Collected Journalism of an Irish New Woman, 1892-1903

1 "On Board a Spanish Steamer" (1892)

For an English traveller nothing can be at the same time more dull and more strange than a voyage on a Spanish steamer, where nobody speaks English, and only one or two passengers and officers but a very little French. The *Montevideo*, bound for Mexico from Barcelona, possesses a captain who speaks French and two officers who are kind enough to imagine that they speak English.[1] The pretensions of the passengers, a mixture of Spaniards pure, Cubans and Creoles, are less [*sic*], and in consequence conversation for the non-Spanish-speaking travellers is excessively limited. On the other hand, unlimited good nature and good humour supply the deficiency. It would be exaggeration, perhaps, to describe the replacement as adequate. Admitting the insufficiency of service, a palpable deficiency when you wake of a morning and find water for washing lacking, a smile and an incomprehensible phrase may soften the hardship but will scarcely suffice for cleanliness. True, there is an electric bell in your cabin, but the use of an electric bell is hardly explained if no sound ensues from pressure. These are the minor drawbacks of life aboard a Spanish liner.

One wonders how the days pass at home, wherever that may be, for a race so perfectly unserviceable for cabined existence, when cast upon its own resources, as the Spanish. We are assured that they are gay; that they play the guitar, the mandolin, dance and sing eternally. But let them congregate under circumstances when these accomplishments are peculiarly in demand, and such resources as dancing, singing, guitar playing, even sociable converse, become as things that are not. They sit and look at each other in complete silence, or they twirl their thumbs, and scream commonplaces across deck or saloon with less notion of spontaneous amusement than unexercised marionettes.

1 The steamship *Montevideo* belonged to the Compañía Transatlántica Española and covered the route between Barcelona and Mexico in approximately nine days. The Spanish government used other ships of the same company to transport troops and weapons to war zones in its colonies overseas (Asúnsolo 1999).

At the end of two days' enforced intimacy a few of the men will unite over a card table, but the women sit upstairs as wide apart as if an ocean instead of a chair divided them. They are all limitlessly good-natured, and ask nothing better than an occasion to be kind to somebody, but they lack initiative, still more woefully lack brains. Whenever you catch their eye, they will smile most warmly. Perhaps they will even gesticulate and venture an amiable observation. But of passing the time they have no notion, and are dull beyond words.

Our ship fortunately carried troops. This was our sole source of gaiety. Soldiers are not hampered by any conventional notions of respectability, and it would be difficult to match Spanish troops in noise, laughter, and childish roughness. All the first class passengers crowded over the railings above the stern where the soldiers and emigrants made a variegated medley. It is almost as much fun to watch them as to be of them. They danced and sang, played round games like children or practical jokes like schoolboys; had the art of good fellowship at their fingers' ends, told stories, tumbled head over heels, and were a delicious sight for civilised man over their midday and evening soup. The Spanish soldier is more childish, more happy, and infinitely less tidy and clean than Tommy Atkins.[2] On the whole he gives the impression of enjoying himself more and being far less disciplined. In the way of dirt or barbarism nothing comes amiss with him; but how he enjoys a dance! – how consistently and good-humouredly he laughs! His favourite game is to sit round in a circle of feet to feet, the bodies of twelve men forming a pretty wide outer rim, their joined feet just a hole big enough for one man to stand therein. Then the onlookers clap hands and sing a melancholy tune, upon which somebody jumps into the small aperture formed by the circle of soles, stiffens his body like a corpse, falls backward, and is flung round the circle like a bag of bones to the cheering sound of laughter, hand-clapping, shouted speech, and rough, sad music. 'Tis amazing all the pleasure this game can give both spectators and players. When the body falls all of a heap in the middle of the circle the soldiers become as voluble and excited as if they had just been distributed glasses of brandy. The first thing we did on coming a-deck of a morning, after mutual greetings, was to go and see what the soldiers were doing. The railings above their quarter was our boulevard, our cafe, our theatre, our club, our amusement, and our work. We watched them play, eat, clean up, sing, dance, and turn in with avidity. Detained in front of the lovely coast of Malaga of a soft October day they so distracted us that we forgot to land. Their own excitement in fear of shore was excessive, and delightfully varied was each man's expression of it. The regiment was

2 Tommy Atkins or simply Tommy was the term adopted to refer to the average British soldier. Already employed during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it became increasingly familiar during World War I and continued to be used over World War II.

furnished by all the provinces, and each Spanish province is a separate nationality. The commanding officer who travelled with us was a Biscayan, with a Moorish face, Andalusian liveliness, and the manners of Castille. Never before have I thought it possible for a man to have such tiny feet and hands, and look a man. In boots, I believe, he wore ladies' threes, and in gloves ladies' sixes. And despite this peculiarity you had a firm conviction that his feet and hands would be extremely serviceable in warfare.

Afterwards at Cadiz we were joined by a brigadier general, so infinitely more Lilliputian[3] that when he sat in a canvas deck chair and gathered his little legs up under him his shrunken frame seemed swallowed in the canvas hollow, above which appeared a helmeted head and a white, withered face very like a corpse's of some hours. He had a wife with him and two little girls, whom he attended with real but perhaps disconcerting devotion. His wife was just as small as himself, but fat and abnormally helpless. He led her about from chair to chair, from cabin to saloon, on deck with grotesque tenderness. It was touching, but you were forced to smile, they looked so old, so absurd, so quaintly unable to stand alone, that the mystery was how the general had ever faced an enemy without his wife on his arm. When the girls were too seasick to eat downstairs the general's military servant, helped by the general, would carry their food upstairs, and on the edge of each chair the queer little man would sit in turn, dipping biscuits into sherry and feeding his invalids like a nurse, himself looking much more ill than they.

But it is not to be denied that a voyage of nine days on the *Montevideo* was an excellent object lesson in the daily habit of a race. The passengers expectorated freely, and left not a clean spot as large as a penny on the whole vessel. They even expectorated at table, and not always between courses. Our cabins were left to clean themselves, unless the passengers preferred to turn stewards and do their own cleaning, and as we were packed like herrings, three or four in the same cabin, each with the necessary complement of cabin luggage and wraps, the discomfort may be imagined without realistic description. However, I was able to assure myself on landing at Las Palmas that the expectorating Spaniard is not by any means the worst thing in male humanity. At his worst, he is only a dirty gentleman, but the clean, well-washed English cad who swaggers about a foreign hotel, informs the foreign waiter who understands English that there is nothing decent or civilised, no honesty (save the mark!) out of England, is so greatly his inferior, where the graces and pleasures of life are concerned, that I am almost reconciled to the spitting. The first thing I saw after dinner at Las Palmas was a young Englishman in flannels,

3 Small in size. The Lilliputians are the diminutive inhabitants on the island of Lilliput, where Lemuel Gulliver finds himself on the first of his journeys into "Several Remote Nations of the World", recorded in Jonathan Swift's satire *Gulliver's Travels* (1726).

smoking with ladies around, and both feet stretched out upon a cafe table. This form of manhood is indigenous to the soil, and not to be grown out of England. At sunrise this appalling young man had been holding forth on glorious Britain and Spanish savages. Las Palmas was hideous, hotels execrable, no place worth living in but England – the creation hailed from Liverpool – and any Spaniard condemned to sojourn in that respectable town might as fitly condemn the taste as well as the manners of the character of British virtues and beauty.

From Cadiz to Las Palmas the sea was so tempestuous that even the soldiers were prostrated with sickness, and only began to dance and sing again the evening before we reached the beautifully-named Puerto de la Luz.[4] The splendid moon had, doubtless, something to do with it, but much more the cheerless prospect of being crowded to death by the addition of six hundred more volunteers and emigrants for Havana. An officer showed me their accommodation downstairs, and awful is an appropriate adjective in commenting upon their miseries. Thirty sleep together in one big iron cage, upon narrow slips of canvas, ten abreast, in three layers. Each cabin holds five hundred, and there are two. When humanity, good fellowship and kindness survive such housing, it may not be doubted that goodness in the rough is indestructible.

As far as Cadiz we were upon sunnier waters, the sea of indigo depth against a pearl-tinted or faintly blue horizon, with nothing to disturb the placidity except the play of the dolphins at intervals. A young moon guided our early start, which by the time we were cast upon the tempestuous Atlantic billows showed the long, lean, bilious visage of its three-quarters' stage. If ever there was reason to accept the childish notion that there is a man within that cold white lamp of heaven, it was the look of grim inspection upon the face of that three-quarter moon, as it stared so unmoved upon the sea miseries of rocked humanity that lay groaning in heaps upon deck, upon saloon couches, and in cabins. From the depths below shrill feminine voices screamed, between the intervals of nausea, "Mi Madre!" and the men echoed, when they found voice, "Ill, very bad". Through the prostrated mass the doctor and ship's officers walked serenely, with a smile on their faces that showed them in partnership with the sarcastic moon.

Meanwhile the air was soft and warm; the stars shone with an exquisite radiance; rivers of silver light ran from our vessel to the horizon, and the sombre blue in shadow was relieved by shooting phosphorescence above the enormous ridges of foam. Each wave, as it broke and bounded backward, made a slant of shining granite or big slabs of green-streaked marble. By day the sea was just as rough, only the uneven floor of dark granite

4 Lynch is referring here to the sheltered port of Las Palmas, known as Puerto de la Luz. Built in the early 1850s, it could accommodate the large ships that plied between Europe, Africa and the Americas.

under the foam was replaced by rainbow sprays in the ardent sun. It would have been delightful enough, once you learned to keep your balance and to anticipate the disasters of the dining room, if there was anyone to tell stories or sing songs, or invent any other means of making this time pass. But the liveliest person will soon tire of the monotony of ship bells and the song of the sea. Beyond the distraction of using my very small Spanish with the amiable ship's officer, I had nothing but a casual converse with an amusing Scotch engineer. He had travelled the world over and found no place like Scotland, no race like the Scotch race, and no liquor like Scotch whiskey. But for Scotland, he asserted, England would be nowhere, as all her men of genius were Scotch. He was convinced there was Scotch blood in Shakespeare's veins. But if not, the Scotch could afford to yield the Divine William, having in Scott and Burns produced two men infinitely greater than the Swan of Avon.[5] Nothing has ever been written on the subject adequate to the excess of this Scotchman's race-conceit. He was particularly hard on England's idol, Queen Elizabeth. She is not popular in Scotland, which fact to him seemed the final word upon Queen Bess.[6] Mary Stuart, he admitted, was no better than she should be, but she was Scotch, and as such no Englishman might dare to throw a stone at her in the presence of her countrymen. In fact, the refrain of his national lyric was that the Scotch is the finest race in the world (pronounced with several rolling r's), has made the greatest mark, is the most successful, and has never been beaten by England. This was a sore point to insist upon to an Irishwoman; but tenderness has never been a feature in the Scotch character. As a balm, he was kind enough to say that he preferred the Irish to the English, and that in Scotland our men of genius are more appreciated than those of our mighty enemy.

We were still rolling desperately upon the bosom of the deep when, at about two a.m., we dropped anchor in the harbour of the Gate of Light [*sic*],[7] and by sunrise, for the rising we could see a sparkling little Eastern town as white as a bride, against a carpet of liquid azure, and beyond a stretch of African sand barren hills. Here the *Montevideo* and I parted.

5 Apart from alluding to Shakespeare as "the Divine William" and "the Swan of Avon", Lynch goes on to register the conviction of the Scottish engineer that his fellow Scotsmen, novelist Walter Scott (1771-1832) and poet Robert Burns (1759-96), were far superior to the English bard.

6 A popular name for Queen Elizabeth I.

7 Lynch mistakenly uses "Puerta" instead of "Puerto" de la Luz, hence her translation "Gate".

2 “José Echegaray” (1893)

The Spanish theatre has for so long been out of fashion that a revived interest in it would carry us into a sort of renaissance. It is not virgin soil, like the drama of the north which has so lately caught the ear of Europe.[8] This, perhaps, accounts for its lack of distinctive originality. For even in Echegaray’s notable plays, strong and original as they are, there is an unmistakable ring of the past.[9] We feel it is more a revival than a youthful outburst, with all the promise of novelty. True, it is dominated by the modern need and its restless searching note; it must prove its mission as something more than the mere desire to divert. Not even a sermon could be more remote than this theatre from the old comedy of manners, of loose morals and diverting intrigue, all weighing as lightly on the dramatist’s conscience as on the audience’s. And it may be questioned if Echegaray, a Professor of Mathematics as well as a dramatist and poet, could be induced to accept Mr. Stevenson’s well-known and not inappropriate classification of the artist as of the family of Daughters of Joy.[10] His is no neutral voice between vice and virtue, concerned solely for the pleasure or interest of the hour, suing approbation through laughter or wit, or sympathy through dramatic tears. Lest his audience should fail to carry their musings on the problems of life to the theatre in the proper modern spirit, he starts by pricking their conscience and exciting thought that as little relieves them from the pressure of reality as one of Ibsen’s plays – though, with the latter his have nothing else in common but this determined purpose.

8 The “drama of the north” that Lynch mentions comprised the symbolist drama of the Belgian author Maurice Maeterlinck and, more especially, the experimental works of Swedish playwright August Strindberg as well as those of the Norwegian dramatist Henrik Ibsen.

9 José Echegaray y Eizaguirre (1832-1916) is remembered as Spain’s first Nobel prizewinner, a distinction he shared with Frédéric Mistral in 1904. Something of a prodigy in the field of science, he soon established himself as a mathematician and engineer of standing. As Isabel II’s reign toppled, he gave up his teaching post for politics, coming to occupy the posts of Minister of Education and Finance between 1867 and 1874. He would abandon politics for a career in the theatre with the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy. Appointed a member of the Spanish Royal Academy of Language in 1894, the institutional recognition was not shared by writers of the so-called Generation of ’98.

10 In “Letter to a Young Gentleman Who Proposes to Embrace the Career of Art”, Robert Louis Stevenson states: “I speak of a more manly way of life, it is a point on which I must be frank. To live by a pleasure is not a high calling; it involves patronage, however veiled; it numbers the artist, however ambitious, along with dancing girls and billiard markers. The French have a romantic evasion for one employment, and calls its practitioners the Daughters of Joy. The artist is of the same family, he is of the Sons of Joy, chose his trade to please himself, gains his livelihood by pleasing others, and has parted with something of the sterner dignity of man” (Stevenson, *Across the Plains. With Other Memories and Essays*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1892, 282).

In this hour, when foreign Shakespeares are springing up around us with incredible profusion, it would be an agreeable task to come forward with a Spanish Shakespeare. But Don José Echegaray is no such thing. He bears no resemblance to the new geniuses hailed with such delight. He has none of the subtlety of Maeterlinck, and certainly offers entertainment by means of tricks less reminiscent of our start in modern languages. His literary baggage reveals neither the depth nor the flashes of luminous thought with which Ibsen startles us through an obscurity of atmosphere, a childish baldness, and an unconventional disregard of all the old-fashioned theories upon which the laws of dramatic criticism have been formed. But if Echegaray is less original, he is creditably more sane. The lack of depth carries with it a corresponding absence of crudeness, and an artlessness often so bewildering as to leave us imperfectly capable of distinguishing the extreme fineness of the line between genius and insanity. The lucid air of the South clarifies thought, and produces nothing less sober than Latin bombast and the high-phrased moods of the Don.

What is more to be deplored in Echegaray's plays is the absence of French art. An artist in the polished, complete sense he cannot be described. He has none of the French dramatist's incision, none of his delicate irony, his playfulness and humorous depravity, none of his beautiful clarity of expression, still less of his polish, his wit and consummate dexterity. Poetry is his favourite form of dramatic expression, but it is not the suave measured poetry of M. Richepin,[11] and while he often takes his inspiration from the Middle Ages, he offers us nothing like the ethereal and fanciful verse of M. Armand Silvestre,[12] when that author condescends to forget that he is *fin de siècle*, and seeks to please through the sweetness and delicacy of some mediaeval legend. Echegaray is poet enough to delight in these thrilling ages. But his treatment of them leaves us cold. It lacks fancy and buoyancy. The women are puppets and the men little better than belted ranters. Sombre passion does not adequately fill the place of absent humour. It is thin and false, and glaringly artificial, like the mediaeval romance of an inefficient author. It is a remarkable fact that such a play as *Mar sin Orillas* (Shoreless Sea) should have achieved popularity in a town so imitatively, not intellectually, modern as Madrid. It has no originality whatever, and offers nothing as compensation for dulness. It is pure Middle Ages, but without the captivating atmosphere of those plumed and belted centuries. It runs complacently along the old dusty

11 French poet, dramatist and novelist Jean Richepin (1849-1926) took to a wandering life before turning to journalism and producing poetry. His first volume, *La chanson des gueux* (1876) [Song of the Poor], revealed his interest in and concern with the lot of the underprivileged.

12 The post occupied in the administration by French poet, storyteller and dramatist Paul-Armand Silvestre (1837-1901) provided him with time to pursue a literary career. His *Rimes neuves et vieilles* (1866) [Rhymes Old and New] was well received. He later turned to fiction.

highroad; swords clash, knights march off to glory and the Turkish wars, and beauty at home struggles with parental enmity, is sore distraught and belied, and while we are reminded, in the high tone of the ancient singers, that "Amor que á la guerra fué | Sabe Dios si volverá"[13] we are confused by the stupidity of everybody.

What touches us more closely is Echegaray's manipulation of the modern conscience, and its illimitable scope for reflection, for conflict, and the many-sided drama of temptation. This is familiar ground, and we are ever pleased to welcome a new combatant. That the Spanish dramatist brings a novel note may be accepted after reading the curious prologue to his *Gran Galeoto*. It is the best and most popular of Echegaray's plays. In its printed form it is dedicated to *Everybody*, which is the crowning insistence on the *motif* of the prologue. This is in two scenes, in the form of a dialogue between Ernest, the hero, and his friend and benefactor, Don Julian, a middle-aged and wealthy banker, with a young wife, Teodora. Don Julian interrupts Ernest in a laborious effort of composition, and the irritated author explains his troubles; he thought he had hit on an excellent idea, but the attempt to give it form, clothed in appropriate terms and scenery, revealed it strange, impossible, anti-dramatic, and beset with difficulties. Don Julian – who is the pleasantest imaginable representative of *everybody*, boundlessly good-natured, of a clear mercantile spirit, without a mental twist or crank, and very much enamoured of his young wife – beseeches his friend to explain away these difficulties:

ERNEST Imagine the principal personage one who creates the drama and develops it, who gives it life and provokes the catastrophe, who, broadly, fills and possesses it, and yet who cannot make his way to the stage.

DON JULIAN Is he so ugly, then? So repugnant or bad?

ERNEST Not so. Ugly as you or I may be – not worse. Neither good nor bad, and truly not repugnant. I am not such a cynic – neither a misanthrope nor one so out of love with life as to fall into an error of that sort.

DON JULIAN Then what is the reason?

ERNEST The reason, Don Julian, is that there is no material room in the scenario for this personage.

DON JULIAN Holy Virgin! What do you mean? Is it by chance a mythological drama with Titans in it?

ERNEST Not at all. It is modern.

DON JULIAN Well, then?

ERNEST Briefly – it is a question of *everybody*.

13 "The beloved went to war | God only knows if he'll return".

DON JULIAN *Everybody!* You are right. There is no room for everybody on the stage. It is an inconvertible truth that has more than once been demonstrated.

ERNEST Then you agree with me?

DON JULIAN Not entirely. *Everybody* may be condensed in a few types and characters. This is matter beyond my depth, but such, I understand, has been the practice of the masters.

ERNEST Yes; but in my case it is to condemn me not to write my drama.

DON JULIAN Why?

ERNEST For many reasons it would be difficult to explain; above all, at this hour.

DON JULIAN Never mind. Give me a few.

ERNEST Look! Each individual of this entire mass, each head of this monster of a thousand heads, of this Titan of the century, whom I call *Everybody*, takes a part in my play. It may be for a flying moment, to utter but one word, fling a single glance. Perhaps his action in the tale consists of a smile, seen but to vanish. Listless and absent-minded, he acts without passion, without anger, without guile, often for mere distraction's sake.

DON JULIAN What then?

ERNEST These light words, these fugitive glances, these indifferent smiles, all these passing murmurs and this petty evil, which may be called the insignificant rays of the dramatic light, condensed to one focus, to one family, result in conflagration and explosion, in strife and in victims. If I represent the whole by a few types or symbolical personages, I bestow upon each one that which is really dispensed among many, and such a result distorts my idea. Suppose a few types on the stage, whose guile repels and is the less natural because evil in them has no object; this exposes me to a worse consequence, to the accusation of meaning to paint a cruel, corrupted, and debased society, when my sole pretension is to prove that not even the most insignificant actions are in themselves insignificant or lost for good or evil. For, added to the mysterious influences of modern life, they may reach to immense effects.

DON JULIAN Say no more, my friend. All this is metaphysics. A glimmer of light, perhaps, but an infinitude of cloud. However, you understand these things better than I do. Letters of exchange, shares, stock and discount, now – that's another matter.

ERNEST You've common sense, and that's the chief thing.

DON JULIAN Thanks, Ernest, you flatter me.

ERNEST But you follow me?

DON JULIAN Not in the least. There ought to be a way out of the difficulty.

ERNEST If that were all!

DON JULIAN What! More?

ERNEST Tell me what is the great dramatic spring?

DON JULIAN My dear fellow, how am I to know what you mean by a dramatic spring? All I can tell you is that I have not the slightest interest in plays where love does not preponderate – above all, unfortunate love, for I have enough of happy love at home.

ERNEST Ah, I thought so. Then in my play there can be little or no love.

DON JULIAN So much the worse say I. Though I know nothing of your play, I suspect it will interest nobody.

ERNEST So I have been telling you. Nevertheless, there will be a sort of love – and jealousy too.

DON JULIAN Ah, then with an interesting intrigue, skilfully developed, and some effective situations -

ERNEST No, nothing of the sort. It will be all simple, flowing, almost vulgar… so that the drama cannot be shown upon the surface. Drama runs between the lines, advances slowly; to-day takes hold of the mind, tomorrow of a heart-beat, undermines the will by infinitesimal degrees.

DON JULIAN But who understands this? How are these interior ravages manifested? Who recounts to the audience? In what way are they evident? Must we spend a whole evening hunting for a glance, a sigh, a gesture, a single word? My dear boy, this is not amusement. To cast us into such depths, is to hurl us upon philosophy.

ERNEST You but echo my own thought.

DON JULIAN I have no wish to discourage you. You best know what you are about – there! Though the play seems rather colourless, heavy and uninteresting, perhaps with the catastrophe, life – explosion – eh?

ERNEST Catastrophe! Explosion! Hardly, and that just upon the fall of the curtain.

DON JULIAN Which means that the play begins when the curtain falls?

ERNEST Just so. But I will endeavour to give it a little warmth.

DON JULIAN My dear lad, what you have to do is to write the *second* play, the one that begins when the first ends. For the other, according to your description, is not worth the trouble of writing.

ERNEST 'Tis the conclusion I have come to myself.

DON JULIAN Then we agree – for all your skill and logic. And what is the name?

ERNEST That's another difficulty. I can find none.

DON JULIAN What! No name either?

ERNEST No, unless, as Don Hermogenes says, we could put it into Greek for greater clarity.

DON JULIAN Of a surety, Ernest, you were dozing when I came in. You have been dreaming nonsense.

ERNEST Dreaming! yes. Nonsense! perhaps. I talk both dreams and nonsense. But you are sensible and always right.

DON JULIAN In this case it does not require much penetration. A drama in which the chief personage cannot appear in which there is hardly any love; in which nothing happens but what happens every day; that begins with the fall of the curtain upon the last act and which has no name: I don't know how it is to be written, still less how it is to be acted, how you are to find an audience, nor in what the drama consists.
ERNEST Nevertheless, it is a drama, if I could only give it proper form

This may be accepted as the author's analysis of his own play, for it is his hero who names it, at the end of an impassioned address to inspiration, in which he calls upon the shades of Francesca de Rimini and Paolo – Dante open at this canto upon his desk being afterwards regarded by Don Julian's nephew as damning evidence against him.[14] In this monologue he tells us that "as the scattered rays of light are gathered to a wide focus by transparent crystal, and the crossed bars of shadows are forged by the dark, mountains made from grains of earth and seas from drops of water", so will he use our lost words, our vague smiles, our glances of curiosity, and all those thousand trivialities dispersed in cafés, theatres, reunions and all spectacles, that float round and about us. Such, he adds, will prove the modest crystal of his intelligence, the lens which will bring light and shade to a focus, and lead up to dramatic conflagration and the tragic catastrophe. So inspired, after a glance at Dante, he takes a pen, and feverishly writes the title: "El Gran Galeoto".

To this extraordinary and self-conscious prelude, which lifts a play quite out of the region of diversion, and, as the sensible Don Julian remarks, plunges us into philosophy, the written, not acted, prologue to *El Hijo de Don Juan* (Don Juan's Son) may be added as an excellent interpretation of Echegaray's personality, revealed already with passable clearness in the dramatic prologue quoted. He enumerates the conclusions of the critics. That the play was inspired by Ibsen's celebrated *Ghosts*. That the passions it deals with are more appropriate to Northern climes than to the South. That it treats of the problem of hereditary madness. That it discusses the law of heredity. That it is gloomy and lugubrious, with no other object than that of inspiring horror. That it is a purely pathological drama. That it contains nothing but the process of madness. That from the moment it is understood that Lázaro will go mad, all interest in the work ceases, and there remains nothing but to follow step by step the shipwreck of enfeebled intelligence. And so on. Echegaray regards all this as the lamentable exercise of dramatic criticism. The underlying thought of his work is different, but he declines to enter into further explanation of it, each scene and each phrase sufficiently explaining it already. To touch more closely upon the matter would be perilous. Besides,

14 The adulterous lovers Francesca de Rimini and Paolo appear in Canto V of Dante's *Inferno*.

he adds, it is not his habit to defend his plays. Once written, he casts them to their fate, without material or moral defence, and the critics are free to tear themselves to pieces over them. There is one phrase alone that he defends energetically, because it is borrowed from Ibsen, and appears to him of singular beauty: "Mother, give me the sun". This he describes in his prologue as "simple, infantile, half comical, but enfolding a world of ideas, an ocean of feeling, a hell of sorrows, a cruel lesson, the supreme watchword of society – of the family". He continues, quite in the modern spirit:

> A generation consumed by vice, which carries in its marrow the veins of impure love, in whose corrupted blood the red globules are mixed with putrid matter, must ever fall by degrees into the abysm of idiotcy. Lázaro's cry is the last glimmer of a reason dropping into the eternal darkness of imbecility. At that very hour Nature awakes, and the sun rises; it is another twilight that will soon be all light.
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> Both twilights meet, cross, salute in recognition of eternal farewell, at the end of the drama. Reason, departing, is held in the grip of corrupting pleasure. The sun, rising, with its immortal call, is pushed forward by the sublime force of Nature.
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> Down with human Reason, at the point of extinction: hail to the sun that starts another day! 'Give me the sun', Lázaro cries to his mother. Don Juan also begs it through the tresses of the girl of Tarifa.
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> On this subject there is much to be said; it provokes much reflection. If indeed our society – but what the deuce am I doing with philosophy? Let each one solve the problem as best he can, and ask for the sun, the horns of the moon, or whatever takes his fancy. And if nobody is interested in the matter, it only proves that the modern Don Juan has engendered many children without Lázaro's talent.
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> Respectful salutations to the children of Don Juan.

From all this it will be understood that Echegaray presses into the service of pleasure the desperate problems of our natural history, and instead of laughter confronts us with mournful gravity; asks us to stand aghast at inherited injustice, and to doubt with him the wisdom of Providence at [the] sight of such undiminished and idle wickedness in man, and such an accumulation of unmerited suffering. Nowadays we are inordinately engrossed by such issues, and life weighs more heavily upon our shoulders than it did upon our fathers. The good old spirit of fun is fast being trodden out of us by the pervading sense of a mission, and the laborious duty of converting somebody to something. We no longer go to the theatre to

weep over fictitious wrongs and smile at imaginary joys. We go to study what we are pleased to call life; to sip at the founts of philosophy, to hear a sermon. It is not exhilarating, but we thankfully take the draught of wisdom offered us, and go our ways without a murmur that we have been depressed rather than entertained. Cervantes, with old-fashioned sanity of judgment, condemned the practice of preaching sermons through the veil of fiction. What sort of reflection would the pathological novel and drama inspire in so wise and witty an author? He might be led to create a type of character even more mad than the Knight Errant.[15]

El Hijo de Don Juan (Don Juan's Son) is an infinitely crueller and more disagreeable play than *Ghosts*, because it is more lucid, more direct. The characters themselves are more carefully drawn, and we have a closer actual acquaintance with them. Here there is not one victim only, but two. Don Juan, the middle-aged *roué*,[16] has a friend, also a middle-aged *roué*. The daughter of his friend, Carmen, is consumptive, and is betrothed to his son, Lázaro, who is subject to vertigo. The play opens with three elderly *roués*, all ill-preserved after a life of scandal, holding converse the reverse of edifying over tobacco and alcohol. Here Echegaray shows how little he means to mince matters by the remarks he puts into the mouth of one of them in reply to Don Juan's boast that the genius of his son is inherited from him. Paternal inheritance would be nothing but rheum or neurosis – "the sediment of pleasure and the residuum of alcohol". Upon this Don Juan launches into poetry and describes the single moment in which his soul soared above material enjoyments and sighed for the glorious and impossible. It was after an orgy, and as his half-closed eyes saw the sun rise over the Guadalquivir through the silky waves of a girl's hair, he understood the beauty of poetry and Nature, and stretched out a hand to clutch the splendid orb. This desire is afterwards recalled to him in a moment of surprising horror, when his brilliant and beloved son, sinking into imbecility, sees the rising sun, and cries: "How lovely! Mother, give me the sun". "And I also wanted it once", Don Juan exclaims: "My God! – my son! Lázaro!"

Don Juan, as might be inferred from his name, carries on intrigues with ballet-girls and servant-maids under the nose of his wife and son. Lázaro seems blind enough to parental delinquencies. Not, as he explains himself when complaining of broken health, that he has been a saint because he has eschewed excesses. The scene where he first appears ailing and stupid is singularly painful, above all, towards the end, when, after an outburst of lucid eloquence, he falls drowsily upon the sofa, and feeling sleep upon him, begs that Carmen, his betrothed, should not be permitted to see him in a ridiculous attitude.

15 Don Quixote.

16 French for rake or libertine.

XAVIER Unless you are as beautiful as Endymion she will not enter. (*Pause*. XAVIER walks *about*; LÁZARO *begins to sleep*.)
LÁZARO Xavier, Xavier!
XAVIER What?
LÁZARO Now I am – half asleep – how do I look?
XAVIER Very poetical.
LÁZARO Good. Thanks – very poetical (*dreamily*).

The second act is somewhat livelier, and contains more spirited contrasts. That Echegaray could excel in lighter comedy may be seen in an amusing scene between the serious son and the dissipated good-natured father.

Don Juan is alone with his son, who is walking restlessly about. The father asks his son what he is thinking of, and then apologises for disturbing weighty thought. Lázaro listlessly replies that his imagination was wandering and he wandering after it. When he has received many assurances of not being in the poet's way, Don Juan calls for sherry, the Parisian newspapers, and *Nana*.[17] Caught laughing over *Nana*, he asserts his horror of immoral books, and his conviction that literature is going to the dogs.

LÁZARO Zola is a great writer. Ah, I've caught the idea I was seeking (*sits down to write*).

There is here a little humorous by-play between the servant and Don Juan, and afterwards a reference to the lugubrious theme in converse between her and Lázaro, whose listlessness, courtesy and musing, make an admirable relief against the alert and fussy affection and frivolity of his father.

DON JUAN Ha, ha! witty, exceedingly witty. Full of salt; hot as red pepper. *Gil Blas* is the only paper worth reading.[18]

LÁZARO An interesting article? What is it about? Let me see.
DON JUAN (*hastily ramming the paper into his pocket*) A dull and shocking article. I must take it away, for the mischief would be in it if it fell into Carmen's hands.
LÁZARO You are quite right (*beginning to walk again*).
DON JUAN I hadn't finished it. I must only finish it later. (*Takes up* Nana) Stupendous! Monumental, enough to make one die of laughing. Lord! why do we read but for amusement's sake? Then give us diverting books (*laughing*).
LÁZARO Is it a witty book?

17 The novel by Émile Zola (1840-1902), published in 1880.

18 A satirical journal published in Madrid between 1864 and 1872, briefly reissued in 1882.

DON JUAN (*in altered voice*) Perhaps. But this light literature soon wearies. (*Seeing* LÁZARO *approach, he hides* Nana *in another pocket*.) Have you anything substantial to read – but really substantial?

LÁZARO (*looking through his books*) Do you like Kant?

DON JUAN Kant? Do you say Kant? The very thing. He was always my favourite author. When I was young I fell asleep every night over Kant. (*Aside*). Who the deuce is it?

LÁZARO If you like I will – (*looking for a passage*).

DON JUAN No, my son. Any part will do, if this can be read in divisions. Let me see. Don't trouble about me. Write, my son, write. (LÁZARO *begins to write and* DON JUAN *reads*.) "Beneath the aspect of relation, third moment of taste, the beautiful appears to us the final form of an object, without semblance to finality." The devil! (*holding book away and contemplating it in terror*.) The devil! "Or as a finality without end." There are people who understand this! "Since it is called the final form to the causality of any conception with relation to the object". Let me see (*holding book still further off*); "final form to the causality". 'Pon my word, I'm perspiring (*wipes his forehead*). "Conscience is this finality without end, is the play of the cognotive [*sic*] forces."[19] What! "The play of cognitive … the play" … If it were play I should understand it. "Conscience of this internal causality is what constitutes aesthetic pleasure". If I continue I shall have congestion. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph! Only think that Lázaro understands the finality without end, the causality, and the play of the cognotive forces. Heavens! what a fellow! (*Reads again*.) "The principle of the methodological conformity of Nature is the transcendental principle of the strength of judgment." (*Strikes the table*.) I should lose myself if I read more. But what a fellow, who can read such stuff and keep sane!

LÁZARO Does it interest you?

DON JUAN Immensely. What depth! (*aside*) I am five minutes falling into it and haven't yet reached the bottom. I should think indeed it interested me. But, frankly, I prefer -

LÁZARO Hegel?

DON JUAN Just so (*Nana*).

After talk of Lázaro's health and engagement, Don Juan, learning that the young man is pensive or preoccupied, solely because he is projecting a drama, says he will leave him to thought. Glancing into Kant, he mutters, "The – the – the cognotive [*sic*] forces – the – the – finality – yes, the finality". "Work, my son, work. Above all, write nothing immoral." He drinks

19 The term "cognotive" (Echegaray's "fuerzas cognoscitivas") used here is not listed in the OED. Lynch appears to have coined the term "cognotive". She might have used "cognoscitive", as listed in the OED.

off a glass of sherry, and regretfully remarks that this finality has an end; then marches away with the bottle, *Gil Blas*, or *Nana* to study in solitude.

This is the sole touch of comedy in a play of ever-increasing gloom, pervaded by the stupor of the hero and the cough of the heroine. "My father loves me dearly", Carmen remarks to Dolores, Don Juan's embittered wife. "Then he ought to have given you stronger lungs", the elder woman retorts, with shocking directness. It is indeed, as Echegaray complains the critics assert, a pathological drama. When his friends are not discussing the symptoms of Lázaro's strange malady, he himself is enumerating them in merciless monologues. He talks of his greatness, of his fame, of the popularity of his works, and then falls into childish drivel, or longs for playthings. "His head is not firm", says Don Nemesis to Carmen's father, in dubiety before the prospect of the marriage; "that is why he is so stupendous at times, and all the world calls him a genius. Put no trust in geniuses, Timotheus. A genius may walk down one street, and hear the people cry, 'The genius!' Let him round the corner into another street, and he will hear the street arab shout after him, 'The lunatic!' Much talent is decidedly a dangerous thing". "God defend us from it!" piously exclaims the elderly *roué*. "I have always been very careful not to cultivate it".

It would be difficult to conceive a more needlessly disagreeable scene than the interview between the celebrated brain doctor and Lázaro, who, the night before, has been consulted by Dolores on behalf of a nephew, and innocently, but with terrible frankness, discusses the case with the unfortunate victim himself. "We cannot with impunity corrupt the sources of life", says Doctor Bermudez, in the high scientific manner, without noticing the increasing emotion of his companion; "the son of such a father must soon fall into madness or idiotcy". "Ah! No! What? My father! I – It is a lie!" Lázaro bursts out, in frantic horror. When the poor mother enters the scene and brings her maternal note of despair to the son's distracted terror, we feel that the modern drama has reached a pitch of tragedy unapprehended in healthier and more barbaric ages. "Lose one's brains as one might lose a hat!" exclaims Don Juan when enlightened. "Bah! idiots are born so … but a man of genius! … Lázaro, who understands *the finality without end* as he knows the *Paternoster!*"

> DOLORES (*despairingly*) But if it were true? If it were true? And then? Oh! why was I born? (*approaching* DON JUAN*, who retreats*). Through you have I lost my illusions, stained my youth, debased my life, forfeited my dignity – through you! And after twenty years of sacrifices, to be worthy of Lázaro! … good for his sake, loyal for him, resigned for him, honourable for him, and to-day! … No, you have always been a scoundrel; but for once you must be right. Impossible! impossible! God could not will it.

DON JUAN Good, I have always been a scoundrel. What more? But don't remember it now; above all, don't say it. Say that you forgive me. Forgive me, Dolores.

DOLORES What does it matter?

DON JUAN It matters to us both. If you should not forgive me, and if God should remember to punish me, and punish me through my Lázaro!

Pitiful is the poor mother's wavering between softness and bitterness. At one moment she pardons him with all her heart, or only bargains that he shall help her to save their boy. And then when he vows to do so with his whole soul and the remainder of his life, she retorts cruelly, "With what life you have left; what Heaven, in its mercy, still grants you". "Dolores!" the poor wretch exclaims, and again she softens: "It is true; I had forgiven you". Upon this the elderly scapegoat brightens and mentions Paris, Germany, England – "the English know so much. Bah! there is a good deal of science scattered over the world". "Then let us gather it all for Lázaro".

This desperate situation is relieved by the entrance of Carmen's father in the black of etiquette, strictly solemn as befits a Spanish father offering his daughter in marriage to his old chum. He says reprovingly: "Do not embrace me. Don't you see that I am all in black – in the garb of etiquette? It is a very solemn occasion. Call everybody except Lázaro – he later. Solemnity above all". The afflicted parents have decided to conceal Lázaro's calamity from the world, and make a heart-broken effort to welcome the betrothal with delight, and the gloom of the situation is deepened by the young man's miserable behaviour when called to his beloved.

LÁZARO Carmen! Mine, mine! I may take her, clasp her in my arms! inflame her with my breath! drink her with my eyes! I may if I like!

DON JUAN Yes, yes, but enough.

LÁZARO What infamy! What treason! Carmen!

CARMEN (*running to him*) Lázaro!

LÁZARO No, away! Why do you come to me? You cannot be mine. Never, never, never.

CARMEN Do you give me up? Ah, I have already felt it. Mother! (*takes refuge in his mother's arms*).

Nobody understands. Carmen's father is indignant. Lázaro's confidential friend asks if he has gone mad, and Lázaro, bewildered, turns despairingly to Don Juan: "Father, father. You are my father. Save me". "With my life my son". "You gave me life, but it is not enough. Give me life to live, to love, to be happy. Give me life for Carmen's sake. Give me more life, or cursed be that which you have given me".

The third act is rendered more sombre if possible from the shabby chatter and airs of aged rake on the part of Carmen's father, with which it

starts. We are introduced to the Tarifa girl, Don Juan's old mistress, now pensioned and respectably established on his estate on the banks of the Guadalquivir. Deeper and deeper are we forced to wade through unrelenting shadow. Now it is the frivolous Don Timoteo sipping his *manzanilla*, and sneering at the young generation as personated by his daughter Carmen, Lázaro, and Lázaro's friend, the girl with her affected lungs, Lázaro with his *dementia*, and his friend formal and headachy. "Ah, in my day we were other", he sighs. "Perhaps", retorts the friend, "it is because you were – *other* then that we are so now". Then it is Lázaro, rough, distrustful, and sly, completely altered, afraid to sleep because he does not know how it might be upon his awakening or if he should ever awake, with swift leaps from childish drivel into the Don's plumed phrases, forgetful of modern raiment, and swaggering through imagery and sonorous syllables as if a sword clanked by his side and he carried the spurs of chivalry. And then the poor victim falls to drinking with his father's old mistress, and when half-drunk and wholly mad, plots with her to carry off Carmen. When she cries out that "farewell" means tears, he exclaims inconsequently: "Then you, too, will cry. We will all cry … Laughing fatigues, crying rests".

Quite gay and reckless, he faces Carmen to propose elopement to her. He laments the former coldness of his words and moods, the insufficiency of the vulgar tongue to express passion so burning and impetuous as his, and terrifies her by his wild and flowery volubility. There is night all around him except for the ray of intense light that encircles her face. On that he concentrates all that remains to him of life, of manhood, of feeling, thought and love. He descends from this into weak complaining. Her happiness is threatened by inimical conspiracies, and yet how is he to defend her? He fancies he is in a desert full of sand, plagued with unquenchable thirst and menaced by a falling heaven. He mixes up in the dreariest way the sands of the desert and the old applause that greeted his genius, wonders if either will have an end, then doubts the end of anything, and implores Carmen to save him. "Help me. Look at me, speak, laugh, cry, do something, Carmen, to keep me from wandering into the desert". But already his look is vague, and he has ceased to see her. In vain she cries to him that she is near, weeps over him, holds him to her. "I am Carmen, look at me. The little head you were wont to love so is close to your lip. I am smiling at you. Laugh, Lázaro, answer me. Wake up! Surely you hear me, you see me!" When his mother comes in response to the girl's agonised cry, a glimmer of intelligence gives a sort of dignity to his incoherent words. He wants his mother to console him, for he has to say "a long, a sad and solemn farewell to Carmen". The girl protests she will not leave him, when he irritably orders her away – a great way off. He loved her much, but now it is adieu eternally. He only wishes now to be alone with his parents, until memory suddenly carries him back into the time of quarrel, reproaches, and jealousies of those two in his childhood. "Don't contradict me, father,

you used to quarrel and make me afraid". He passionately orders him away, too, with Carmen, and turns for comfort to his mother. Then he remembers his school troubles, how his mother coldly parted with him, and to guard against complete loneliness, calls for Paca, his father's old mistress. "Come, I am young, and wish to live", he cries, and when we find Don Juan aroused to indignation and threatening to fling the Tarifa girl over the balcony into the river if she does not instantly retire, we are ready to hail the mercifulness of Ibsen. This is to carry a sermon to an intolerable length, and drive us so out of love with both philosophy and science as to paint unreason with a double allurement. A father kneeling to his mad son to let an old mistress go, and the son, struggling out of the gathering torpor of intelligence to stare at the rising sun:

> "Mother, how lovely!"
> "Lázaro!"
> "So lovely! Mother, so lovely! Give me the sun".
> "My God! I also wanted it once", sobs Don Juan.
> "For ever!" is the last lugubrious note of Dr. Bermudez.

It is a relief to turn from this ghastly tragedy to the brighter movement of *El Gran Galeoto*. My printed copy of this play shows it to have run to the twentieth edition, which, for an unreading land like Spain,[20] is an enormous sale. Bright is perhaps a misleading term, for the whole is tinged with the profound melancholy that strikes us in the Spanish gaze, in its character and in the trustful note of its popular songs and dances. The English are supposed to take their pleasures sadly. The saying were more appropriate to the rather dreary race beyond the Pyrenees. Whatever may be their preoccupation (generally speaking it is dulness or an empty mind they are afflicted with rather than sadness) they give the foreigner the impression of being the wholesale victims of a shattered organ which we have the habit of associating with the affections.

The *Gran Galeoto* starts comfortably with the domestic happiness of the good-natured banker and his young wife. The dialogue is easy and spirited, though we miss the French sparkle and incisive brevity. As befits their nationality, everybody is addicted to long speeches, with just a suspicion of *hidalgic*[21] bombast. But we are interested and pleased. Don Julian is felt to be an estimable fellow, who can shower benefits with delicacy, and veil patronage so artfully as to convince both himself and the poet Ernest (he

20 According to Jean-François Botrel, in 1900 only one third of the Spanish population could read and write. See: *Libros, prensa y lectura en la España del siglo XIX*. Madrid: Fundación Germán Sánchez Ruipérez, 1993, 12.

21 Noble, from the Spanish *hidalgo*, a member of the minor aristocracy.

of the famous dialogue) that he is but accomplishing a duty, and that the son of his dead friend has full claim upon him. If Teodora is not an original or striking personality, she is exceedingly natural. There is not one false note about her. She is in love with her elderly husband after the fashion of childish young wives – affection composed of one part fondness, and three parts admiration and respect, but of passion not a particle. She is impulsive, enthusiastic, sits dreaming of Ernest's greatness, his stupidity in all practical matters, his future marriage, and the delightful time she and her husband will have looking after the young pair. Ernest himself is a more pensive, high-phrased type of poet than Don Juan's brilliant son, "a handsome fellow, with a soul on fire and given to romanticism". That his talk is anything but *fin de siècle* will be gathered from his first announcement that he is bent upon throwing off the benevolent oppression of Don Julian's kindness, and subsisting by his own work.

> True, I know little of life, and am not well fitted to make my way through it. But I divine it, and tremble, I know not why. Shall I founder upon the world's pool as on the high sea? I may not deny that it terrifies me more than the deep ocean. The sea only reaches the limit set by the loose sand; over all space travel the emanations of the pool. A strong man's arms can struggle with the waves of the sea; but no one can struggle against subtle miasma. But if I fall, I must not feel it humiliation to be conquered. I only wish, I only ask at the last moment to see the approach of the sea that will carry me whither it will, the sword that will pierce me, or the rock that will crush me. To feel my adversary's strength, and despise it falling, despise it dying! and not tamely breathe the venom scattered through the ambient air.

To this plumed and mediaeval sentence, the sensible Don Julian remarks to his wife: "Didn't I tell you he was going out of his mind?" and then to the youth: "What has all this to do with the matter?"

As food for the travailing spirit of independence, he proposes to Ernest the work of secretary in his house, and to this Ernest joyfully accedes. The good-natured banker goes away, leaving the poet to do a little raving for the benefit of Teodora. It is dusk, and the young people forget to call lights – their solitude, innocent of design or thought, is invaded by Julian's brother and sister-in-law, Don Severo and Doña Mercedes. Not only are they a suspected pair from that moment, but the undried tears of gratitude in Ernest's eyes are accepted as such evident symptoms of frailty that, after some sarcastic and probing dialogue, whose sense is quite unapprehended by the convicted culprits, Don Severo marches off to the good work of arousing his brother's suspicions. Don Severo is no Iago, though bent upon Iago's work. He is a well-meaning honest relative, who, like many another, objects to his brother's exercise of good-nature

towards others. His suspicions receive a natural prick from his dislike to [*sic*] Ernest, and his wish to see him cast forth from a hospitable roof. Hard-natured he is, but not evilly intentioned. His wife is a very typical woman: impulsive stirs of kindness disturb her mundane hard sense, and she stops every now and then in the exercise of the knife to bemoan the youthfulness and innocence of her victim. "Poor child", she murmurs over the terrified Teodora, and honestly seeks to exonerate her at the expense of the other victim – the man, the interloper. As the double authors, Echegaray and Ernest, announce in the prologue, nobody acts with guile or conscious evil. Neither Mercedes nor Don Severo starts with the deliberate purpose of injuring Ernest or Teodora. They have an honest conviction that Ernest repays his protector's favours by making love to his young wife, and, although Julian turns furiously upon his brother, and threatens to cast out of his house the first who shall again stain his wife's cheeks with tears, yet when Ernest comes in, and in surprise asks why Teodora had been crying, the irritated husband exclaims, "Don't busy yourself about my wife". Light has been let in upon the darkness for the poor poet, who makes up his mind to leave at once. This offer awakens the old kindness and confidence in Julian, and during the rest of the act, he is torn between the sting of jealous instinct and friendship. One minute he almost throws Ernest into his wife's arms, and whether they talk or are silent, look away or at each other, every gesture, glance, and word is submitted to cruel and searching analysis.

SEVERO You see you are becoming reasonable.
JULIAN I have caught your madness. Ah, how sure a thing is calumny! It pierces direct to the heart!

These varying moods of Don Julian are worked with great skill to the inevitable climax. After Ernest leaves his house with the intention to sail for Buenos Aires, Julian fluctuates between every shade of confidence, remorse, and resentment:

> Coward, mean and jealous, I let that poor fellow go … in my heart I wished what my lips denied; 'Come back Ernest', aloud; and to myself, 'Do not come back' … No, Severo, this is not to act like an honest man … Is by chance impure love, in this world of clay, the sole supreme bond between man and woman? … My wife now sees me always sad, always distant … A shadow lies between us, ever deepening, and slowly, step by step, we move more apart … I wounded in my love, and she, by my hand, wounded in her woman's dignity and affection! … Who will say that, I losing little by little, and he gaining as steadily, the lie of to-day will not to-morrow be truth? I jealous, sombre, unjust, and hard, and he noble and generous, resigned and always sweet-natured, with that

> halo of martyrdom which, in the eyes of women, sits so becomingly on the brow of a brave and handsome youth.

And further on:

> Do you want me to show myself so miserably ungrateful and jealous before Teodora? Don't you know that a woman may despise a lover and love him still, but not so a husband? Contempt in his dishonour … And should I see on her cheek the trace of a tear, the mere thought that it might be for Ernest would drive me to strangle her in my arms.

As gradually as a man of good nature so comfortable and unfathomable as Don Julian's may be undermined by unworthy suspicion, and transformed to a hard, unjust tyrant, so Echegaray shows us two clear-eyed and friendly young people unconsciously driven by the world that has already judged them when they still walked as far away from perilous sentiment as brother and sister, to the edge that threatens reason. Hearing disrespectful mention of Teodora's name from the lips of a viscount, Ernest must needs challenge him, and to prevent this duel, Teodora comes secretly to his rooms. She is too proud to accept Ernest's championship and protests that if any one must defend her name, it should be her husband:

> ERNEST Nobody loses by my death, and I lose still less.
> TEODORA For God's sake do not say that.
> ERNEST But what do I leave in this world? What friendship? What strong love? Is there a woman who will follow my corpse shedding a lover's tears?
> TEODORA All last night I prayed for you … and you say that nobody … I could not bear you to die! (*vehemently*).
> ERNEST Ah, we pray for anybody; we only weep for one (*with passion*).
> TEODORA Ernest!
> ERNEST (*terrified by his own words*) What?
> TEODORA (*moving further off*) Nothing!
> ERNEST (*also moving away, and lowering his eyes timidly*) I told you a little while ago I was half mad. Take no heed of me.

This rash visit of Teodora brings about the first half of the climax. Don Julian, hearing of the projected duel, hurries off and fights the viscount on the spot. Wounded, on his way home he stops to leave a message with Ernest. The servant's announcement that Ernest is engaged with a lady whets the wounded man's suspicions anew, and with[in] seconds he insists on going upstairs. This scene appears to me both clumsy and unnatural. Why was it necessary to bring Don Julian here *wounded*, when he ought to be on his way home to bed? But since he has come, surely it would have

been more dramatic and more in keeping with the dignity and innocence of the two victims to have surprised them together in the outer room, instead of hiding Teodora away, and then, in order to produce the great effect, make Don Julian faint, so that Don Severo shall exclaim: "Let us carry him inside, and put him on your bed."

It is very well for Ernest afterwards, in his interview with Pepito, Don Severo's son, to give the true facts, but we have to admit that there is a good deal of sound sense in Pepito's reply:

> The explanation is easy and simple; the difficult thing, Ernest, is to get us to believe it, for there is another still more easy and simple.
> ERNEST Which dishonours more – and that's the best of it.
> PEPITO Well, at least admit that Teodora was light if not really bad.
> ERNEST Guilt is prudent and cautious. On the other hand, how imprudent is innocence!

In her hour of desperate trouble – husband dying in belief of her guilt, her family turned from her – the only voice raised to anything like a note of compassion for Teodora is that of Doña Mercedes. If Echegaray followed the old lines, it is Mercedes, the only other woman in the drama, who would be Teodora's bitterest enemy. Yet contrast her tone with that of Pepito, her son, whose youth, one would imagine, ought to prompt him to some sympathy with a beautiful young woman in grief:

> PEPITO And Teodora?
> MERCEDES She stays upstairs. She wanted to come down – and cried! – like a Magdalen.
> PEPITO Already! Repentant or erring?
> MERCEDES Don't speak so. Unhappy girl, she is but a child.
> PEPITO Who, innocent and candid, sweet, pure and meek, kills Don Julian. So that, if I am to accept your word and regard her as a child, and such is her work on the edge of infancy, we may pray God in His mercy to guard us from her when she shall have put on years.
> MERCEDES She is hardly to be blamed. The infamy lies with your fine friend, he of the dramas, the poet and dreamer. He it is who is the culprit.

And later, when she alone is convinced of Teodora's innocence, she cries to her in unmistakable sincerity:

> "Pardon me – now I fully believe you!"
> "And before – no?"
> "Hush!"

In the scene between her and Ernest (who enters after he has killed the viscount) is the same fine struggle between social inexorableness and womanly kindness. It is only when Ernest casts himself into a seat sobbing, and Pepito remarks: "These nervous creatures are terrible. They kill and sob in the same breath", that her rigidity relaxes. She does not conceal that he has more to fear from her husband's severity than from hers, and begs him to retire that Don Severo may not see him. The dialogue that follows between her and Teodora is skilfully handled, and shows the character of both women in admirable relief. True, a French dramatist would have enlivened it by a little satire, but Echegaray is faithful in portraiture, for there are no women less capable of satire than Spanish women. Anger in them is a vehement explosion of temper; sorrow a gust of tears. Mercedes interrogates and probes very cleverly; but her victim could not be more candid or more submissive.

TEODORA The world can think such things. I hear such strange stories, I see such sad events happen, and calumny has so embittered me, that I find myself wondering if what the world says can be true.

There is not much honour in pinning this poor wretch, and taking the measure of her bleeding heart. Of this the elder woman is so soon convinced that she embraces her, and makes way for Ernest outside, and imploring to see Teodora. This scene is not so strong and dramatic as it might be. Teodora is too indignant and aloof, Ernest is hardly equal to the occasion. Once only does he reach a true note.

TEODORA Quickly, for mercy's sake. Julian suffers.
ERNEST I know it.
TEODORA Then we should not forget it.
ERNEST No, but I also suffer.
TEODORA You, Ernest? Why?
ERNEST Through your disdain.
TEODORA I feel none.
ERNEST You have said so … he suffers as those on earth suffer. I as those in hell.

The false note here is Teodora's question, Why? Of all people, she ought to be the last to doubt her fellow-victim's suffering. And her "You, Ernest! Why?" is trivial and irritating. Indeed, it is in this scene that Teodora is less sympathetic and natural. We are not moved by her high protesting innocence. We prefer her earlier in the dignified reticence and confession of her pathetic "nothing" in reply to his perilous "what". She would be none the less a victim for a little tenderness in this scene, and it would heighten the dramatic effect of Don Severo's discovery of them. An actress might, of course, interpret this apparent insensibility of Teodora as the result of mental

and moral stupor from excess of emotion, and this would be a fine evasion of the author's meaning, which is to prepare us for the surprises of the climax.

This has been already foreshadowed in the second act, in the dialogue between Pepito and Ernest, where the former finds the open Dante on the poet's desk. "Galeoto was the book they were reading, and they read no more … Galeoto was the medium between the Queen and Lancelot, and in all loves the *third* may be truthfully nicknamed *Galeoto* … Sometimes it is the entire social mass that is *Galeoto*". Here we understand that it is the world, her husband, everybody, who work with one seeming will to drive Teodora into Ernest's arms. Don Julian, dying, musters strength to call Teodora, and holding her in a tyrannical embrace, glares vengefully across at the unfortunate young man, who has never meditated anything less respectful than the Don's salutation upon a lady's hand. "I loved her. Silence and approach (ERNEST *approaches*). You see I am still her owner".

ERNEST She is innocent.
DON JULIAN No, since I do not believe it … No oaths, or deceitful words, or protests.
ERNEST Then what?
DON JULIAN Deeds.
ERNEST What does he wish, Teodora? What does he ask of us?
TEODORA I don't know. What are we to do, Ernest?

The dying man solves their doubts by grasping Ernest and forcing him upon his knees in front of Teodora.

DON JULIAN You love each other. I have seen it clearly. Your life, Ernest.
ERNEST Yes.
DON JULIAN Your blood.
ERNEST All.
TEODORA Julian!
DON JULIAN See, you defend him; you defend him.
TEODORA Not for his sake.
SEVERO For Heaven's sake.
DON JULIAN Silence (*to* ERNEST) bad friend! bad son!
ERNEST My father!
JULIAN Disloyal – traitor!

With a supreme effort of fever he strikes him on the cheek, and when he is being carried off the stage, looks back from the doors, and cries bitterly to his brother: "She is weeping for him, and does not follow me. Not even a look! She does not see that I am dying, yes, dying." And then again, after a pause, "Dishonour for dishonour! Farewell, Ernest". Left alone, Teodora and Ernest speak to themselves rather than to each other.

ERNEST What is the use of loyalty?
TEODORA And what is the use of innocence?
ERNEST My conscience begins to darken.
TEODORA Pity, my God, pity!
ERNEST Pitiless fate!

Remembering her, he adds, "Poor child!" They are interrupted by the return of Severo and Mercedes with the news of Don Julian's death. Severo turns to his son, and orders him to cast Teodora instantly out of the house. Even the unsympathetic Pepito protests against such a brutal sentence; and Ernest flings himself in front of her, and whilst averring her innocence, lets it be seen that the tigerish instinct is awakened in him. "Her lips are silent, but I will speak". And then when Don Severo advances to thrust him aside, he bursts out: "Let nobody approach this woman. She is mine. The world has so desired it, and its decision I accept. It has driven her to my arms. Come, Teodora. You cast her forth from here. We obey you."

SEVERO At last, you blackguard!
ERNEST Yes. Now you are right. I will confess now. Do you want passion? Then passion and delirium. Do you want love? Then boundless love. Do you want more? Then more and more. Nothing daunts me. Yours the invention: I shelter it. So you may tell the tale. It echoes through all this heroic town. But should any one ask you who was the infamous intermediary in this infamy, you will reply, "Ourselves, without being aware of it; and with us the stupid chatter of the idle". Come, Teodora; my mother's spirit kisses your pure brow. Adieu, all. She belongs to me, and let Heaven choose its day to judge between you and me.

I have written at such length of the least and most popular of Echegaray's plays that I have left myself no space to touch upon the others. But in these two dramas – *Don Juan's Son* and *The Great Galeoto* – enough will be understood of the passion of gravity with which the Spanish dramatist enters into the obscurer and less picturesque tragedies of life. Love with him is not the sentimental sighing of maids and boys, as he again shows in *Lo Sublime en lo Vulgar* [The Sublime in the Everyday], but the great perplexed question of married infelicity and misunderstanding. Don Julian dies broken-hearted and wilfully deceived, and his deception it is that forges the tempered happiness of his rival. In *Lo Sublime en lo Vulgar* we have two diverse husbands: Richard, an airy social success, full of elegant phrases, befittingly tailored, and of manners the best – the sort of man destined to float to the surface in all circumstances, and minuet with grace round the ugliest corner. Bernard, whom he betrays and laughs at, is the commonplace, scarce presentable husband, married by [*sic*] a refined and poetical creature for his money, and blushed for by her at every moment while she

is solacing herself with the elegant improprieties of her friend's husband, Richard. Here we have another picture of marital jealousy, justifiable in this case, and perhaps for that reason more merciful. Instead of turning from his faithless wife, the insignificant and vulgar Bernard wins her to him and to atonement by an unpretentious magnanimity, and the play ends hopefully with Richard's cry to his wife: "Louisa, pardon! – and forget!" And Bernard, turning to Inez, his wife, explains his generosity in sonorous verse: "Honour goes from the soul into the depth, and in the world I put no trust. Since my honour is my own, I understand it infinitely better than the world".

Not even Tolstoy, with all that delicacy and keenness of the Russian conscience, that profound seriousness which move us so variously in his great books, has a nobler consciousness of the dignity of suffering and virtue than this Spanish dramatist. And not less capable is he of a jesting survey of life. Echegaray writes in no fever of passion, and wastes no talent on the niceties of art. The morality and discontent that float from the meditative North, have reached him in his home of sunshine and easy emotions, and his work is pervaded nobly by its spirit. And unlike Ibsen, he illuminates thought with sane and connected action. Discontent never leads him to the verge of extravagance. Extravagance he conceives to be a part of youth, addicted to bombast and wild works. Man trades in other material than romantic language and rhodomontade. Hence he brings emphasis and plain speech to bear upon him when youth has had its fill through the long-winded, high-coloured phrases of his scribbling heroes. Thought, perhaps, travels too persistently along the shadowed paths, and we would be thankful to find our world reflected through his strong glass, dappled with a little of the uncertain but lovely sunshine that plays not the least part in the April weather of our life here.

The note of unwavering sadness depresses. But, at least, it is not ignoble, and he conceives it borne with so much resignation and dignity that if the picture carries with it the colours of frailty, it brings a counterbalancing conception of the inherent greatness of man.

3 "Upon Dancing" (1893)

It is, perhaps, paradoxical to state that the English, generally so much stiffer and less graceful in the movements of the body than either the Spanish or the French, are, in the movements of the dance, whether on the stage or in the ballroom, notably more graceful and rhythmic than either. The superiority of the Spaniards in the single dances lies in the vivacity of their emotions and in a certain fierce dramatic expressiveness. Study, for instance, dancing in a modern drawing-room in Spain, and what will chiefly strike you is the enormous difference the races introduce into the quadrilles and the waltz. They manage by the difference of their personality to make the quadrille pretty and attractive, and by the lack of rhythmic movement to transform the graceful waltz into a vulgar gallop. The very name of the quadrille – *rigodón* – in their soft lisp, takes to itself a delightful barbarous charm, and ceases by ear and sight to be so hideous and inexpressive a thing of civilisation. Their alterations give to each figure a racial as well as a personal colour. They do not walk through them. They carry themselves in an eternal bow and curtsey through the whole quadrille, introducing an incredible amount of chains, which afford the ladies, with their trains and fans, occasion to reproduce the pretty formality of the old gavotte, and the dons opportunity to show how inimitably they salute, and how natural to them is the attitude of homage. But here ceases their supremacy in the ballroom. They can offer their hand and bow as no other race can, but they have not the modern art of dancing. A stiff English man and woman stand out in the waltz among these dark-eyed, smiling, jiggling couples as exponents of the poetry of movement. While the poor Spaniards hop most woefully through the intoxicating measure, the blue-eyed foreigners from overseas whirl past them in perfect and measured accord with the music, though in the matter of expression their faces are grotesquely dull, as joyless and dull as automata; their well-trained bodies indicating no pleasure but a sense of duty.

It is that the Spaniards are essentially dramatic. They dance best when they have personal emotions to express by this means – when movement is subordinated to expression. Hence the singular and magnificent beauty of their national dances. Give a woman a shawl and a few bars of that odd, half-whimpering, hysterical music which Sarasate[22] interprets with a masterly elevation of its inexplicable penetrating charm, you will instantly see revealed a whole story of the war of the sexes – provocation, flight, contempt, prayer, fury, and reconciliation. Her face, her feet, every line

22 Virtuoso violinist Pablo de Sarasate (1844-1908) received his musical education in Spain and the Paris *Conservatoire*. His concert tours took him across Europe and the Americas, where he became a celebrity. Several contemporary composers, including Lalo, Saint-Saëns and Wieniawski, composed for him.

of her eloquent body will work in harmony, and the spectators must be made of stone if they can watch her unmoved. It is a crude and animal art, I admit, like the crude and animal music that inspires it; but it is an art, and excellently well developed. Put the same woman in a modern ballroom, with all her delightful eloquence of eyes and lips and body, and she is at once reduced to a pitiable figure. The music of civilisation has no language for her, and she cannot resolve to it with grace.

Here it is that the more plastic Englishwoman shows herself the superior of her French as well as of her Spanish sisters. She is graceful for precisely the same reason that the Spanish is rendered awkward. She has nothing to express, and all that art requires of her is the perfect balancing of her body and to swing correctly to the music. These requirements can be met with an entire lack of imagination, and her features are not called upon to express the faintest semblance of emotion. For the same reason an Englishman waltzes well. Where the personal ceases and the plastic comes into full play both may be relied upon to reach perfection. Not long ago I went to see a dancing class at a West End[23] academy. The art exhibited here I cannot say was the perfection of plastic achievement. The pupils, male and female, looked out of their element, and one and all seemed to develop a most unreasonable passion for the barn dance[24] – I suppose because it afforded a play to the natural rowdiness of their temper. I judged them to be weak in their aspirates and totally unacquainted with the niceties of the ballroom. Their dulness, too, was exhibited on a gigantic scale, and one wondered what advantages they obtained in return for their money. In Spain men and women of the same class would not only have worn an easier air, but they would have looked more individual, more varied; the women would have had the inevitable and unconscious aspect of allurement, and the men would have drooped at once in homage and captivation. But of this expressionless, awkward, and unindividual crowd a figure showed which could nowhere have been met out of England. A rather pretty girl with a quantity of fuzzy fair hair and the slenderest of supple figures in grey muslin. Seated she was as ordinary as the rest, and her features in repose hardly claimed the eye. But when she danced she was bewitching. You saw she was one who had her natural place before the footlights. It was skirt-dancing, of course, just the mere expression of grace, but a very lovely enchantment. That Englishwomen never enchain by a personal atmosphere (at least so an exquisite French writer has complained to me) seems vividly explained in this excellence. They carry no delicate or dramatic suggestions. Nature has abundantly supplied them with physical attractions, a high, imposing, unspiritual beauty; but she

23 In London’s entertainment district.

24 A traditional or folk dance.

forgot or omitted such elements as magnetism or sorcery. Here and there the existence of the British sorceress only proves the rule by force of exception: she is something so essentially exotic, strange, un-English. Could it be possible for the national optimist to dream of an English Carmen dissociated from intolerable vulgarity and offensiveness? Well, I have seen at Cadiz a Carmen in the flesh – a rollicking, smoking, dangerous Carmen off the stage, who was neither vulgar nor offensive. Her walk was certainly a swagger, but it was noble and picturesque in its way. She did not wear a dagger in her garter, according to the legend, but she looked quite capable of stabbing a rival or a troublesome lover. She was, however, aboundingly good-natured, and not even her swagger or strident voice could destroy her magnetic and penetrative charms. I believe no master living could have taught her to be other than grotesque in the waltz, but untaught she was insolently grand with her long-fringed shawl, stamping and whirling and twisting her body backwards and sideways after the vivid *chula*[25] fashion.

I do not think I have ever seen a French person on the stage or in the ballroom dance well. The ballets of the Follies Bergère and the Gaité that I have seen have always been frankly ugly and ungraceful, and the *première danseuse* in no case could compare with her English rival. To begin with, she had not the plastic beauty, and *chic* seemed to be her aim, and not the development of movement and step. It is not, as in the Spaniard's case, because she reveals a nature so aboundingly dramatic and a personality so violently marked that she cannot drop the woman in the dancer. She runs to the other excess, and is the reverse of crude and barbaric. The very elusiveness of her nature, and the intelligent quality of her magnetism, which elsewhere renders her supreme among women, acts here as a deterrent influence. She is not so lovely nor so placidly stupid as the English ballet girl, nor would she be content to be so purely spectacular. I have seen nothing in Paris in the shape of ballet dancing to approach the beauty of Miss Letty Lind's dancing in "Morocco Bound", where it would be difficult to say if harmony were completer in movement or in combination of colour and flow in costume.[26] The dramatic violence, the insolent voluptuousness, the expressive individuality of the *chula* are replaced by an exquisite art, in which the face, the personal emotions, play no part. You are not minded to look at the English dancer's eyes, and her smiles have small meaning for us. She is something quite outside herself. There is no

25 After the manner of a challenging or defiant woman. Lynch may have had in mind the dress and attitude adopted by some Madrid inhabitants.

26 Letitia Elizabeth Rudge (1861-1923), known as Letty Lind, became popular in the late Victorian period. Her early theatrical appearances in children's roles were followed by performances in burlesque, pantomime, farce, skirt dances, as well as in other popular forms of entertainment. Her role as Maude in "Morocco Bound" in 1893 launched her into a successful career in musical comedy.

warmth, no invincible note of sex in her performances, and for this reason, perhaps, it seems to reach an unapproachable perfection. The secret of her expression is rhythm, not emotion. The dancing master of the academy referred to, who took himself and his profession with all the gravity of a Minister of State, held optimistic views of the future of England through the superiority of its women's dancing. The men, he complained, were hopeless – too lazy to take the trouble to master the mysteries of the art. Some of his female pupils had acquired the almost forgotten movements of the minuet or gavotte, and danced them with what he conceived the reminiscent air of Versailles. But alas! – they had no male assistance. The men hobbled or dawdled awkwardly, without any religious feeling for the importance of step and the nobility of deportment. With the help of Englishwomen in their present high state of development, he regarded it as a possible achievement to revive the lost splendour of the French Court, the vanished perfumes of the red-heeled century. But then, he added, sighing, "all our efforts will never teach Englishmen to bow or bend their bodies from the waist as foreigners do by instinct, and how, pray, can a poker minuet?" This, I would remark, is an excess of optimism and patriotism. The Englishwoman is scarcely witch enough, coquettish, or delicately personal, to win applause in such dainty dances as the gavotte and minuet. What she can do she does admirably, but you must be content to dispense her from anything like individual or dramatic revelation. "She lacks atmosphere", as my French friend said. And what more heady, more atmospheric than the gavotte and the minuet? Both are a sort of drawing-room drama, of the captivation of the Grand Monarque's Court[27] – the complete revelation of a personality made up of the intelligent use of other material as well as steps and music, perfumed mimic qualities pertaining to powdered hair, wide-hooped skirts and embroidered coats, with sword knots, ribbons, fans, and snuff-boxes. This is remote enough from the crude expressive dancing of Spain, where shawls, castanets, and tambourines abound, and eyes, and hips, and arms figure more prominently than legs or steps. One is the genius of the people of the passionate South; the other is the art of an old Court, but by the same law both are highly dramatic and national.

27 Louis XIV of France, known as Le Roi Soleil [the Sun King] or Louis le Grand [Louis the Great] was also known as Le Grand Monarque [the Grand Monarch].

4 "The Señora of To-Day" (1894)

"The Catalan is the worst bred man in Christendom", I have heard a Spanish nobleman assert. A soft-mannered and high-bred Spaniard may be permitted to make so comprehensive a statement if he has not travelled in other lands to discover how universal, how cosmopolitan, is "the worst bred man in Christendom". We decide to-day in a fit of anger that it is the Englishman, and to-morrow a ruffian Frenchman, perhaps some bragging and offensive representative of the illustrious Gaudissart,[28] convinces us of the native supremacy of the sons of Gaul. Or just as we have given the apple to a bearded German, a gentleman of Castille staggers our judgment. What we may accept is the superlative harshness of the Catalan tongue. Here the eye is affronted by the ugliest combination of consonants and vowels which, through the medium of the ear, degenerate into rough growls and grunts. The lisped Castilian *d* is transformed into a hard *t*, as *ciutat* for the soft, musical *ciudad*. The noble *señor* becomes a degraded *senyor*, there being in Catalonian no such letter as the Castilian ñ. Don Quixote himself could never have pleased us in this barbarous patois. The least fastidious would reject acquaintance with the immortal don in such a tangle of *ch*'s and *x*'s and terminating *y*'s oddly contracted into a bastard kind of ñ.

But we are less certain of our right to classify the Catalan as even the worst-bred man in Spain. Each province has its own opinion. Some award the distinction to the Aragonese. This is generally the neighbouring province, not elsewhere regarded as impeccable in the matter of manners. Others decide in favour of the Majorcans, who speak a sister-dialect of Catalonia, like the Valencians, which has gone through the softening influence of Moorish vocables.[29] The ill-bred Majorcans complain of a lack of breeding in the Galicians, who, while Majorca contributes the best cooks to the Peninsula, when they can be lured over the water from their picturesque rock, are content to furnish the best servants. The quaint Basque people, on their side, speak slightingly of the people of the flowery land of Andalucia, which they describe as the bullfighter's province, and are pleased to regard those of the population who are not gentlemen of the arena as common knaves and rascals and impudent *chulas* [*sic*].

There is apparent agreement only on one point: that the home of courtesy is in Castille. The high manner of Castille and the walk of the fasci-

28 "L'illustre Gaudissart" [The Illustrious Gaudissart] is a short story by Honoré de Balzac, written in 1833. It focuses on a rather too self-assured travelling salesman, one Félix de Gaudissart, who hails from Paris. The city gent will find himself outwitted by locals in the village of Vouvray, near Tours.

29 Here Lynch registers Catalan as a dialect. *Mallorquí* [Mallorcan] and *valencià* [Valencian] are dialects of the Catalan language.

nating Andalucians – what heretic so bold as to reject either tradition? Oddly enough, you find both. But you must penetrate beyond or below Malaga if you would see the flower of feminine Andalucia. The good natives of Malaga are common, inelegant, rough even, beside those of Cadiz or Sevilla. And if you would clothe the don in his forfeited garb of *capa* and *sombrero*, revest him in the high dramatic air of Almaviva,[30] you must waste no time dreaming or searching for him in modernised Madrid, with its glare and dust of club, of jockeys, grooms, and smart social echoes of the denser capitals of Europe. Penetrate into the heart of old Castille. Linger about the ancient capital, and call it Ballijadolitti [*sic*],[31] most liquid and lisping of musical names; or sit and wait upon inspiration in that centre of learning, Salamanca.[32]

But even here, when you come to know something of the life, and have pierced beneath the romantic haze of salutation, ready smile, and lofty speech, you will soon discover how unenviable is the lot of the Spanish woman; within what mean and intolerable limits of action, thought, and education she is confined by tradition. Of this we have been hearing ever, but hearing is hardly understanding, and we have imagined her a happy animal. That is an immense mistake. She is furthest from being happy of any woman I know of, and I have listened to her confidences, married and maiden. We dream of her as breathing the atmosphere of flowers, lulled to content by the hysterical glamour of the guitar or the fantastic click of the castanet. True, here and there in Andalucia the rose still shows above her ear and sometimes between her lips as part of the graceful legend. But who now thrums the guitar beneath her lattice? Not even the shades of Almaviva, Don Juan, or any other forgotten heroes of lattice and lute. The guitar as part of the colour and glory of her existence has passed away along with her lover's sword and the cloak twisted with picturesque dexterity round one arm.

We turn over the leaves of the land's crude history, and the wonder grows that its chivalry should have reached us as an imperishable legend. Even long after Cervantes' days, Spanish ladies of exalted rank had not the right to sit at table with their husbands. They sat in a corner on the floor and their food was spread upon a carpet, while in the middle of the room their males sat comfortably round a table. In a general way, the woman

30 Count Almaviva appears in two plays by Beaumarchais (1732-99): *Le Barbier de Séville* (1775) and *Le Mariage de Figaro* (1784). Mozart's *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786) draws on the latter text.

31 A corruption of Valladolid. Ferdinand and Isabella had secured the city as the capital of Castile. Charles I would identify it as one of the imperial capitals but its importance was forfeited when Philip II moved the court to Madrid in 1561. Valladolid would only regain capital status between 1601-06.

32 The University of Salamanca is Spain's oldest university, founded by King Alfonso IX in 1218.

may be said to be sitting on the floor in a corner ever since. If she has now her seat at her husband's table, her position is still far enough from that of equal and brother, for in the middle class houses she is served after him. The upper class, of course, adopts the general laws of civilisation, and exaggerates or modifies them according to racial instinct.

In the old days the *hidalgo*'s sense of chivalry seems to have expended itself in public, and during the fleeting period of courtship. He might cast flowers and verses at his lady's feet with appropriate ardour; he might bend the knee of willing homage, thrum a graceful *seguidilla*[33] or a heart-breaking serenade, and flaunt her colours in naïve unreserved. The tradition is still preserved in that semi-mediaeval diversion that foreigners stationed in a Spanish town delight to take part in – the race for ribands on horse-back. The ladies paint or embroider those ribands, which are rolled on a line within reach of the rider's upraised whip, with loops or rings through which, at a flying speed, he must insert the end of this whip, and if he succeed in carrying off a riband he proudly ties it round his arm, and goes adorned with the lady's trophy in triumph. The lover, of course, is ready to die in the attempt to secure the right badge, and the way the town then claps shows how candidly it has been taken into his confidence. Such was, and still is, the picturesque side of his servitude, and he has never been slow to appreciate its opportunities for effective display. He is a strong man who does not feel ennobled in a suitable attitude of the drama. But here the chivalry of old days ended. In all things else the lady then, as now, had a sorry time of it. The sweetest guitar-player that ever languished in love could not possibly have made existence other for her than it was – a prison; and the loveliest phrases, lisped in pure Castilian, must have proved an insufficient compensation in slavery. Think how bored the mediaeval lady must have been in her castled leisure – we need not look for unusual merit in the wandering minstrels to explain the avidity with which they were welcomed. The modern lover of Spain is greatly less interesting than the minstrel of romance. He cannot even play the guitar, and his love-making is the silliest ogle. But he represents the sole distraction left the poor woman, and despite his inadequateness as a Romeo, we must not wonder at the eager appreciation he meets with.

All over Spain the life of the street and that of the house is fashioned exclusively for the convenience of men. It is merely modified Orientalism, with, I imagine, a flavour of grossness foreign to the meditative Eastern. Women's tastes and exactions and varied daintinesses of mind and body are of no account. It is conjectural if the want be understood. The upper classes, as I have said, closely imitate the French and the English. You have the Anglomaniac and the Gallomaniac, both in open hostility. The one

33 "A Spanish dance in 3/4 or 3/8 time; also the music for such a dance" (OED).

patronises the shops of London, drinks brandy and soda and "pell-ell", or "black portere",[34] says "how do you do?" and has such fluent and original phrases at the service of his friends as "Time is money", "To be or not to be", and possesses a smart trap, an English horse, and an English groom. He is a very correct and finished gentleman. The other is a more subtle order of being. He is all shades and manoeuvring, with an artistic blending of haughtiness and allurement. His head is the head of a Frenchman, with the additional element of the picturesque. He follows the fashions of France, and might be the youthful or aged hero of any of M. Octave Feuillet's perfumed pages.[35] In both camps the same noticeable importation of foreign habits and foreign apparel, and to neither may we any longer look in our search for national characteristics.

Turn to the woman of the middle and lower classes. You will find her so surprisingly accommodating, subscribing so complacently to the order that extinguishes for her any rudimentary aspiration towards modern civilisation, that it would seem she lacks all acquaintance with a certain familiar side of feminine instinct. She feels no impulse to turn away her head in a thrill of repulsion when the men around her expectorate at table, and not inevitably between the courses. On the contrary, she accepts expectoration as so constant a necessity with the male that she indulgently provides spittoons for him at the dinner table, in her drawing-room, in the halls and corridors and in the bedroom. It is a subject of speculation whether or no[t] a Spaniard manages to dispense with spitting in his sleep, since to this performance every waking hour seems to be devoted so sedulously. When his womenfolk neglect to furnish spittoons, he will cheerfully sacrifice the best carpet and make it a disgusting trouble to tread one's way through a room he has occupied.

I remember once travelling from Alcázar[36] to Valencia in a first class compartment with three Spaniards – one a high military official, a colonel, I believe. I have not in the course of varied travels met three worse-mannered men. Two of them, to the uninterrupted music of throat-scraping, spat so continuously on the strip of bright new carpet at our feet that it would be difficult to say if the acuter suffering lay in sight or sound, and I was obliged to make a paper covering for the degraded carpet in order to beat a retreat. The absurd notion that such a habit might be a severe trial for a lady would never act as a deterrent influence in its pursuance in Spain.

34 Lynch's attempt to render the pronunciation of "pale ale" and "black porter" by a representative of the Spanish ruling class.

35 The novelist and playwright Octave Feuillet (1821-90) was known for *Le roman d'un jeune homme pauvre* [The Novel of a Poor Young Man] (1858). He became a member of the French Academy in 1863.

36 Alcázar de San Juan, a town in the province of Ciudad Real.

The world, you see, was made for men – railway carriages, carpets, and women included. And if a lady chooses to be out along the highways, that is her affair, and she is expected to bear the consequences in heroic silence.

The don accomplishes his duty when he has elaborately bowed and described himself at every feminine foot. Let us do him the justice of admitting that he bows with consummate grace, and he is perfectly willing to fling his cloak (when he wears one) down on the pavement of street or *plaza* for a pretty pair of feet to walk upon. He pays woman in lavish coin of admiration; adjures her frantically as "estrella de mi vida" (star of my life), "luz de mi corazón" (light of my heart), etc. Meanwhile he permits her to live on in prodigious discomfort, and in the shackles of barbaric servitude.

I would not have it thought that the good-natured *señoras* endure a stinging sense of injury or discomfort, or that they are consciously resigned to a life of torture, picking their way, with skirts tucked up, as carefully along the passages of their houses as along the frequented Spanish streets, and dodging nausea at every turn. In the South and in the Colonies they themselves freely indulge in this national pastime. Here you may watch them lean for hours over the indispensable balcony in placid contemplation of street life, and vigorously spitting between times. For this reason it is a wise precaution to choose the middle of the thoroughfare. I am still held in horror by the vivid remembrance of a picture once seen in Santa Cruz of Tenerife. A portly old gentleman, wearing a low felt hat, and walking on the shadowed side of the narrow street in serene enjoyment of the air and noise. Above, poised over the wooden balcony, one of the marriageable young ladies of the town, in a white dress, dark-eyed, smiling, musically named Estrella (pronounce Estraillia). I wonder still if it were wickedness or thoughtless impulse that led her to spit down the very moment the portly old gentleman passed beneath her balcony. Anyhow he received the discharge full upon the crown of his hat, and walked on, unconscious of the outrage.

Perhaps the ladies have adopted the vice as an engine of private revenge. Their lives, despite the smiles and bows and liquid syllables, are miserable enough to justify it.

5 "Along the Spanish Highways" (1894)

We, the uninitiated, are apt to picture the Don in sombre majesty kissing hands eternally. Courteous abroad, in his own house he describes himself as "king and lord", and rules supreme, above all should he happen to be of Cataluña. Here we fall upon the rougher, more barbarous character. The Catalan is like the Spanish side of the Pyrenees – rude and uncultivated. Contrast Panticosa with Cauterets,[37] and you have all the difference between the Frenchman and the Catalan. Dreary, uninteresting, and not consciously noble, like the *hidalgo* of Castille, the race is industrious and enterprising. If it is not a sympathetic race, it is perhaps part of its heritage as the former that the graces of life should play so comparatively small a part in its midst. The Catalans are not without reason regarded as the roughest type of Spaniard. Indeed, the proud Castilians will shrug contemptuously and assert that they are not Spaniards. A distinct people, the only real traders of the Peninsula; capital colonists and sailors, as little the slaves of pride as they are of passion, it is not astonishing that all the wealth and commercial progress of Spain should be concentrated in the northern province of Cataluña. Neither the guitar nor the *Toros*[38] flourish in this quarter, although in such large towns as Barcelona and Tarragona both are necessarily tolerated, and inspire some enthusiasm. The people dance, of course, but it is characteristic of them that Cataluña has not contributed its share to the national dances. Instead, they have their handsome, purse-proud, and rather French capital, Barcelona.

No country can offer a more magnificent specimen of a provincial town than this old one of Hamilcar Barca.[39] It is bright and new and showy, and if it has sacrificed colour and individuality to the pervading tone of France, it is what might be expected of a people wedded to French traditions by long mixture of the races. After Roman and Moorish rule we find Catalonians and the Provençals so constantly intermarrying that in their history, Carcassone, Narbonne, and Toulouse seem as inherent a part of Cataluña as Cerdaña and Gerona. And Barcelona was the powerful rival of Genoa and Venice. She had conquered Majorca and Valencia, and had won laurels in Africa and Sicily.

To-day she has less of the old medieval aspect than either of her more famous rivals. Here and there you may chance upon a Moorish memory in architecture; here and there upon a Roman arch, an old street that

37 Panticosa, in Spain, and Cauterets, in the French Hautes Pyrénées, became fashionable destinations in the 19th century for those who wished to take the waters. The latter, in particular, attracted such notable visitors as François-René de Chateaubriand, Victor Hugo, Georges Sand and Napoleon III.

38 Bullfights.

39 A soldier and statesman, father of Hannibal, reputed to be the founder of Barcino (Barcelona).

suggests the martial centuries, a noble palace eloquent of all the barbarous enchantments of the Middle Ages. The cathedral quarter is full of fascination. Thank God, it is leagues away from the world of fashion. This casts it into romantic isolation. But reserve your ecstasy of admiration in presence of a Catalonian from Tarragona. He will brag of his cathedral and his monastery of Poblet, whose exquisiteness still bears the shameful brand of French barbarity.[40] As you travel through this unhappy land, you are confronted with French infamous achievements in defaced convents or cathedrals, and the worse behaviour of the Christians in earlier days before ruined Moorish palaces and hideously Christianised mosques.

To-day, for the sake of the cathedral, it is possible to cherish charity for Barcelona, and forgive its absence of picturesque poverty, forgive its air of flaunting prosperity, its excessive display of modern wealth; the flare of electric lights, broad boulevards so offensively French, multiplicity of tram-lines, and a nauseating atmosphere of commerce more than English. Here, in the heart of mystery, in the enchanted dimness of dark stone and jewelled windows, we are face to face with the spirituality that ran like a thread of light through the old brutal times. We are no longer brutal, but we do not build such churches. Artistic tastes prevail, but the glorious secret of these stained windows has gone from us.

Turning to the race, we find that it is the Roman that has most permanently stamped the common people. True, it has apparently gone through the same modifying process as the Provençal cast. In Cataluña you are constantly reminded, among the women, of the comely type of Provence. Straight, well-balanced women, with bright, eager glances, so different from the other Spaniards of their sex; not beautiful, but alert, easy of carriage, healthy, and blitheful workers, and at times surprisingly free of the noticeable degradation of the mouth, which is characteristic of a people in decay.[41] Not so attractive as the pleasant Provençale, of a surety, but with something of her square brow and look of diminished Roman. The men are rougher and plainer, and while both sexes gesticulate and are voluble enough, they possess as little of true Provençal effervescence as they do of Castilian courtesy and charm. Good nature the women offer as apology for brains, but the middle and lower class male is frankly execrable.

40 One of the gems of Cistercian architecture in Catalonia, Poblet was founded in 1150 as a royal pantheon for the kings of the Crown of Aragon. It suffered severe damage by French troops during the Peninsular War and subsequently it was badly plundered during the First Carlist War.

41 Here Lynch is echoing 19th century theories of race as depicted in Robert Knox's *The Races of Men: A Fragment* (1850). In this connection, she must have been aware of popular English notions of the Irish. See *Inauthentic: the Anxiety over Culture and Identity* (Rutgers, NJ: Rutgers UP, 2004), where Vincent J. Cheng observes: "by the 1860s the popular image of the Irishman in both popular cartoons and in written discourse was an anthropoid ape" (4).

The very dialect he speaks and writes is so hideous to the sight and ear, that there is fear of the foreigner approaching him with prejudice. Just so suave and beautiful is the language of Castille, composed of the most musical vocables, and hardly less harmonious on the printed page than in the educated mouth. Just so harsh and barbaric is this dialect of Catalonia. It is not, I think, improbable that the sound of the speech we habitually utter may be a guiding influence upon our manners. I offer this as an explanation of the politeness of the French and the courteous Tuscans, and the dignity of the Castilians, who speak, one a graceful, the other a sweet, and the last a noble language. St. Francis of Assisi had conversed in vain with bird and beast in Catalan; and Sir Philip Sidney were less captivating if his chivalrous sentiments had been expressed in speech so barbaric.

When you get into Tarragona you have left behind you the sensible whiff of vivacity blown over the mountains from the French frontier. Here gloom prevails, and you may cheerfully face the highroad, once you have inspected, with what fortitude depression may have left you, the notable cathedral, the tower of the two Scipios, the cyclopean walls, and the monastery of Poblet, a miracle of beauty and harmony. The accentuation is stronger, the race grows drearier, there is less of Provence in dialect, and woman looks dull and soft-eyed in heavier bondage. Along the road you will have much to admire – pine woods and hills, not so beautiful as those you will find farther on when you come within range of the majestic Sierra Morena, nor so strange as the ruby hills outlying Córdova, but strange and beautiful enough. Little villages seem to peep fearfully out of sudden recesses in this world of vineyards on one side and the magic Mediterranean on the other; valleys spread like gardens between the harmonious swell of hillsides, and far up against the glow of the heaven shows a Roman ruin or a medieval tower with the sharpness of an exquisite verse in familiar prose. When you come to a town, the light seems to deaden. Enchantment fades, and you are cast upon the bosom of picturesque reality. Tortosa empty and still upon its broad and gloomy Ebro; musically named and of quite legendary sadness! The children sit in the streets and look at you with solemn dark eyes, as if they were averse to play, and the elders jabber the strong Catalan that sets the teeth on edge. Lying between Cataluña and the Kingdom of Valencia, Tortosa holds itself proudly aloof from both. “Is it Valencian or Catalonian you speak?” a native of Castille once asked of a native of Tortosa. “Neither. I speak the dialect of Tortosa.”

Valencia, the garden of Spain! Never was country more fittingly named. Not for its beauty, but for the dazzling display of flowers and fruit in a paradise of gardens and orchards, which engirdle the town in smiling wealth. These gardens wander out along the plain, and the highroad carries you through miles of gratifying sights and smells. Only at Orotava of Teneriffe have I seen flowers in such abundance and so miraculously cheap. For a *real* (2½d.) you may carry home a stack of roses, red and white, lilies,

heliotrope, and verbena. Purple grapes sell for a penny the pound, and if you choose to carry a big family basket to the market of a morning you may fill it with pears, peaches, plums, grapes, and bananas for something under two *pesetas* (1s. 8d.). Of all the delightful babels, you will find none more full of enchantments than the market-place of Valencia. The Catalan grunt is modified. The dialects are step-sisters, that of Valencia has a softness of its own, and the voice carries a sort of musical drag that has some of the charm of the southern life. The type is brighter, more seductive, more Spanish. The women behind their stalls are captivating from excess of vivacity, good-humour, and jokes. They weigh their fruit with an airy contentment, and remark confidentially that there are many English established in Valencia. When I was there the English Consul was dying, and before I left the market no less than five women had made me feel that some relative of mine was on the point of death, and all these good-natured and smiling people were filled with friendly compassion for me. "There is a candle burning for him, poor man! – before the Virgin of the cathedral", one of them said, with a reassuring glance. I, of course, had nothing more to wish for an unknown compatriot so suddenly sprung upon me as a brother, and expressed conviction that the Virgin would be sure to respond and look after him. One woman, above all, has left an ineffaceable memory. She was apple-cheeked, with clear grey eyes that danced with the pleasure of blithe blood running through her healthy veins. It would be calumny to call so cheering a creature merely pretty. She was the embodiment of practical gaiety and full-blooded youth, and was vividly lovely in her quaint Valencian head-dress; black hair plaited widely just above the neck, and run through with four pearl and emerald pins, two on either side between ear and temple, parted in the middle, and frizzed full along either side of the narrow brow. This divinity presided over bags and sacks of the delicious pistachio nut, from which the *chufa* is made.[42] For a *real*[43] she filled a big paper bag, that provided an entire day of unutterable enjoyment in chewing their acrid sweetness as I wandered along narrow streets, inspected churches, and was refreshed with the air of the Turia[44] upon the beautiful Alameda.[45] Though Valencia is not by any means a town I would choose to live in, nor to be counted as one of the romantic towns of Spain, none has ever given me such an indescribable sense of gaiety. The atmosphere sparkles almost, and the delight of

42 Lynch confuses the pistachio and the earth almond or tiger nut, from which *horchata de chufa* (a refreshing summer drink) is made.

43 A small Spanish coin, comparable to what was an English farthing.

44 A river that runs through the provinces of Teruel, Cuenca and Valencia.

45 An *alameda* is a tree-lined avenue where people stroll. In Valencia the particular stretch was, and is, known as the Alameda.

being runs as a sort of pervading current, giving an electric thrill to the stupidest moment. Everybody looks exuberantly happy, and the general smile is so contagious that you find yourself at once in beatific fraternity with the waiter who attends at table, with the shopkeeper who sells you the latest thing in fans, the tram-conductor who escorts you down to the Grao[46] – where there is sea-bathing, and music, and jolly little restaurants on the very edge of the Mediterranean – as if you, himself, and the entire universe were one gigantic and entertaining joke. On a summer evening there is a rush for the port, and not only the tram steps, but the ledges that run upon either side are packed with passengers holding on to the upper rails, or to each other, with a delightful absence of reserve. Through this dense crowd the conductor mysteriously makes his way, cracking jokes all along the line. Your neighbour is at once your bosom friend, and gleefully describes an accident on a still more crowded tram the previous Sunday. The Spaniards have a passion for trams. What delights them is to run a steam tram through a ragged narrow street, the outer rails in most dangerous conjunction with the ribbon of side-path that does not permit of two very lean persons walking abreast. When the street turns a sudden corner it is, indeed, [a] matter of serious peril. This eccentricity is more apparent in Valencia than elsewhere. Streets were never laid in a less beautiful disorder; and the old lovely promenades under the trees of the Alameda were never more ruthlessly sacrificed to this execrable taste. But along the splendid avenues between the bridges of the Turia, that used to be known as the Guadalaviar until the Valencians revived the ancient name, the walks are kept in perfect order; with unflagging care the broad paths, the beds of bright flowers, the myrtle, citron, orange, and pomegranate-trees are cultivated. For the rest, however, the note of the place is this indistinguishable gaiety and happy disorder. Perhaps it is the explanation of the Spanish proverb: "A Valencia la carne es yerba, y la yerba agua. Los hombres son mugeres, y las mugeres nada" (At Valencia meat is grass, and grass water. The men are women, and the women nothing.)

This disesteem does not prevent them from possessing a Virgin's shrine of some fame. Like all the other Virgins of Spain, this statue has a gorgeous wardrobe, and its cloaks and gowns twinkle in waves of coloured light shed by innumerable jewels. What a beautiful lesson in vanity and extravagance these shrines preach to the women of the Iberian Peninsula! It is the habit of august personages, when they pass through Valencia, to bestow a gift upon this statue. Our Lady rejoices in a collection of singular inappropriateness. King Amadeus[47] presented her

46 The port quarter in the city of Valencia, known as El Grau in Catalan.

47 Amadeus I, Duke of Aosta, reigned briefly as King of Spain, between 1870 and 1873.

with the watch he wore. It was left, however, to the late Don Alfonso[48] to reach the freshest note of originality. Surely it must have been a humorous, and not wholly respectful, fancy that prompted the king to leave his walking-stick in the curve of the Virgin's arm? "See, the late king's walking-stick!" says an unctuous sacristan. "Poor young man! He had nothing else about him to give." One wonders what was in the mind of "the poor young man", when he permitted himself to stand convicted of a practical joke before posterity. I dare say the little king will go there some day and lay his toy sword, to which he is much attached, at the feet of Our Lady. In the Philippine Isles she presides over the peace of the colony in the uniform of Captain-General.

To cross the endless plain of La Mancha is to understand Don Quixote's unquenchable thirst for adventure. Who would not go forth in pursuit of excitement if condemned to nature so barren and monotonous! It is a deserted land, empty of trees, and cattle, and horses. Nothing but flat and niggard earth begirt with everlasting blue. From time to time the eye is startled by an odd-looking feature that might be a lean donkey or the shade of Rosinante[49] fixed in monumental calm, and which closer view discovers to be a deformed and leafless tree. Moonlight itself could not cast a glamour over such a spot. Where are the rocks and caves? Where is the windmill? How did Don Quixote manage to get lost to the sight of his friends? It is doubtful if by walking the whole length of the plain, which suggests infinity without the inspiration of Paradise, it would be possible to drop under the relentless horizon. I saw it first when the sun was striving to drag it drearily out of the dewy dawn. It was like the ocean without its flying foam, without its translucent splendour, its roar and changes. The emptiness of it conveyed no sense of freedom; rather that of imprisonment. Maddening as a fixed idea, until you almost felt by instinct the fever in the blood, the imperative clamour for excitement or death that acquaintance with it must breed. Already the traveller is shut away from such meagre progress as that cunningly suggested in the "Rome Hotel" and "Café d'Espagne" of the more advanced towns. La Mancha has not risen to such polyglot height, and contents itself with the native *fonda*, a form of inn not greatly changed since the days of Cervantes. The dining-room is a long kitchen, where groups of frightful-looking men stand or sit at a distance from the table, and stare enigmatically at the foreigner, and mutter between scraping their throats and spitting, "Inglesa", "Sola". And the native Maritornes, just as hideous, untidy, and dirty as Don Quixote's

48 King Alfonso XII, who died in 1885.

49 Don Quixote's horse, Rocinante in Castilian, perhaps from Spanish *rocín*, meaning hack or nag, and *andante*, walking, though for further interpretations see Edward J. Dudley's *The Endless Text: Don Quixote and the Hermeneutics of Romance*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1997, 134.

nymph, casts food at you with a laugh that sounds lugubriously like a shout of derision and premonition of misadventure.[50] Should you incline to meditation on the great mysteries of life, you may rest your eyes on instructive pictures portraying the saints in an insipid heaven, and the devils pitchforking each other about in the midst of fascinating flames. When you ask for a bed, be thankful if you get clean bedding on a stone floor out of the region of spits. As for fleas, even in midsummer, I judge them to have migrated in a body from Spain to the Carpathians, if we are to believe Miss Dowie.[51]

The centre of Spain is as desolate as the desert. But from Manzanares southward, on one side beyond Córdova, and on the other beyond Granada, the highways travel through an enchanted land. The first taste is of awful magnificence in the jagged cross of the Sierra Morena.[52] The road winds in and out [of] this impressive range. Sometimes it is hemmed in by rough mountain sides merged in yellow and red and blue, as the light and shadow fall. Then a wooded ravine opens, and at the bottom there is a view of peaceful plain, of that sparkling southern green with yellow running through it like a wave. This forms the outer circle of a paradise of colour. Past the ruby hills, low soft swellings of rough earth as red as blood, begirt with dazzling foliage, and dotted all over with shrubs of sunlit green; water that flows like a gem of many facets, of surprising clearness, and of luxuriant coolness. It is, indeed, the luxury of the country, and in midsummer you pay a *real* for one glass of it along the vile little stations. The spirit of enterprise is so absent that none of these Andalucian stations have a fruit-stall, and, unless you go considerably off the public track, guided by a parched throat, you may offer your soul in vain in barter for a melon or a bunch of grapes. Still you wander in the seventh heaven, feasted on colour and form. You are gradually learning to adore the Moors and regard the Christians as barbarians. When you wheel round these red hills and fall upon the sunny glow of Córdova's gardens and rich-tinted plains, your heart leaps. The wind comes scented from miles of pine forests, and if you would give an appropriate voice to romance what more need you say than name the noble river at your feet – "The Guadalquivir!" Córdova and the Guadalquivir! The mere words are as good as one of Bernardo del Carpio's

50 Physically unattractive, servant maid Maritornes has been read as the female antagonist to protagonist Dulcinea, Don Quixote's ideal in Cervantes' romance.

51 Traveller and writer Ménie Muriel Dowie (1867-1945) achieved popularity early on thanks to her *A Girl in the Karpathians* (1891), the account of a solo trip on horseback in the summer of 1890.

52 A mountain range in the south of Spain.

plumed and spurred songs.[53] 'Tis a loveliness of dreamland that lies upon the spires and aisles of this forested earth – a bewitched grace revealed in the outlines of the town growing out of the sunlit haze. Here must it be good to live forgetful of the world, live in an open-eyed dream, away from the fret and misery of our modern towns; worshipping the memory of the glorious Moor, and striving to cultivate some slight charity for the devastating Christian. And I had not yet seen Granada.

After this Sevilla found me cold enough. It was a taste of atrocious weather, for one thing; and all the men seemed cast in the same mould of brutal bullfighter, for another. It is not surprising that Andalucia furnishes the *toreros*.[54] These men look as if they could kiss a woman in one breath, and kill her in another. They seem to walk through the flash of knives in an atmosphere of wine and ferocity. The waiter who uncorks you a bottle of *Manzanilla* has the air of acquainting you, in the mute flourish of his instrument that he would not be indisposed to toss off your life's blood on the smallest pretence. He takes you[r] modest offering with a frown and a steady-stare under his square heavy brows, that fatally recalls the bull-ring. You escape with your life, breathing fervent thanks to God, and then to face worse than the bullfighter's stare. Sunfire running through the air like a molten torrent; rivers of light let loose upon the streets, and the squares so inundated, that to cross them is like battling one's way through fiery waves. The eyes ache and weep, cheeks are blistered, like a peeled tomato. It is a physical torment to endure the lightest raiment, and the body craves the cool and gloom of the sepulchre. What a delicious rest then in the cool cathedral! To sit and absorb its dimness, the grateful contact with stone that the ruthless sun outside has not touched, not as a sight-seer, looking about for monumental glories, but simply as a pilgrim sheltering from the glare. The silence, the stillness, the shadowed lights breed a sense of ineffable peace, while outside the world is all abustle under the flail of the fiery heavens.

Here already the land of enchantment lies behind your way, and your face is set toward arid tracts and the monotonous vine-plains of Jerez. I used to believe sherry a wine of British manufacture until I saw this sea of vineyards less dreary than the interminable plain of La Mancha, doubtless, because of the Bacchic smiles – but ugly enough the whole country from Sevilla to Cadiz. Outside Jerez deserts of sand, with still pools of the encroaching sea-water; and ever the intolerable heat, a sense of suffocation and thirst, while wine was cheaper to drink than blessed water. Would you

53 The legendary Spanish character, protagonist of several popular Castilian ballads. Del Carpio's chivalric feats, later celebrated by Lope de Vega and others, include an alleged defeat of Charlemagne at Roncesvalles.

54 Bullfighters.

learn what a value water may have above champagne, with what a delight the eye falls upon its innocent sparkle? Go to Andalucia in midsummer, travel its dusty roads at noontide, and you will cheerfully exchange a bottle of imperial Tokay[55] for one glass of clear water.

Soon the pools widen and lengthen into slips of blue; the desert takes on something of the look of a long beach. The boom of the ocean comes drowsily over the land, and the air grows more vigorous with its salt. There is Cadiz glittering in its bridal white against the heaven's sapphire; as brilliant as the snowy point of the Pyrenees between the blues of their bases and the blue above. The Atlantic at its feet rolls away like a carpet of indigo, worked in flying foam and sparkles of gold.

Every traveller is astonished at the excessive whiteness of Cadiz. The streets might be cut out of shining marble, and are all decorated with bright green jalousies and balconies. Of such an immaculateness the pavements that you could dine off them without a tablecloth. Of a prettiness so dainty and regular that you weary of it before the first day is over; for each street is like another street, and there is no escaping the contrast of white and green. Night decorates it with some variety – everybody is abroad; streets, squares, *alamedas*, and gleaming café-fronts are all alive with the hum of humanity. You are enticed along by the smiles and lovely allurements of the maidens and matrons, with their exquisite walk, their mantillas and long-fringed shawls. You are kept amused by the vivacity and volubility of the men. Here, at least, the guitar twangs and the mantilla is still worn, sometimes even with the traditional rose; and often a dark-eyed nymph passes with her slight Andalucian swagger and its message of charming provocation, flaunting a rose between her lips. But only sometimes, alas! The fashions of Paris have encroached so far, and the ladies of Cadiz are not unacquainted with a passion for the shoddier articles of England.

55 A sweet wine produced in the small plateau of Tokaj, in northeastern Hungary and southeastern Slovakia, near the Carpathian mountains.

6 “Around Tarragona” (1895)

The contrast of life and death cannot present itself in more captivating form than the picture of dead Tarragona against a sunny background alive with every radiant hue, rich in all the vital charm of a most varied landscape. If you have entered Spain by Roussillon, you will, by the time you reach Tarragona, be familiar with the unique varieties of Catalonian scenery. Here the eye is offered breadths of sunlit plain, whose green lights waver and scintillate like jewels that reveal and dart their rays. Then little rounded hills of unimaginable airy grace curve against Pyrenean majesty. Below, the chattering life of rills and lovely woods, free emerald spaces, little painted houses that beguile the judgement and redeem the sin of ugliness by innocence, wooded ravines that lend a more than natural fascination to peril, flowering shrubs that have all the abundance and glow of gems in Eastern story, and the queerest of towns – neither French nor Spanish, and far more foreign than either by reason of their tattered and nondescript air; above, the austere and uninhabited mountains. You have seen Cardona, the famous salt-mountain, prismatic as if it were built of gems of blinding brilliance. You have rounded the last spur of the Pyrenees, saluted upon a backward glance that world of snow and blue shadow, that reaches heavily from earth to wander by glittering peaks beyond the line of heaven, and, as it waves into a rampart of mere inextricable cloud upon a ground of sapphire, your eye fronts a new wonder – the magnificence of Montserrat. By this you are, perhaps, surfeited with terrestrial majesty. No effect is lacking in the list of enchantments – from combination of sierra and gorge, of valley and plain, of wood and meadow, of smiling slopes of habitation, and strips of coastline, with their sparkling edges of blue. And you have run through every diversity between luxuriance of foliage, fruit, and flowers, peaceful sweeps of river-bed, and barrenness of sandy places, of awful nakedness of rocks that defy the labour of man, where the eternal silence is only broken by the spring and winter rush of waters through their wild torrents, flashing foam, and roaring down all sounds of mountain life.

Barcelona then offers a needful rest for the senses after such an unwonted excess of natural beauties. You have loitered agreeably among the streets and noisy boulevards of that brilliant city, refreshed for the road again, and not discontented to greet once more, after its ostentatious civilisation, its thronged thoroughfares and the wild career its passion for tramways has run to, the broad serene splendours of mountain and plain and shore. Your path lies now through ways less inland. The wonderful sea of Middle Earth dances every now and then into the view, the very heart of blue, sometimes striking boldly out from a pearl-hued horizon, or lying against a paler strip of sky, reminiscent of its own depth of colour, but with memory faded upon thin layers of white cloud. You have crossed the famous Puente del Diablo, supposed to have been built by Hannibal, traversed

many a picturesque and quaint old town on either side of the Llobregat,[56] with fortresses standing from the days of Hamilcar, and Roman Byzantine churches and cloistered convents in all the pathos of Time's disarray. You can now remember your first and last view of Montserrat, for you have entered the lovely plain that waves like an inner sea of bloom between Vendrell[57] and the Mediterranean. You may have been tempted to wander a little off the high road to look at the old Roman arch, the Arco de Bará,[58] for the sake of its defaced inscription of Pliny the Younger's friend. Or you may have preferred to linger outside Tarragona a while, among the three castles of Altafulla,[59] and have dreamed upon its rugged cliffs in an appropriately picturesque attitude. The place right in the face of the Scipios' rude tower, with the classical sea at your feet, lends itself to musing.

But not yet here has the sense of decay, of death, fallen upon you and left you a prey to sadness. Your way hitherto has lain through fresh and sunlit places. All the influences about you were cheerful. If you did enter many a dead little town, there was no suggestion of desolation. The landscape ran laughingly upon their edges, and the limpid air of everyday life, without the pall of memories or the stillness of retrospection, blew blithely about their tortuous streets. For mirth it might still be Provence carried beyond the Pyrenees, with vivider [*sic*] colouring, warmer glow, intenser individuality of outline and charm. The austerity of the mountains only served to temper, not depress, nature's seemingly inexhaustible gaiety.

There is not on the face of this earth a drearier or sadder town than Tarragona. Its blighted aspect is only the more accentuated by the rivers of blinding sunlight poured freely along its streets and over its *plazas* and *paseos*. Would you read ruin upon an expressive landscape? You have but to sit in a boat below upon the sunny breast of blue waters that undulates into the embrace of the pale-hued stonework of its two moles. You glance up at the desolate town. It circles like an amphitheatre. Indeed, at no point are you free from Roman suggestions. After the liveliness and brightness of modern Barcelona, you seem to have dropped into the remotest ages of mankind. The people themselves make no difference. They hardly enliven the general dulness. What preoccupies you is the past, in which they have no part. You may not be acquainted with the written history of Tarragona, but for all that, and despite your traveller's ignorance unillumined by

56 The so-called Devil's Bridge crosses the Llobregat River, linking Martorell and Castellbisbal.

57 Currently known in Catalan as El Vendrell.

58 Listed in Baedeker (1898) as Portal de Bará; currently known in Catalan as the Arc de Berà. The triumphal arch was erected during the reign of Augustus and stands on what was once the Via Augusta.

59 A town by the sea, north of Tarragona, which features a historic quarter with a single medieval castle.

guide-book, that past, dating far beyond the Roman settlement, presses upon your imagination, takes possession of you to the exclusion of recognition of actual environment. It is eloquently revealed in every stone.

Beyond, you have the aromatic life of the hills, the peopled woods breathing of pine and sweet southern scents; below the sheltered bay, enlivened by the touch of red and white sail of the boats that lazily rock upon its bosom. These form the setting for Cyclopean remains, for Roman towers, for Pilate's house (afterwards the palace of Augustus, since almost destroyed by Suchet,[60] when he sacked the town in 1811), for Moorish remains, and one of the noblest of Spain's cathedrals. Other towns in Spain and elsewhere are the homes of memories as imposing, even if not ostensibly recorded for the traveller upon prehistoric stones and towers still called in common speech Cuartel de Pilatos and Torre de los Escipiones.[61] But no other town, surely, wears its heritage of antique associations so lugubriously, so sullenly, as Tarragona. No other town sleeps so heavily upon its pillow of reminiscences and turns a front of such unwavering sadness upon the progressing world. The foot, shod with the leather of our days, treads uneasily, as it were, with a feeling of profanation, these light pavements, which reflect the sun too strongly, and have the deadness of time without its romantic shadows. Peace has a forlorn air among these defaced city-walls and broken ramparts, these ruined forts and towers and tiers of amphitheatre. Conviction seizes you that the place is lying in degraded slumber through our modern ages, that the poignant history of recent times is naught for it, and that one day it will awaken to restore the old face of war and fortified expectation it must have worn in the days of siege and conquest.

For all that, the place is not without its beguilements. It has, chief among these, its most beautiful cathedral and its perfect Romanesque cloisters. The ordinary pen may not hope to do justice to these. Its outskirts are of almost matchless beauty, and if you scale the battery of San Fernando, you may see such a view as might gratify a sage for life. What more is needed than the castled crags of Altafulla – in the distance, the sea, with its bright-sailed feluccas, the rolling plains and enfoliaged hills, cut as clear against an intense sky as exquisite sculpture? And within easy eye-shot such memorable monuments as the Roman aqueduct[62] and the Tower of

60 Louis Gabriel Suchet (1770-1826). Following the conquest of Tarragona in 1811, Napoleon awarded him the distinction of Marshal.

61 According to local lore, Pontius Pilate was born in the Roman city of Tarraco. The Tower of the Two Scipios, also according to legend, was a burial place for two Roman generals who died in Hispania during the II Punic War.

62 The Roman aqueduct carried water from the River Francolí to the city of Tarragona. It is known in Catalan as the Pont del Diable or Aqüeducte de les Ferreres.

the Two Scipios. It has its antiquities to appeal to the learned minds, and a Bacchic smile for the wine-bibber. If you go some way inland you may lose your senses in the noted vineyards, and sleep contentedly amid memories of such undiverting personages as Hamilcar, Hannibal, the Scipios, Pilate, Augustus, if you are not contented with the Goths and Moors, or, still nearer, the French, the English, and the late civil wars.

The life of the streets here is neither so instructive nor so diverting as further south; nor yet is it noisy and insistent as at Barcelona and Valencia. There is a sombre roughness about the people which carries off the semi-mountain note of their costume. *Capa* and *sombrero*[63] do not reign here. Instead, you may see the red *gorro* twisted curiously[64] round the man's head and the short jacket flung over one shoulder, with spotless shirt and short dark breeches. The distinctive mark of the Catalonian woman is a handkerchief knotted across her bosom, her bold, erect carriage, and her brilliant smile. Her head is more often bare than covered with the traditional mantilla, and whether mistress or maid, city matron or peasant woman, she seems equally particular about the cut of her dress. She is always neatly shod, her skirts hang gracefully, the under-petticoats are always worth seeing, and her bodice fits well. These are her outward virtues, and repay inspection. Her claims upon beauty are summed in splendid eyes, a smile of natural allurement, and the matchless skin of her country. Elsewhere you will find complexions of rare bloom. In Spain alone is woman's skin of unblemished texture – smooth as satin, soft and delicate as the leaf of a rose in full flower. For the rest, she looks a capable, good-natured creature, dowered with a vivacity and harshness of tongue that make her conversation a fatiguing surprise. She is courteous as well – more courteous than her mate – and fills her daily existence with a thousand little charms and prettinesses which we – robuster and busier race for our sins – ignore.

Ah, those many graces of Southern life! Even the grim deadness of Tarragona cannot evade their insidious influence. The Rambla has its display of flowers, ever in demand in social intercourse. It is not only the lover who sends bouquets, but friends, acquaintances, relatives, employers, and servants, all are bound by the same graceful law of interchange. Flowers go backwards and forwards, from house to house, breathing perfumed messages of friendship and remembrance. Unhappily, they enter less and less into the adornment of the head. Catalonia is too near France not to make an ostensible effort to follow the wake of progress and what we are

63 Cape and hat, i.e. as traditionally sported by men in the south.

64 The "curious twist" is Lynch's perception of the red cap or beret [*gorro*] customarily worn by Catalan peasants, known as the *barretina*. It was incorporated into the male national dress, like the short jacket, shirt and breeches subsequently mentioned.

pleased to term civilisation. It has its own standard of cleanliness, not to be confounded with the British estimate of the bath. Where we place the daily bath as the highest development of personal cleanliness, the Spaniards, North and South, but more particularly the Catalans, substitute the worship of spotless linen. The British workman's dingy shirt is a thing to shudder at. Should occasion compel the Catalan workman or fisherman to divest himself of jacket and breeches, he stands before you in immaculate linen. Whatever the deficiencies of his wife's outer garments may be, you may back her for an interior of radiant white. This passion for spotless linen is carried into bedrooms, and you may travel far and never see the squalid sights of our London chambers.

7 “The Insurrection of Cuba” [The Spanish Commander of the Forces] (1895)

Madrid. Saturday

The troubles in Morocco have scarcely been settled by the military genius of General Martínez-Campos,[65] when he is deputed by his country to quell the insurrection of Cuba. Yesterday he left Madrid, to embark at Cadiz, for the second Spain below the equator line. All the town turned out to do him honour. Nothing is more exuberantly joyous than the melancholy don when he shows himself in public in a patriotic mood. The weather was lovely, and the sun lent brightness to the bright scene. A more spontaneous show of enthusiasm I have never seen. For the hour admiration exalted the illustrious general to the post of Roman victor. Flowers abounded only less than smiles. The hero is a stout, heavy-faced Spaniard, with a charming courtesy of manner, a thick moustache and imperial, and eyes as sad as the traditional orb of Iberia. The expression is severe and commanding, and the head has a firm military air over the gay uniform of black with scarlet and gold facings.

All around and about the station were gathered an impassable crowd, as far as the Paseo del Botánico. At six o’clock Martínez-Campos’ carriage was in sight, and slowly clove a passage through the sombre and brightly-apparelled multitude, the General bowing right and left in response to the roar of applause that greeted him. *Vivas* for Martínez-Campos, for the little King, the Queen Regent,[66] and for Spain, rent the air.

The General was accompanied by his sons, the Generals Murez, Valdis, and Tchague [*sic*],[67] his aide-de-camps, and other distinguished persons. Some of these only went as far as Cadiz. When way was made for the party,

65 Arsenio Martínez-Campos Antón (1831-1900) is mainly remembered for heading the coup that put an end to the First Spanish Republic (1873-74) and restoring the monarchy under Alfonso XII. In late 1893, he was sent to the Rif region, in Morocco, to quell a rebellion. A peace treaty followed, signed on 4 March 1894. For contemporary accounts of the General’s departure for Cuba, see: “Círculos Políticos”, *El Día*, 3 April 1895, 3; “Viaje del General Martínez Campos”, *La Época*, 4 April 1895, 1; “Cuba”, *La Correspondencia de España*, 4 April 1895, 3.

66 The “little King” was Alfonso XIII (1886-1941), the reigning monarch from the time of his birth until he went into exile in 1931. Maria Christina von Habsburg-Lothringen (1858-1929), was Queen Regent until 1902.

67 It would appear that Lynch confuses the generals’ names. Contemporary accounts speak of Alvaro Suárez Valdés (1841-1917), who developed his military career in the colonies and also fought/intervened in the Second Carlist War. The young Winston Churchill fought against the Cuban rebels under his orders in late November 1895. The other general Lynch refers to is Francisco Echagüe y Santoyo (1860-1924), who had accompanied Martínez Campos to Morocco in 1894 to negotiate the end of the First Rif War.

they took their place in the sleeping cars, and Martínez-Campos stood at the door to receive the numerous deputations and personages come to speed him on his voyage. First came all the high military officials of Spain, beginning with the aged Captain-General, the Marquis of la Havana,[68] accompanied by his aides-de-camp Carvajal and Tacón. The generals embraced warmly after the foreign custom, and the spectators of the scene made no secret of their demonstrative sympathy. The sympathy was the greater because of the infirmities of the Captain-General, which necessitated frequent pause for rest on chairs placed for his convenience. The Queen was represented by the Dukes of Medina-Sidonia[69] and Sotomayor,[70] and by the Generals Alameda and Polavieja,[71] the latter of whom conveyed her Majesty's compliments and best wishes for the voyage and expedition to the illustrious traveller. The Infanta Isabel was represented by Don Antonio [*sic*] Coello,[72] his [*sic*] secretary. German and French regiments were represented, and every grade of civil and military authority was there to add the brilliance of varied uniforms to the brilliant scene, and the Government was represented by the President of the Council, the Ministers of War, of Mercy and Justice, the Ministers of Marine and Foreign Office. Politicians abounded, and the amiable, self-satisfied countenance of Emilio Castelar[73] was a noted face in the crowd.

A hero fêted without women to applaud his triumph were a sorry scene. The multitude joyously broke a passage for a distinguished group of Spanish ladies come to add the charm of flattery to a public ovation. Amongst these was the well-known writer Emilia Pardo Bazán.[74] Each lady as she approached the General's carriage was frantically cheered, and Martínez-Campos beamed in glorified content as befits a don publicly awarded for his prowess in the field by the admiration of the fair.

At twenty-past six the signal for departure whistled, and the Andalusian express slowly steamed out of the station in the deafening roar of enthusiastic humanity excited to the point of fever. Cheers followed him as far

68 José Gutiérrez de la Concha (1809-95),

69 José Joaquín Álvarez de Toledo y Silva, 18th Duque de Medina Sidonia (1826-1900).

70 Carlos Martínez de Irujo y del Alcázar, 8th Duque de Sotomayor (1846-1909).

71 Federico Alameda y Llancourt (1826-1908) spent most of his military career in the Peninsula, in the Corps of Engineers. Camilo García de Polavieja y del Castillo-Negrete (1838-1914) was Governor General of Cuba (1890-92) and Field Marshal of the Philippines (1896-98).

72 Lynch is referring to Alonso Coello de Portugal y Contreras (1831-1923), who, in 1917, was awarded the title of 1st Count of Pozo Ancho del Rey by King Alfonso XIII.

73 Historian, journalist and politician, Emilio Castelar y Ripoll (1832-99) became president of Spain's First Republic in 1873.

74 The renowned Galician novelist and essayist, champion of women's rights, Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921) was writing and publishing, like Lynch, in the 1880s and 1890s.

as the multitude could penetrate, and Martínez-Campos responded by a vigorous cheer for his country and his sovereign. While the train was in sight every head was uncovered. It was an imposing moment even in a life so fortunate and triumphant as that of Spain's first living commander.

Meanwhile we may ask ourselves, is Martínez-Campos really the great military hero his country takes him for? In character he is strikingly Spanish, courteous, and cold, audacious, indomitable, and despotic. Luck has ruled his adventurous career, and the army dearly loves a lucky commander. He has literally cut his way on the point of his sword, guided by the star of fortune. He has failed in nothing he has set himself to do, and if the expedition of Cuba does not make him acquainted with disaster, can be said to have reached the highest point of military fame in these modern days of small enterprises and insignificant battles. In politics he has proved himself less admirable. His speech is too copious of Iberian inflated verbosity; it overflows on all sides, indifferent to the effect on parties or persons. In the late outbreak of the Spanish military against that unfortunate tribe, the newspaper editors, his behaviour was hardly qualifiable as correct. His haughty disdain of civil criticism exceeded his love of discipline, and in his indignation at the Press he overlooked the passionate folly of the army. In his speech in reply to the ardent greetings of his proud and excited countrymen, he did not scruple to lay about him with the amazing vigour of a paladin, who slaughters his enemies with the tongue instead of the sword. Out of the fulness of the heart he spoke with terrible ferocity of judgement. The politicians who listened to him in radiant admiration forgave his indiscretions for the sake of his military enthusiasm of the old fiery and impassioned school, his courage, and his effective professional qualities. The very spontaneity of his temper robs it of all venom, and lends a kind of geniality to his speeches of worst taste.

I am not sure that the fine figure he makes on horseback does not largely inspire the kind of enthusiasm Boulanger on his black charger excited in Paris some years ago.[75] The race is so vividly defined in that figure of virile pride, of composed dignity, of unconquerable and despotic force. He so emphatically breathes the mediaeval sentiment: God and my good sword; and withal he retains so much of the Latin spirit of youth, such a fresh martial optimism. The sword for him is still the great deliverer of mankind; the camp is still the grand school of all the virtues. His glance, when the soldier's blood is roused, is vivacious, scintillating with fervour, and he knows no depression or dejection of spirit. He is kind to his men, is impulsive in his behaviour to them, and his pulses still can throb to the adventurous measure of youth. He carries with him across the ocean not

75 French general and politician Georges Ernest Jean Marie Boulanger (1837-1931) acquired political notoriety in the latter half of the 1880s, fleeing to Belgium in 1889.

only the love and admiration of his country, but for the moment all its most passionate hopes. The insurrection in Cuba is for Spain what the Mutiny War[76] was for England; and Martínez-Campos is the mainstay of Spain in this crisis. Much depends on him, and the question eagerly, anxiously asked on all sides is, will this single man bear himself in this terrible responsibility with fortune unabated and honour untarnished?

76 The Indian Mutiny, or Sepoy Mutiny, challenged British rule in India between 1857 and 1858.

8 "A Spanish 'Master' at Home" (1895)

It was a tropical day when my boat's pause at Santander left me time to visit Pereda,[77] the modern Cervantes. I was already stupefied by the blaze of the brilliant Sardinero, Santander's fashionable suburb, where the sea seemed liquidescent fire waving gold on the outer edges, intolerable blue within. In the dark hall, when the door was opened, stood the famous academician's son. He disappeared to announce a foreign lady, whereupon a slim, middle-aged *hidalgo* stood in a doorway, glaring at me, through the twilit atmosphere, in haughty inquiry.

"You wish to speak to me?" thundered the great man, and I found courage to murmur a tremulous "Sí, señor".

As he advanced I saw that I was in the presence of a singularly handsome Spaniard; sombre, liquid dark glance, beard and moustache close cut in the Velázquez[78] fashion, pure white mixing unshaded with intense black. He wore a thick white scarf, and his aspect was nobly "unmodern".

"What is your business with me, *señora*?" he again thundered, and I flung a helpless, stunned and terrified glance around. Instinct prompted flight without a word of explanation. Castilian fluency dropped from me as an alien garment, and I murmured an unintelligible desire to explain my visit to the Don within the shelter of comfortable walls, in some less exposed quarter than an open hall. Never have I seen a more significant shrug than Pereda's: such eloquence of fury, injustice and menace it breathed, that I was braced for an interview. This haughty and irritable gentleman, the proverbial slave of his nerves, should be taught what was fitting with his claim upon public admiration. He led me into an elegant study, and pointed to a sofa. I wish I could produce his dramatic gesture, his magnificent attitude of incensed *hidalgo*, the picturesque ferocity of his expression and air: I, trembling and stupefied on the sofa, he standing with folded arms before me, breathing menace from crown to heel. "Explain this intrusion to my satisfaction, madam, else I shall not hesitate to fling you out of the window". Such the unspoken phrase, and I *felt* a cocked pistol

Translated into Spanish as "Un 'maestro' español en su casa", the article appeared in Santander's newspaper *El Atlántico*, 26 Nov. 1895, 1.

77 José María de Pereda y Sánchez Porrúa (1833-1906) began his career writing criticism, journalism and drama, but acquired literary fame publishing local sketches and realist fiction inspired by his native Santander. His novels closely depict the life, language and customs of the fishermen and mountain dwellers of the region whilst also displaying his traditionalist and anti-liberal views. His career as a deputy for the Carlist Party was short-lived. Subsequently, he became a member of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language. During the latter years of his life, he was deeply affected by the loss of his elder son. See Lynch's article "Pereda, the Spanish Novelist" (1896), below.

78 Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599-1660), a leading artist of the Spanish school of painting during Spain's so-called Golden Age.

before me. What might be the effect of my incorrect Spanish? For every vestige of intelligence had forsaken me, and I despaired of enunciating a phrase not absolutely idiotic.

In faltering accents I named myself. To my surprise – for this singular genius marched me through surprise – his brow cleared, the fire of his brilliant glance softened to interested scrutiny, and he unbent to the social attitude. Instead of looking disposed to shoot me, he sat beside me, and asked me in tones eliminated of wrath why I had not named myself at first. He informed me that he was acquainted with my name, and, instead of hurling me through shivered window-panes, or swallowing me at a single bite, he proceeded to converse in the most amiable fashion. Pereda in a good humour, I discovered, is as engaging, as simple, as exquisitely-mannered, as Pereda in a bad temper is formidable.

Before I left he gave me his photograph, bearing the legend of his friendship and affectionate regards, with his last novel, "Rocky Altitudes" [*Peñas arriba*], and invited me to dinner – a pleasure I was forced to decline, because my boat left at 4 p.m. I was charmed by the photograph, as the breathing image of Cervantes, with all the dignity and sweetness, the quizzical sadness underlying the humorist's smile, the beauty whose captivation even anger could not mar.

Me he now blames for the startling ferocity of his reception. I did not name myself; the hall was dark; he was tired and hungry after an expedition to Solares,[79] and, hearing of a foreigner, he feared he might be called upon to talk in some outlandish tongue. But he pleads impenitence. He is delighted he behaved badly for the pleasure it gave him to see himself in what he calls my spirit of Andalucian exaggeration.

He has some acquaintance with English, and admires Bret Harte enthusiastically.[80] Himself he describes as the slightest possible of writers – not an author in all the meaning of the word, but simply and prosaically a bourgeois with an affection for letters. I could not forbear a smile at the word "bourgeois" on the lips of a Velázquez gentleman of the seventeenth century. It was an amiable coquetry, for never was the high Castilian less "bourgeois" than Pereda. M. René Bazin, in his recent articles in the *Revue*

79 Solares, known for the medicinal properties of its waters, is some eleven miles from Santander. The first spa was built in 1827 and enlarged five years later. Railway travel in the early 1890s, followed by a casino and a grand hotel in 1902, contributed to transforming the place into a choice destination for the Spanish bourgeoisie up until the beginning of the Spanish Civil War.

80 Author of such celebrated stories as "The Luck of Roaring Camp" and "The Outcasts of Poker Flat", Francis Bret Harte (1836-1902) was an American realist writer of short fiction and regional sketches who produced writing similar to Pereda's in its depiction of local types and the vernacular.

des Deux Mondes, has given the spirit of his philosophy.[81] I but reproduce his autobiographical replies to my questions, as it were, on memory's wing:

> I write when the mood prompts me, solely for my own pleasure. I never begin a book knowing what will follow, nor do I make a rough copy, the only corrections being those made in the printer's copy. So that the critics who father a preconceived idea on me furnish me with an excellent joke. I, who never projected a plan, never prepared a point! All I need is a scene and a few characters to start my task, which never lasts more than two or three months, covering ten or twelve pages daily. I had rather my characters were true than interesting, for art is truth; and, in keeping with my artistic complexion, this is how I proceed in my trade, striving that only that shall happen which ought to happen between men in the commerce of life. When I have conformed with this artistic law, after my fashion, I leave the public to make what it can of my books. When a student I began to write sketches of local customs, which appeared in periodicals of Madrid and Santander, and were afterwards republished in two volumes – *Escenas montañesas* [Mountain Scenes] and *Tipos y paisajes* [Types and Landscapes]

[-lovely gems of modern literature, but impossible to translate because of the dialect and the delicacy and colour of Pereda's prose].

> Then I wrote a few novels, one, *Hombres de Pro* [Men of Worth], being a description of my political campaign as Carlist Deputy in 1871. I wrote some dramas which were played and not hissed, but are sufficient evidence that I was not called to shine in that line. Which of my books do I regard as the best? They are all bad. I put my best work into *Sotileza* [Fine Spun], but I don't like it. I like none of my books. *Peñas Arriba* [Rocky Altitudes] (the last) has had, I am assured, the biggest sale of any book of this century in Spain. A large edition went off in a fortnight – I don't know why. I have travelled something[82] – not as much as I could wish, for I am a stay-at-home. I am satisfied with this beautiful corner of earth (Polanco), where I was born, 1834, and where I hope to die.[83]

81 Under the heading "Terre d'Espagne", Bazin published several articles in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* (Feb-June 1895) in which he documented his recent journey across Spain. His views on Pereda, published in volume 128 (March 1895), 97-122, were subsequently collected in *Terre d'Espagne* (1895).

82 Lynch appears to be translating literally from the Spanish. Pereda's use of what would have been "algo" in the original Spanish, i.e. "something" in English, is used idiomatically here meaning "a little" or "to a (certain) degree". See also Pereda's use of "corner", more appropriately "patch" here in English.

83 In fact, the Spanish author was born on 6 February 1833.

We parted the best of friends, and many letters since have passed between us, not without humorous reference to the "ferocity" of the start.[84] Menéndez Pelayo, the Brunetière beyond the Pyrenees,[85] describes Pereda as the most typically Spanish writer since Cervantes; and I, after long wandering in the land of the *Romancero*, find him the sole realisation of the *hidalgo* of legend I have had the good fortune to encounter.

84 Part of this correspondence has been studied by Salvador García Castañeda in "Pereda y Hannah Lynch o la pequeña historia de un malentendido", *Siglo Diecinueve*, 1 (1995), 139-57.

85 Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo (1856-1912), also a native of Santander, was a close friend of Pereda's. His literary fame, like that of the French Brunetière, chiefly derived from his scholarly research in literary criticism and the history of ideas. Ferdinand de Brunetière (1849-1906), at one point chief editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, was a critic and literary historian of note. He is remembered above all for his analysis of the development of French literature within the framework of Darwin's theory of evolution.

9 “Santiago de Compostella” (1895)

Beautiful, ill-smelling Santiago!

To write of it is like an endeavour to compel into a few bald pages the magic individuality of Toledo, the art, the charm, the exquisiteness of Florence. Toledo in arid Castille, desert, sun-blighted, tawny, and black-grey Santiago, the Field of Stars,[86] up among the northern green hills, represent the two extremes of Spain. One cut out in pale unshadowed brown, the other in humid, milky stone, yet both unwaveringly sad and still, both essentially towns “with a past”, with neither present nor future. Yet both have their living interests: Toledo in her fabric of arms, where modern swords are fashioned as strong, if not as beautiful, as those of yore; and Santiago in her hospital for poor women and orphans, quite the most enchanting of public institutions I have ever seen. It is indeed typical of this land of good-natured gentlemen that women and children should fare so well at the hands of the State, housed and cared for in this beautiful old convent so sanatively situated on a breezy hillside!

The best general view of the town is to be had from the Cathedral belltower. Around a wavy line of hills, exquisitely coloured and shaped, with dark folds of pine woods across their brightness, like the folds of a mantle flung over a shoulder, and here and there lines of lighter foliage, merry-looking streamers of green ribbon, floating airily over the scene. Nearer you have every gracious effect of mediaeval combination of form and colour. Warm against the lovely mystery of dark stone and feudal austerity the contrast of reddish pectinated roofs set upon a sunny softness of landscape that rolls away to the infinite through a mountainous swell of opal-tinted mist rising from the verdure, and softening its brilliancy against the gem-like clearness of the sky. Sharply outlined on the blue the delicate fretted spires of the Pilar and Santa Susanna upon their isolated peaks, sketched in ink with all the precision and none of the vagueness of moonlight. Below, hardly a curve, a stroke, a scallop of the lacework of the matchless Patio of Fonseca,[87] hidden from scrutiny, and near, in its sombre bareness, the queer tower of the Flag, layer upon layer of black stone, like broad, low steps narrowing to a point for the famous flagstaff where the colours of conquered Granada floated in assertion of Moorish subjection to the Christian shrine of Spain. On either side the Royal roads of Pontevedra and Orense, by which the pilgrims came from all parts of the world, and engirdling the upper town, the charming horse-shoe promenade, with its bloom

86 The name Compostella is derived from the Latin *Campus Stellae*, that is, Field of Stars.

87 The Colegio de Fonseca is a Renaissance-style building, originally belonging to the Fonseca family. Already in use for educational purposes in 1544, it eventually became the seat of the old University of Santiago de Compostela.

of flowers and aisles of sunlit green. The third side of the tower offers a magnificent view of the Plaza. When does this great Plaza not look at its best? When does it fail to strike at the founts of imagination and emotion, and compel forgetfulness of the miserable achievements of civilisation? You believe you see it here at its very best, dark, stately, and deserted, with all its pomp of architecture. Behind it the severe and most majestic façade of the monastery of San Martin is a note of ecclesiastical challenge flung at the modern eye. We have historic assurance that this magnificent and haughty edifice was built for monks, else one might mistake it for an emperor's palace. Few emperors, indeed, have inhabited a building half so handsome, half so commandingly grand. Brightened by the gardens in front and the play of the fountains it is something to wonder at, to make proud the heart of man, and give an ostentatious strut to his devout and dignified march in meditation. Near the big tower with its marvellous combination of delicacy and strength, of light and shade, completes the harmony in stone upon a divine canvas of mountains and serene heaven.

My first moonlit vision of the Plaza of Santiago is a thing to remember always – one of the traveller's abiding sensations. Dark intensity, made up of black shadow on deep grey stone; solemn majesty fronting the wind on a bleak hillside, named, because of its height, and perhaps also because of its austere aloofness from all we call life; because of its cold ideal visage, its air of stern purity, as if it could not harbour vice – "Compostella, Field of the Stars!" For sheer strength and sombre beauty it is an unique picture. Four single buildings make the perfect square. Never a house, a shop, a sordid suggestion, a line or arch not essential to perfection of outline and mass. The cathedral, enveloped in flakes of velvet-shod, still white light, was a thing befitting dreamland, with its lovely façade, its three exquisite faces, its bell tower silhouetted against the glass, and the quaint, strange Torre de la Bandera. Opposite the stern plain mass of the Casas Consistoriales, with the notable relief of the Battle of Clavijo,[88] where St James appeared and turned the tide in Christian favour, there is a fine equestrian statue of the Apostle upheld by angels, in pure white marble, which glistens like snow above the damp black stone. The Colegio de San Jerónimo at the top and the beautiful front of the Royal Hospital of Isabel and Fernando the Catholic at the bottom, complete the symmetrical grandeur of the mediaeval dream. It is said that Carlos Alberto[89] on his

88 A mythical 9th-century battle between Christians and Moors, in which the apostle James led the Christian armies to victory.

89 Carlo Alberto, King of Sardinia and Piamonte (1798-1849), promoted Italian national unity. He came to declare war on Austria but was defeated at Novara and later abdicated. He went into exile in Portugal and died in Oporto.

way to Oporto and Zeiles [*sic*][90] crossed the Plaza of Santiago uncovered, saying that it befitted mortal majesty to pay public homage to majesty so enduring.

A new frontage was added in the last century to the cathedral in order to preserve the wonderful Pórtico de la Gloria from the ravages of the atmosphere. Now you may admire it within the entrance. This portico is of the twelfth century. It took Mateo, the architect, twenty years to finish. The middle arch is glory, Paradise, whence travel up from the earth below the branches of the tree of David. The lower arches comprise Purgatory and Hell – Dante in stone! Not one visit, nor twenty, could serve to guide the eye through such a diversity of groups – Christ surrounded by his apostles and angels, scenes of the Passion mingling with figurative scenes of the Apocalypse, souls gazing upward through flame, led from Purgatory to glory by archangels and angels; the damned between reptiles and monsters devoured by demons. Vices and virtues take natural shape in the great childish Gothic mind, and the founder, Fernando II, gives his features to the figure of Adam.

The four entrances are of different periods. The principal façade, del Obradoiro, is of the eighteenth century. That of Las Platerias belongs to the old basilica of the eleventh century and is a very beautiful and harmonious work of art, famed for the bold grace of the shell that sustains one side. The Puerta Santa is an odd composition of the tenth and eighteenth centuries, and is only opened four times in each century – on the feast of St James, which four years are called holy years, or the Saint's Jubilee. The Archbishop, in solemn state, surrounded by his clerical staff, performs the ceremony by knocking thrice against the door with a handsome golden hammer. The lock is so arranged that the third blow sends it wide open as if by magic, and all the faithful fall upon their knees. It is a curious and quaint medley of Byzantine and Gothic, and for this reason holds more interest, if less charm, than the more picturesque Puerta de la Azabachería passementerie work, as the bead embroiderers used to have their booths under the arcades of this entrance. This highly decorated side dates from the eighteenth century.

After the Gran Plaza, you have another *plaza* of austere beauty to admire, the square of San Martin, and there you may walk across and fall into ecstacies over that gem of porticoes, the dark fretted courtyards of the Fonseca College. This was built by Cardinal Fonseca in emulation of Great Casuero [*sic*]'s Tower at Toledo.[91] Here now flippant students study

90 Lynch's distortion of Chaves, a town in northern Portugal known for its medicinal waters, where the ailing Carlo Alberto may have stopped en route for Oporto.

91 Alonso III de Fonseca (1475-1534), was Archbishop of Santiago between 1507 and 1523. The tower of the Cathedral of Toledo to which Lynch is probably referring, was commissioned by Juan Martínez Contreras, appointed Archbishop of Toledo in 1423. Lynch appears to confuse Casuero with Contreras.

medicine and anatomy, with preposterous luck, which, I daresay, the rascals do not appreciate. To study anything, to dream and idle amidst such legendary and artistic memories ought to be compensation sufficient for all the miseries of life. I saw groups of these fellows walking about at ease, apparently not in the least impressed by their surroundings, not looking at the fretted lace-work, at the lovely ornamentation of the pillars, nor at the reliefs worthy of Berruguete,[92] nor at the governing towers of the cathedral seen against the blue arch of heaven. But everyone is privileged in Santiago. The canons have the grandest cloisters of a land of grand cloisters. The citizens have the most splendid *plaza* of a land of splendid *plazas*, and here these students have the loveliest patio of a land of lovely patios. Yet we elsewhere live without these things, and they apparently are not happy, for they have their political parties, and murmur dissatisfaction and revolt in their quaint Gallegan dialect, harsh and rude like the Portuguese, to which it bears strong affinity. They are proud of their disinterestedness at the College of Fonseca,[93] and showed me, along with precious parchments and illuminated missals, the Book of Hours of Alfonso the Wise, for which they say two thousand pounds were refused from the British Museum, and the prayer-book of Juana la Loca, the Emperor Charles V´s unlucky mother. One or other of these they offered the late King, Don Alfonso,[94] on the occasion of his visit to Santiago, but he very properly declined to deprive the town of such a treasure.

The minor churches of Santiago are many and interesting. First, the church of San Martin, with a remarkable double flight of steps downwards from the *plaza* to the church door. This handsome church contains, among many striking monuments and tombs, one perfect work of art by a Gallegan master, Ferreiro,[95] a painted wood sculpture, the life-size image of St. Scholastica. A more beautiful specimen of Spanish sculpture is not to be found even in the great school of Valladolid. It is more gracious, more genuinely lovely, if not more inspired, than even Fernandez's famous St. Teresa[96] in that town. The flow of the nun's garb, the surprising naturalness of the attitude, and the lofty sweetness of expression, are supremely enchanting.

92 The original distorsts the name of the artist ("Berroquete"). Spanish sculptor Alonso González Berruguete (1490-1561), son of the painter Pedro Berruguete, became one of the leading artists of the Spanish Renaissance.

93 The original carries Vonsela for Fonseca.

94 King Alfonso XII visited Santiago in 1877 and 1881, the first monarch to do so since the 17th century.

95 José (or Xosé, in Galician) Antonio Mauro Ferreiro Suárez (1738-1830), prolific in the production of religious imagery, who developed his career in Galicia.

96 The sculpture of St. Teresa of Ávila is the work of the Baroque sculptor Gregorio Fernández (1576-1636). It is currently on display in the Colegio de San Gregorio in Valladolid.

At San Lorenzo, which lies beyond the town in the midst of fields and foliage, there are three things to examine and give thanks for to the wonderful sixteenth century – the altar of the dukes, in polished Carrara marble, said to be Italian work, and the noble life-sized statues of Don Francisco de Zúniga y de Guzmán and his wife, Donna Leonor Manrique.[97] The altar is a fine example of Renascence high relief, flowery, exquisite, complicated, sculptured between four delicate pillars. The tunics of the angels appear to float in the air with the softest imaginable effect of fold. This *retablo*[98] was brought from Sevilla by the late Duchess of Medina de las Torres. The friezes are profusely ornamented and set in striking juxtaposition with a ground of red marble. The kneeling statues of the marquis and his wife are, to my thinking, nobler because simpler work. They have the yellow worn look of old polished ivory rather than the flaunting lustre of marble. Wax itself could never have been more responsive to the artist's touch and thought than this hard stone. For quietude of devotional attitude for subtle suggestion of character, the almost breathing emanation of a soul through every line and curve, I have seen nothing more extraordinary, more undoubtedly "living" than these two statues of an armed *hidalgo* and a magnificently arrayed great lady praying with the candour and sincerity of their century. Every detail of the lady's dress is superbly real, and her expression is a softened, unquestioning resignation, an admirable mixture of *devote* and *grande dame*. Yet the creator of these masterpieces is an unknown artist, presumably Italian, who probably came to Spain in the victorious train of the Grand Capitan,[99] and settled at Sevilla. Where is the rest of his work hidden, and how comes it that his name is unknown, belonging, as it does, to a century on which beat such fierce light as on that of Carlos Quint?[100]

But the most curious of all the Compostellano monuments is the extraordinary Church of Santa Maria del Sar,[101] at the foot of the town. The Rector, Don Francisco González Gómez, though an antiquarian, could give me no explanation of the origin of the strange word Sar, which looks as un-Spanish as it sounds. Nor can anyone, it appears, pretend to offer any

97 Francisco de Zúñiga y Pérez de Guzmán (c. 1460-1525), 1st Marquis of Ayamonte, and Leonor Manrique de Lara y Castro (c. 1460- ?).

98 "A structure at the back of an altar consisting of a shelf for ornaments, or of a frame enclosing a reredos or similar decoration" (OED).

99 Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, a high-ranking soldier in the Spanish army during the reign of Ferdinand, the Catholic King, was known as the "Gran Capitán". For further information, see the note in "The Spaniard at Home".

100 The monarch ruled the Spanish Empire as Charles I of Spain and the Holy Roman Empire as Charles V of Germany.

101 The Colegiata de Santa María la Real de Sar (Santa María a Real do Sar, in Galician) was built in the 12th century and is situated by the River Sar.

satisfactory explanation of the queer design of the church. Was it a deliberate freak in architecture or the action of some subterranean trouble that sent the pillars leaning outward like the Tower of Pisa? Surely in the case of a shock of earthquake the decline would have been in the same direction in both lines of pillars, whereas here the pillars, as if by preconceived design, lean outward on both sides. The first effect when you are inside is appalling. You want to get out before impending catastrophe under the impression that you have come in the middle of an earthquake or that another throb of the land will see the roof split under the wrench of falling massive columns. But this eccentric diversion in stone has stood nearly eight centuries of wonder and admiration, and will doubtless stand thirty more. Don Francisco has excavated from its tombs of vulgar plaster, so dear to the modern Spanish eye, an exquisite bit of Byzantine cloister, considered to be fifteenth century, though the church dates considerably beyond that period. Some of the tombs of the priors are of the thirteenth century – one even so far back as the year 1200 – and the more ornamented and finished ones are of the Renascence period. It stands above the French road, so called because the pilgrims of the northern countries, crossing the Pyrenees, entered Santiago by this side, while those of the South and East came by the Orense road.

Of course there is the inevitable tribute to Cervantes, even in grey, northern Santiago; a town so remote and bleak and strange for the immortal humorist of Alcalá as Edinburgh would have seemed in like age for "Will of the Avon".[102] A fountain of no artistic value, except for the instinctive pleasure of saying "Fuente de Cervantes" on a picturesque, broken place, with high, dark casements and the wandering arcades of cut-throat suggestion for very forsakenness, diving down paved slopes like the mouths of blackness, with a rude lamp or two, to assure scared imagination that authority obliquely stalks the town, or is concerned in a vague, inefficient way for the safety of the traveller abroad. I sat on the lamp ledge of this fountain when all the town seemingly slept. Summer moonlight in Spain! Upon a diaphanous ground there sailed the moon, full and luminous, like a disk of burnished gold in the fluid, translucent blue. The stars, scant and large, trembled like drops of lambent silver shot with sparkles of fire, and the line of milky way was a soft glimmer of white in the ether spread like a veil across the dusk of the heavens. From Cervantes' bust water musically trickled and rippled and plashed into the brimming basin.[103]

102 William Shakespeare, born in Stratford-upon-Avon.

103 An echo of Lynch in Joyce? See the simile at the end of the final sentence of Chapter 1 in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916).

10 “Impressions of the Canary Isles” [Teneriffe] (1896)

The little steamer, *León y Castillo*, that plies twice a week between Las Palmas and Santa Cruz de Teneriffe, selects the best of all hours for a first glimpse of that picturesque island. You leave a stuffy little cabin and go on deck for a whiff of invigorating air to find land upon the forward horizon heavily revealed between two twilights – the shadowy blue of night, and the cheerless brown of the wide mysterious dawn, lit by the waning moon and the brilliant morning star. It is a revelation of miraculous beauty. The harbour looks like the entrance to a dim paradise, made up of the loveliest mountain-lines against a sky of lilac promise, with life asleep along the shore. On one side the unearthly glimmer of a tired moon drooping to extinction; on the other, the penetrating fulgence of the steady star; and between the land of mountains and deep ravines, peak beyond peak, fold upon fold, to this furthest altitude of snow-hooded Teide, emerging with all the mystery of Nature’s simplicity out of the silence and peopled gloom of night.

A little pier shoots out upon ocean’s marbled plain, and the movement of boats and dusk-hued sails getting ready to meet the steamer seems as vague and dim as the stir of a shadowed under-world. The beauty of land wears an aspect of cold and strange remoteness. But when the boat has rocked you across the slip of troubled purple, from whose waves the foam slides backwards as from blocks of shining granite, the romantic charm vanishes. You have a vulgar little town instead of a vision of high-arched streets that throw wide banks of shadow along rivers of blinding light, of picturesque *plazas* and lovely patios. You have been carried on the crests of the labouring waves to a sordid quay, where coated ruffians loaf in quest of coin and gossip, without as much as a red sash or embroidered jacket or cloak among them. By-and-by, when the sun is up, and you go forth to examine the place, you are further surprised with its ugliness. But for the magnificent girdle of mountains of the deepest purple and the long roll of ocean, you would not even find its strangeness anything of a compensation for its meanness. For an adequate presentment of its varied encircling features you should, after you have looked at Nelson’s captured flag in the cathedral,[104] mount the belfry stairs, and there you will see a picture of wide and rocky *barrancos*,[105] brilliant bits of green spaces, palms and camels accentuating the wild majesty of the mountains, enfoliaged *plazas*, the high-road to [La] Laguna curving upward round broken meadows,

104 Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson’s flag from the cutter *Fox* was preserved for some time in the cathedral in Santa Cruz. It is now displayed in the Museo Histórico Militar de Canarias. The cutter was sunk in Nelson’s attack on Tenerife in 1797, when he lost his arm.

105 Ravines.

here and there a pretty garden, and Gran Canaria outlined upon the pure sky like folds of soft cloud. Below ugly little lanes invite inspection under enchanting names, such as Calle de la Luz, Calle de la Cruz Verde;[106] and the Street of Castille leads to a dull *plaza* in front of the Captain-General's establishment (the imaginative describe it as a palace), and from here queer passages skirt the under line of broken hill-paths, and lead to a charming avenue of pepper-trees and oleanders, with high under-edges of red geraniums on both sides. From this point Santa Cruz presents a coquettish side view, with its Italian bell-towers, red-brown against the liquid intensity of blue, and an attractive edge of foliage along the rim of the terraces, while the red tiles and white walls under the open fan of the palms are not without a note of quaintness. Away to the verge of the heavens, a wavy world, with its violet and sullen moods, with none of the Mediterranean's inland charm: none of its soft white bloom of mist, nor its gem-like glitter, nor its pearl-hued hours of melancholy. Out there lies the travelled highway, the old Spanish main. The *Santa Maria*,[107] bearing its precious burden, captained as no other galleon yet had been, rocked upon its perilous billows and was cast windward upon these shores for repair. Here may have stood the leader of the exterminated race,[108] puzzled by a sight so unaccountable as that corded stranger so gallantly bound for unknown ports, and Columbus, looking landwards, must have found food enough for his courageous mind in conjecture upon the inhabiting people. On one side come and go the vessels for South America, and on the other the great liners for New Zealand and the Gold Coast, while yachts and schooners glide in and out the insular sea-roads in a perpetual shifting of masts and sails.

The life of the *plaza* is unchanged, whether you sojourn on the Peninsula or in the Spanish colonies. Here may you sit within view of the pink-painted fort, and the modest house where Marshal O'Donnell, Duke of Tetuan, was born.[109] Santa Cruz speaks contemptuously enough of the Peninsula. It looks towards Cadiz in sullen envy, and says that it has sent over men as great as any produced in Madrid. "We sent them O'Donnell, and they made a Duke of him, but they might just as well have made him

106 The Street of Light, the Street of the Green Cross.

107 The name of Columbus's main ship on his first voyage to America in 1492.

108 Lynch is probably referring to the native people of Tenerife, the Guanches, subdued by the Crown of Castile in 1496.

109 Soldier and politician Leopoldo O'Donnell y Joris (1809-67) was of Irish Jacobite descent. He gained protagonism in the 1850s, as head of a military coup, and occupied leading posts in the government. He became President in 1865 but, following a coup by General Prim, went into exile in France, where he died.

Regent as that fool Espartero".[110] It also sent Pérez Galdós,[111] the popular novelist, and now the fishermen of the Canaries call their boats by his name or the names of his favourite heroines. Not that they have read his books, but they regard him as having placed the haughty Peninsula under an obligation to them.

At all hours the *plaza* has its tale to tell. When the light is fading out of the heavens, you may sit and watch the manoeuvres of the conquering officers pacing up and down, with their eye upon form of subjugated womanhood, flirting their canes or trailing their swords and gossiping between drinks at the café. Then the sea, in the glamour of sunset, takes on its evening beauty, and mystery creeps into the crude sapphire of the sky. On band nights it is too crowded, though it is always pleasant to hear laughter and social chatter, and watch smiling faces go by in groups. But it is best of all to see the *plaza* upon forsaken nights. Take the occasion of an unexpected invasion of the drama. Everybody who can afford it goes to the theatre, an edifice of mixed pretensions, where a musical conductor misconducts an inefficient orchestra, and raps out a thin bass accompaniment on a cracked piano, and a prompter irritates the gallery to mutiny by a too audible performance of his duty, while rows of female heads show in the boxes, elaborately decorated, smiling above the flutter of the eternal fan. Those who cannot afford this distraction, shut themselves up in their houses, prisoners of pride and their neighbours' opinion; for Santa Cruz is as proud as any *hidalgo* in decay. It would not have its poverty detected. You have the place to yourself. A new moon curls like a shred of silver upon the shadowy blue, and the warm and lucent stars shed a twilight above the town lights. Forms and profiles as they move about are oddly revealed, and the scene looks mediaeval enough to be a legend or a mystery. You will see a man pass with the bright lining of his *capa*[112] showing upon his shoulder with operatic grace, and the contrast of dusky beard and pallid cheek suggestive of Almaviva and other beguiling heroes of lattice and lute.[113] Reality is clouded as if by perfumed dust blown from star to star upon the salt-laden breezes of the sea. So warm is the air, so subtle the

110 Joaquín Baldomero Fernández-Espartero Álvarez de Toro (1793-1879), acquired military distinction during the Carlist Wars and was Regent of Spain between 1841 and 1843. After a period of exile, he returned to Spain in 1849, becoming involved in the *Bienio progresista*, from which he would withdraw, a disappointed man, in 1856.

111 Born in Las Palmas, Benito Pérez Galdós (1843-1920) studied law in Madrid and was encouraged to write by Francisco Giner de los Ríos, producing journalism before embarking on fiction. He was appointed a member of the Spanish Royal Academy of the Language and also took an active interest in politics, becoming an MP.

112 "A Spanish cape or cloak" (OED)

113 Here, apart from Count Almaviva, Lynch is alluding to other literary characters such as Don Juan.

scent of brine, so illusive the quiver of the stars and the white shaving of a moon swimming in indigo, that if you happen to be neither blighted nor bored, you are ready enough to count yourself on the rim at least of the Garden of Hesperides.[114] Then should the hoarse thrum of a guitar come, carried upon the night wind from the pier below, where the sailors sit, rapping its amorous, unmelodious, insistent notes at judgment, with its thin sweet muffled charm, you are jerked into fancy's enchanted forest upon a sentimental thrill of senses in the blink of an eyelid. What is the sorcery of the guitar? It is the woodenest [*sic*] of instruments, and it lacks melody, yet we cannot hear it in cool blood. It possesses no body. Yet it has the peril of wine. Without art, it can set our pulses dancing. A couple of rough chords and a thin whine for treble, a hollow echo of wood and nimble fingers, broken bars of sweetness like the rainbow-hued bars cast by the sun on a summer tempest and swallowed in the valley of the waters as they recede and are gathered into mountains. Strange for the modern ear to sit on the *plaza* of a dull Atlantic island, and listen to that crude and plaintive staccato, and those heartbroken chords, with their indescribable half-animal and hysterical charm. Some of the queer scraps of song seem to come from the throat of a sixteenth-century Spaniard.

After musing by starlight on the *plaza*, your duty is to awake in the twilight of dawn, and then you will taste the untainted freshness of the air blown from Teide as an intoxication.[115] This is the best hour for driving. Let your route be Orotava, that blest spot upon God's earth. You will be fronting the hills, after a cup of chocolate, by the time the sun has got well above the sea-line, and melted all the pearly lights in a blaze of colour. Mountain rolls beyond mountain, a shimmering revelation of upper worlds, of naked chasms, of wild fastnesses, and solitudes seemingly untravelled by the foot of man. From Santa Cruz to [La] Laguna, the old capital of Teneriffe, there is little to note.[116] The foliage is scant and mean, with touches of silver where the sharp breeze in its vagabond course tears over the fields.

[La] Laguna looks empty and cold; with moss-worked pavements that ring hollow to the tread of hoof. It wears a sad reminiscent air, as if it clung to the memories of *capa* and *mantilla*,[117] and resented the infelicitous introduction of modern raiment among the wandering dons. There is something

114 In Greek mythology, the Garden of the Goddess of Marriage, Hera, was situated in the west.

115 Volcanic Mount Teide is Spain's highest peak, rising to a height of 3,718 metres.

116 La Laguna was inhabited by the Guanches and it is understood that a lagoon or lake which existed there was a place of pilgrimage. Following the Spanish conquest of the island, San Cristóbal de La Laguna was founded in 1496-97.

117 "A large light veil or scarf, often of black lace, worn by (esp. Spanish) women over the head and covering the shoulders" (OED).

plaintive and engaging in these forsaken cities, and [La] Laguna, now used as a summer abode for the people of Santa Cruz, up among her hills, has the proud consciousness of being her rival's superior in beauty and nobility of aspect, even in her dismantled condition. She at least has handsome decorated doorways and picturesque arches, and wears her air of fallen state with dignity. Close by you have the aromatic life of the woods, and the softening wonder of an opaline mist formed by the hot air of the coast breathed upward to this marshy eminence, and condensed to a thick veil which you can watch descend steadily and roll away over the plain. The trade-winds blowing round [La] Laguna are changed from west to east; thus you will within an hour be suffocated at Santa Cruz and chilly up at [La] Laguna. The Merced in the wood of Obispo outside [La] Laguna[118] is a spot almost as famous as the lovely valley of Orotava. To wander here is to drink deeply of bliss in an earthly paradise. Can this have been the spot of the Garden of Hesperides? From this point begins the faint blue bloom of the eucalyptus upon the landscape, like a summer haze, and with it you are launched into the heart of the picturesque. Teide shows its dark peak under a hood of snow, and upon its rounded shoulders lies a mantle of broken snow-lines. Should there be a cloud, it will catch it on the wing, and leave it as ragged against the white spurs as a beggar's cloak. Away and around it, in violent contrast, the underhills make a girdle of sombre beauty relieved by spots of dazzling verdure. Some bear upon their bluffs gashes of red earth, as crimson as the blotches on the dark shoulder of a wounded bull. The sea and sky are of a blue so soft and misted by the summer heat as to look like an interfusion of lights making a wall of liquid azure along the precipitous shore. Through this veil the sail of a boat shows, its brilliant whiteness subdued to silver, and you can scarce tell if it be a thing of earth or sky. For sound there is the song of the ocean, and the birds fling notes as thick as spray against your ear from the roadside trees. You breathe every vigorous and delicious odour from the pine-woods that wander up the mountain-sides; the perfumed shrubs and underwood of the ravines, and the paradisiacal wilderness about you of heliotrope, roses and sweet-peas that grow in Nature's hedges of tropic bloom.

If you are not of an exploring cast of mind, and have an aversion for the physical labour of scaling peaks, you may, at the Villa of Orotava, repose contentedly, perched between the upper altitudes of this forested mountain-side, with the Port at your feet. Here may you dream amid every effect of loveliness; encircling hills, divinely formed and most divinely clad, with the frown of grey and purple rocks, the smiles of the pleasant fields, so lucidly green, the splendour of vegetation and gardens, any of which might

118 Lynch is probably referring to the *Bosque de Las Mercedes*, a forest of evergreens, laurel and heather.

have been the fitting home of our first parents; savage torrent-beds with armies of radiant flowers encroaching beyond the verges of their gloomy depths; enchanting paths under trees that the sunlight falls through in pools of glory upon the shadowed ground; glades and thickets, and ever in view the eternal ocean as glittering and purple as the Aegean waters.

The Peak itself from this point of view does not strike the imagination as one of the world's wonders; and the luxuriant orchards of the villa, and friendly solitude of the scented and open forest close by, speak with more eloquence to the indolent vagabond than Teide's tale of convulsed rocks and lava-blackened and burnt earth. The villa is built on the slope of a hill, in a network of gardens and orchards like an Italian town. It is clean and pretty and picturesque, and the moss-sown streets wind up and down, always open to the eye of the flowers and the boom of the ocean. It has its own engaging note, if it lack both castellated and Moorish suggestion and the exquisite glow of colour that charms us in old Southern towns. It smiles mirthfully in its sunlit slumbers, and wears a fine hint of nobility in decay. Instead of historic columns, it offers you the hills, alive with the life of the woods, fragrant with Nature's sweetest scents, and aglow with all her precious hues. And beyond the sharp dip of its base, through fields of corn and maize, in a tangle of rich vegetation, it shows you the long roll of foamy surf. It breathes content from earliest dawn till night turns the dusky woods to impenetrable shadow. Along the valley-way it invites you out of its bright little streets, through a succession of enjoyments. If you happen to be a first-class traveller, it points to the palatial hotel below the Puerto, which, like Teide's peak, is an insistent note in the landscape.

There is, of course, the usual rivalry between the Villa and the Puerto. The Port looks up the hill, sniffs from a distance of two miles, and asserts that the Villa is unhealthy. The Villa glances down at the Port in pity, and points to its upper hills as a sanative background. If the wiles of both appeal to you, you may build yourself a brand-new mansion along the lovely *carretera*[119] which winds down from Villa to Puerto, and there be as happy as a grateful heart will permit. One ostensible eccentric from overseas has labelled his caprice with an inscription that greets the eye as a foreign tongue: "This is the house that Jack built". The natives speak of him as Don Juan, and stare to find you do not instantly recognise him for an acquaintance from the description. It would be waste of breath to point out that, except the man in the legend, not a living soul could be traced as simple Don Juan. In his native land Shakespeare himself might walk in undisturbed incognito as Mr. William. The people here are the friendliest I have ever met. Peasant women, whom I stopped to talk to, led me through some marvellous orchards and gardens, and gathered me stacks of flowers. I might

119 Main road.

have lived upon natural scents so thick with them was the air I breathed in my hotel room. I sat among roses, carnations, and heliotrope, in strange places, amongst wide-eyed foreigners, and, to please them, told the tale of my voyages. Men came out and joined us in wonder, and said *Caray*! and *Ave María Purísima*!,[120] and then they gave me cheese and coffee, and, weighted with my burden of flowers, somebody was sure to insist that I should go and see another garden down the *carretera*. It was delicious to break away, through acres of maize, with the tassels shaken against your cheek, swing in under the laden boughs of the fruit-trees, and move to spare the royal bloom of the pomegranate; jumping silver rills that make their own beds along the plantations as they trickle down from the hills.

I know nothing more cheering to the vagabond than this readiness of friendship among the common people. Go where you will abroad, you may shake the hand of beggar, loafer, peasant and cottager. All have the same free and hearty welcome for you. They seem to delight in outlandish acquaintance, and if you happen to be a woman, you instantly appeal to their better selves. Here, as elsewhere, I have kindly memories of people whose names I never knew, and who did not know mine. I remember driving by diligence with a brave and heroic-looking young gentleman beautifully clad. He wore long boots, radiant linen, velvet breeches, a short, smart jacket, and a wide-brimmed hat. Men of breeding might go as far as his native village to acquire his perfect manners, Wondering who this picturesque and operatic young man might be, I afterwards questioned the diligence driver (a rascal I had reason to suspect of stealing my bag with all my things, and the wonderful bargains in Orotava lace and embroidery I had driven), and learnt that he was a village butcher. So with all the trades-people here. I wanted to match some stuff sold me by a woman of Orotava down at Santa Cruz, and was informed I should apply to Don Pablo or Don Pedro, and then to Don Nicholas of the Puerto. Surnames are suppressed – everyone is still as well-born as they were on the Peninsula in the days of Lope de Vega[121] and the German ambassador, who, asking for a servant's credentials, was presented with proof of his descent from a Gothic king.

120 English equivalents of the Spanish exclamations might be "Goodness me!" or "Holy Mother of God!".

121 Félix Lope de Vega y Carpio (1562-1635), canonical poet and playwright of the Spanish Golden Age.

11 “Impressions of the Canary Isles” [Concluding Paper] (1896)

If you would see Orotava in its gayest and most distinctive mood, you should manage to be there for the feast of Corpus Christi.[122] The hotels and every possible lodging in the Port and the Villa are crowded with the happiest-looking sightseers come to see the famous carpet of flowers. I had been told that all the little streets, balanced between blue of sky and blue of sea, like Margery’s Daw’s see-saw,[123] in a perfect slant, would be covered with flowers. I could imagine the effect charming, but hardly an affair to bring people in boats across from the different isles, and send them up from Santa Cruz to [La] Laguna in excited cavalcades. That was my error. It was quite a strange and surprising sight.

Picture these engaging little streets showing the loveliest fancies in flower-leaves along their slopes, not loosely spread flowers, as I had expected to see, but the leaves of millions upon millions of flowers of every gradation of hue, sorted and fitted closely in wooden compartments, and quaint devices and fancies built upon proximity with a painter’s or a weaver’s art. One street had what looked like a real Oriental carpet, with a Greek border in deep red and orange. The regularity of tracing and design was so correct, and the roses and buds, the leaves and stems were so perfectly the stiff ugliness of a carpet as to deceive the eye. When such colours unfamiliar in flowers as black, royal blue, or green were needed, the leaves were dyed. A charming effect was produced by a double row of flags of all nations intertwined with the colours of Spain along an entire street. The Union Jack, faithfully reproduced in all its brilliance, gave the spectator over-seas a homesick pang. There were many flags new to me, and these, I was told, belonged to the South American Republics and a variety of remote islands. The sombre Austrian flag in that flaunting mass of perfumed colour had a peculiar air of majesty and isolation, but the Tricolour and the British flags harmonised quite jauntily with the red and yellow of Spain. Opposite the courtyard of a local aristocratic palace there was a picture that won all enthusiastic praises. You never passed it as long as the leaves retained their fictitious glory without its circle of gazing admirers. It was a life-size angel, most skilfully drawn and coloured upon a background of blue and golden sky, flying over a sunny landscape against a wider rim of purple sea. The angel had a mass of brilliant, reddish-golden hair, made out of nasturtium petals, I think; flesh-tinted rose-leaves gave a perfect suggestion of creamy cheeks; the leaves and lips were made of rose and violet eyes, and it is incredible with what skill the lashes and

122 Corpus Christi is celebrated sixty days after Easter Sunday. In a number of towns in Spain, members of the local community design carpets of flowers which are laid out in the streets.

123 “See Saw Margery Daw” is the title of a popular nursery rhyme.

eyebrows were suggested with brown thorns. She wore floating garments of deep and bright red, and the lines of shadow were made of those blood-dark roses that look like plush. Her arms were bare, and she was dropping yellow sheaves upon the earth. The sea, as deep as the Aegean, was made of the darkest violets I have ever seen, and light playing upon the ripples was the effect of here and there a dash of the paler Parma violet.

When I had bestowed praise as lavish upon this work of art as even to satisfy the pride of the innocent townsfolk, they assured me that, beautiful as it was, it was still not so beautiful as the *alfombra* they made for the Infanta Eulalie to walk upon when she visited Orotava on her way to Chicago.[124] "That was so beautiful", they said in ecstatic remembrance, "that she declined to tread upon it, saying that it would be a sin".

As you round the Port, and take the opposite road away from Orotava, the eye embraces a magnificent panorama of mountain range, now forked under the peak, now lying in heavy lines of upper and under shadow between sky and sunlit plain. The outer world is all blue water and white sail, with a summer mist blending the line of sea and heaven, or a soft sea-fog lying in damp wisps upon the craggy precipices that shoot down from the shore. You coast a pebbled beach, or you are carried down the wild depths of a ravine made up of every variety of green and leaf, from the most delicate maidenhair to the roughest of tropic shrubs. And, beyond the palms and dragon-trees, more strange than beautiful, you see Icod[125] on its sleepy verdant slope dropping seaward from its *plaza*. If you like to look at a Guanche cave, you may pass an hour in such agreeable inspection; but lazier travellers will find their entertainment among the gardens and the palms, watching the lizards, and preparing by rest to skirt the formidable spur of sierra that takes you across to Santiago. The earth about you is here more savage, less luxuriant and southern. You have a taste of Africa in the dusky desolation of the landscape, and sometimes a note of the Peninsula is struck by a little vivid underhill, with its blood-red stain upon the bare dark flank of the inner mountain.

If you would be impressed with the famous Peak you must see it from Sombrecïta [*sic*].[126] I do not say that this is the most attractive view, but it is the most magnificent. Personally I prefer the modest charms of the Orotava side of the island. There you have forested splendour. Here is the scarred

124 María Eulalia de Borbón (1864-1958), the Infanta Eulalia de España, was the youngest daughter of Isabella II. A polyglot and woman of progressive views, the Spanish government commissioned her to act as Spain's representative at the Chicago World Fair, also known as the Columbian Exhibition, in 1893. Between April 24 and April 26, en route for the United States, she stayed in the Canary Islands, visiting La Orotava on the last day of her tour.

125 Icod de los Vinos is a town in the north east of Tenerife.

126 Lynch is probably referring to the Sombrerito, a mountain commanding splendid views of Mount Teide.

majesty of nature that awes, and wears no smile. The sun shines upon mighty furrows, and reveals the sombre contrast of steep and perilous ravines. The gloom and terror unnerve, and imagination reverts to the grotesque.

The ascent of the Peak and the Cañadas have often been described by the useful and venturous type of traveller. My ambition did not lie that way, and I contented myself with gazing in awe-struck wonder at the terrible ugliness and might of savage grandeur. A world of blackened stone, bounded by a crater wall, did not tempt me to face the discomforts of mounting into a rarefied atmosphere, with every possible form of suffering, and nothing to compensate me at the end but gratified curiosity and an inadequacy of adjective. If I could have been sure that at the top I should find an Alpine heaven of snow and a flush of crystal hues against an inextricable rampart of cloud and peak, such as tempts us up the Rigi[127] and then sends us into a transport of delight, the pangs of ascent I knew would only prove an added zest to the reward of paradise.

But just a solid moor of snow, and, above a white cone, Teide's hooded head, and the interminable scars of the crater! To have seen it once, I know, is to have looked upon one of the world's wonders; and I marvel here at my own courage to write in cold blood that I have lived the four seasons on these islands and turned without having desired to see what has attracted so many.

What is better than looking terror and majesty so close in the face, and learning the insignificance of the dear habitable spots of the earth, is to remember a divine night-ride along one of the unique roads of the Canary Islands. The air is never so soft, except in the full summer months, that a keen breath is not felt from the encircling hills, and even should there be no moon, the large, full stars are like guiding lamps, and cast a mild wavering light along your path. The hills are more beautiful in their heavy night shadow, and you see their tops shaped upon the dimmer heaven. Turn your face toward one of the bright little harbours, where the lights twinkle merrily out of the darkness, and the lamps of a ship standing far out upon the waters make a belt of rays upon the wavy blackness. From either side of the road the silent woods and gardens waft you their sweet odours, and the island seems to sleep in the lap of the pulsating sea, breathing perfumed sighs.

It is, of course, the great crucial question, whether you prefer Teneriffe or the Grand Canary. The capital of the latter, Las Palmas, is not only a finer but a more distinctive town than Santa Cruz. It is quite Oriental – is almost as effectively white as Cadiz. The roofs are flat, and there is a Moorish look about the cathedral to complete the Moorish aspect of the town. But

127 Mount Rigi, a range in central Switzerland, the highest point of which is the Rigi-Kulm (1,798 metres).

Las Palmas, beyond its lovely name, has little to offer the imagination after the splendid setting of Santa Cruz upon a background of purple peaks. It is no shock of stern beauty that greets you as the boat draws near the strange sandy land beyond the Puerto de la Luz, with its arid, African look. But when you cross the miniature desert of the strip of sandy Isleta, and enter the pretty little town, you have something more novel and pleasing to survey than the squalid ugliness of Santa Cruz. The women complete the foreign effect with their straight white head-gear, which is partly veil and partly cloak, reaching below the shoulders. Little brown, naked children play and quarrel upon the sand, and the inhabitants have an air of dignity and local distinction which they lack across the water. You must not say this at Santa Cruz, if you would be popular there, any more than you may draw attention to the fact that Pérez Galdós was born at Las Palmas, instead of having, like Homer, been born at several places at once.

Away from the pretensions of small trades-people who form the aristocracy of Teneriffe and Grand Canary, the peasants and artisans will be found a class of better breeding and finer feeling. These are cheerful, honest folk who live upon *gofio*,[128] and throw cordiality and a smile into their wayside greeting. An old man, sitting on his orchard wall, nodded to me, and flung a ringing "Good-day", in English, after me. I looked back, and responded in the same tongue, upon which he called to me to wait, and in a few minutes he was over the wall, carrying a stack of white and red roses to me. "You took my joke, and so I hope I may offer these in return for your good-nature", he said; and made me an elaborate bow. I am still minded of the excellent manners of a queer old bookbinder, who lived in a wooden house on a slope of the "Hill of Dates". Whenever I open a book of his rude binding, he stands before me, bowing profusely, and apologising for delay, with his fine social air. Not less Peninsular was the polish of his wife and daughter, who marked their interest in me with smiling affability of glance and the Canary exaggeration of the mainland lisp. The grocer of the village of Matanza, too, is quite a figure of romance in memory: almost as splendid as an Andalusian *torero*. He sat with me in the coupé of the diligence, and I marvelled at his appearance. He wore long leather boots, spotless linen drawers, tucked into the boot-tops, wide breeches of black cloth, slit at each side, and reaching the knees; a brown velvet jacket, a crimson silk sash and scarf to match round his throat, and a brown sombrero. His person was as picturesque as his attire, and his manners worthy of both. He was young and dark and grave, with the moustache of a brigand.

At Las Palmas social pretensions necessarily strike a lower tone. There it is commerce and not the military that guides the dance. English rule is even more supreme here, and more fatal. You walk about the moonlit

128 A type of local flour made of roasted wheat, corn or barley, sometimes with added sugar.

plaza, or along the strip of enfoliaged pavement that fronts the cathedral, and the speech of the British clerks of the shipping offices greets your ear above the lisped vocables of the promenading colonials. But the town itself is richer in foreign elements. You may stand and watch the women fill the jars at the public fountain, and you will agree that the sight challenges the prettiest you have seen elsewhere. The cathedral wall throws a deep shadow across the brilliant pavement, and while one half [of] the fountain is revealed in white, the other is in black shadow. The water falls into the mouth of each jar like a thin rod of silver, and the chattering women sit or stand about in attitudes of varying grace.

By day you have less to do than at Santa Cruz, for the port is not convenient for idling. You have to take a steam tram and cover the long sandy track of Isleta to reach the melodiously named Puerto de la Luz, and when you get there you will find the boats far out, and no communicative sailors loafing about to instruct and entertain you. True, you have a museum to visit if you are fond of looking at the skeletons of extinct races and the utensils of cave-dwellers. You have the poetry of Carrasco [*sic*],[129] the local celebrity of departed centuries, whose bust may be seen upon his own square, and whose name nobody but the *Canariotes*[130] remembers, though Cervantes, I believe, mentions him; and if neither somebody's history of the islands in ten volumes,[131] nor the several books on them by English tourists[132] will supply you with adequate intellectual employment, you have but to study Spanish, and some proud native will surely offer to lend you one of the novels of Pérez Galdós, the man they call divine there, because, I suppose, he was born at Las Palmas – *muy frío, muy inglés*,[133] somebody once described him, as if English coldness were a virtue.

Better still, betake yourself to the hills, and study the effects of sunrise and sunset at San Mateo or Santa Brigida in their flowery nests. Halfway,

129 Bartolomé Cairasco de Figueroa (1538-1610), born in Las Palmas, took holy orders in 1558. He is credited with being the patriarch of Canary Island letters, not only because he was the first Spanish writer to represent the archipelago poetically, but also because he organized an influential literary circle. He was admired by Cervantes and Lope de Vega and is known to have influenced Góngora's poetry.

130 A native of the island of Grand Canary.

131 Agustín Millares Torres, *Historia general de las Islas Canarias* (Las Palmas: [n.p.]. 1881-95), 10 vols.

132 British books on the Canary Islands that Lynch might have had access to are Olivia M. Stone's *Tenerife and its Six Satellites* (1887), Frances Latimer's *The English in Canary Isles; being a Journal in Tenerife and Gran Canaria* (1888) and John Whitford's *The Canary Islands as a Winter Resort* (1890). For further information see Nicolás González Lemus, *Viajeros victorianos en Canarias. Imágenes de la sociedad isleña en la prosa de viajes* (Las Palmas de Gran Canaria: Ediciones del Cabildo Insular de Gran Canaria, 1998).

133 "Very cold, very English".

as you halt for food and rest, you will find an excellent fat innkeeper, who will refresh you with smoked ham and bottled ale, and talk of Elizabeth's murder of the sainted and beautiful Marie Stuart with the emotions that event may be supposed to have excited several centuries ago. And you, if you are perfidious and polite – the obvious duty of every traveller – will agree between draughts of palley-alley,[134] that it was a bad day for England when the faithless Tudor[135] introduced Protestantism. *Esta pobrecita, esta reina infortuna*,[136] you will still hear him cry with chivalrous, upturned glance, seeing beheaded Marie in his mind's eye, as you drive away.

134 That is to say, pale ale, a light beer.

135 A reference to Henry VIII, who rebelled against the Church of Rome.

136 "That poor creature, that unhappy queen".

12 “Pereda, the Spanish Novelist” (1896)

José Maria de Pereda is at once the most provincial, and for that reason perhaps, because of sheer intensity of vision and a fixed compression of interest, the broadest of modern Spanish writers. That, in the matter of style, he is the greatest may be accepted from the judicial pronouncement of the eminent critic Señor Menéndez Pelayo, a critic no less equipped than Brunetière himself for the exercise of his profession.[137] He accords Pereda direct descent from Cervantes by his style, which never loses its purity and finish however eloquent and impassioned the prompting mood; by a dialogue dense and palpitating as the flow of speech from living lips; by a vigour of clear conception of character, and the pervasion of sanity sweetened by wit. As the complete and classical expression of a race, he places this living writer between the immortal biographer of the ingenious *Hidalgo*[138] and Velázquez. His realism is theirs, with the touch of melancholy that gives tenderness to irony, the witty sensibility that guards from mere sentimentality, the kindliness that blunts the edge of harsh truth.

Pereda is a realist in the highest meaning of the term, not of the document school, with its wearisome and inadequate system of classification, and its monstrous error of scientific analysis of the insignificant. Like George Eliot, he is content to ennoble the vulgar, and penetrate to the heart of commonplace existence with the fine and delicate understanding of sympathetic genius. He writes of what he knows and intimately apprehends, and because knowledge has taught him to love his subject. Bret Harte[139] has no surer understanding of the Californian miner than he has of the fisher-folk of Santander, and no deeper sense of his unconscious heroism. But he is no novelist in the dramatic signification, still less in the Tolstoian. He creates no brilliant social scenes; eschews all poignant situations except those that may be suggested by a glimpse, through a rifted cloud, of the inarticulate soul; turning instinctively from the great moments of life, from the complexities of sex, and the deep movements of passion. Where woman is concerned his pen is as cold and reticent as Stevenson’s.[140] While she is young, she is useful as an implied ornament,

This article was reprinted in the United States in *Littell’s Living Age*, 208(1896), 692-702.

137 On Menéndez Pelayo and Brunetière, see the note in “A Spanish ‘Master’ at Home”.

138 The “immortal biographer of the ingenious *Hidalgo*” is Miguel de Cervantes y Saavedra.

139 See earlier note in “A Spanish ‘Master’ at Home”.

140 In *A Robert Louis Stevenson Companion* (London: Macmillan, 1984), J.R. Hammond observes that Stevenson’s critics have perceived a “lack of credibility in his female characters”. He also notes: “Five of his novels – *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, *The Wrecker* and *The Ebb-Tide* possess no major female characters. Of the remainder, the Countess

and perfumes the romantic atmosphere. But he deftly rounds the mystery, having no understanding of it, and by temperament being averse from study of it. He accepts the soft, nebulous condition of young and innocent love as a pretty enchantment which it behoves a middle-aged gentleman to indicate with a smile and pass on without recording its warm nonsense, its eloquent silences, without revealing the palpitating heart of youth. Love of any other sort he simply declines to recognize. Sex plays as small a part in this Spaniard's realistic studies of life as it does in Stevenson's captivating records of romance. Yet there is no lack of scoundrels and sinners in his books; but he founds their villainy on social and political humbug, on dishonour, greed, on all the vices that sin against *hidalguia*.[141] As a keen humorist, he finds matter here enough for effective exposure; and the women, upon whom he is somewhat hard, generally sin by vulgarity, by silly pretension, pride and extravagance. His claim upon the century is, however, no mean one. As a faithful painter of customs and manners of one little corner of Spain of which he is the artistic voice, he may be said to be without a rival at home, with no master abroad.

The books of this careful and finished artist, with his rare reticence and his whole power of analysis and observation directed upon a chosen society of blurred and inarticulate humanity, are cut off from the highways of civilization as the Cantabrian coast is cut off from the rest of the Peninsula by a rigid mountain range. If it is a mountain sketch like his quaint *Sabor de la Tierruca* [Redolent of the Soil],[142] you breathe the clear air of the Sierras through every page. If it is a fisher novel, like *Sotileza* [*Fine Spun*], his masterpiece, the pages taste [of] salt like the air of the coast. You may not see the ocean, for Pereda is generally scant of mere description, but you feel it round and about you. Sordid walls and a squalid street may withhold sight of the blue, but ocean's roar is ever about your ears, insistent, imperious, incessant. So blow the mountain breezes, though the persons of the tale may be saturated with alcohol. For he is no landscape painter, nor yet a describer of life upon the deep. He rarely follows his fisher-folk and sailors beyond the harbour-bar, though *Sotileza* contains one fine passage relating a threatened shipwreck in a few thrilling pages.

Rosen in *Prince Otto*, Catriona Drummond and Barbara Grant in *Catriona* and Flora Gilchrist in *St. Ives* are all believable creations but one has the impression that each has been drawn from the outside rather than with inner conviction" (25).

141 Nobility.

142 The title here in English, and all those which follow of Pereda's works in square brackets, are taken from either one of the following works: William Henry Bishop, "José María de Pereda", in Charles D. Warner (ed.), *Library of the World's Best Literature*, vol. 19. New York: The International Society, 1897, 11305-8; Noël M. Valis, "José Maria de Pereda" in Germán Bleiberg, Maureen Ihrie, Janet Pérez (eds.), *Dictionary of the Literature of the Iberian Peninsula*, vol. 2. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993, 1250-3.

It is the brutal blunders of shore existence, the waiting of the women, the momentous hour of farewell and the brightness of greeting after each voyage, the strifes, the drunkenness, the wooings, the many sorrows and the few joys, the comfortless homes, the sullen resignation and the heavy sense of fatality that weighs ever on that varied form of child and heroic animal, the sailor – this is what he paints in strokes that have the breadth, the vitality, the colour and meaning of life itself. So thoroughly has he mastered his subject that every fibre, every variety of the sailor's common thread of experience he follows, and touches with scientific certainty. He knows him in all his phases, from drunken loafer to sober, prosperous captain of merchant vessel; knows every change in his vivid and picturesque dialect; gives you the man with his savage outbursts, his simple magnanimity, and crude revelations of temperament. Not a particle of vice, not a twist of mind, not the remotest prompting of virtue, of generosity or meanness is hidden from this merciless scrutator, not a throb of existence nor a beat of heart. He is no land sentimentalist in ecstasy over the perils of nautical life. If he knows its terrors, and uncovers to the splendid courage it develops, he can gauge its turpitudes, and is quick to note the absurdities, the superstitions and quavers of the marine animal on shore. But his conclusion is that an indestructible innocence forms the basis of the nautical character, even where its development is solely swayed by bestial impulses. In *Sotileza* he pauses in report of the trivial chatter of a band of sailors to cry:

> And these big children were men who could guide a ship to any port of the world; who, with a fervent prayer and a promise to the Virgin, had a hundred times fronted death in the fury of tempests with a serene countenance and an impaired heart! Was ever poetry greater, more epic, than their very *littlenesses*?

He is saturated with the influences of the hills and the waves, is steeped with their colour and atmosphere; understanding, feeling, seeing with the eye and heart and brain of the fisherman and the mountaineer. He is the artistic soul of his province, and has given an imperishable form to its sentiments; its rough virtues; its obscure inexplicable instincts; its brutality blent with nobility, superstition sewn upon an independence of character that has something of the tidal movements of the waves and the impenetrable steadfastness of the Sierras.

It is this deep, unsentimental sympathy with the poor, with harbour rascals and hillside clods, the side-lights cast upon the man's character by his wholesome interpretation of nature, and the imperturbable geniality of his temper that give Pereda's writings their intrinsic value. He wisely declines to idealise life, too profoundly convinced of its need of improvement; but it is not at the bidding of pessimism that he sometimes drops

his humorous pen into gall to lash the moral squalor of politics and social deceptions. He distrusts cities, and is apt to credit them with an excess of duplicity. When he enters them he exchanges the broad Cervantesque smile for an embittered sneer, except in his first novel, *Los Hombres de Pro* [Respectable Folks], a record of his one political campaign. Here he remains the humorist, witty, suggestive, brief. The experiences and feelings of Simon C. de los Peñascales as candidate and deputy, and his wife's social pretensions constitute the highest and most delicate comedy, a bit of Daudet in *Tartarin*, toned and pruned by more austere and reticent taste.[143] Though some of his books are much too long, he cannot be charged with labouring over his characters, and he combines brevity with depth in his analysis. In Los *Hombres de Pro*, a scathing reflection on the compromising *bourgeois* and the political *parvenu*, he contents himself with a single sentence which discovers his personality and is his only direct criticism of characters he reveals in strokes and sharp relevant dialogue. After a telling description of the *bourgeoisie* of a certain town, he sums up the general character of the *genus*:

> He is an impartial man, a man of *order* and *rational progress*, the implacable enemy of all absolute statement, or, in his own language, of all *exaggeration*. […] With the Liberals he passes for a Reactionist, and with the Reactionists for a Liberal. When his ideas prevail, the political situation could not be better, nor worse when his ideas are vetoed. His style is ample, sonorous, outwardly clear, turgid underneath, always by effort honeyed and seductive, and the instant it is printed, such words as 'order', 'progress', 'peace', 'religion', and 'country' float uppermost. In substance it is the written presentment of the spirit of the epoch which saw its rise, that is, if we may decide whether the epoch formed the spirit, or the spirit the epoch. Upon such is nourished and sustained this new race, the plague of the century, a race without faith, without conviction or enthusiasm. It calls *order* all that preserves its digestion undisturbed, and *progress* all that adds to its income. It means the domestic hearth when it prates of the *country*; and understands by society a gathering of merchants tranquilly engaged in the buying and selling of bales of cotton, flour of Castile, and paper of the State – a race that compromises with everything except a rise in the price of bread.

The world at large regards those two powerful novels *Sotileza* and *La Puchera* [The Stew] as Pereda's masterpieces, he himself agreeing that they are those which best present him. I conceived that it must be my for-

143 Alphonse Daudet (1840-97) achieved popularity with the comic novel *Tartarin de Tarascon* (1872), to be followed by *Tartarin sur les Alpes* (1885) and *Port-Tarascon* (1890).

eign judgment that was amiss in my preference for the two lighter works *Escenas Montañesas* [Mountain Scenes] and *Sabor de la Tierruca*; but I have recently been set at ease by learning that Menéndez Pelayo gives his vote of preference to these same books. He admits, as I do, the superlative claims of the great and original novels, but winds up an erudite definition with a natural revulsion to personal taste: "It is all quite true, but every one to his special mania, and I return to the *Mountain Scenes* and the *Savour of Natal Soil*". He adds: "For me it is the Pereda of my youth I must ever love – Pereda, without transcendentalism, philosophy, or politics; the unapproachable painter of the woven mists of our coast, of storm bursting over the mountain side, of the exhilarating freshness of the meadows after rain", and then traces him through all the phases of common suffering and everyday joys of the delightful *Escenas Montañesas*. It is the preference that we give *Scenes of Clerical Life*, *Silas Marner*, and *The Mill on the Floss* over George Eliot's greater novels; the preference we give *La Mare au Diable* and *La Petite Fadette* over *Lélia* and George Sand's more splendid books.[144] It is the love most of us have for the simple, the fresh, the unaffectedly pathetic, the unconsciously joyous, that such sketches as these stir profoundly.

These "mountain-scenes" contain two sketches of supreme beauty – one distinctively tragic, the other excellently witty, with that dry quaint humour which is Pereda's charm. It is not to be confounded with American humour. It is too influenced by classical tradition, for Pereda is a man of letters in the severest academical form. He has the innate worship of style that belongs by right of heritage to every gifted writer of Latin race. He writes clearly, has the art of finding the appropriate word without apparent effort, never seeks his humorous effects in anything outside the ordinary, and presents them with the smiling simplicity of Goldsmith[145] – Goldsmith himself would have relished "Suum cuique", the wittiest story Pereda has written. It is contained in a hundred pages, and is droll from first to last. The central figures are two, Don Silvestre Seturus [*sic*],[146] a middle-aged serious *hidalgo*, contesting a legal dispute of three generations, a country chimney-lover, with no knowledge of life beyond the mountains; and his schoolfellow, a potent Minister down at Madrid, a man of the world, who

144 George Eliot was the pseudonym of Mary Ann Evans (1819-90). The "greater novels" Lynch may have had in mind are *Adam Bede* (1859) and *Middlemarch* (1871-72). George Sand was the *nom de plume* of the French writer Amantine Lucile Dupin (1804-76), known in her lifetime as a consequence of her relationships with Frédéric Chopin and Alfred de Musset, but also because of her own progressive views on womanhood and social issues.

145 The Irish writer Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74). In *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), *The Deserted Village* (1770) and *She Stoops to Conquer* (1771), he displayed a style characterised by simplicity and a gentle humour. Lynch suggests that Pereda's writings exhibit similar characteristics.

146 In the original, Don Silvestre Seturas.

has his hours of fatigue of the dust of society, and dreams of pastoral joys and all the simpler virtues. The fun, brilliantly sustained without a halt in an even flow of genial spirits, runs through a polished gamut of experience. Don Silvestre goes down to Madrid, and is shocked from the waking to the sleeping hour. He unveils the pangs of disillusion to the Minister, who, in a moment of dejection, agrees with him. "One breathes dust and chews ashes in the capital", he cries, yearning for the simplicity of shepherd existence. But the Minister's chapter of disasters and disillusion in the country is infinitely funnier, and told with all the relish and art of an expert. First the enjoyment of physical discomfort and privation, then impatience, then bitter lamentations. Breathing the poetry of the fields, he catches sunstroke, and examining the peasant, he discovers the hollowness of pastoral literature. A couple of lying rascals drag him into a process upon a false charge, and the court scene deserves a place beside that of *Pickwick*, and *Port Tarascon*. The witnesses, pledged to swear away the life of the "foreigner", as the visitor from Madrid is termed, the pompous idiot of a mayor, the bewildered Minister, are all figures of first-rate comedy.

Writing of "La Leva" (Weighing Anchor), Menéndez Pelayo does not scruple to assert that there is nothing in all ancient and modern Castilian literature so deep, so moving, nothing that leaves an impression so ineffaceable as the last pages of this tragic sketch. And yet it is the sordid misery of a sailor leaving his children to the care of a drunken, thriftless wife ashore. But what a figure of grim magnanimity, of taciturn sacrifice, of squalid heroism is Uncle Tremontorio, a fine fellow, who has sailed in warships and visited many strange lands, and remains ashore to comfort the womenfolk and look after his friend's drunken wife and neglected children. Here is realism, abject, miserable realism, but interpreted with tenderness and melancholy. The realism of fisher-life painted with a strong and reticent pen, not with Pierre Loti's instrument of melody and vague charm.[147] Here and elsewhere, Pereda recalls two familiar names -though neither can have inspired him, supposing him to be acquainted with our latter-day literature, since "La Leva" was written in 1864 – Bret Harte and Stevenson. The pages of "La Leva" are steeped in brine, and all the naked perils and sufferings and shamelessness of the little harbour colony are bare to an indulgent eye. It is the silent heroism and humility that he insists on rather than on the odious degradation. Beneath the filthy rags even of the drunken Sardinera he detects the human heart beating, detects the vague ineffectual manifestations of the spirit even in the mire. The difficulty of translating such a tale as "La Leva" lies not only in the insuperable barrier of style and colour,

147 Louis Marie Julien Viaud (1850-1923), better known by his pseudonym, Pierre Loti, cultivated a romantic prose style in contrast to the naturalist trends then current. His stories often drew on his long career as a seaman. For his most famous book, *Pêcheur d'Islande* (1884), Loti focused on the life of the fishing community of Paimpol, in French Brittany.

which can never be properly transposed from one tongue to another, but in the rough and picturesque dialect of the coast. You may find an equivalent for polished prose, but where are you to seek for an equivalent of the powerful and vivid speech of Uncle Tremontorio, with its salt flavour and unconscious poetry? I will endeavour to reproduce a mere skeleton of his death scene, in the powerful sketch "El Fin de una Raza" ["The Last of His Race"]. He has been cast ashore from a wreck in time to die in his bed – evidently the sailor's legitimate ambition, his chances being opposed to it. In reply to the author's question, if sailors have any forewarning in tempests, he exclaims, with a smile bitterer than the salt of the waves:

– Forewarning! Think of it, sir! You are in your boat, like a leaf on a tree, neither quiet nor moving. Land within sight, the sea like a cup of seething steam; something or nothing like a waterspout against the horizon. So you might remain for a month. Then suddenly a little breeze strikes you full in the face. It is a nor'easter, and there you go like a shot, swallowing knots, on the top of a grey blotch stretched across the sea; and there's a roar that might be the waves precipitating themselves to the nethermost depths. To see and to hear it congeals the blood in your body, and sends the hair of your head straight up. You clutch your oars with just an edge of sail, to see if you dare race ahead. *Tiña!*[148] You haven't made a yard before *that* is down upon you.
– And what is *that*?
– Sir, I don't know, unless it may be the anger of God passing over us. That is *the last*. You have just to unfold your packet of sins, and commend yourself to the Virgin. It is time to quit earth for the *without end*, and cry out upon those who bear aloft the wings of the heart.
– And what happens at that terrible moment?
– Can any living being tell you, sir? *Tiña!* Where are the eyes, where the time to see? You are in a furnace of foam, which tosses the boat as if it were a nutshell. The boiling waters rise, rise, then subside, and as they fall, you are buried under them, and you can't tell whether it is a rock or a mountain that has fallen upon you. You are wounded and stunned at once, and when you open your eyes, *Tiña!* neither man nor boat, nor oar, nor shore, nor heavens, nor aught else. Nothing but clamours and buffets and seething foam and abandonment. No voice is left you to pray to God, for in the roar you have no ear for your own works. One furious swell sinks you, another floats you to the top. Your head is heavy, and he who can swim best would fain forget it, so that he may sooner have done with the struggle.

148 Literally, 'ringworm'. Used as an exclamation, the equivalent of 'Damn!', given that if ringworm befell one, it was seen to be a misfortune.

But there is no English for the broken and spirited speech of Tremontorio, for any of Pereda's dialogues in dialect. In the ordinary hours it has a rough humour and colour that must be *felt* in the original. In the great moments of life it has its incommunicable beauty and pathos. Leland has said you must understand Irish if you would understand all the humour and pathos of the Irish peasant's speech.[149] What strikes us in these masterly tales of North Spanish folk is their contrast with the wordy, gallant, guitar-strumming south. Both guitar and *toros*, the atmosphere of castañet and carnation, are as foreign up among these wild sierras of the north as they would be in Scotland. When you meet a fellow in a short jacket with a turn for eloquence, you understand that he is a knave from Andalusia; and every courtly, high-phrased Don must be a native of insincere Castile. This, at least, is the mountain point of view. The race is singularly austere, scant of speech, of kindlier deed than manner; more given to drink than to gallantry; with a fine bearing in peril and suffering that may be classed as actual heroism. Truthful and simple, without southern braggadocio, their defects are part of their qualities. Hard unemotional natures, conducting their quarrels with a ferocious calm, passive in affection, inarticulate even under the eloquent passion of love, their home life cannot be described as attractive. The amorous season of youth, elsewhere soft, here develops with the scornful tenacity of the mountaineer. He strives for what he desires, but he makes no effort to please.

I have indicated Pereda's qualities of wit and pathos, and his profound knowledge of one characteristic corner of the world. I will now endeavour to give the English reader some glimpse of the features of his charming book *El Sabor de la Tierruca*. This is not a story, but a series of connected pictures, one more enchanting than another. It is the book of an idler, a woodsman, who can write a unique and exquisite chapter about an oak-tree, who is at home upon the hillside, and finds his paradise among the pine-woods of Cumbrales.[150] I know nothing more quaint, more odd, nothing that reaches perfection and charm by such apparent indolence of method as this slight sketch-book; and though it is pre-eminently the book of the woods and the mountains, it is never for one moment "dehumanised" by excess of description. Life is too vivid here, the characters you greet are too real, and the dialogue too piquant and delightful for the reader to be permitted to sink the personages in the scenery. It is the writer's fancy to keep you always in the open; but the characters

149 In *The English Gipsies and Their Language* (London: Trubner, 1874), American humourist and folklorist Charles G. Leland claimed: "those who can converse with Irish peasants in their own native tongue form far higher opinions of their appreciation of the beautiful, and of the elements of humour and pathos in their hearts, than do those who know their thoughts only through the medium of English" (7).

150 Today a neighbourhood of Polanco, in Santander.

come and go with life's own medley of profile and suggestion. It is the perfection of an unanalysable wit. The author indicates so little, and the reader understands so much, recognizes so vividly a face merely glanced at, not described. In our cheerful stroll with our guide through wood and village street, recognition is as instantaneous as in actual experiences; speculation as lazy and as unexciting. We are rid of passion, with its fret and fever, of tragedy, with its bitter taste of regret, and are delighted with the every-day unfolding of existence. The delicate chatter of wind among the leaves, the play of light upon varied greens, the race of clouds across the blue, and their shadowy chase over the mountain-shoulders, the hum of bees, the song of birds, the vivid eyes of flowers – here is life enough; and for excitement you have the changes of the high coloured heavens, the roar of the torrents, the patter of rain in the street, and the glorious voice of the storm lending captivation to the midnight rest. Each picture is flashed like light from a haze of mingled hues, and the shadows lie dense against a blaze of sunshine. For incident you have half-words full of meaning, dropped lids, unexpected eye-shot, and luminous smiles, sudden revelations of character in gesture and attitude – in a word, plastic drama. You detect the conquering assumption of a fellow by his ostentatious twist of sash, the cock of his hat over alert eyes, his strut under a girl's balcony, and the flourish of his cane. You read the maiden's heart by the conscious fold of her mantilla and the side flash of dark eyes on her way to church or market. Art is so concealed, so masterly is the reserve of this apparently discursive writer, that the pages might have been pencilled on the forest leaves as they dropped about him, without a thought of publication. And yet what breadth, what solidity, what vital freshness, what suggestion of the impeccable craftsman beneath this air of nonchalance! He makes us feel the fierce sun rays that whiten the air in the intervals of storm and rushing showers, and cast pools of throbbing gold among the thick shadows of the woods, and we are content that the story should be an unobtrusive melody, recurrent, interrupted, oozing out through pleasant philosophy and gossip at all sorts of odd corners: now in a church porch, again under a dripping umbrella, or a glorious oak, along the hilly road, or down the sunny street. Confidences reach us from the chatter of girls on their balconies at sunset, and we hope the grey-haired *hidalgos* will not make up their quarrel for the amusement it affords us. Pablo and his love-affair give the touch of romance, but we prefer the knave from Andalusia, the local battle, when the rival village we abhor is defeated, and we see Pereda, the Academician, throwing his foe with Pablo's hand, and, of course, as a North countryman, making straight for the head of the Andalusian knave. Above all, we prefer a chapter that deserves immortality – the love-scene of a village lass and her lover, a gem in modern eclogic literature. This is nature in the broadest and fairest sense of the word: not the nature of the French novel, still less that of our

own cheaper neurotic literature, but the nature of the Sicilian Idyllists, the rude, sweet, clean naturalism of the fields.[151]

The two novels, by reason of which Pereda takes rank by general vote as the "Master" in modern Spanish literature, are *Sotileza* and *La Puchera*. It would be difficult to find a just comparison with either of these great books in our own literature. Like Balzac's studies of provincial life, like George Eliot's, they are universal by the very quality of concentrated local interest. They also have something of the vastness of nature, and ocean's thunder is their appropriate Titan-chorus. But while their realism has all the ennobling flavor, the sincerity of George Eliot's – and *La Puchera*, at least, contains one character who has a natural place beside the creations of Balzac – the pages have a colour, a melody of their own.

Hitherto Pereda was known as the writer of lovely short tales, full of exquisite art and deep significance, a writer of pathos and power, with every precious quality of style. Outside his provincial mission of singer of the wave and mountain-side, he had an incontestable reputation as a novelist, having written a few striking but imperfect novels, with here and there scenes and characters of the first order. At his worst, eminently the superior of Valera and Pérez Galdós,[152] regarded as balanced somewhere between Balzac and Dickens, not so mighty and searching as the one, more subdued and classical than the other, with a narrower vision and canvas. At his best, he made a leap back over the top of the century to stand prominently below Cervantes, to whom he bears so striking a physical resemblance, with his pointed beard, his brilliant, kindly glance, and the delicate irony of his soft smile. He had hymned the fields and the mountains in faultless prose, and his country thanked him for a few imperishable figures, broadly Spanish if local, for pages of vibrant dialogue, ringing with the sound of human voices; but it waited – *l'oeuvre*. It wanted the *Don Quixote* of this modern Cervantes. *Don Quixote* has come literally in two separate books, and these have already their accepted place on the bookshelves of Castilian classics as the greatest novels of the century. Far enough away both from *Don Quixote*, of course, but sufficiently characteristic in the mass of more or less notable work – for literature beyond the Pyrenees has never reached so high a level since its revival in the first quarter of the century – to justify in part the excessive homage of such conjunction. I refer to it here chiefly to explain the relative importance of these powerful books – their accepted value in the eyes of

151 The Greek poets Theocritus, Bion and Moschus stand as the foremost Sicilian idyllists. Theocritus wrote during the 3rd century BC and launched the Bucolic school of poetry. Bion and Moschus composed their bucolic idylls a century later.

152 Juan Valera y Alcalá Galiano (1824-1905) was a diplomat and politician as well as a novelist. He held a number of diplomatic posts before embarking on a literary career in the 1870s. For Pérez Galdós, see the note in "Impressions of the Canary Isles" [Teneriffe].

Pereda's contemporaries, and their recognized position as the crown of a brilliant career.

There was still the song of ocean and its tempests after that of flowers and springtide, Menéndez Pelayo had reminded him, "Remember that you have written 'El Raquero', 'La Leva', and 'El Fin de una Raza', and we are still waiting for the monument to your name and your people – the maritime epopee of your native town. Only you can bring into Castilian literature all its intense melancholy and rude affections".[153]

Pereda responded to this call with *Sotileza*. It is, indeed, the bible of sea-folk. The sufferings, the perils, the every-day heroism of sailor and fisherman, the vices and virtues of their women-folk, the play of children, and the opening heart of boyhood so diversely revealed in his three fisher lads, the lovers of Sotileza, all these forms of varied life make breathing pictures upon a vast canvas, drawn in the large free strokes of a master, filled in with such minute details as are absolutely necessary. Nothing here of the "document" school, no indication of the note-book; yet a naturalism more intense, more vivid than any Zola has evoked from his superabundance of detail and wealth of description.[154] You have drunkenness, naked poverty, foul-mouthed women, and ferocious men, but nothing to shock. The clear salt air breathes its purifying influence over all. Humanity here is simply savage, never disgusting, and pity is the essential note of the book. Who could ever bargain over the price of fish after reading the fisherwoman's lament at her sick husband's bedside?

> Poor fellow! Fifty long years struggling with the sea, with chills that give fever and suns that scorch, with wind and rain and snow; little rest, a moment's sleep, and off to the smack before the break of day. And then, shut your eyes so as not to see the image of death that goes aboard before any living creature, and always, always accompanies the poor wretches, to end their business, when least they expect it and when they have no other help but God's mercy. Look here, Don Andrés, I don't know what comes over me when I see folks haggle over a penny for a pound of cod in the market-place – folks who throw away a dollar on a rag they don't want. If they only thought what it costs to get that fish out of the sea. What peril! What work! And why, good sir? Because the first day the unfortunate fisherman remains in bed his family has nothing to eat, however laborious and honest he may have been, like this poor fellow, who hasn't a single vice.

153 The three stories appeared in *Escenas Montañesas* [Mountain Scenes] (1864).

154 Émile Zola (1840-1902) is considered to be the major exponent of Naturalism. He is particularly well-known for the narrative cycle *Les Rougon-Macquart*, a series of novels written between 1871 and 1893 depicting the vicissitudes of two branches of the same family across several decades of France's Second Empire.

It may be contended that I am claiming for Pereda's *Sotileza* the place which has already been accorded to Loti's *Pêcheur d'Islande*. But however similar the subject, the two books in no way clash; and while *Sotileza* has the claim of priority, Pierre Loti has never needed to look outside of himself for inspiration. If *Sotileza* lacks the poetic fascination that captures the reader from the opening to the end of Loti's unique book – lacks too the eagle sweep into the heart of passion or tragedy – lacks the enchantment, the melodious charm which Loti, with such dexterous art, uses as a narcotic of the judgment – lacks his exquisite prose, pervaded, like the music of Chopin, with a *maladive* personality – Pereda's epic of marine life is not the less great as a whole. On the contrary, though my own preference is given to *Pêcheur d'Islande*, one of the books one would like to have written, I must admit that Pereda's more prosaic, saner treatment of the subject carries with it more convincing depth of reality, a manlier grasp, an intelligence of view as lucid as it is broad and interpretative; a sympathy infinitely more human, more intense, more commonplace for that very humanity, and, above all, a comprehension of "values" more sanative, more objective than Loti's. Besides, he deals with a race less passionate, less dreamy, less vague than the Breton Celt. It is a mistake to conceive the Spaniard as a creature of fire and passion, of uncontrollable impulses and flaming moods. I know no race more sane, of greater self-control. The Spaniard may be eloquent, he gesticulates, his features are expressive, but he is not excitable and he is ever master of his emotions. It is not phlegm, but an instinctive dignity that orders this self-control at every turn of life, as well as indolence and a southern clarity of sense. There is not an echo of passion, as the French, as we, understand it, in all Pereda's books. To write of the Santanderino fishermen as Loti writes of the Breton would be to distort nature and plunge into the unreal and grotesquely fantastic.

One of the finest characters in *Sotileza* is Padre Apolinar, the real sailor's priest. He is one of themselves, with the sailor's rough dialect and his uncouth tenderness of heart. There is no conscious nobility about him. He grumbles freely at all the demands made upon his time and purse, and though he takes off his only pair of trousers to cover the nakedness of a small harbour blackguard, into whose head he is vainly endeavouring to hammer the catechism, he does so without the sleek sweet superiority of Hugo's bishop; does so in a rough abusive way, almost swearing at the rascal and his drunken mother, and then faces the street with untrousered leg beneath his soutane. So, though hungry, he gives away his dinner, roaring at the little girl who comes to beg for her sick mother. Consistently human, he carries his heroic virtues with an admirable ferocity, and the author, himself of faith as simple and unquestioning as the sailor, draws him with humorous sympathy, without any desire to idealise honest nature, or make a stained-glass picture of the man because he happens to wear the priestly garb.

The heroine, who gives the book its title, is the most notable of Pereda's girls – a creature of impenetrable character from her first appearance on the twentieth page, a little girl, fair-haired, pale, with a hard frown and a valiant gaze, and, reared in the midst of hideous squalor, with a cat's passion for cleanliness. Scant of speech, hard, stainlessly pure in person and mind, such she traverses life, an enigma to the end. Three lads of her age – Pereda has done no subtler, more striking work than his presentment of these lads, with their varied manner of growing, living, and loving – love her in different ways. One is her social superior and benefactor, the captain's son, a young gentleman in the full sense of the word. Another is the son of her mortal enemies, a shy, inarticulate fisher-lad, in whom love of a creature so superlatively clean and superior could only take the form of indirect homage, of blundering, self-torturing worship. The third, the lowest form of harbour loafer, a gross and filthy animal, with bestial instincts beyond even an understanding so primitive as his. It is given to few of us to fathom the mystery of the human heart, and even Pereda himself offers no explanation of Sotileza's inexplicable sympathy for the lout, Muergo. It is an inclination so undefined, so vague, so subtly suggested as to be preserved from the monstrous or the revolting by the exquisite reserve of the author. He is able to indicate in a girl, famed over the town for her superlative physical cleanliness, attraction to physical squalor in a merely animal lover; savagely, coldly pure, yet drawn to sympathy with brutal instinct by physiological aberration, and never once offend, never shock or surprise. You scent a mystery, but the author does not dwell upon it; on the contrary, clears the surcharged atmosphere by showing you Sotileza, the moment the brute presumes upon her icy tenderness, furious and disdainful. This is the enigma he makes no pretence of solving: when the awakened brute attempts to embrace her, Sotileza's incipient preference is turned to hate. But what is hidden in the heart of Sotileza we never know. We greet her, a child, incommunicative, long-suffering, incomprehensible, and so we part with her, not having fathomed her, not having understood her. Neither knowing why she gave her shoulder to Andrés, the brilliant "young gentleman" of the novel, with his fortune, his fine clothes, his handsome face and his grand manner, and he having rescued her from death when children and secured her the protection of Padre Apolinar as an ill-treated harbour-orphan; nor her rare cold smile to Muergo, the indescribable monster with an early affection for drink. Still less can we make of her unemotional, reserved acceptance of Cleto, the fisher-lad, who worships her in awed silence. We imagine the sufferings of childhood may have furnished her with armour against sentimental expansion, but after all, if this were so at first, surely such kindness and love as her adopted parents – next to Padre Apolinar the most attractive and homely figures of his great book – showered upon her, would have worn away this reserve. We leave her as we meet her, with surprised, interested,

questioning glance, in doubt if we ought to admire or abhor her – only clear on one point; while the study of her has been an intellectual enjoyment, we are very sure that we do not love her.

La Puchera, as a whole, takes rank below *Sotileza*, but it contains one character as great as any created by Balzac. The "Père Grandet"[155] is not a more wonderful study than "el Berrugo", but the figures are not to be confounded. The salient features of race make a sharp division, and Pereda's study of a miser and domestic tyrant, if less profound, is more humorous. It touches us less, of course, for there is only one Balzac, and he knew how to give the necessary relief to his subject by enframing it in domestic suffering of the highest quality. The Berrugo's wife we only hear of as having sunk into death a silent martyr, and his daughter is a vague ineffective creature, who inspires us with no interest either before or after her conversion to civilisation. I have already said, it is with inarticulate humanity and odd village gossips that Pereda reaches his supreme note of genius. Juan Pedro, the loquacious fisherman, and Pedro Juan, his timid silent son, with his abortive efforts to propose to the girl he loves in a dismayed, wondering fashion, are the central figures, along with the hungry doctor, who keeps himself and his poor family alive on good-humoured gossip and extravagant concern for his neighbours. These characters and the unfolding of their daily lives are excellently conceived and executed.

The dialogue is vigorous, vivid, and breezy. It is life seized on the wing, and presented to you palpitating, without being ostensibly submitted to any refining process. I say "ostensibly", because Pereda is too polished an artist not to exercise choice and discretion, and too admirable a craftsman not to be able to conceal both. "Il faut être profond dans l'art ou dans la science pour en bien posséder les éléments", said that amazing scamp, Rameau's nephew. There can be no doubt of Pereda's complete possession of the elements of his art; he has penetrated to its very depth. He, too, has grown white in harness, and recognition coming over late, he had plenty of leisure to study his trade. "C'est le milieu et la fin qui éclaircissent les ténèbres du commencement". [156] The blaze of light shed upon Polanco (Pereda's residence outside Santander) within the last ten years reveals to us the old familiar story of early neglect expiated in a frenzy of late enthusiasm. This "modern Cervantes" was writing for thirty years before his right to the master's mantle was recognized. Now he has his

155 Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850) acquired popularity with the novels he began publishing in the 1830s and continued into the 1840s, collected under the title *La Comédie Humaine* [*The Human Comedy*]. Félix Grandet, also known as *le Père Grandet*, is one of the main characters in *Eugénie Grandet* (1833).

156 The two quotations belong to *Le Neveu de Rameau ou La Satire seconde* [*Rameau's Nephew, or the Second Satire*], which Denis Diderot (1713-84) wrote and revised during the 1760s and 1770s.

armchair in the Academy, and his last book, *Peñas Arriba*, ran through an enormous edition in a fortnight, the first event of the sort in Spain. No man, not even a successful general, could be surer than he of his public statue after death, and already the town of Santander has commissioned a popular artist to paint the most admired scene from *Sotileza* for a handsome sum to present to the author.

Peñas Arriba [Rocky Altitudes], with its slight human interest, and its excessive length, is the book of Pereda's that has been saluted with the heartiest welcome. Here it is the characters who form the accessory and landscape which fills the scene. Not with the sentimentalism of Bernardin de St. Pierre,[157] nor with the gorgeous declamation of Rousseau[158] and his disciple, Madame de Stäel;[159] still less partaking of the mild twaddle of landscape writers at home, who paint clouds and hills and sunsets as a background for flirtation and tea. It rather resembles *The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains*.[160] The "life" of the landscape melts into the life of the mountaineers, and they become inextricably one. It is the book of the upper mountains, the epic of rocks and escarped altitudes, filled in with a rough incommunicative society, reticent and hard in emotion, suppressing all indication of passion with a savage modesty, and quaintly in terror of anything outside the daily routine of labour, food, and rest – in a word, of the divagations of temperament, which is characteristic of Pereda himself. He cannot write a love-scene, nor do his characters seem able to face one. They beat about nature in semi-consciousness of their state, troubled, afraid, in desperate revolt against frank speech, or any of the outward signs of "love". The writer deftly skirts the phase, with a hasty acknowledgment of its power, with a cold suggestion of its charm. This is how he discharges his duty to lovers in the 636th page of *Peñas Arriba*, having brought his youth and maid face to face in throbbing emotion for the first time. The mountain lass looks in pallid fear at the haughty *madrileño*, who has gone through a severe and lengthy apprenticeship to the rough existence of the "upper rocks", and he feels as foolish as any village lout. The girl is afraid to recognize her feeling for this brilliant young

157 *Paul et Virginie* (1787) afforded the botanist and writer Jacques-Henri Bernardin de Saint- Pierre (1737-1814) a degree of popularity.

158 Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) excelled as a writer, pedagogue and philosopher. His political ideas were most immediately influential within the context of the French Revolution and his progressive ideas in the field of education have been long-standing.

159 Feminist writer and philosopher Madame de Stäel (1766-1817), the daughter of Geneva protestants, devoted *Lettres sur les ouvrages et le caractère de Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (1788) to Rousseau.

160 Published under the pseudonym of Charles Egbert Craddock, *The Prophet of the Great Smoky Mountains* (1885) was written by Mary Noailles Murfree (1850-1922). The novel focuses on Tennessee mountain life and has been hailed as one of the author's best works.

man, before whom she stands in humility as King Cophetua's beggar-maid.[161] With burning cheek and moist glance and throbbing bosom she murmurs a broken phrase to this effect, which lights up the fire in the lover's breast, and, the book being written in the first person, he says: "We acted the ever-eternal scene, so silly in the eyes of the cold and dispassionate spectator. But I, who until then had been one of these, found it even sublime, and until that moment I had no knowledge of the depths hidden in my own heart". This is all he says of the scene, and in the next paragraph has asked and obtained the hand of his beloved, and he informs us that the days follow to a celestial music:

> What more could I aspire to, insipid and disillusioned worldling, than to live by the heat of this divine fire which enflamed my heart and brain, and transformed me from an unfeeling, careless, and luxurious townsman into an active, diligent, and useful mountaineer? For such a love, with such a companion as she who has worked this stupendous miracle, what better nest than this sheltered, hidden valley in the midst of Nature's wonders, in the immensity, the omnipotence of her merciful Creator!

And this single cold page touching on love ends a volume of six hundred and thirty-eight pages! But this long book, too, has its quaint touches of humour, its flashes of wit, and Pereda's strokes of inimitable character-drawing.

161 The legend of "The King and the Beggar Maid" tells of how the powerful African King Cophetua suddenly became infatuated with the young beggar Penelophon on seeing her naked outside his palace. He weds her and they become a blissfully happy couple, admired and beloved of their subjects.

13 “Montserrat” (1897)

One of the most interesting pilgrimages of Europe is Montserrat. The ordinary traveller who is content with a single point of interest about a noted spot probably connects Montserrat solely with St Ignatius, remembers his long walk from Manresa to the Virgin’s shrine on the top of an escarped eminence, where he laid for ever at rest a gallant sword gallantly wielded at Pampeluna.[162]

But there are various recollections earlier still centred round Montserrat. In the first place there is the legend of the Virgin’s Statue, wrought by the hand of St Luke, and carried to Spain by no less a personage than St Peter himself.

Vilfredo, Count of Barcelona, sent his daughter, Riquilda, possessed of a devil, up to Montserrat to share the solitude of the hermit, Garin. The hermit, Garin, forgot his role with most lamentable consequences. He murders the maiden, buries her on the mountain side, and then flies off to Rome to escape Vilfredo and his own conscience. The Pope’s sentence pronounced on him is the strangest possible. He must crawl on hands and knees from Rome back to Barcelona, and there live like a wild beast. This he does so perfectly that his bowed and deformed body becomes as that of an animal, furry and inhuman. Count Vilfredo, hunting, captures him, and carries him chained for exhibition to Barcelona. The Count’s youngest child, of five months old, seeing the strange beast, cries out quite distinctly, “Rise, Garin, God has forgiven thee!” What could the Count do but forgive also in the face of such a prodigious miracle? When Garin led him to his lost daughter’s grave, Riquilda, buried for eight years, was found in perfect health and beauty.[163] This is the origin of the Monastery of Montserrat, built by Count Vilfredo.

But nothing the imagination of man could devise could equal the strangeness of the physical aspect of this grouping of stone, massed in such barbarous insistent relief, above the natural aspects of plain and mead and river and hillsides. Local history explains the prodigy by the earth’s convulsion at the moment of the Crucifixion. Every portion of stone is a gigantic

162 Iñigo López de Loyola (1491-1556), future founder of the Jesuits, was wounded at the Battle of Pamplona in 1521. It was during his recovery that he began to experience a spiritual calling. On his way to the Holy Land, he visited the Monastery of Montserrat, in Catalonia, where on the night of March 24, 1522 he had a vision and resolved to leave his military career for good. For several months, he lived an ascetic life in a cave in nearby Manresa.

163 Known across Europe during the Middle Ages, the legend of Fray Juan Garín (Fra Joan Garí, in Catalan) and his rape of Riquilda has also drawn the attention of many Spanish and Catalan authors, including Pedro Calderón de la Barca, Jacint Verdaguer and Josep Maria de Sagarra. Lynch affirms that the recovery of Riquilda triggered the construction of the famous Benedictine monastery. In fact, Count Wilfred the Hairy ordered the construction of a smaller convent nearby, Saint Cecilia of Montserrat.

human form – male, female, young of both sexes. Most are recumbent, in the attitude of sleep; a few seem clasped in revolt and horror of some momentous doom. As for me, who has watched these monstrous stone giants, above, below, in all views and lights, I cannot but believe that they are the remains of some prehistoric race, when heaven knows, humanity must have been hideous enough to justify earthquakes, deluges, and fire from above. The various expressions of terror and unconsciousness are so perfectly represented in this frightful world of stone that imagination easily constructs the facts. It is a barbarous and superterranean Pompeii. Instead of charming ladies at their toilet, frivolous dandies in lovely painted houses, which the southern excavations revealed, here you have flung into the upper air a loose-limbed, colossal, repugnant race, gathered together in the more brutal expression of existence. But it tells the same story less prettily. Some appalling mood of nature blights, arrests life, and on the atmospheric action petrifies the bodies. No guide book tells me this, but so I permit myself to account for all these hundreds and hundreds of gigantic forms, these limbs, hands, feet, busts, trunks, heads, features of both sexes and all ages.

The advice of experience is based upon previous error. I made the mistake of listening to Spaniards before going to Montserrat, instead of consulting Murray or Baedeker. In the first place, I pride myself, foolishly enough, on having travelled over most of Europe, to the confines of Turkey, without a red-covered guide-book. This is my weakness and my folly. It saves me from looking like a tourist, object of my horror and unjust contempt, since there is nothing on earth more respectable, more worthy of our admiration than a tourist. But, alas! it throws me upon local information, the most incorrect and most worthless. When you travel, in Spain especially, it behoves you to seek inspiration in the authentic pages of Murray or Baedeker, but never, oh, never, under any circumstances, rely upon the ignorance of the Spaniard. A Spaniard will go ten times to Montserrat (or elsewhere), and cheerfully misguide you thither on the eleventh. Inaccuracy, inflated language, and profound ignorance, are faithfully cultivated by the absurd race as dignified qualities. To know what he is talking about, to remember what he has seen, to be an accurate guide, are indignities which Spanish chivalry will not descend to. Hence, having addressed myself to several high-named and magnificent Hibernians who had several times visited Montserrat, it was natural I should be all abroad as regard route guides, excursions, and charges. I paid the usual price in purse and experience for my rash reliance upon local institutions.

Upon knowledge gained too late I proffer gratuitous and magnanimous advice to my readers. Take a single ticket from Barcelona to Montserrat, by Monistrol. The Spaniards will tell you to take a guide to San Germanico

[*sic*].[164] I did so at the cost of seven shillings, quite an unnecessary expense. The paths about Montserrat are as clearly marked as those of the Forest of Fontainebleau. You need no guide anywhere, except to the appalling caves of Collbató. It is one of the crack excursions of Montserrat, but I do not recommend it, for several reasons. I set out, not knowing, at a bad hour – 8 a.m. It is a ride (an expiation of several uncommitted crimes) of two and a half hours on a shadowless rocky mountain-side, descending by leaps and jerks from rock to rock. The guide book tells one the muleteers conduct you by the skirt of the mountain to the caves without taking the long hot road to the village. Not possessing this useful trans-Pyrenean information I was not aware of the fact, and permitted my deceitful guide, whose people lived in the village, to take me to the inn in his wretched personal interest. Here, by his perfidious command, I unwisely left my mule. The innkeepers, extolled by insane foreigners (beginning with the Comte de Paris or the Duc de Nemours), led me through the intricacies of a tidy little village, and put me in the hands of a man who looked like a scowling villain of the road. He proved what the common people in Spain generally are, kindly and inoffensive. Our tempers were put to the test under rays that struck the face like flailed fire up an atrocious mountain-side, an hour's zigzagging walk on burning stone, without a tree to cast the tiniest oasis of shade. Half way up I sat down on the edge of the precipice and clamoured for death. No image but that of the grave, dug particularly deep, seemed cool and dark enough for broiled skin and aching eyes. No adjective seemed strong enough to express my loathing of earth and life. When at last I did reach the caves that had, I believed, lured me to my doom, not even the fear of black-beetles and rats could withhold me from stretching my exhausted length on the ground, and gasping out my last instructions to the distraught guide, whose only duty I conceived it soon would be to carry the news of my death to the village. He did not despair, however. He drenched my head with water, and poured ice-cold lemonade down my throat. After half an hour's intense suffering I became reconciled to live [*sic*], and was able to explore these remarkable caves. The entrance is 30 metres above the path, in the middle of a vertical wall, which you climb by a ladder. There are, I think, nine caves of enormous size, penetrating inward and downward to the depths and the heart of the huge mountain. Some of the stalactite columns formed by the action of the water are of surprising delicacy and beauty. Illuminated with Bengal lights, the effect is an endless succession of columned halls, with spiral balustrades; long galleries where the incrustations on the walls look like strange and artistic drapery, graceful arches, and every form of architectural intricacy. The

164 Presumably Lynch heard "San Germanico" for "San Jerónimo" (Sant Jeroni, in Catalan), mentioned in the final paragraph of the article.

grotto of the stalactites is an immense nave, with a wonderful perspective of galleries, arches, stairways, and columns, and the gothic hall, one of the last of this extraordinary subterranean palace, built by the dropping of water, is as fine as a cathedral.

But pleasanter far are the over-ground beauties of Montserrat. The way to San Jerónimo lies on the wooded slopes, of the mountain, and when you reach the hermitage the view is superb. Such small things as towns and villages, though many are visible, sink into insignificance when the eye embraces the whole Pyrenean range, the mountains of Navarre, the vast blue sheet of earth's middle sea, and a bank of cloud against the dazzling heaven, which is the Balearic group of islands. Such a perspective of mountain, sea, and plain is unique and unforgettable. The walk to Santa Cecilia is more cheerful and more homely, and here you may sit at the wide wire windows, and look beyond La Pieda [*sic*][165] and the olive glades and the river Llobregat to the towns of Tarrasa and Sabadell.

165 Unknown place name. Lynch may have been referring to what was the village of Piera, close to Montserrat, or may have been alluding to a *pineda*, i.e., a pine forest, nearby.

14 “An Unnoted Corner of Spain” (1897)

With the salient features of Andalusia and Castille the untravelled reader is sufficiently familiar. Without ever having left our library corner, we have no reason to be unacquainted with the old-world beauties of Seville, Granada, Córdova, Toledo, Burgos; with the newer attractions of Madrid, and even San Sebastián. These towns lie, happily, along the tourists’ beaten track. We have read of them in the beautiful prose of Washington Irving,[166] of Théophile Gautier,[167] and of lesser writers. But of the lovely province of Galicia the untravelled reader knows comparatively nothing. He conceives Spain in landscape to be a mingling of desert and oriental paradise: interminable plains, bleak and tawny, bounded by majestic sierras, capped with snow, shadowed with rare blots of pine-woods, eternally empty and grand like the boundless plains; and luxuriant splendours of Eastern vegetation and colour, of ruby hills and palm and aloes, gardens of scarlet pomegranate and golden orange and citron, rills of running silver, bowers of cedar, magnolia, and myrtle. These are the features of ugly Castile and glowing Andalucia: the one stern and historic, the legendary land of hero; the other warm and romantic, the voluptuous dream of imagination, the land of guitar and castanet, of love, of rhythm, of dance and dagger.

But each province of Spain has its marked individuality, by which it is separated from the rest as almost a different nation. The natives rarely say “We are Spaniards”. They express themselves: “We are Catalonians, we are Aragonese, we are Galicians”, with a proud and firm resolve not to be huddled in a promiscuous and ignoble general designation, which makes them part of a race composed of so many antipathetic elements. Nothing could be more opposed in characteristics, in feature, in dress, in language, and national habits than any province of the north of Spain and any of the south. Again you must divide the northern provinces, clearly distinguishing between the very distinguishable Basques, the Catalans, the Asturians, the Leonese, and the Galicians. All these are what they call themselves, “a different people”. Basque meeting Basque upon the frontier of Castile, greet as to Englishmen meeting in New York. *“Mi paisano!”* they exclaim, and impart their impressions of the Castilians as if they represented the more or less sympathetic stranger in a foreign land. Amalgamation is im-

Reprinted in *Littell’s Living Age*, 214 (Sept. 1897), 644-52 and *Eclectic Magazine*, 66 (Oct. 1897), 510-19.

166 American writer of short stories, travel sketches and history. Thanks to works such as *Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* (1829) and *Tales of the Alhambra* (1832), Irving (1783-1859) commodified the Romantic representation of Spain among readers of the English-speaking world.

167 The travel book on Spain *Tra los montes* (1843), by Théophile Gautier (1811-72), acquired popularity in the English-speaking world as *Wanderings in Spain* (1853).

possible with such striking diversity of element, where the single attribute in common is a passionate conservatism. Hence the broken history of the country; hence that lamentable and nobly tragic tale of the war against Napoleon. Each province fought, with dogged determination to ignore the efforts of the others, its own desperate fight, sometimes with magnificent heroism, sometimes with inexplicable baseness, but always with the persistent design of separateness. Understanding so much, we read the significance of the splendid patriotism of Zaragoza, the Aragonese being a hardy, indomitable race, and the inconceivable cowardice of Valencia, the Valencians being traitorous, a facile, a pleasure-loving people: the one, rough and unchangeable like its mountains, sombre and sullen like its river, the dark wide Ebro; the other, flowery, evanescent, like the bloom and fruit of its smiling extent of orchard and garden, shallow like its pleasant Turia. So near by geographical lines; so afar by lines of character. One, besieged, revealing the noblest qualities of man, the other the meanest! Then talk of Spain as if the land were solely comprised of one or the other!

The province of Galicia has neither the vices nor virtues of Zaragoza and Valencia. The Galicians are less rough, less obstinate, though not less martial, than the Aragonese mountaineers, with their traditional pride and independence; less pleasing than the delightful, faithless, and money-loving Valencians. For mirth and enjoyment, along with beauty in women and luxuriance in landscape, go to mirthful and cultivated Valencia, the garden of Spain. But for grandeur, for the picturesque, for variety and the untrained loveliness of nature, go to Galicia, justly called the Switzerland of Spain.[168] Here you have mountain passes, dusky ravines, gorgeous torrents flailing foam and spray adown their rocky channels, broad river effects, grand sierras, pine and oak and chestnut woods, and sweet familiar lanes breathing of fragrant honeysuckle, of yellow broom and white heather. You have bracken and bell-heather running inland under the slim pine columns, daisies, snapdragons, and gorse, and along the road the common garden rose of every hue. Farther down the splendid coast, from Pontevedra to Vigo, the vegetation has a yellower, more southern luxuriance. Here the vine-fields are sheets of ambered green, yellow waving like the sparkle of light through the trellised foliage. The air is thrillingly pure, and [the] Atlantic lets in its broad stroke of violet through every break of the landscape, adding to the enchantment of its indescribable gaiety. When you are tired of the sea you have the pleasures of the forest, and these abound on all sides. Nowhere have I seen pines growing in such abundance, darkening for miles the long

168 Already in use during Lynch's lifetime, the designation became more common after the publication of *Galicia, the Switzerland of Spain* (1909) by anthropologist Annette Meakin, who arrived in La Coruña (A Coruña, in Galician) in January 1908. She spent several months travelling across the territory, taking photographs and gathering information on the Galician language and local customs.

wide slopes of the hills; nowhere chestnuts of such magnificent girth, of a green so deep and rich, spreading such shade as to give a tropical aspect to these woods. To this the maize, with its delicate tassels, its broad bright leaf, brings its airy graceful charm, and fields of young plantain add their vivid smile. The lips unconsciously broaden, the eyes kindle, under the captivation of nature's joyous revelation. It would be worse than incongruous, it would almost seem a desecration of such permanent mirth, to receive here sad news from home. One has fallen into the heart of quiescent pleasure, the still satiety of the senses warmly shut in from murmuring memories; and to remember grief and care and futile industry, to dwell upon the trials and troubles of the busy world outside this Eden of blue and gold and green, would be a folly and an impertinence beyond the efforts of grateful imagination. For gratitude must ever be the feeling prompted by these delightful pauses in the smiling byways of life's rough road.

There are several ways the traveller may start his tour in Galicia. He may take ship for Santander, for La Coruña, or go direct to Vigo. Or he can choose the journey thither by land should the sea not be to his taste. The Paris mail will take him as far as Venta de Baños, a dreary little junction close to Valladolid, and here he will catch from Madrid the slow Galician mail, which he can leave at Monforte, and begin his tour from the south of the province, wending at leisure up to La Coruña and along the northern coast as far as Pasajes, should fancy prompt him beyond Rivadeo, the last little coasting-town of Galicia, on the edge of the Asturias. Thus the marine coward will be spared the sufferings of a sea-voyage, though he will miss the bold beauties of a matchless shore-line that only reveal themselves in all their splendid significance of sweeping curve, of craggy scar, of grand sierra and blue bay, to the gazer from ocean's way.

But this is the route I should suggest to the lovers of the wave. Take the Paris mail as far as San Sebastián, or boat to Vigo, according to the time of year, and whether you wish Paris to be the start or termination of your journey. When you have admired the famous Concha, the lovely shell-shaped beach of San Sebastián, and feasted your eyes on the view from the top of the hill, made your first bow in Spanish, with a musical "Gracias", and smiled a gratified smile on hearing yourself for the first time addressed as "caballero" or "señora", drive back to Pasajes. You will already have seen it from the station and found it dull and ugly. But the drive from San Sebastián will begin the mending of your opinion. Not that it is a beautiful drive, but it is so much better than the railroad. If you are lucky enough to find a boat at Pasajes for Bilbao, take it, however bad it may be, and you will thank me. Should you start from Vigo, however, and wind up your sea-travels at Pasajes, as I did, by a summer dawn, you will

have still more reason for thankfulness. Was it by dawn that Lafayette[169] gazed upon these receding shores as he sailed from this picturesque little harbour with Spanish gold to aid him in America's war against England? The houses drop into the water as they do in Venice, and moored against each wet doorstep is a boat, while three sides of the old yellow church are stained with the damp line of the ebb and flow of the tide. No fairer dream could imagination evoke than this soft twilit picture. The water is green, clear as a gem of mystic enchantment. A haggard light gleams against the little shut casements, and the walls of the dwellings built round the bay are grey and yellow, their wet steps wandering under the waves, and the dark lines of boats pulsing against them above. So still, so silent, with the first beams of morning sending golden rays down the silver air, and the stars still faint in the brightening sky.

On sea you are never far from the mountainous coast, and Bilbao, with its activities, its factories and mines, its truly elegant and imposing commercial note, its long river-line covered with mighty vessels, and its handsome modern edifices, will be a surprise for the dreamer of dead romance, of cloaked and picturesque indolence, of silent, medieval streets and forsaken *plazas*. If only for this surprise, Bilbao is worth seeing. Here do not look for one of the larger steamers, but seek a small Spanish trading-vessel. For a song you may have a capital cabin, kindness, good-nature, and pleasant sailor companions, and you will pay a dollar a-day for good food and wine. Book for La Coruña. These trading-vessels stop at every out-of-the-way port, run alongside the little wharfs, and offer you the occasion of seeing towns and villages not mentioned in the guide-book, with less trouble and fatigue – though certainly with less excitement – than the land route. Even Bilbao will not have prepared you for the stately quays of Santander; and here you will have time to drive down to the Sardinero, the summer rival of San Sebastián, a delightful bathing-place. At first glance it wears almost a tropical aspect, owing to the illimitable stretch of burning sands and the violent contrast of bare light-brown rocks with the fierce blue of the ocean under a heaven as intense, to the hard scant foliage and the white unshadowed roads. But there are softened nooks, bits where the rocks gleam grey against the crystal jade of the sea, and the hills throw purple shadows against the light; where green plays its freshening sparkle over the harshly-toned landscape, and terraced houses peep out of orchard bloom and blossom.

Gijon is the next halting-place. Except as an opportunity for visiting Oviedo, where a train takes you in an hour and a half at a snail's pace, I

169 Travelling under a false name, the Marquis of Lafayette (1757-1834) sailed from Bordeaux in late March 1777, calling at the fishing port of Pasajes (Pasaia, in Basque). Ignoring a royal decree prohibiting his departure for America, he left for the United States on 26 April. He reached Georgetown (South Carolina) on 13 June and soon joined George Washington's Continental Army.

know no other reason for stopping at Gijon. It is ugly and uninteresting, but there is a quaint *plaza* shaped like a three-cornered hat, with an old palace-front worth examination, and the imposing statue of Childe Pelayo, the famous victor of Covadonga. Gijon was also birthplace of Jovellanos, one of Spain's modern heroes and sages, and you may doff to an insignificant statue to him in a dusty insignificant public garden at the top of the long *corrida*, the principal street of Gijon.[170]

The shores of Gijon are hardly out of sight when you behold the beautiful coast of Galicia. You have come forth in search of the picturesque, and you will nowhere else experience better. Hours in these irregular voyages are never to be counted on, but I wish you the luck of dropping into the exquisite harbour of Rivadeo by sunset. Red flush and orange flame send their hues over the magnificent peaks, and drop red and glimmering gold into the heart of the purple waves. The town lies white against the mountains, and the glitter of water may be seen running down the steep ravines and broken precipices of the sloping shore. Black rocks, and green gorges with the rays filtering through their underwood, and the great firth and river meeting, and hollow sandy spaces travelling like white roads inward. Opposite, another little white town, banked snugly against the wooded hills. I have forgotten its name, but it has the prettiest imaginable effect in rivalry with larger Rivadeo; and as the flushed heavens pale, and colour steals out of sky and shore and sea, the empurpled peaks make heavy and massive shadows in the delicate gloom of twilight.[171] Their darkness gives a finer radiance to the early stars, and the town lights below are yellow spots dropped tremulously among the dusky trees.

An evening may be cheerfully spent among the dark streets, the handsome squares, and the thronged *alameda* of Rivadeo. When summer comes, supper is postponed till as late as half-past ten. Every one is abroad from dusk till midnight, tasting the starlit air, and conversing. These Spanish *alamedas* in old-fashioned Spanish towns, where hospitality is not practised, are the public drawing-rooms, while the *plaza* is the men's club. Men go to the *plaza* to conspire, to gamble, to curse their enemies and plot disturbance, to blacken the character of the faithless fair. They walk the *alameda* to ogle, to whisper, to ease their heart of its weight of sentimental woe, to lament, conjure, laugh, and gossip. Women go to meet their friends and foes, talk over the fashions in shrill animated tones, over

170 According to Spanish historiography, the Asturian nobleman Pelagius (Don Pelayo, in Spanish) initiated the Christian reconquest of the Peninsula following his victory at the Battle of Covadonga (722). Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos (1744-1811) strove throughout his life to implement enlightened economic and educational policies with a view to modernising Spain. He became known for his wide-ranging reformist ideas, which often brought him into conflict with the Inquisition.

171 Lynch is most probably referring to Castropol, in Asturias.

the town's wrong-doings, and criticise their neighbours' clothes. Fashions and scandal are the topics of burning universal interest. The men are as deeply interested in the question of raiment as the women, and have as keen an eye for cut and texture and trimming. Give a Spanish child a lesson to learn, and however long it may have applied its mind to mastering it, nothing of it will be remembered twenty-four hours afterwards. But let the same child, so incredibly stupid in the matter of lessons, cast a single glance upon a stranger, and nothing in his or her external appearance will pass unnoticed or be forgotten years afterwards. If you wear a dress to-day in Spain, and put it by for five years, then wear it again, the smallest Spanish child will be able to remind you of the day and date of its last appearance – will be able to tell you if the trimming has been altered or the cut. The race lives by observation, not by thought. It sees everything and learns nothing.

More charming still is the indescribably quaint small town of Viveiro. I believe Borrow and myself are the only two who have visited it.[172] The oldest inhabitant avers that I am the first foreign woman whose foot has trodden its street. The sensation my appearance created on the minute wharf and on the brilliant market-place induces me to credit this statement. When you travel in Spain, never omit to visit these delightful market-places at sunrise or thereabouts. They are entirely run by women, all smiling, gesticulating, chattering, and imperturbably good-humoured. They wear kerchiefs on head and over bosom of very pronounced hues of yellow or red, sometimes hideous ones of black. I do not give them for beauties in bewitching attire, and I cannot truthfully say I admire the most unbecoming way they tie these ugly handkerchiefs under their chins. But their cleanliness, their vividness, their sparkle, the kindly attractiveness of their universal character, the visible delight they take in serving you, in talking to you, above all, the absence of squalor, of vulgarity, of any touch of repulsiveness, so common – nay, so inevitable – with the same class in England, make a visit to these markets a joy and a refreshment. Besides, the fruit is so plentiful, so cheap. For twopence you may carry away as much of whatever fruit is in season as your arms can hold; and then how are you to discharge your debt for the goodwill, the sweet service, the jokes and laughter and the dear broad smiles of the attractive Spanish peasant woman? She sends you away with a cherry between your lips and a cordial in your frame – a cordial that cannot be purchased anywhere,

172 When George Borrow reached Viveiro in 1837, it was already dark and heavy rain was falling. Even though everybody "appeared to be buried in profound slumber", together with his guides, he finally managed to find accommodation in the local, dilapidated *posada*. The following morning, in drier weather, Borrow notes that Viveiro "consists of little more than one long street, on the side of a steep mountain thickly clad with forests and fruit trees". See *The Bible in Spain*, vol. 2. 3rd ed. London: John Murray, 1843, 294.

and is composed of the bright nothings of a morning greeting, of eyeshot charged with human lovableness, of charity and good-humour.

When the world was younger, Viveiro must have had its hour of importance. Else how [to] explain the emblazoned and turreted arch under which you pass from the wharf to the *plaza*, the half-effaced escutcheons on the old forsaken dwellings along the river beyond the bridge at its mouth? It has the look of a noble sunken to tatters, but not oblivious of birth and its insistent privileges. It still has its arms to show, its towered and battlemented front, and your handsome new towns have no such romantic casements, no such quaint old balconies, nor the appropriate matching of green lattices and dull brown stone. Then the gardens, the orchards – all mountains and valleys an unending orchard in blossom or in fruit – the broad foliaged roads over the bridge running to an aisled perspective, the dear blue little bay begirt with sunny hills, and the wide river sweeping down the mountain-side with one splendid curve to the ocean, – who would not rest awhile at Viveiro, and muse with boat and horse, forgetting and forgotten of the busy world?

There are pretty coasting villages, too, where you stop: Cillero, where the girls in long dark barns pack barrels of sardines that gleam like silver; and Santa Marta, beautifully bayed. These lead you by alluring interests to the first historic point of Galicia – La Coruña, the place which records the noblest sacrifice hero ever made, and represents laurel-crowned defeat.[173] You have had a glimpse of the opening of the bay of Ferrol, a remembrance *à vol d'oiseau* of an Italian lake, softly banked by green sunny slopes, and far out from land is pencilled clearly the famous Torre de Hercules. This is now a very commodious light-house, electrically illuminated, with a handsome terrace atop where the lighthousemen may promenade in haughty survey of sea and land. The mountain-peaks are their neighbours, the stars just a little above them, and such the altitude of their daily existence that ocean itself for them loses something of its immensity, and land dwindles into insignificance. Not for lack of beauty, however, for the picture is fraught with endless charm; but everything from this great height appears engagingly small, whether you look across amethyst-tinted water, level fields, or the curves of a superb shore-line. The bay is less impressive than that of Rivadeo, because the mountains have diminished to low green hills with broad slips of plain between, and here and there a dusky valley or a bleak upland. There is little strange or picturesque for the English eye, except the island fortress, San Anton, of sombre castellated grey, with light splashes of green, and, as you look beyond the metal pier, a flashing line of glass galleries.

173 During the Battle of La Coruña, on 16 January 1809, Lieutenant-General Sir John Moore was mortally wounded while leading the British Army against the French troops of Marshal Soult.

Each house in La Coruña has its glass *mirador*, with a single pane here and there set, to open on a downward slant, through which the idle woman thrusts a well-dressed head, and leans over folded arms to gaze down into the street in placid contemplation. The *mirador* is the woman's kingdom. The man has the streets and the *plazas*. The light, above all toward sunset, striking on these glass galleries, sends back a prism of magical hues, and sometimes it is difficult to distinguish the faces for the blinding splendours which radiate from their setting.

The town is a handsome, an effective one. It has little to offer as charm for the senses, less wherewithal to arrest the antiquary, but the streets are white and clean, without a touch of dulness, San Andrés and the Calle Real such as any provincial town might be proud of – broad, bright, with a notable air of elegance. History sends you to the old Battery, now a botanical garden, unroofed, with antique windows let into the walls, blurred by wind and rain and wave beating everlastingly against the glass, where in the centre, a point of religious pilgrimage, stands the plain monument of Sir John Moore and the slab erected to the Serpent.[174] The children play about here between school-hours, but you will often find it empty for a musing pause. Charles V held the Cortes here once, and you may see the rough low arch through which he embarked for Germany, called the Emperor's Gate; and on the other side, below the prison, the still ruder arch through which his son of terrible memory – Felipe II, a guest at the Franciscan monastery hard by – set sail for England and an unloved bride.[175] But if La Coruña offers meagre shelter to the wandering imagination, and lends no assistance whatever to the evocation of momentous medieval pictures, it makes a pleasant starting-point of many a delightful tour by horse or diligence – the roads hospitably open to the millionaire's carriage and to the foot of the modest pedestrian. Before crossing the slip of open sea into the lovely bay of Ferrol, you may ride or drive to Oleiros, and dream yourself contentedly among the uplands of Surrey. Onward, as you round the last spur of the hills which hides the sea from you, the note of peasant costume grows more effective. Though the jacket is short, it has not the jaunty cut of Andalucia. The long black gaiters are of felt, closely buttoned to the knee. Between the knee and short black breeches, also closely buttoned along the thigh, are folds of spotless linen. Sometimes the breeches are of velvet or corduroy, sometimes of rough black cloth. Youth adorns itself

174 The British torpedo cruiser HMS *Serpent*, carrying a crew of 175 men, mostly naval cadets, was shipwrecked off the Galician coast, near Camariñas, on the night of 10 November 1890. Only three men survived.

175 Philip II departed from La Coruña on July 13, 1554, with a fleet of seventy vessels and reached Southampton a week later. He was travelling with the purpose of sealing his marriage to Mary Tudor. On Philip's accession to the throne in 1556, Mary became Queen Consort. It would appear that Philip never cherished any affection towards his spouse.

with a red sash and such peacock plumes as a scarlet sleeveless jacket open upon the full white shirt, an outer fawn coat adorned with rows of little brass buttons, and a fawn peaked cap with a red ribbon round it. The sedater, whose days of vanity are over, content themselves with a short black jacket to match the breeches, open to display the full white shirt, and a conical black felt hat. The limbs are generally slender, the extremities small, the faces tanned and sullen, full of a boorish, incommunicative pride. The dialect is rough and unattractive, with a twang of harsh Portuguese running through the whining broken Spanish. Good-nature here as elsewhere is the dominant feature of local character – good-nature and a haughty offhand antipathy to trade.

What strikes you most in all your rambles throughout Galicia is the obvious fact that all the outdoor labour is accomplished by the women. The men seem to be abroad chiefly to air their becoming attire and flick the hedges with big sticks, the cigarette ever between their lips. But the women are old and tanned and wrinkled at twenty-five, and wear nothing to catch the eye but a bright kerchief. If husband and wife move anywhere, you will see the man cheerfully smoking, with his hands in his pockets, or gallantly flourishing the stick of leisure, and the woman beside him carrying on the top of her head all the family belongings in a big trunk. The women work in the fields, are the porters, itinerant merchants, the water-carriers and fruit-growers of the land. By sunrise they throng the markets, carry your luggage to and from train or boat, and walk behind the squealing wooden-wheeled cars drawn by wild oxen. The sound of these barbaric bucolic vehicles is only less enervating and plaintive than the *gaita*, the bagpipe of Galicia. There is much of the Celt in the race, as well as much that is familiar to Celtic eyes in the fresh green landscape. The male is proud, vain, martial, endures hardship without complaint, despises his womenfolk, to whom he makes over all ignoble labour, treats woman frankly as a creature of inferior order and his servant, and is apt, under the influence of the coarse wine of the country and the noxious *aguardiente* (Spanish *eau-de-vie*), to resort to physical chastisement should she thwart him. But he is faithful and patriotic. His wife is the pick of womanhood, and Galicia is the pick of God's earth. Meanwhile, did he but know it, the female is unquestionably his better-half. Her folly is shown in longsuffering; but she is a fund of good-nature, kindly manner, and energy. What activity there is is hers, and without her the rich natural resources of a land that yields two crops, two grape seasons, would be far more neglected than it is. While my lord the peasant is out upon the highways idly discoursing on politics or begging your admiration of his neat gaiters and scarlet jacket, she by dawn is out in the fields, or on her way to market with baskets of fruit and flowers and vegetables large enough to hold a family; or on her way to catch the first train and dispossess the traveller of his luggage, industriously knitting, crocheting, or embroidering as she waits.

The distractions of La Coruña are few. The town is abroad, walking the Calle Real or the pretty public gardens along the harbour from the late afternoon to the late supper-hour, and after that it goes to sleep. I have ventured forth and found it empty at ten o'clock. This is a local loss, for La Coruña by moonlight is a town of enchantment. Its whiteness enhances the dream-like effect of moon and stars. But the Spaniards are the least sentimental or aesthetic of observers. Art, the beautiful, form no part of their lifelong reverie. They who have fashioned such exquisite things have no understanding, less reverence, of their value. And to walk, for the mere gratification of fancy, through lovely empty streets, seems to them the last note of lunacy. The theatre is very superior to anything in a town of the same rank at home. For two shillings you may enjoy a velvet arm-chair in the *parterre*. Here I saw Echegaray's last play, *Mancha que Limpia* [The Cleansing Stain]. It was, on the whole, not badly acted for an insignificant provincial town, and, in my opinion, the acting was on a level with the play. The Spaniards are not critical. In this they resemble the Irish. They are proud of Echegaray, who has done some good work, and some work inconceivably bad.[176] But these dear sympathetic Spaniards can see no difference between the good and the bad. Because Echegaray wrote *The Great Galeoto*, *Mancha que Limpia* must be applauded. While the first is almost great, I never held my soul in patience over more childish drivel, more twaddling gossip, than the latter.

Sometimes there is an inferior circus, where I saw an exquisitely graceful female jockey ride as I have never seen man or mortal ride before. The Rational Dress Society might be guided by her miraculous instinct in choice of raiment.[177] Her dainty high-topped boots, her white leggings revealing without impropriety or abandoned charm a matchless perfection of slim form, and a beautifully fitting yellow and brown satin and plush jacket, as long as a Louis Quinze coat, with cap to match, made a whole of bewitching effect. That she, too, was beautiful goes without saying. She remains in memory as the single instance of a delicately refined and feminine creature, flashing a queer inexplicable poetic grace, without any trace of boldness, of vulgarity, through the malodorous atmosphere of circus and music-hall. Or you may occasionally feast your eye on Andalucian dancing. Spurious or real Sevillans come up from blest regions, and dance the *Sevillana*, most popular of dances, to the thin, abrupt, hysterical drone of their oriental music. This dance, as indeed do all the songs of the people, ends like an unfinished phrase, upon the top of a sob, a gurgle of laughter

176 See Lynch's "José Echegaray" in the *Contemporary Review* (1893). Her translations, *The Great Galeoto* and *Folly or Saintliness* followed (1905). Premiered in Madrid on 9 February 1895, *Mancha que limpia* tells the story of a woman maddened by jealousy who kills her lover's wife.

177 The Society for Rational Dress, established in London in 1881, was a reform movement that opposed tight clothing and impractical footwear for women. The Society's *Gazette* was issued between 1888-89.

with a sudden suggestive and dramatic gesture. Its fascination is eternal, matter of sensation, not of criticism or judgement. The Galicians seem to have added nothing to the national dances. They content themselves with the rude whining bagpipe, the *gaita*, a splendid-looking instrument, with polished pipes, shining brass, and red velvet bag, bedizened with fringe and bobbins. It is spoken of as a local treasure, borne in processions with reverential tenderness, eagerly looked out for and recognised, in its preposterous assault upon eye and ear, as the harp may have been in bardic days. However, the brightest and most affecting spectacle I saw at La Coruña was the departure of the troops for Cuba on the big liner, the *Maria Cristina*. Never have I seen such pronounced, almost intoxicating gaiety of sea and shore.[178] The magnificent bay was besprinkled with colours – red and yellow, of course, the prevailing hues. Flags and banners waved, brilliant uniforms in a shock against brilliant dresses, the red and white military plumes mixing with every tint in parasol. From sunrise to sundown the music played, and people snatched odd moments for meals, for nobody seemed to be under roof all the day. A startling and pretty sight was the impetuous action of a portly well-looking and well-dressed lady who saw a young soldier walking dejectedly alone down the pier in his travelling grey, with knapsack strapped over his shoulder. All the rest had their friends, their *novias*,[179] mothers, relatives, and made the usual gallant effort to look elated and full of hope. This lad had no one, and one divined he was carrying a desolate heart overseas. The handsome woman burst from her group of friends, took the boy's hand, and said, "My son has already gone to Cuba. He is in the regiment of Andalucia, and sailed two months ago. You may meet him, Pepe G-. Take this kiss to him". She leant and kissed his cheek. An English boy would have shown awkwardness, but these graceful Southerners are never at a loss for a pretty gesture and a prettier word. The boy flushed with pleasure, and still holding her hand, said, with quite a natural gallantry, without smirk or silly smile, "And may I not take one for myself as well, *señora*?" The lady reddened duskily, laughed a little nervously, and bent and kissed him again, to the frantic applause of soldiers and civilians, while the boy walked on braced and happy.

Ferrol is, if smaller, a prettier town than Coruña. Nothing more captivating than its animated aspect. The sweet-smelling, tropical public gardens, as luxuriant as an oriental dream, where the most attractive working girls of the entire world flaunt their provocative charms in the face of admiring

178 The *Maria Cristina*, a transatlantic liner belonging to the *Compañía Trasatlántica Española* was temporarily chartered by the Spanish government to transport troops to Cuba to quell the anti-colonialist conflict escalating on the island. The contingent that Lynch saw boarding the ship departed from La Coruña in late February 1896 together with other soldiers aboard the *Montevideo*.

179 Fiancées.

naval officers; the lively Calle Real, where *señoras* and *señoritas* parade until midnight in the latest resplendent fashions exaggerated with provincial fervour; the stupendous dockyards – the largest, they say, in the world: all offer you varied and irresistible attractions. Add to the excitements of shore the varied beauties of a harbour locked in like an Italian lake, with a circle of soft green hills, of old grey fortresses, and valleys shadowed with dusky ravines and woods. Beyond the dear low hills are banked the wandering range of sierras cleaving the upper and under blue in all their naked, savage, and forked majesty.

At Ferrol the traveller should take coach for Betanzos. This is a road seemingly carved through all nature's most glorious effects for a god. It really seems impertinent that a mere mortal for a few shillings should have the right to enjoy so much. Your way is cut literally through points of exclamation. Could yonder effect of mountains be bettered? Yes; for here you have a waterfall, a white radiance of blinding beauty flailed into a broadly flowing river. There an old fortress starting out of a murmuring forest; here a change from exotic foliage to naked chasms; craggy torrents flashing in a ravenous roar into tranquil river-washed meads. North, south, east, and west combine like a kaleidoscopic dream, to show you how diverse, how consistently lovely, is the face of our earth.

At Betanzos you may take the train for Monforte, and thence branch off for Pontevedra. This is an interesting old Roman town. It lies in a divine setting of landscape, and the dominant nature of its marine beauties will be accepted when I assure the reader that the five surrounding bays are said to form the most exquisite line of coast of Europe. I know nothing, as a whole, to compare with the prolonged, magnificent effects of Carril, Villagarcía, Pontevedra, Marín, terminating at the famous bay of Vigo. The bay of Carril by sunset, of Marín by dawn, of Vigo at any hour! – and the witching intermediate excursions by sea, by land, by rail and coach!

Pontevedra has the air of fallen majesty. True, I can find nothing in its history to justify this air, but there is whispered mention in the beautiful ruins of a Benedictine monastery, a small Cluny, of great constables and admirals, who filled the ranks of forgotten heroes. Its delightful historic pretentiousness is equalled by an old French town, whose history also hardly justifies so much insistent medieval splendour -Beaucaire. According to record, Beaucaire and Pontevedra claim a great deal too much. Both seem the cradles of mailed heroes, of great deeds, of imperishable hours in history. But the fragrant, sanative pine-woods outside Pontevedra have nothing to do with Gothic façades, with granite frowns, with Roman ruins and bridges, with exquisite column and pillar and forgotten legend. Here you are in the heart of Nature at her kindest. The pines of Pontevedra are famous – so tall, so strong, so plentiful, that, alas! – the natives, urged by a need of lucre, thin these grand pine-forests to supply the shipyards of England and Scotland with timber. The number of trees cut down and

embarked yearly for the North is colossal. I believe, until this trade was started, the whole country was dense with wood, while now the forests lie in patches, and if the demand continues with its present ferocity, and corresponding increase of temptation, the pleasant woods of Pontevedra will rest among the glories that have been.

Along with the gratifying sights and sounds and smells of wood-land, of river, and of ruin, you have the begirdling enchantment of blue surge and translucent foam. Take the steam-tram to Marín, and say then if you can better your surroundings in the most favoured spots of Italy, of Greece, of Switzerland. Watch the sunset hues over the clear scalloped hills along a sky flashing iridescent flames from its rich heart. Look at the sails of the boats, white or red or brown, shot out with a fascinating unreality of outline, cut so startlingly clear in the intensified atmosphere. Stare drowsily across the liquid field of bemusing indigo, surrounded as a dream, captivating as nothing else in nature, and then give your eyes to the exquisite lines of the warm wooded slope. Here may you nod in the opium-eater's open-eyed reverie, with softness of curve to temper brilliance of colour, with the dusk of the woods to tame the unabated majesty of [the] Atlantic, with the peaceful flow of rivulet and rill through plumed and tufted crevices and crags tuning their sweet pastoral song for the indolent ears.

Or take boat for Vigo, or train through vine and plain fields, where the breath of the South steals over you like sun-spray, and you are too happy, too wrapped round with exterior loveliness and mirth, even to find an apt quotation for the relief of surcharged feelings. Vigo itself, divinely situated and most eccentrically constructed, is not beautiful, but the bay and the coast-line are of magical splendour. When you have made the turn of the harbour and racked your brain for an appropriate adjective, tired of the old ones, you may cheerfully take the train to Pontevedra, admire the other lovely harbours of Villagarcía and Carril, wander among the woods, and then face the imposing monuments of Santiago, of Compostella. It is not my design to write here of Santiago. Such majesty of architecture as that unique *plaza* alone calls for a corresponding gravity of treatment. The pen of learning, of research, of thrilled reverence, and several sheets of paper, are demanded for such a subject. I merely sketch the route, mentioning Santiago as the chief point of interest in Galicia. You have matter here for a week's observation, and this hardly allows of any interval for the needful periods of unwatchful ecstasy. Santiago I place among the most beautiful and distinctive towns of the world, beside Florence, Toledo, and Oxford.

From Santiago the coach-road, eight hours by diligence, takes you to La Coruña, unless you have preferred at Betanzos to return to La Coruña, and start thence for Santiago, Pontevedra, and Vigo, in which case you can catch the Galician mail at Monforte and travel home by land, or take the boat from Vigo.

15 “Toledo” (1898)

The Toledo you visit to-day is the Toledo of Gautier’s day,[180] Toledo as she fell from eminence as Spain’s capital into gloomy obscurity, when the rising of her Comuneros, under Juan de Padilla, was quelled by Charles Quint, and later, when the morose Philip chose miserable, ugly Madrid for his capital.[181] Belted by her legendary river of golden water, the yellow, untraveled Tagus, she sits, forsaken, beautiful, and austere upon her throne of seven steep rocks. The train deposits the traveller at the foot of the town, and at once his senses are besieged and gratified. In these dull days it is a sensation to enter a forlorn city by such a noble bridge as that of Alcántara, turreted and castellated on either side. Imagination is projected back into the feudal ages, and one almost hears the flourish of trumpets that accompany martial drama. The banks of this yellow river are the shores of sombre poetry; the broken walls and ramparts that circle so magnificently upward to the foot of the huge Alcázar are a protest against the mediocrity of our modern taste and civilisation. For Toledo clings to the past, and still wears the visage of proud and inconsolable regret with which she closed the last page of her intimate history. Just so brown and barren, with such a front of unflinching sternness, such an air of charmed slumber and living legend, the verdure of the bright Vega[182] lending grace to the splendid sadness it so sparklingly surrounds, must she have looked in her great day of hieratic glory, when Councils were held here, and Gothic sovereigns dutifully knelt to armed archbishops, in her brief poetic hour of Moorish triumph, in her long shout of feudal revolt.

From the two bridges at either end of the town, San Martin and Alcántara, the road rounds what remains of Wamba’s walls,[183] cut along the edge of the steep rocks upon which the picturesque old city is built. Writing of these walls and gateways and bridges, Street says: “They are the finest I

180 Apart from describing the main sights and monuments, in the chapter “An Excursion to Toledo” in *Wanderings in Spain* (1853), Gautier also focuses on other aspects of the city barely discussed here by Lynch, such as the figure of El Greco and the local sword-making industry.

181 The Revolt of the Comuneros was a popular insurrection that took place in the Kingdom of Castile between 1520 and 1521. Citizens protested against the privileges of the high nobility and the political and economic measures recently implemented by Charles I, a king born and raised in Flanders whom many considered a foreigner. The leaders of the revolt, Juan de Padilla, Juan Bravo and Francisco Maldonado, were beheaded after the defeat at the battle of Villalar on 23 April 1521. Despite resisting a few more months, Toledo finally surrendered in October. During the reign of Charles I the city became an important imperial seat, as did Granada. Finally, Philip II established his court in Madrid in 1561.

182 “In Spain and Spanish America: an extensive, fertile, grass-covered plain or tract of land” (OED).

183 Wamba, Visigoth King of Spain from 672 until 680.

have anywhere seen".[184] Certainly the entrance to Toledo is unique. The boldness of site is unsurpassed, spreading upward from the narrow zone of the Tagus to the towers of the Alcázar and Cathedral pinnacled against the upper arch of heaven. High rocks project, upon which odd enchanting streets and lanes are cut like sharp upward and downward strokes. Each street has its surprise, with the wide portals, the nails, as large as half oranges, fantastically wrought, stamping the doors with their ineffaceable historic note, the artistic Spanish balconies of heavy iron curving inwards, the gay glimpses here and there through open doorway of a tiled and foliaged patio, the mad fashion of its tortuous course, its quaintnesses of colour and form. The landscape around wears the look of ardent desolation, and to walk among the empty hills, yellow, and brown, and rose, is to taste the odours of Araby. Every step you take upon the rude herbage sends out a pungent scent like spice. Nature here captivates by the magnificence of its penury. It can dispense with charm in its haughty and harmonious nudity. It makes no pretence to sheathe the peril of its broken precipices with the beguilement of verdure, but lets them hack their murderous way to the river brim without any sign of vigorous vegetation. Heavy and still the light, with autumn glories of colour it is worth visiting Toledo alone for, and history becomes so close a companion that the march of centuries is forgotten, and we ecstatically walk with Goth and Moor.

The first thing to attract the traveller is the famous Puerta del Sol. This Arabic gate is a feature of bewildering beauty. I know nothing on earth to compare with it. If you have walked from the station, it consoles you for the dust, and mitigates the torture of the vilest pavement of the entire universe. From the pretty little terraced garden beneath it, the Miradero, you may watch the magical sunsets of October (the best month for Toledo, her hour of brilliant loveliness) and look across the Vega, where the old Palace of Galiana stood, one of the departed wonders of this wonderful town, and follow the long curves of the yellow Tagus, which lies curled like a great serpent asleep upon the tawny land. Above you enter a region of lanes, so narrow, and so thickly shadowed by heavy stone, that there is hardly a chink for the broad beams of heaven, and streets that, to the eye below, seem to touch the sky. Here, at least, illusion is pampered, curtained off from the faintest whiff of disappointment. Words even are full of exotic charm, and chime a pleasant assurance of fidelity to a vivid and vital past.

You tumble upon the three-cornered, impossible, delicious Zocodover. Who is to analyse the fascination of this strange word? It means, I believe, in Arabian, Place of the Beasts. Here fairs, markets, meetings, *autos da fé*, revolutions, conspiracies, everything that could take place in pictur-

184 "The walls, gateways, and bridges of Toledo are, I think, the finest I have anywhere seen; in part, at least, of extreme age, very perfectly preserved, and on a grand scale". See George E. Street, *Some Account of Gothic Architecture in Spain*. London: Murray, 1865, 229.

esque times, were held. It has not changed in a single feature. Through an archway on the left you may step down to the squalid little inn Cervantes dwelt awhile in, and see above the rude wooden gallery, the window at which he sat writing the "Ilustre Fregona".[185] The shade of Cervantes accompanies us throughout all our wanderings in Spain. To have harboured him, if but for a single night, is glory enough for any town to call for the tourist's respectful visit. The pleasantest hour of the Zocodover is after sunset. When you have wandered through the lovely flushed dimness of the Cathedral above, whose beauty at this moment becomes magical through the lights of its 750 painted windows, saunter round the colonnaded *plaza*, with all the queer little shops getting ready their evening illumination. You may sit in front of the inevitable Café Suizo, and sip a glass of coffee or beer in the midst of merry chatter, and the slow passing to and fro of idle Spaniards and blighted officers who detest this dull garrison, where there is nothing on earth but the picturesque for distraction. If you have come abroad in search of local colour, you will not find its equal the world over. Girls go by with jars admirably poised on their heads or shoulders, water-carriers lead their patient mules laden with big water-jars, or the fruit and vegetable sellers, after the day's affairs, drop into the animated twilight behind their donkeys piled with baskets. 'Tis a revived glimpse of the *picaresca* novel, for amiable scoundrels loll upon the stone benches of the little place, and haughty and impoverished dons strive to look as if they were in the habit of dining.

The street leading upward takes you to the Alcázar built by Charles V for his wife, who died before it was finished, in the insignificant Palace of Fuensalida.[186] Tradition will tell you airily that Charles, on seeing completed the regal staircase, without its equal for magnificence, exclaimed: "Now, for the first time I feel I am an Emperor." But Charles never saw his palace completed. It may be called a posthumous monument, since neither the Empress for whom it was built nor the Emperor who commanded its erection lived to cross its threshold. All we see now is its imposing *façade*, the glorious patio, and this gigantic staircase, wide enough for a whole city to ascend it at once, which leads nowhither. They are restoring for years the *artesonado* roof[187] that ran round the galleries of the courtyard, only instead of reproducing it in wood, it is in ironwork – very effective – which will probably be completed in another hundred years. A window is shown in the midst of space, with no walls to indicate a chamber, as that at which

185 "The Illustrious Kitchen Maid" is one of the stories included in Cervantes' *Novelas Ejemplares* [*Exemplary Novels*] (1613).

186 The Palace of Fuensalida, where Isabel of Portugal died, is a 15th-century, Mudejar-style building. It currently holds the seat of the regional government of Castilla-La Mancha.

187 Coffered ceiling.

the imprisoned French Blanche, unhappy wife of Pedro the Cruel, sat looking out upon a beautiful landscape as inadequate consolation for her inexplicable captivity.[188]

But the glory, the pride, the fame of Toledo rest upon her unique Cathedral. There is nothing like it in all Spain. Is there anything to match it elsewhere? Instantly, on crossing the threshold of any of its doors, the spirit surrenders in awe to its captivation. You feel that architecture here has reached the highest note of hieratic majesty. Mere admiration is blunted, so seizing is the imperious silence of emotion. Who could attempt to describe the grandeur of these five immense aisles, where you walk through a forest of pillars, illumined with the jewelled lights of 750 stained glass windows? It is the mysterious eloquence of its silence, the multiple claims of its beauty that convert it into a place, not of prayer, which means the cry of the individual, but of meditation on the complete insignificance of the individual. So must the Pagans have felt in that other unique temple, the Parthenon. The Cathedral of Toledo is the Christian Parthenon, an unique temple, more glorious, more impressive, more perfect than any other. You may mount miles of belfry stairs, and sound the famous bell of Toledo, the largest of the world, with a peal that reaches Madrid. But you will suffer physical torture while listening. From here you may look down upon the earth, as far from you as if you gazed from Alpine heights, and enjoy a thrill of fascinating peril. Below, through incredible depths of space, flows the Tagus, making almost an island of rock and town, and around a violent line of hills, with the smiling verdure of the broad Vega, and a wide opening for the way of Madrid.

The hasty tourist can make shift with a half day in Toledo. He can, in a few hours, gather a distinct and ineffaceable idea of its wonders, seize *à vol d'oiseau*, as it were, the town's austere significance, the stern genius of its Gothic note mixed with the softer, more voluptuous beauty of the Arabian character; the pervasive religious quietude and dominance and the regal pride of its dead personality. In such a glimpse he will carry away as a permanent memory the strangely magnificent picture it makes against the high heaven, with its crown of towers and spires, all more or less steeped in Moorish tradition, the *mudéjar* steeples, the semi-Arabian roofs and pillars, a Roman-Gothic, Moorish-mediaeval legend, such as you will see nowhere else in all Europe. Beside it Nuremberg is cheap and modern, and Florence a picturesque modern realisation of the enchanting Middle Ages. In so short a time you may walk ramparts of a captivation as

188 King Peter of Castile (1334-69), also known as Peter the Cruel, married Blanche of Bourbon (1339-61) in Valladolid in 1353, when she was only fourteen. He was chiefly interested in her dowry, and left her a few days later. The king had Blanche imprisoned for the rest of her life in different locations; according to some chroniclers he was responsible for ordering her assassination.

penetrating as the Spanish *Romancero*.[189] And all (starting from Madrid) at the cost of a few pounds, with an excellent hotel, the "Castilla" (the only one of Toledo, for the others are just as dear, and are atrocious), and much suffering from spiked stones, and sun and dust, and a yearning for silver streams, and ice, and cold water.

But to depart the same day is to miss the greatest charm of Toledo. First, the vivid glow of sunset in the Cathedral aisles, then the splendour of sunset lines along the hills, over the wavering river, and splash of crimson upon the suburb Antequela [*sic*];[190] the deep twilight effects over the curving path of Our Lady of the Valley, the dimness of gorges and silent mountain-ways, and the clear fluid atmosphere; reverie above the scented hills of San Martin in the romantic neighbourhood of the bath of Florinda, where each step perfumes the still air, and the herbs are of a sweeter pungency than those of Provence, breathing of honey and Oriental dreams. To leave these feudal streets with the stern railing of their windows and their pall of black shadows, the dusty yellow squares, the odd little *plazas* and broken terraces, all the less imaginative allurements of beautiful churches, of *alcázars*, of ruined palaces, patios, grand staircases; of bridges, unsurpassed in beauty, gates, ramparts, all part of a legend in stone of unperishable romance, and wander out through the exquisite Puerta del Sol, and the martial bridge of Alcántara by dropping dusk, is to drink the very air of fairyland. The Gate of the Sun is a sculptured Moorish poem in red and brown against the limpid sky, where the stars begin to shine like lamps. The castellated bridges are a note of pure romance; and above the darkening flow of the river there are layers of roofs drooping to its marge under terraces of spires, and domes, and towers, their colour blending entrancingly with the red hills and the burnt rocks. The light is still brilliant though the sun has set, and the atmosphere is so clear that the precision of line to the remotest distance is perhaps too bold for beauty. But what a harmony in its audacity, what a chastening vigour in its poverty!

Above the charming bridge of San Martin, built by Charles V, is that singular monument of Gothic magnificence, with its matchless cloisters, San Juan de los Reyes. Some travellers go into ecstasies over the interior of this superlatively sculptured church; others, this writer amongst them, find it a distinct disappointment. There is no mystery, no charm about its single wide aisle. One misses the witchery of shadow, the enchantment of soft and coloured light. There is no stained glass to send purple and ruby and orange

189 The *Romancero* is a collection of old folk ballads dealing with feuds of honour, love affairs, aristocratic rivalries and the struggle between Christians and Moors during the Middle Ages.

190 Lynch is probably referring to the *barrio* or quarter of Antequeruela, named after the Castilian knight Ferdinand of Antequera, sometime Regent of the Kingdom of Castile but eventually elected as Ferdinand I of Aragon with the Compromise of Caspe (1412).

rays slanting across the stone, but the crude glare of daylight travels unbrokenly down from the circle of windows in the dome. The church seems too short and too low for such extraordinary width of aisle and massiveness of highly wrought pillars. And then, the excessive splendour of the decoration, at first a surprise, becomes an aching labour for the regard. Whoever saw such a rich wonder of heavily sculptured walls and columns? But it is too intricate, too gorgeous to please. Its artistic value is immense, yet it leaves the eye cold. But outside, the cloisters, even in the disfigurements of the restorer's touch, reveal a surpassing delicacy of beauty, with an exquisite note of claustral mirth, of graceful, smiling sanctity, befittingly wedded to the order of St. Francis, to whom the monastery belonged. Foliage and verdure, and flowery branches with the sun upon them, make a big vivid splash of colour between the four arched and columned galleries, and the whole picture is permeated with an indescribable gaiety and lightness. The historical interest attached to this famous monument of Toledo's departed glories lies in the fact that it was built by Isabella and Ferdinand to commemorate their defeat, at Toro, of Isabella's rival, the Beltranya [*sic*],[191] the daughter her brother Henry persisted in regarding as his own, to the vast entertainment of his Court, where she was by her nickname openly connected with the Queen's lover, the Count of Beltrán. Round the walls outside are a quantity of rusty chains, which were taken off rescued captives of the Moors, and which constitute anything but a pretty ornament.

A little downward is the now desolate and squalid quarter known long ago as the Judería. Here the Jews dwelt, once a wealthy, learned, and important body in Toledo. Among the various traditions is one that after the taking of Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, a colony of Jews founded Toledoth, and the reason the Jews were allowed under Christian rule to possess their synagogues here is accounted for by the curious legend that at the time of Christ's arrest the Rabbis of Jerusalem decided to consult the Rabbis of far-off Toledo before pronouncing the sentence of death. A deputation was in consequence sent with a long parchment stating the case, and asking the advice of the Iberian settlers. The Jews of Toledo pronounced emphatically against the sentence of death; but a tempest delayed the arrival of their document in time. In consideration of this document the Goths permitted them to thrive and build their temples, subject to occasional fierce persecutions, and this tolerance was continued after the conquest by the Castilian sovereigns until the fanatic San Vicente de Ferrer came from Valencia, brandishing the cross in one hand and the torch in the other, and, in the name of Christ, set fire to the whole Judería, preaching the massacre

191 Juana 'la Beltraneja' (1462-1530) was the illegitimate daughter of King Henry IV of Castile. Married to her uncle, King Afonso V of Portugal, she unsuccessfully claimed the throne of Castile against the troops of her aunt, Isabella, and King Ferdinand of Aragon. Defeat at the Battle of Toro, in Zamora, on 1 March 1476, ended Juana la Beltraneja's claim to the throne.

of the Jews, the sacking of their temples, the destruction of their homes. Isabella finally expelled them from her kingdom, and this long-suffering race was thus flung out of a city, theirs before the kingdoms of Castile existed, theirs before Roman or Carthaginian trod its rough pavements and built the great walls along its ramparts. You may gather some notion of what this Jewish colony was from inspection of the two lovely synagogues to-day in fair preservation. Santa Maria la Blanca is the more imposing, el Tránsito the more beautiful. The former is Moorish-Byzantine, the second Moorish-Andalusian, that is, less austere, more graceful, with a delicacy and wealth of sculptured wall that delight the eye. It was Samuel Levi, the treasurer and friend of that historic monster, Pedro the Cruel, who built this lovely gem of temples, and in the neighbourhood was his magnificent palace, wantonly sacked, when Pedro, in need of funds, arrested Levi, and plundered him previous to his assassination.

Pedro's palace is on an ugly square, near the palace of the Trastamares, which Henry of Trastamare bestowed upon Du Guesclin for his unchivalrous services in the suppression of the King, his stepbrother.[192] Nothing of the former remains but the door with the massive knocker and big half-orange-shaped nails, but some notion may be gathered of the vanished magnificence of the Trastamare palace from the staircase and gateway. Hereabouts was the house Hernandez Cortes was married from; an enamoured page stabbed himself at the bride's feet, as the bridal procession left the house. An idea of the old mudéjar palaces of Toledo will be had by a visit to the famous Casa de Mesa and the Taller del Moro, the latter earlier by some centuries, Cordovese-Morisco, and the former, far more beautiful Granadino-Morisco. Study the walls, the *ajimez* windows, the superb *artesonado* ceilings, and then rebuild in imagination at its supreme hour such a city as Toledo must have been in its Moorish splendour, which traditions were still maintained under Christian rule, Moorish architects being employed even in the building of churches, hence the *mudéjar* steeples, the *ajimez* windows,[193] and horseshoe arcades, until the fatal unhappy day of the expulsion of this glorious race.

192 In 1366 the French knight Bertrand du Guesclin (c. 1320-80) and his men joined the forces of Count Henry of Trastámara in their fight against King Pedro I of Castile. After several victories and losses, including the successful campaign of Burgos and a terrible defeat at Nájera (1367) before the English troops of Edward, the Black Prince, King Pedro was finally vanquished at Montiel (1369). In a subsequent dagger fight between the two contenders, Bertrand du Guesclin aided Henry in the assassination of his stepbrother Pedro. As Henry II (known as 'The Fratricide'), he thus became the first king of the House of Trastámara in Castile and León.

193 The *ajimez* window is arched and divided by a column.

16 "The Spaniard at Home" (1898)

The oldest, purest (in blood!), and proudest aristocracy of Europe is by a singular anomaly of Spanish character the most democratic. When the Revolution devised its illusive rule of equality, which is nowhere, hardly even in aristocratic England, more conspicuously absent than in modern France; when America, assisted by the ever-admirable Washington, proclaimed itself a free Republic, and travestied freedom as no constitutional monarchy of Europe to-day would dare to tyrannise, – neither could, in its most utopian dream, have conceived a casual outward equality more delightful than that which exists beyond the Pyrenees between *seigneur* and peasant, between master and servant, between prince and people, between shopkeeper and customer. Here Anglo-Saxon servility and cringing curtsey are unknown, uncomprehended. When the Infanta Isabel goes up to La Granja of Segovia to hunt, the villagers greet her gleefully: "Here's our Isabel. Good day to thee, Isabel". No "princess" or "highness" or the obeisance of the serf. Merely a doff of *sombrero* from village lout to his sovereign lady; a smiling display of two brilliant rows of teeth and the familiar hand salutation of Spain from his mate, who greets the Infanta as one of her own sex whom she is charmed to see again. So when the Infanta Paz[194] (unlike masculine, original, high-toned Princess Isabel,[195] who rides like a man, smokes huge *puros*,[196] and is as generous and intelligent as she is loud and virile), a gentle, feminine creature, rather of German legend than of heroic *romancero*, goes to drink Spanish waters or freshen drooping spirits along a Spanish shore: "How art thou, Paz? the eye is refreshed by sight of thee". The Princess Eulalia,[197] with her golden hair and youthful gaiety, her schoolgirl abhorrence of etiquette, her innocent *frédaines*, [198] is a pleasing representative to them of eternal youth. I was at Teneriffe when, on her way to Chicago, she stopped at the Canaries.[199] "Good day

Reprinted in the *Eclectic Magazine*, 68 (July-Dec. 1898), 595-606 and in *Littell's Living Age*, 219 (Oct-Dec. 1898), 73-85.

194 An Infanta of Spain, María de la Paz de Borbón y Borbón (1862-1946) was the third daughter of Queen Isabella II and her husband Francisco de Asís de Borbón.

195 The eldest daughter of Queen Isabella II, the Infanta Isabel de Borbón y Borbón (1851-1931) received the title of Princess of Asturias twice on account of her rights as heir presumptive to the Spanish throne.

196 Cigars.

197 María Eulalia de Borbón (1864-1958) was the youngest daughter of Queen Isabella II.

198 Pranks or mischievous tricks.

199 The event took place in 1893. Lynch mentions the visit of Princess Eulalia, then 29 years old, in her article "Impressions of the Canary Isles" [Concluding Paper].

to thee, little one", shouted the peasant women. "A happy voyage and a happy return". The Princess bowed in the homeliest, brightest way, and I noticed that whenever the "little one" was shouted emphatically, she waved her hand as well.

A duchess enters a shop. Do you imagine she will be more courteously received than a little milliner? Not at all. For both are instantly made at home, and treated to the *hidalgo*'s finest manner. The one as well as the other will take a seat and lean across the counter, playing with fan and eyes and lip, in the same roguish intent to get the most for their money. The difference will be to the advantage of the little milliner, for the shopkeeper will ask the duchess a higher price, and that is all. And do you imagine there will be a pin to choose between the graceful familiarity, the amiable attitudes of the duchess and the milliner? None, except such as mark the value of breeding. The one will be common, arch, and pouting as befits her class, accustomed to win its way with grosser methods; the other will be the great lady quite unconsciously, with just those pretty distinctions of race and tradition that please and do not offend. For she is too simple, too democratic in the best sense of the word, to condescend. She does not regard the shopkeeper as her inferior because he has no social existence for her, and does not traverse her *salons* in evening suit and white tie. He finds his diversion elsewhere and has other interests than hers. Meanwhile, he is entitled to the same courtesy as her equals, and she has not the smallest objection to pay him in full the measure of consideration he tacitly claims. He may even discuss his family affairs with her, and be sure of a humane listener. If his daughter is dying of consumption, she will be immensely grieved in his presence, and forget all about it in less than five minutes. In this she is not personally to blame, for an incurable colossal selfishness is the most notable characteristic of the entire race. And while her expressive and mendacious eyes are filled with pity for him, she will remember to argue and bargain, just as she did a while ago in exchanging agreeable pleasantries, for all the world like the little milliner. But she will never be the less a duchess because she and the shopkeeper are on the best of terms. Her unconsciousness of her rank in everyday relations, which would stupify an English duchess, comes from the fact that she belongs to a prouder race. Had she a mind to sport her coronet in a shop, the owner and his attendants would speedily make short work of her decorative dignity. To them it would simply mean an underbred and foolish exhibition, for *side*, impertinence, and vulgar haughtiness are not defects the Spaniards will tolerate. This explains their inherent and incorrigible dislike of the Anglo-Saxon. You must in Spain accept the general recognition of human dignity: though you may be in never so violent a hurry, you must yield to the servitude of form, and waste precious time in convincing your fellow-man, whose

hand may even be extended to you in beggary, that you regard him as no less a gentleman than yourself. Else are you not "muy cumplido, muy formal",[200] but a mere foreign lout.

In a race in decay, the question of blood runs down among the lowest. In Ireland every grocer and bootblack imagines himself descended from a king, and in Spain the glover and the haberdasher may also be descended from a Gothic sovereign. The man the English tourist insultingly addresses as "fellow" is possibly clothed in the imaginary glory of some such remote ancestor as Wamba or Childe Pelayo. I have known a Catalan shopkeeper who pointed to the portraits of Bourbon sovereigns, saying, "Papa y Mama Borbón". He meant that he was a son of the House of Bourbon, but the relationship remains obscure and unexplained to this day. What matter? He royally struts his shop, folds himself outside in the cloak of regret and remembrance, and romantically apostrophises the shades of *Papa y Mama Borbón*, unaware that there is anything preposterous or ridiculous in his attitude. Princess and duchess, duke and lord, are his equal, though they enter his shop to purchase a pair of gloves or a yard of ribbon.

While the Spanish nobility do not, as in England, concern themselves in the least with the improvement, the moral training, and sanitary arrangements of their dependents – are, instead, culpably indifferent to all that touches upon their comfort -they are considerably nearer their servants and their peasantry than any other aristocracy. In the most imposing palaces you will find servants swarming at night in villainous airless boxes accepted as rooms, often without a window, always without a fireplace. The servants never dream of complaining. The race is, from sovereign to beggar, a stoical and long-suffering one. Its standard of comfort is so low, that to go without fuel in winter and without air in summer is no reasonable claim to martyrdom. On the other hand, both servants and peasantry find their masters human beings like themselves, whom they may address at ease, whom at all hours they may greet in a tone of cheerful equality. I have heard a marquis, whose guest I was, exclaim at lunch: "*Tiens!*[201] I was in the tram this morning, and when I offered to pay, the conductor corrected me, 'The *señor* is already paid for'. I looked around in amazement, and behold there was Manuel [his valet] on the platform smiling and nodding to me". Manuel the valet, being the first to respond to the conductor's call for coppers, paid for his master, whom he discovered to be seated within. I travelled on a Spanish transatlantic liner. There was a duke and his valet on board. The valet, like his master, travelled first-class, talked at table, offered *entrées* or cigarettes, with the easy air of a grandee. Neither the duke nor the valet

200 "Very deferential, very polite".

201 French exclamation meaning "I say!" The Spanish aristocracy would be familiar with French, an advantage for Hannah Lynch, who provides instances of frequenting such families.

expected or received a different treatment. When Spanish noblewomen travel with their maids on sea, the *rôles* are reversed. The maid, as far as I have observed, is an expense not justified by any rational return. Indeed, coming from Teneriffe to Cadiz, I have seen an unhappy colonel returning to the Peninsula with a sick wife and several small children, accompanied by servants of both sexes, obliged to rise at dawn to heat milk on a spirit-lamp for the youngest baby, and to act all day the part of maid to his sick wife and nurse-maid to the children, while the servants lay in the cabin or about the deck moaning and clamouring to die. The colonel looked just as sea-sick and miserable, but he it was who had to do the work. Do you think he complained, or that the servants thanked him? Before leaving the question of servants, I should say that, though the Spanish servants are paid less than in England or France, and are abominably housed, their lot is a happier one than ours enjoy. The standard of civilisation in their regard is as low as it can possibly be, removed by scarce a step from that of the middle ages. But they have an individuality for their masters. If they are sick, duke or duchess will visit and help to nurse them. They are not called by their surnames, and their feelings are never wounded. Once at table, when a great family was spoken of, and wonder was expressed as to whether they had or not returned from the seaside, I heard the head-butler, offering at that moment a dish to the marchioness, my hostess, remark, "They have returned, for I saw the countess yesterday afternoon with la Marietta".[202] Marietta was the eldest married daughter, the wife of an illustrious noble of Castile. Nobody seemed to mind. Coming down to dinner in a new silk blouse, the under-butler of the same house once greeted me quite contentedly: "Ah, what a pretty colour! That blouse admirably suits the *señorita*. It pleases me greatly". Some of the newly made nobles are introducing British formality, and insist that the servants shall say Master This and Miss That; but this insistence on European etiquette at once marks them off as *parvenus*. At these houses, when you call, you are received as in Paris or London, by correct and inane automata, whose physiognomies and voices you never remember. But the servants of the great old houses smile, acquaint you with the fact that they are glad to see you, and when they hear that you are well, they cry out vivaciously, "Me alegra mucho".[203] If you happen to be ailing, they will offer advice and voluble sympathy. These are never to the visitor the servants of So-and-so, but Joachim, Manuel, Teresa, or Madalena.

This is the sympathetic side of Spanish aristocratic character: the absence of pose, of snobbishness, the complete and dignified simplicity,

202 "La Marieta" (spelt with a single "t") is the Catalan diminutive of Maria. The marquis and the marchioness alluded to by Lynch may have been the Marquis and Marchioness of Sentmenat, resident in Barcelona.

203 "I am so pleased".

the pleasant sense of equality in mere personal relations it exhales, and above all a pretty and indestructible personal kindliness of manner and action, – only surface-deep, it is true, but most captivating as far as it goes. I have known a marchioness send to one of her tenantry, an obscure and exceedingly common little teacher of English, on her saint's day, a magnificent bouquet and a dish of ice-cream. This English old maid was quite the poorest of her tenants, and for that reason the marchioness singled her out for all sorts of pretty attentions she never dreamed of bestowing on her wealthy tenants, without knowing her or caring in the least for her. For in Spain poverty is no blighting disgrace, and wealth is no glory.

Turning to the other side, it must be admitted that a drearier, an emptier, a less intelligent form of humanity does not exist on the face of the world than the Spanish aristocracy. Which half is the worse, male or female, it would be difficult to pronounce. Dress, gossip, and, while young, love are the preoccupation of both. Wives, doing nothing, asking nothing but attractive raiment out of doors and plenty of gossip within, have on the whole an easy time, for Spanish husbands are the least exacting of their kind. Whether faithful or not, they are, as a universal rule, tender, devoted, wonderfully patient and gentle in the face of hysterics, scenes, and injustice. Indeed, this mild resignation is the keynote of national character, both in public and in private life. The higher you go, the more remarkable it becomes. I have seen a Spanish son, the head of his house, the father of a family, and the bearer of a great historic name, endure such injustice at the hands of a capricious mother uncomplainingly as left me staggered. And always imperturbably respectful and tender. He might blanch with wounded pride and affection, but never a protest, never the least diminution of filial deference. He claimed no authority along with the titles that came to him on his father's death. Once speaking to me of some reform he projected, he said quite simply, "That will be later, when I am master". It did not occur to him that the bearer of the family title, over thirty, was entitled to a voice in family matters, and that filial deference should stop short of complete effacement before maternal despotism.[204]

The Spanish mother of all classes possesses a virtue I cannot sufficiently laud as a woman. It is rare that her preference is not given to her girls. I have known numbers of Spaniards, nobles and *bourgeois*, and the mother's favourite has always been a girl. One young countess, the mother of two of the loveliest little boys I have ever seen, and the most exquisitely bred, confided to me last summer the fact that she expected a third child, and *intended* it should be a girl. "I didn't intend hard enough the other times, and so Juan and Luís came; but this time I think of nothing else: all the

204 Lynch may be referring here to Joaquin de Sentmenat y Patiño, 7th Marquis of Sentmenat, who was 35 in 1898. His father, the 6th Marquis, had died in 1892 and his mother passed on in 1909.

baby's linen is embroidered already with the name of Agnes. I have told my babies that a little sister will come soon, and every day they ask me several times have I heard word of Agnes, and when she is coming. I have decided it is all a question of will, and so I am concentrating my whole powers of mind and will upon this little girl I long for". Six months later I receive news that Agnes is born, and the house cast into the tumultuous joy that usually greets the birth of an heir.[205] Spanish mothers have an adoration for one of their daughters that surpasses the jealousy of any British mother for her son. She must marry her – well, because it is the girl's accepted fate; but what difficulties! – what dislike and distrust of the son-in-law! – what manoeuvres to keep the girl in maternal bondage! If tradition and nature did not intervene, along with the human instinct of maternal pride – which desires, all in loathing, the proof of discernment of the jewels' value in some base masculine brigand – many Spanish girls would find it hard to marry. As it is, I know one mother, one of the greatest ladies of Spain (I may perhaps call her the third lady of the realm), whose behaviour to all the aspiring grooms of her only daughter, a fabulous heiress for Spain, resembles that of the ogre of fairy tale, who forces the amorous prince through unimaginable paces, in the secret hopes of discouraging him. I am glad to receive news from Madrid that the latest adventurer in the field of sorrow has stood to his colours, and, as the hero of fairy tale, is like to come out triumphantly to the tune of Mendelssohn's Wedding March in the church of St Francis (for there is no cathedral in Madrid) in all the promise of lace and orange blossom. But what modern betrothed of Paris and London without the romantic strain would endure such proof of fortitude and faith as that poor young Spanish nobleman daily endures for the privilege of overcoming maternal jealousy! I would not be a Spanish girl for my mind's sake, for my life's sake, for such an existence is intolerable to the average civilised and thinking being; but if I were content with the wadded atmosphere of the pussy cat or the pet canary, not free to live or think for myself, but smothered in satin cushions and caresses, fed upon the sweets of life, then would I choose to be an over-loved Spanish girl, the captive of home and parents, the spoiled idiot of humanity.

The singular thing about these pampered girls, whose parents are their slaves to an extent no British father or mother could ever conceive, and who, as a rule, repay their devotion and abnegation with the usual ingratitude and selfishness that mark the race, is that once they marry they in turn become as absorbed as their neglected parents in maternal love, and

205 Lynch may here again be alluding to the Sentmenat family, resident in Barcelona, as the name Agnès is the Catalan equivalent of the Spanish Inés. María de Sentmenat y Patiño, daughter of the Marquis and Marchioness of Sentmenat, married Fernando Fabra y Puig (1866-1944), 2nd Marquis of Alella, by whom she had three children: Juan (1892-1937), Luis (1893-1936) and Inés (1897-1924).

pay back quite cheerfully to their own child the love which they themselves took for granted without a word of thanks or an act of recognition. Of the most thankless of daughters are fashioned the most passionate of mothers. When one studies the problem elsewhere, and sees the unmerited misery of the daughters in Ireland, the coldness, inhumanity, and selfishness of the Irish mother to her girls of every class, the monstrous way in which the girls are sacrificed to their brothers, left without education that these may play the gentleman, deprived of the enjoyments and pretty fripperies of girlhood, the money that might have helped to establish them squandered by the most heartless and least sacrificing of parents on the face of the earth, and nothing left the unfortunate girls but penury and struggle and the dull old maidenhood of dull and narrow Irish towns and villages, one is forced by sympathy to greet the excessive devotion of the Spanish mothers and lamentable spoiling of the Spanish daughters with indulgence. The years of youth are brief, and, after all, the parents are not altogether unselfish; they too find their profit and pleasure in their abnegation and tenderness. What matter if the unborn reap the full benefit? The sad part of the system is that in both periods the intelligence is left uncultivated.

Borrow expresses an unmitigated contempt for the Spanish nobility.[206] But he should have taken into consideration its redeeming features. I admit that these are inadequate, just as are the virtues of the entire race. The war shows us the imperishable quality of their valour and their incurable inefficiency. The daily life of any Spanish nobleman will furnish abundant proof of both. I have known a young titled idiot, with less brains than a linnet, who spent his days at home in a rocking-chair, abroad in club or theatre or at the Plaza de Toros, who only lived upon the mediocre resources of provincial pleasures, conduct himself like a hero in the terrors of anarchy at Barcelona. He was aware that the bombs were specially directed at him, as one of the foremost of the gilded youth; and wherever there was a post of prominent danger he claimed it, trod his way gallantly through dynamite, unblanched and haughty, and was one of the finest and coolest figures in the frightful Liceo catastrophe.[207] Who can sneer at a race that produces idiots of this quality? Yet in his undecorative hours the fellow is completely insupportable, of a grossness and vapidity of conversation

206 Unlike Richard Ford (1796-1858), who did enjoy hospitality and interaction with the Spanish aristocracy, George Borrow (1803-81) preferred to mingle with ordinary Spanish folk. Shortly after his arrival in Madrid, Borrow declares the following about the ruling classes: "I mingled but little in their society, and what I saw of them by no means tended to exalt them in my imagination. […] I believe the less that is said of them […] the better. I confess, however, that I know little about them; they have, perhaps, their admirers, and to the pens of such I leave their panegyric" (George Borrow, *The Bible in Spain*, vol. 1. London: John Murray, 1843, 253-4).

207 On 7 November 1893, the first night of a new season at Barcelona's opera house, an anarchist, Santiago Salvador, hurled two bombs at the stalls during Act II of Rossini's *William Tell*. Only one of the bombs exploded, killing twenty people and injuring many more.

to abash and awe the uncleanest stage of Continental youth. It is true, in the matter of unclean talk, the Catalans bear a special reputation in the Peninsula, – and here the men do not wait for the departure of the women from the dinner-table, but utter remarks and pleasantries in their presence to stupefy even a reader saturated with the excesses in this form of wit of the classical literature of Europe. The famous *esprit gaulois*, whose modern voice is M. Armand Silvestre,[208] finds its affinity in these gross Catalans, with their deep strain of Provençal blood, so different from the rest of Spain, and so fundamentally antipathetic to Castilian character.

Nothing proves this difference more (and here are we fronted with the danger of fast-and-loose pronouncement, since grosser Catalonia can furnish a higher level in public taste than high-bred Castile) than the place the bull-fights play in the aristocratic society of both races. In Catalonia only fast and common women go to the Toros. The men of all ranks, of course, go; but you will find Catalan males who describe the amusement as barbarous and degrading. I have known Catalonians bitterly resent the late king's brutal passion for the sport, and accuse him of having retarded by half a century the progress of Spain. Whereas in Castile the passion is shared by the duchess as well as the *chula*, by duke and barber. Walk through the park any Sunday after Easter, and you will see carriage after carriage roll by from the blood-stained Plaza, full of titled ladies in brilliant attire. What is "bad form" in Barcelona, for the women of social standing, in Madrid is the height of enviable glory. Is not the Princess Isabel an enraged lover of the sport? In a conscientious desire to judge the national entertainment with full experience, I have sat out two bull-fights to the bitter and sanguinary end. I think, if possible, I was more impressed with the horror of it on the second occasion than on the first. Then I was too stunned and stupefied by the atmosphere of blood and noise and blinding light and shocking pain to realise the full infamy of it. But the second trial remains upon memory a still vivider sensation of horror. It was a lovely spring day. Without, along the bright Alcalá, adown the delicious Castellana and Prado,[209] aflush in purple blossom, all was happiness, vivacity, gaiety, and brilliance. Through the open windows of the amphitheatre you looked across from city noise and glitter to the still sadness of the brown Guadarrama, mantled above in radiant snow. The animation within was captivating; never have I seen anything to equal it elsewhere. The emptiest visage was vivid with speech; alert, smiling, a perfect flood of light gathered in each dark glance. Ladies of court and fashion, whose devotion in sick-rooms is proverbial, were there in the white-lace mantilla

208 Paul-Armand Silvestre (1837-1901), a French poet belonging to the Parnassian movement.

209 The names of a wide thoroughfare (Alcalá), an avenue (Castellana), and promenade (Prado) customarily strolled along.

of etiquette, with red flowers above the ear. Our modern life elsewhere can show no more picturesque scene. And all this for the shedding of innocent blood, for the torture of helpless animals. As I watched the play of the ruffianly *toreros* and the abominable blood-bespattered *picadores*, I recognised but one gentleman in the arena, the ill-treated bull, and the horses seemed to me as worthy of admiration and pity as the Christian martyrs. Honestly I should have rejoiced to see the bulls and the horses not only mangle and maul their provokers, but charge victoriously for the animated multitude. Yet women around me, emblems of the social refinement of their race, clapped vigorously; and when one poor horse went mad from pain and tore wildly round the arena, they clapped still more, laughing at the humorous sight till the tears came to their eyes, and shouting "Está loco! Está loco!".[210] When I feel disposed to weep for Cavite and Santiago,[211] I remember that appalling scene, and tell myself that if the Spaniards can bear suffering splendidly, they can witness suffering still more callously, and I feel that the wrongs of generations of dumb brutes are being justly avenged.

The most melancholy looking of races is the least capable of sadness, just as being the most distinguished in tradition, it is the least polite. Every second pair of eyes tell[s] with impressive eloquence the tale of a broken heart, of inconsolable regrets, of fatal memories. In the field of emotions you may be certain that the owners of these sombre glances have never penetrated beyond the facile and animal loves of Spain, the chances of the lottery, the fugitive animosities of club and Plaza, and the brute excitement of the Toros. With an engaging candour and simplicity, they have reduced life to its rudimentary elements: talk, food, sleep, love, dance, and laughter. The aesthetic, the moral, the meditative side is suppressed. Art, except that of the stage and the Plaza de Toros, is regarded with uncomprehending and empty disdain. The aristocracy reads even less than the *bourgeoisie*. Indeed, there is nothing a Spanish woman abhors more than a book. The futility of literature was never more apparent to the wisdom of Solomon. Her hatred takes an aggressive form, for a book in the hands of another is resented as a personal affront, and serious and ingenious are her efforts to cure misguided persons of this unhappy passion. She mysteriously connects a book with the loss of your immortal soul, and supposes heaven to be the Elysium of the illiterate. Seeing a volume of mine once, the least intelligent but kindest and most charming of women cried, with the delightful play of Castilian eyes and hands, "Oh, how big it is!

210 "It's gone beserk! It's gone beserk!"

211 The battles of Cavite (1 May 1898), in the Philippines, and Santiago (3 July 1898), in Cuba, were the two most disastrous defeats suffered by the Spanish Navy during the Spanish-American War.

What a dreadful quantity of pages! It must be terribly wicked!" I laughed, and begged her to pray for my conversion; and she was kind enough to suggest that perhaps, after all, notwithstanding the monstrous offence of mere authorship against public morals and breeding, I might not be damned. Whenever she referred to my profession, it was in a tone of sad and pitying resignation, and I interpreted her unexpressed feeling: "What a pity! – and yet, in spite of so serious a disqualification, I can't help liking and forgiving you".

The resources of pleasure and distraction being so few, naturally love-making absorbs two-thirds, if not more, of youth. Fashionable young men, in the best of tailoring, with their hearts upon their sleeves, lounge in club or café window, or upon the animated pavement, in wait for beauty. Every woman that takes their fancy is addressed by them in extravagant compliments. Those armed with notes they call "flowers", hymning the praises of blonde or brunette, distribute them with impassioned speech. Nothing could be less delicate or less subtle than Spanish love-making. It follows its obvious course, like the moon or the tide. Youth and maid have their duties cut out for them by tradition and custom, and the whole town is aware of their tender relations twenty-four hours after the explosion of passion. The lover takes up his post of honour outside the beloved's window, not by moonlight, but in the full glare of day, and the silly creatures hold dumb converse for hours at a stretch. They have time, you perceive, to waste, and – my faith! – they waste it with a vengeance. There are other loves less official, but not a whit more discreet; and a land that thrives upon gossip is well supplied by each young man of fashion and fortune. Austerity is not a predominant feature of modern Spanish life.

After love, the amusements of youth are gambling and the graceful and brilliant game of *pelota*. Cricket and football seem clumsy and inscrutable recreations beside such a finished and charming exercise as *pelota*. These slim, deft Spaniards, with their grace of gesture, their inherited charm of movement, an indescribable animal nobility of expression and attitude, make almost a classical picture of a modern game. Pity it is that more time is not given to *pelota* and less to the theatre (which chiefly means the ballet and its attendant influences), the café, and club, where the national vice, gambling, is practised with lamentable assiduity. The Spaniards do not drink, and profess loathing and horror of the English because of their devotion to the glass. To listen to them one would think there was but one vice, and that is drunkenness, and that the people who do not drink enjoy immunity from censure on every other score. Such is the ferocity of their contempt for this failing, that I have heard a Spanish nobleman gravely assert that a man should be hanged for getting drunk once. I suggested humanely that imprisonment might suffice on the first occasion. Whereupon he angrily protested: "No, decapitation at once. It should be regarded as a capital crime". That indolence may be a vice far more disastrous in its

consequences to a nation than even the abuse of alcohol you could never convince any Spaniard. Meditating on the exposure of national imbecility the present war reveals,[212] I am minded of the daily existence of one of the most important of Spanish military officials I once was privileged to study in profound astonishment. This man received a large, a very large, salary from the Government, and ruled over no less than four immense provinces. He rose at nine or ten, swallowed his chocolate, smoked a cigar, and at eleven o'clock went to his office, where he signed papers, gossiped a little with his several secretaries, and came up-stairs to breakfast at noon. After breakfast he slept for a couple of hours, walked up and down the *salon*, smoking and listening to the chatter of his women-folks, went down-stairs to his office at three, and remained until four o'clock, and that was the extent of his daily labour. The State paid him enormously, for Spain, for exactly two hours' insignificant work, and the rest of the time he did nothing but sleep, smoke, rock himself in a big rocking-chair, too lazy to stir out, to walk or drive or ride, too dull and indifferent to read or talk. His mind was as empty as his days; and with such military chiefs in office, is it any wonder that not a single preparation for the war was made, not a single evidence of official competence, of forethought, of average intelligence was displayed by Spain at home or in her colonies? And this is by no means an isolated case. I studied for a month in a public library of Spain. The officials always arrived long after I was seated at my table. All the time they remained there, they walked about or sat on tables, gossiping and smoking. Nobody wrote, nobody read, nobody knew anything on earth about the books in every one's charge, and at one o'clock they locked up the library and went home, worn out with the day's labour, to refresh themselves with a siesta and a lounge upon the public place. And this is the life of the average Spaniard, rich or poor, unless he plays *pelota*, bicycles, or rides. The writers, on the other hand, are far too industrious in their ardour to prove the rule by the exception, and shuffle off coils of print with a lamentable and undiscerning facility, which explains the hopeless mediocrity of modern Spanish literature.

A Spanish habit that at first surprises and then charms is the immediate intimacy of address. Sir, Miss, and Madam are dropped beyond the Pyrenees. You are instantly saluted by your Christian name by persons you see for the first time. "What is your baptismal name?" they ask, and forthwith you are plain John or Elizabeth. If you happen to be an isolated British subject in a remote and unfrequented part, they may dignify the John with the historic Don, and at once you feel draped in the cape of legend. But in *salon* and at table they will hail you Elizabeth at a first meeting. A Spanish writer of whom I had written, but who was a perfect stranger to me, meeting me

212 The Spanish-American War of 1898.

during my last visit to Spain, accosted me quite naturally as if we had been brought up together, "¿Cómo está, Hannah?" I should have replied, "Muy bien, José"; but insular perversity made it perfectly impossible for me to address a venerable, grey-bearded stranger and Academician as an old schoolfellow or a first cousin. We reversed the reproach of the play, where the lady says, "I call thee Clifford, and thou call'st me Madam".[213] Pereda continued to call me "Hannah", and I respectfully (and to his complete surprise, no doubt) addressed him as "Señor". Habit is a fatal thing in the intercourse of nations. When an aristocrat calls one who is not of his or her rank by his or her Christian name, it is a brevet of equality! In the fashionable clubs, where the scions of old houses are all José, Fernan, Joaquín among one another, the representatives of new nobility are scrupulously addressed as "Count" or "Marquis". To remember a man's title in social life is to dub him *parvenu*. The same simplicity in letter-writing. You address your titled friend, great of the first order, as "My dear friend", and he or she signs "Yours affectionately" (the Spanish equivalent being "I kiss your feet", if a man writing to a lady; "I kiss your hand", if a lady writing to a man or another woman), INÉS or JOAQUIN. All the formality is reserved for the envelope, upon which you are expected to be extremely punctilious in the matter of titles, of lords, of excellencies, of honours.

Nothing is at once more facile and more difficult than social relations in Spain. This is explained by the urbanity of the individual and an incredible national susceptibility. The urbanity is merely superficial, and in consequence lures the naïve foreigner. Is it possible to be taken in by such candid and courteous advances? Unfortunately Spanish courtesy must be accepted at an enormous discount. As a rule it means nothing but empty words. A Spaniard would regard his own brother as a loafer if he came to dinner often. A friend could not do this, for the door would be politely shut in his face on the second occasion. No northern race could conceive anything to match Spanish inhospitality. I will give an example. A Spanish writer, with whom I have had a correspondence for several years, of as pleasant an intimacy as if we had been friends for life, begged me when next I went to Spain to visit him. I went to Toledo last year, and not once but repeatedly he urged me before leaving the Peninsula to come up to the north to see him. At last I consented. Instead of taking from Madrid the mail-train for Paris, I took the slow train up to the coast town where he lived, which meant a journey of seventeen hours, and added two days and three nights in all to my return voyage to France. I telegraphed to the man I naturally regarded as my host to announce the hour of my arrival. Sure enough, when I reached this remote town, the great man was on the

213 From the *The Hunchback* (1832) by Irish dramatist and actor James Sheridan Knowles (1784-1862).

platform, not with a member of his family (he was married, he had a wife, a daughter of twenty-two, a son over twenty), but with two strangers, men of letters, he introduced to me on the spot. I expected him to give my luggage in charge of a porter and show me to a cab, and then drive me to his house. No. He left me to settle everything, and told me to have my things sent to the Fonda Europa, that we would walk there, as it was close to the station. At the hotel he told me to settle about my room, and waited for me. Then he sat down, assured me he was enchanted to see me, and proposed to return when I had rested and lunched. He and his friends came back in the afternoon, and I was carried off in a steam-tram to make the acquaintance of a fellow-Academician along the coast. The illustrious man received us standing, showed us all his treasures, without offering us a chair, or tea, or even a glass of water, though it was hot enough, heaven knows, and bade us good-bye with the most ardent regrets. My friend, who assured me repeatedly of his affection, his admiration, and sympathy, escorted me back to my hotel, and blandly wished me a good appetite for dinner and a good night's rest, hoping to see me again. I left next day without seeing him, and, having gone to the far north at his invitation, I neither entered his house nor drank a draught of water at his expense. He was amazed at my dissatisfaction at this extraordinary reception, and in several long and eloquent letters afterwards protested that he had done all that it behoved a gentleman to do to show me honour and friendship. He had come twice to my hotel in one day, and he regarded it as the height of exigence to expect more. It never occurred to him that a five-pound note, two broken nights, and several unnecessary hours in a railway-carriage, constituted a big price to pay for two hours of his society, without even the compensation of a good dinner.[214] An American, to whom I repeated the story, said it reminded him of the hospitality of a certain man of Kentucky, who said: "If ever you find yourself near my house, stay there". But here is revealed the superiority of American candour. At least the Kentucky man warned you of what to expect, whereas my illustrious Spaniard always called his house *my house*, and instead of advising me to "stay there" repeatedly urged me to "come here". The explanation is that he never for an instant thought I would go, and believed that he would have all the benefit of his fine protestations and mock hospitality for nothing. My telegram was probably a thunderclap, and he had not the courage to reveal his indiscretion to his wife. For poverty was no explanation, as the man belongs to what is called

214 Lynch took the train to Polanco, being welcomed by the writer and two colleagues, José María Quintanilla and Federico de Vial. The following day Pereda did not accompany her. It was All Saints' Day and he wished to honour the memory of his son Juan Manuel. The "fellow-Academician" Lynch refers to may be Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, who possessed an excellent library in Santander. See Salvador García-Castañeda's "Pereda y Hannah Lynch o la pequeña historia de un malentendido", *Siglo Diecinueve*, 1 (1995), 139-57.

the *haute bourgeoisie*, owns estates, has a luxurious town residence, into which I penetrated several years previously, is rich and highly civilised; but, like nearly all Spaniards, understands hospitality as the freedom of the streets. "This is your house", says the Castilian, and marches you along the public place. In his esteem the *plaza* was instituted for the *hidalgo*'s reception of his friends. I, in my early visits to Spain, spoiled by my experience of a Spanish woman as sincerely and cordially hospitable as a princess of Eastern fable, accepted hospitality on all sides with a lamentable lightness. I was charmingly received always, but, I have no doubt, left a reputation behind me of gross indelicacy in construing this Iberian compliment by the common rules of Anglo-Saxon speech.

I know not why the opinion prevails that the Spaniards are dirty. Their habit of spitting is, of course, appalling; but in every other respect, the middle classes are cleaner than the English or the French. Middle-class houses are scrupulously tidy and clean, and in Barcelona domestic luxury is so general that for £24 a-year you may have a magnificent flat, with every latest sanitary improvement, lofty chambers, marble stairs, electric bells, and electric light. In the suburbs the £12 flats are large and charming, with gallery and terrace. I noticed in Valladolid also that the middle-class houses are quite modern and luxurious. As for the standard of bedroom cleanliness and personal linen, it is unsurpassable. Well-to-do people in England are content with coarse and common sheets, while a Spanish peasant offers you embroidered and lace-trimmed linen. The upper classes have the standard of our own – the daily bath, the daily change of linen. Nobody dresses for dinner, which robs the table of its decorative aspect; but the curious habit of dining with gloves is gaining ground in Madrid. In some houses dinner-gloves are placed beside the napkins, and the lady takes off her drawing-room gloves and puts on her table gloves as a matter of course. One seeks in vain the special attraction of this fashion, for surely the ungloved hand is more lovely [by] far than a gloved hand any day.

Religion plays an inevitable but facile part in every phase of Spanish life. Morning mass is as regular as breakfast; but I doubt if the result be in the least spiritual. The virtues of the land are racial, the religion an impossible mixture of materialism and contented ignorance, with a remote and naïve strain of paganism, which keeps the modern traveller of tolerant views on the edge of a smile, so quaint and hideous and sensual are all these forms of worship, – gorgeously dressed dolls, crucifixes decked out with the skirts of a ballet-dancer, and gold-fringed scarves, beads, medals, and processions. With their splendid capacity for devotion, their indomitable courage which in suffering turns the least intelligent and sympathetic Spaniard into a hero or Roman heroine, their innate dignity, one asks oneself if something of imperishable value might not be made of this decaying race by an austere wave of puritanism and religious intellectuality, the exercise of the untrained conscience, the blighted will. When you see a nobleman

and his wife sit up to watch by the bedside of a sick house- or nurse-maid; a selfish woman of fashion prolong her stay in the country because of a sick servant, and lavish the same expensive care on that servant as she would on a member of her own family; and see them elsewhere give proof of an inhuman indifference to the interests of their fellows, one has an instinct that this inconsistency might easily be rectified by education. For Spain cannot by the kindliest observer be regarded as civilised or modern.

In her development, as well as in tradition and in national character, Spain has practically stood still since the death of the sixteenth century. This fact has ever been the triumphant delight of the mere artist, of the modern dreamer, of the lover of picturesque and romantic legend. But nations in these progressive and complex times cannot, with propriety or justice, be regarded from this exclusive standpoint, and can hardly be admired for living so resolutely up to a national character formed by times that have barely a connection with our vivid, vital, and moving present. Spain stands forlorn on the edge of history, draped in the cloak of futile regret, with glance unintelligently retrospective, blighted and empty, mind a blank, attitude a complete conquest of natural activity, the assertion of stupefied indifference. Hence the laboured and exhaustive complaints of the modern traveller.

It is in the abstract no doubt a charming reflection that down there, beyond the imposing Pyrenean range, a great people dwell in a state of comfortless despair, lamenting still the death of Felipe Segundo. But when you cross the Pyrenees, the proofs of this condition are less inspiring, and affect the modern temper most injuriously. You are continually beset with a burning desire to take innkeepers, shopkeepers, muleteers, canons, citizens, policemen, and every other official by the throat for the gratification of exasperated nerves. The trains drive you to despair. You wish wildly that there was more water and less electric light. You moan over the question of *pesetas* and reals,[215] which so wantonly taxes all your arithmetical capacities, should you have any. The servants provoke thoughts of insanity, suicide, or apoplexy. Meanwhile the Don stands before you, imperturbable, gentle, indifferent. What on earth can you be so unreasonable as to expect from a people blighted by the death of Philip II? If you choose to project yourself out of the comfortable, active nineteenth century back into the middle ages, that's your affair, only in heaven's name meet the surprises and experiences of your backward voyage like a man. You are wandering among a race of gentlemen, devitalised by regret, demoralised by a quietude you have not been taught to understand. Respect their repose, their traditions. Admire their sixteenth-century regard when you have the fortune to meet it, the *hidalgo*'s lean dull visage so inappropriately set off

215 An anglicization of the Spanish plural *reales*. A *real* amounted to a quarter of a peseta.

by vulgar modern raiment. Do not insist that they shall know precisely the time of day, or see the sun in the mid-day sky. When the mail-train, already two hours late, chooses to waste another hour while the officials are dining or making love, swear not, but wisely go and do likewise, and let the good folk across the Pyrenees frown and fret over retarded correspondence.

These are the disadvantages for the tourist, a creature naturally of no account whatever in the regulation of national machinery. Not for his convenience are the public clocks set, not for his pleasure do the water-works play. Let him find what gratification he can from the study of alien habits and manners, or let him sulk in his third-rate inn, and marvel that foreigners are allowed to exist, unfortunate and misguided as they are. But now and then even modern history may be relied upon to give us a taste of the sleeping qualities of the sixteenth century among the subjects of Felipe Segundo. In the trivial experiences of every day, Sancho [Panza] may be prominent. He talks common-sense, quotes sound and humorous proverbs that reek of mother-earth and mother-wit, eats and drinks heartily, does as little as he can, and keeps his purse-strings tightly closed. But once let an ideal of chivalry, a principle of honour afloat, something lofty, intangible, for which he may give his life or his last penny, and there you have Don Quixote careering wildly against windmills or the changing heavens, ready to defy giants and attack all powers single-handed. For deep down beneath this indifference and indolence, beneath this seemingly impermeable egoism, which in daily life are the salient characteristics of the race, is the unexhausted generosity, the rash unconquerable heroism of the adorable Knight of la Mancha. It has told in all great moments of Spanish history; and to-day the splendid sight of a poor and decadent nation, heroically armed to meet a wealthy and powerful people, reveals it in all its freshness and faith: Sancho when daily bread has to be earned and life lived meanly in its mean significance, Quixote when the drums beat, and the banners wave, and national honour is at stake. Then no thought of cheap interests. Quixote proudly and chivalrously cuts the strings of Sancho's purse, and the dollars, *pesetas*, and reals pour vigorously into the nation's lap. Quixote, brandishing his sword, while the bands play the "Marcha Real" or the "March of Cadiz", never pauses to ask himself if he is strong enough to meet the enemy. He brooks no murmur of reason or prudence. The life's blood of the nation must pour, if needs be, to the last drop – just as the last penny must be spent for honour's sake, and not for interest.

And this spirit of generosity can sometimes be exercised in an alien cause. When young America rose up against Great Britain, and shouted for freedom, Spain offered to defray half the expenses of the war, and Lafayette sailed away from the picturesque little port of Pasajes, laden with Spanish dollars. "They repay us ill", said a Castilian Minister to me some years ago in Madrid, when the Cuban rebellion was younger than to-day. "We gave them money to win their freedom, and now they are encouraging

the insurgents of Cuba". The Minister did not then anticipate the lengths to which that encouragement would go. Reason will retort that America is only playing the part in the Cuban rebellion that Spain played in the American rising. But Spain's assistance was spontaneous and perfectly disinterested, whereas it is nothing but sheer hypocrisy and humbug on the part of the Americans to prate of humanity, or a noble desire to punish cruelties they would be the first to imitate. The Indian brave and the nigger know something of American humanity, and the blacks of Cuba are not likely to fare better should they have the doubtful fortune to fall into their hard hands.[216]

The spectacle Spain offers us to-day in facing so unflinchingly a war brutally forced upon her, broken, ruined, and alone as she is, recalls her heroism in the beginning of the century, when she, alone in Europe, stood up boldly, and fought the tyrant of the hour. Bonaparte had ruthlessly trodden out all frontiers, and the whole Continent was under his sovereignty, when Spain, degraded and impoverished, made her gallant and glorious stand against him. Such heroism as that displayed in those immortal sieges of Zaragoza and Gerona is not a quality that even centuries can destroy.[217] Many a blunder, many a folly, countless and lamentable stupidities marred the story of the Peninsular War, and the Spanish Government to-day proves itself quite as incapable as the military Juntas; but the fight to-day for national honour is not less heroic, less desperate, than the long struggle with Napoleon. Force, wealth, and brains may be on the side of the people whom Pereda, the Spanish novelist, unjustly described to me in a recent bitter letter as "a nation of miserable merchants", but the Don is assuredly a sympathetic figure.[218] His banner in the fray is a magnificent tradition of

216 Lynch's footnote reads: "Since the above lines were written, the tale of America's magnanimity and generosity, so recently recorded, compels me to admit the injustice of these lines. As an enemy America has won her spurs in the realm of chivalry".

217 During the first siege of Zaragoza, from 15 June to 14 August 1808, the French troops were repelled. The city surrendered following the second siege, from late December to 20 February 1809. The siege of Gerona lasted seven months, the town finally capitulating on 12 December 1809.

218 In a brief note included during the war in *Álbum Patria* (Santander, May 1898, 4), Pereda quotes a paragraph from Lynch's letter expressing sympathy towards Spain: "No puedo dejar pasar estos instantes, tan críticos para España, sin mandar a V. unas líneas con la expresión de mi grande admiración por la actitud actual de ese país. Es tan noble, tan valiente, tan heroica, que estamos todos llenos de simpatía hacia ustedes, y todo el afecto que de antiguo les profesábamos, renace ante ese nuevo rasgo de la hidalguía castellana. Se ve que los españoles siguen teniendo más de Don Quijote que de Sancho: y esto, en los tiempos que corren, es admirable" ["I cannot let these crucial moments for Spain go by without sending you a few lines to express my great admiration for your country's attitude. It is so noble, so courageous, so heroic, that we are all full of sympathy for you, and all the affection that we professed towards you of old is now reborn before this new instance of Castilian chivalry. It seems that Spaniards still share more of Don Quixote than of Sancho, and at the present time this is admirable"] (quoted in García Castañeda, 1995, 142-3).

honour, a legendary valour that will stand to him in the deepest depth of degradation. Whatever faults history may lay to his charge, he is no cheap trickster, no mean braggart, no modern upstart new to arms, unacquainted with glory and victory. Above all, he is no tradesman. In whatever rank you find him, you may count on something of the gentleman; and the snob, that intolerable curse of modern civilisation, is singularly rare in his midst. He may idle away his life in peace, but he does not brutally hustle his neighbour on the market-place in a lust of gold, with neither probity nor pride to regulate his transactions.

Most of us have been dazzled by the splendid effrontery of the Great Captain, when Charles Quint, with Teutonic meanness that affronted Castilian taste, demanded an account of his expenses from Gonzalvo of Cordoba. "What!" shouted the indignant conqueror of Naples; "I win kingdoms for this fellow, and he comes with a beggarly demand for the bill! Well, he will get a bill that will be well worth the sending". In modern slang, he makes the sordid emperor "sit up", and the *Cuentas del Gran Capitán* has passed into tradition as a stroke of genius in brilliant and picturesque extortion.[219] In this method of doing business the Don may excel, belonging, as I have said, to the sixteenth century. He is quite ready, if he gets the chance or the provocation, to charge a million dollars, as the Great Captain did, for hatchets, and sign the receipt with a gallant flourish and a gesture worth the price. But he robs as a soldier, a pirate, an adventurer, never as a tradesman. To-day he is alone in his medieval cloak, fine and distinguished, a figure of valiant futility.

219 Gonzalo Fernández de Córdoba, known as "El Gran Capitán", was one of the most competent military strategists of his time. He led two campaigns against the French and their allies in Italy, securing vast territories for King Ferdinand. The anecdote mentioned by Lynch refers to Charles V. In fact, the discord took place between Fernández de Córdoba and King Ferdinand, who became jealous of his general. Today, the phrase *las cuentas del Gran Capitán* still survives in popular parlance as a euphemism for what is considered an exaggerated or unjust bill.

17 “Alfonso XIII” (1900)

Twenty years ago, Maria Christina of Hapsburg-Lorraine entered Spain, by law a newly-made Spaniard. Born at Gross-Sodowitz, July 21, 1858, granddaughter of the Archduke Charles Ferdinand, she was then abbess of the canonesses of Hradschin in Bohemia, and the project of her marriage with the young widower of Spain was conceived at Arcachon[220] by the ex-queen Isabella, who spent a season in her company there. She was not a stranger to the bereaved sovereign; as boy and girl they had already met in Vienna, when Prince Alfonso wore the uniform of the military college Teresiano.[221] The king came to Arcachon incognito, in the August of ’79, exactly eleven months after the death of Mercedes, whose loss he had so passionately mourned, and continued to the end of his short life to mourn with an ostentation not befitting his condition as the husband of another woman. Three months later, November 29, the young arch-duchess united her destiny with his in the church of Atocha, in the roar of cannon and the clamour of trumpets. Madrid rejoiced in the usual way: the Plaza de la Armería, beflagged, thrilled in response to every sound of the military orchestra. Nothing was heard from the thronged Plaza del Sol to the War Office, near the Puerta de Alcalá, but the joyous greetings from dawn of the City to the new queen. The papers teemed with praises of her, with flamboyant descriptions of her trousseau, of the fabulous gifts the King gave her, of her wedding-gown of silver and lace, and long cloak stamped with the golden lilies of the Bourbons. And the uniforms of all the armies of civilization were gathered round her to assure her of universal sympathy and congratulation.

But what did all this mean for Spain? The consorts of ruling monarchs are usually but decorative figures, of small historic importance, interesting only to their courtiers and to the foreign embassies deputed to hold official relations with them. If they conduct themselves with dignity and tact, and good-nature, their fame may extend beyond the palace walls, and their subjects may possibly bless them. But the rôle they accept in marriage, however illusively brilliant it may seem, is a passive and an effaced one, a surrender of personal tastes, and prejudices, and habits, added

220 A town located on the French Atlantic coast, near Bordeaux, Arcachon became increasingly popular as a spa resort among the aristocracy and bourgeoisie during the second half of the 19th century.

221 The young prince met Maria Christina of Habsburg during his first year in Vienna when a pupil at the Theresian Academy, a private boarding school, whose chief goal was to prepare the sons of the élite for the civil service. Initially admitting only members of the aristocracy, the academy gradually opened itself to the bourgeoisie. The curriculum included a sound scientific education, diplomacy, modern languages and a variety of sports. Alfonso XII became a pupil in 1872, at the age of fourteen, and left in 1874.

to the surrender of nationality. If they exercise an influence, it must be a subterranean one, hidden, unfelt, without a shadow of insistence, with every possible regard for the susceptibilities of those who openly suspect them as intruders.

Never was a young queen a more effaced and unconsidered figure among her subjects than was Maria Christina during her husband's lifetime. Never was a proud young girl, with all the exactions of a woman's heart, all the demands of a pure and lofty nature upon her domestic surroundings to satisfy, placed in a situation so ungrateful and so difficult. It is only when you disrobe a queen of her royalty, and place her before your imagination as a mere woman, with all the rights and weaknesses of a woman, that you will recognize the immense, the almost superhuman demand of courage, of self-effacement, of stoic dignity that is made upon her. Put an ordinary heroine of a novel in the situation of Maria Christina, before almost the wedding-bells had ceased to peal their joyous promise, and the weeping sympathies of her readers would have made a martyr of her. In the first place, the king was the ostentatious mourner of a buried bride, and no less ostentatiously sought oblivion in the wide world of women outside his home. This appears to be the recognized right of kings, and it is customary to ignore what the exercise of this right may mean for their queens. These latter are trained to play the part of constitutional enigmas. Sometimes, as in the case of the late empress of Austria, the enigma unveils itself, and shows us the face of suffering woman in revolt. This is to misunderstand the rôle of queen. Maria Christina once or twice, in an outbreak of outraged womanhood, may have forgotten that she was queen, to remember too poignantly that she was a woman and a wife, but these defections from the compulsory enigmatic attitude of sovereign were but temporary, the passing cry of a wounded heart and of wounded dignity: she was quick to recognize her duty as queen, and hide her griefs behind an exterior of adamantine reserve. A tall, slender, cold-looking young woman, she sought to make no friends, veiled herself from obtrusive sympathies, proffered no confidences. The Spaniards around her bitterly complained. She was a foreigner, and as such a suspect. They distrusted her, not knowing her, resented her coldness, what they called her Austrian haughtiness and her silence.

The day Alfonso died, November 25, 1885, her tragic position won all Spanish hearts. The king had outlived his brief hour of popularity. He was too young and frivolous to measure the consequences, for so democratic a nation as [the] Spain of today, of a frivolous reign. He could be brave as befits a man of his birth, which he proved in the small-pox plague and

the earthquakes.[222] But his real preoccupations were bull-fights and ladies of light morals. Instead of the serious sovereign Spain needed, she had only a mediocre rake, and whatever may be thought to the contrary, nowadays at least, the rule of the rake is none of the wisest. And so Spain was once more on the verge of a revolution. But death at twenty-eight is considered a tragic expiation of the follies of youthtide, and the country only remembered the king's extreme youth and regretted its unfulfilled promise. His errors were after all, the errors of impulsive and passionate nature, without a bridle to its desires and no higher ideal than the enjoyment of the hour. Spain saw but the corpse of a young man, beside which knelt a young widow. Spanish chivalry awoke when the Spaniards reflected that this young widowed queen was a foreigner, a woman on the point of motherhood, whose fate was in their hands. When the Prime Minister, Señor Cánovas came into the mortuary chamber to tender her his resignation, the newly proclaimed Regent, terrified at the immediate prospect of her responsibilities, cried to him: "No, no, don't talk to me of business-matters, at least while Alfonso is here". But she was even in that awful hour made to understand that affairs of State may not yield to private misery, and as *Reina Gobernadora*, though her eyes were full of human tears in the presence of a human unhappiness, she was obliged to take the oath of allegiance to the king's successor and to the laws of the country, which she confided to the new minister Señor Sagasta.

What manner of woman, Spain asked itself, was this reserved and silent queen? For many centuries Spain has not been fortunate in her queens. Their morals have left all that was possible to be desired, and, unlike the case of Catherine of Russia,[223] this extraordinary lack of virtue and decency was not once modified by the presence of extraordinary intelligence. For the moment Christina was a woman made sacred by her condition, but after the birth of her child, who might be the future sovereign, it needed but an unwise and undignified action to bring about the ever threatened revolution and her own expulsion. By that time the Spaniards knew what manner of woman Maria Christina was – knew and appreciated, won by her great if unobtrusive qualities, so completely won that the very Carlists, who had hoped to profit by the perils of her widowhood, were forced to

222 On 25 December 1884 a strong earthquake struck Andalucia, claiming the lives of over 1,000 people. The following month King Alfonso XII travelled across the ravaged area, in the mountains of Granada, to assess the devastation and express his sympathy to the villagers. Subsequently, there was a severe outbreak of cholera (not smallpox) in Valencia, spreading inland and killing thousands of citizens. The king visited some of the infirm at Aranjuez and it is reported that on his return to Madrid he was cheered by the crowds, who lauded his compassion.

223 Empress Catherine II of Russia, 'Catherine the Great', was also hailed as 'the Messalina of the Newa' on account of her many lovers. Lynch's allusion to the morality of Spanish female monarchs may be an allusion to Queen Isabella II, who acquired notoriety on account of her love affairs but also due to her political mismanagement.

pay the tribute of sheathed swords to her sovereignty, and when the little king was born, thanks to his mother's tact, he found a stable throne for his cradle. It is her tact that has obliterated the memory of her husband's misconduct, and carried her triumphantly through the reverses of the Spanish-American war. Had Alfonso been king then, Spain to-day would be a Republic. What else was it but a stroke of genius that made her select for a summer resort San Sebastián, the stronghold of Carlism, where she and the young king are adored, where Alfonso XIII has his own regiment of children which he commands in perfect military style? Maria Christina is proof, if proof were needed, that no reign is better than that of a good woman without any considerable qualities of intellect, with only her dignity and tact of woman of the world; while a bad one backed by genius may leave a record so brilliant that it would tax a great Frederick to beat it. Indeed, we may call the Queen Regent's tact, as Rossetti called a woman's beauty once, genius, for it, like beauty, has accomplished a work which resembles the triumphs of genius.[224] And this miracle she has wrought solely by her personal prestige, without beauty or a brilliant personality, amidst a race irrationally hostile to strangers, and suspicious of foreign influences; a race of proud, umbrageous, and ungrateful temper, composed of various elements of disaffection, narrow, jealous and embittered by misfortunes. For a chill moment, during and after the war, it was feared this noble figure of Queen would be called upon to pay for the defeat of her country, and that the crown she has so heroically worked to place upon her son's head would prove one of the unfulfilled dreams of an admirable career. It was even stated that her Austrian refuge was ready to receive the royal fugitives. But the Spaniards remembered all they owe her: years of dignified regency such as they have not been accustomed to for centuries, a Queen among their smirched annals of royalty not unworthy to take a place beside the glorious figure of Isabella the Catholic, and so to-day her authority is undiminished, her prestige stronger than ever.

It would be impossible to bestow excessive praise upon the Queen Regent as a mother. If she has ruled Spain wisely, she has only lived for her children, and these she has ruled even more wisely than her kingdom. A tender austerity, an unsleeping watchfulness may be described as her exercise of motherhood. The young King has been brought up admirably, and is really a charming little fellow, bright, full of natural kindness, impulsive, like his father, but with all his mother's exceeding sense of duty and discipline. A letter before me from Madrid this week tells me of a recent punishment. General Sánchez, his tutor, would not allow his favourite playmates, the little boys of the Marquesa de Monistrol, to be telephoned for from the Palace, and so the disgraced king sits alone in his

224 Lynch is alluding here to Dante Gabriel Rossetti's sonnet "Genius in Beauty" (1871).

schoolroom.[225] But his mother has trained him to bear his punishments with extreme goodwill, and he suffers like a little gentleman. With a sigh he complains that there is not much fun in being a king, as he has to obey every one, and people only pretend to obey him. His dream is to go about with five other boys in a big carriage without elders, pending the more brilliant and congenial hour of commanding regiments. Even as a tiny lad he was never affected with shyness, and began to chatter in foreign tongues to the ambassadors as soon as he knew a few words of their languages. Trivial but amusing anecdotes of his childish intelligence fly to my pen as I strive to fashion a picture of this important little lad. There is one I heard from General Martínez Campos, about six or seven years ago, who was then the king's military tutor, I think. The wild ambition of Alfonso was to possess a real gun, "that went off, you know, and killed the enemy". The Queen only permitted him to possess inoffensive weapons that could kill nobody. His feast-day was approaching, and he coaxingly came up to the General, "Mamma won't let me have a real gun", he protested, "but you know, it will be my feast-day soon. Couldn't you give me a present of a real gun, General? You know, if it were a present, mamma couldn't prevent me from accepting it". Said the General recounting this anecdote at table: "Es tremendo ese chico" (he is a tremendous little fellow).

What we disengage from all the court gossip about Alfonso XIII is a delightful evidence of simple and austere training. If the boy does not turn out a sage and a saint, it will be no fault of his mother's. She is bringing him up to be a model king, a wise and efficient ruler, and a thorough gentleman. And all that without a touch of priggishness or self-consciousness. He has not the ghost of an idea what a surprisingly good little fellow is he. Lest the flattery of the people should spoil him, she keeps him away from public view as much as possible. He is obliged to study hard, so as to be able to converse intelligently when he comes to reign, with every class of his subjects. He must rise winter and summer at half-past seven. And, thanks to his own impulsiveness and love of play, he remains quite a child, with nothing of Spanish precocity. Last summer a friend wrote me from San Sebastián, he might be seen whenever he got the chance, playing enthusiastically with a group of children. His tutor, the Comandante Castrejón, has four or five lovely children with whom he was allowed to romp to his heart's content, and there was the Hope of Spain on all fours, with three babies of both sexes on his back, shouting to him as he tore round the room, "Arre burro" (Gee up, donkey), he with a string in his mouth, which they violently tugged as reins, the little girl beating a wild tattoo on

225 María del Pilar de Sentmenat y Patiño, daughter of the 6th Marquis of Sentmenat, was married to Joaquín Escrivá de Romaní y Fernández de Córdoba, 4th Marquis of Monistrol. Their two sons, Luis Bertrán Escrivá de Romaní (1888-1977) and Alfonso Escrivá de Romaní (1894-1978), may have been the "playmates" Lynch is referring to.

his royal head. The game over, his majesty espied through a door sweet things on the dining-room table, and with the air of a rogue whispered to the eldest child, "Take me in there where the sweets are". He saw his first play this summer at San Sebastián, and I learn that he is reserving a great surprise for his mother. He and his boy friends are inventing a play of their own, which they are going to act themselves. "It's much nicer to invent your own parts as you go along", the King proudly explained, "then you haven't the trouble of learning them before-hand". It is to be hoped he will not spoil the surprise as he nearly spoiled a surprise at San Sebastián got up by the young princesses, who arranged, unknown to the Queen, an amateur concert. They dressed up all the officials in disguises of their own invention, and gave their brother a trumpet to play. In his eagerness to show off his new talent he rushed away for his mother before the poor princesses had time to group their effects; but the concert went off all the same, and naturally the courtiers pronounced that never was such a trumpeter before as the King of Spain. Innocent scenes, but all this pretty gossip goes to the fashioning of charming historical studies by and by. Read M. de Haussonville's big work on the child Duchess of Bourgogne,[226] and admit that the charm of the book lies in the quaint mingling of infancy and court etiquette, the contrast of the extreme importance of the baby duchess with her velvet trains and ermine mantles, her court and grave officials, and the ordinary little girl, like any other, with the usual child's preferences and prejudices, gaiety and laughter, tears and tempests. And so, through that singular mixture of solemnity and simplicity which the Spanish court has become, Alfonso XIII comes and goes a very pleasing picture of impulsive childhood, brightening royalty with the grace of childhood, lending to it the laughter of its surprises. Who that can remember such an incident as this, would not always have children upon thrones? It was the occasion of a splendid Court ceremony, I forget in whose honour. But all the ambassadors were there, and every one kissed the infant King's hand as he sat on his big throne, with the Regent on his right. On the steps of the throne sat the little princesses, Mercedes on one side, Maria Theresa on the other. Maria Theresa was then her brother's favourite playmate, but she excited his wrath on this occasion by repeatedly knocking her head against his leg. The temper of his Majesty the King gave way; he could no longer endure the intolerable outrage. Forgetful of ambassadors and courtiers, of his royal mother's presence, of the solemnity of the great hall, he bent down and caught his sister's hair in both fists, and began to tug it violently. Thus assaulted, Maria Theresa lifted up her arms and seized her brother's head in a vengeful grasp, and before anyone could come to the

226 Lynch is alluding here to the four-volume work *La duchesse de Bourgogne et l'alliance savoyarde sous Louis XIV* (1898-1903) by Gabriel Paul Othenin de Cléron (1843-1924), Comte d'Haussonville.

rescue of the King and the princess, both angry children had rolled ignominiously down the steps of the throne, and their various members had to be gathered together by obsequious gentlemen-in- waiting, and restored to their earlier dignity. If infants ruled kingdoms in this cheerful fashion, and so delightfully kept the nursery with its wars and disasters in view, be sure there never would have been a revolution against them in any land.

What manner of king Alfonso XIII will prove, time has yet to tell us. But if he should fulfil the excellent promise of his well-bred infancy and boyhood, Spain has nothing to fear. He has been taught to remember others and not himself. He has been trained to obey before learning to command. Now in his teens he is still a child, with all a child's fondness for children, and the play of children. And should Spain ever recover her ancient prestige, let her honestly tell herself and others that she owes this immense debt to the gracious and admirable woman who rules her, and who has proved herself so royal and so noble a mother.

18 “Rebel Catalonia” (1902)

When you hear Castilian and Catalonian speak of each other, and become intimate with the character of these two so contrasted races, you no longer wonder at the unrest and ill-humour of rebel Catalonia. Imagine the practical go-ahead Anglo-Saxon governed by the dreamy and indolent Celt; and while deeming and regarding himself the superior of two, feeling that the dominant race regards him with arrogant disdain. For Irish and English are not more unlike than Castilian and Catalonian. They clash in every respect, and not the smallest of Catalan grievances is the obligation to speak Spanish at a disadvantage. For, like the Irish, they speak it always with a pronounced accent which offends the Castilian ear, but, unlike the Irish, they do not bring as an atonement eloquence or picturesque fervour. They have no winning qualities in speech or character – these rude Catalonians; they are harsh and discourteous, sharp in money dealings, tight-fisted, resolute in gain, like all commercial races. But they are active, thriving, practical, progressive, and the root of their incendiary disposition is a permanent dissatisfaction at having to knuckle under to a race they hold to be their inferior. Now the very qualities upon which they pride themselves, and blow abroad their praises in resounding vaunt, are repugnant to the haughty Castilian, who sets no value on this thriving, active, practical, national temperament, while the Catalonian’s lack of breeding, his coarseness and dreadful dialect fill him with something very like horror. And so the old quarrel of ill-mated races under one flag rages, and as in all quarrels, each is convinced that wrong is on the other’s side.[227]

Castile complains of the turbulence and unprovoked aggressiveness of Catalonia, asserts that it exacts too much attention and consideration, and that the entire country is sacrificed to the interest of a noisy province. Then Catalonia contributes nothing to the maintenance of the Kingdom in proportion to its exorbitant demands. The forbearance of Spain is in constant requisition above the Ebro, and to please Catalonia a higher rate of duty than the Spaniards can afford to pay upon indispensable foreign goods is maintained, the profit of which goes exclusively to Catalonia. The *Catalanistas* on their side are much more emphatic in their charges. They accuse the Castilian Government of every known iniquity and ineptitude. If a Catalonian wishes to erect a simple post, anywhere from Tortosa to Roussillon, he must solicit permission from the authorities in Madrid, who can know nothing whatever about the matter. At the end of several months,

227 Two Spanish publications, both before and following Lynch’s death, partially echoed her points about the rivalry between Catalonia and Castile: Juan Uña Sarthou, “La rebelde Cataluña”, *La lectura*, 17 May 1902, 570-2; B. Santos y Vall, “Ecos de Cataluña”, *Nuestro Tiempo*, 122 (Feb), 1909, 204-5.

after repeated and trying applications for reply, he receives word from a minister's secretary that the important question (one not even of local importance perhaps) is being duly considered by the Government. Of course, the Government has never heard of it and never will. At the end of a year the impatient Catalonian ends where he should have begun, and takes the train for Madrid. Here, alas! in order to gain a minister's ear, he must freely open his purse. We never know what to believe of public chatter about ministers in any land, but report in Spain on this delicate ground is especially awful. Travelling through Catalonia and Majorca last summer, I heard the tongues of men wag with consistent ferocity about Señor Sagasta's Ministry,[228] which I might have taken to be a band of conscienceless pirates. 'Tis the price one pays everywhere for power, and the men who win in the running are aware of it, and do not need our pity. Cánovas del Castillo was assassinated,[229] and today more than one Spaniard will solemnly assure you that the nomination of Señor Sagasta is an irreparable calamity for Spain, from which I infer that it really does not matter what colour of minister governs a country. It is safe for half of the nation to go to the dogs, anyhow, to be misgoverned and pillaged.

But this I do know, that under the present ministry I witnessed astounding irregularities last summer at Barcelona, which led me to conclude that the *Catalanistas* are not without some show of right on their side, however heartily we may deplore these revolutionary outbreaks beyond the Pyrenees. Of course, revolutions are never nice or comfortable matters, but without revolutions we should never have progressed beyond the morals and manners of the Middle Ages, and we have to remember that the Iberian spirit is that of the 16th Century, while the Catalonian is considerably in advance even of the latter end of the 18th century. Few nations have confidence in their politicians, but I can testify that the Catalonians have less reason than others to put their faith in those who govern them. At Barcelona last summer, the ministerial nominee, a Catalonian plutocrat, with hardly four thousand votes, was in the governmental organ credited publicly with twelve, while the *Catalanista* chief, who had nearly fifteen thousand, was cut down to seven. The Catalonians threatened a revolution, and by some mysterious, inexplicable, underhand process, the ministerial nominee, whom everybody had congratulated on his election, was wiped out, and the Catalan member triumphantly went off to Madrid to repre-

228 Leader of the Liberal Party, Práxedes Mateo Sagasta (1825-1903) served as Prime Minister of Spain on eight occasions over the years 1870-1902.

229 Leader of the Conservative Party, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo (1828-97 was assassinated by an Italian anarchist in revenge for his iron-hand policies.

sent his province.[230] It is obvious that political matters in a land where such things can happen unquestioned are in an infirm and unsatisfactory state. But the threatened revolution was, like many another Spanish revolution, a matter of bombastic threats. We went forth to the Plaza de la Constitución exactly three times to witness it, and all we found was a few pacific-looking males on horseback and a few curious spectators waiting to see what was going to happen. Nothing of consequence happened; a few deputies hurried into their carriages and drove hastily away from the scene of bloodshed and revolution, with no other thought in the morning than the gross satisfactions of the luncheon table, and in the late afternoon for those of the evening repast and flirtation. The famous *Tió Fresco* of Barcelona raced down the Calle Fernando, followed by a score of lads and roughs with matches and torches vainly endeavouring to set him on fire, a fantastic satire upon the *révolution manquée*.[231] Yet the French and English papers at that moment were representing the streets of the town as running with blood and we were all in Barcelona pictured pathetically as snatching at hasty meals with scared faces to the boom of artillery. There was not a shot anywhere, and we read the foreign accounts of the town's doings as if we were reading news from China.

But there is nothing like dwelling permanently in an atmosphere of revolution to breed an amused indifference to its consequence. To-day I get a letter from Barcelona, a mere good-humoured comment on the state of siege. "You know more about us than we know ourselves", writes my correspondent. "Happily bread is still sold, and one or two tramways are running in the hands of troops, infantry within and artillery without, but for news we must get papers from Madrid, and for these we pay any sum, beginning at a peseta and running up to a dollar". No other concern. My correspondent has been inured by a residence of a quarter of a century to the troublous and threatening atmosphere of Barcelona, where it may be said the people eat, drink, dance, and make love upon an ever-menacing social earthquake.

230 In the Spanish general election of 1901, won by the Liberal Party of Sagasta, the *Catalanista* party (Lliga Regionalista) gained parliamentary seats for the first time. According to Charles E. Ehrlich, the intervention of the Republican politician Alejandro Lerroux became paramount in securing a recount of the votes cast and preventing manipulation. Six deputies from the Lliga Regionalista won seats in Madrid: Lluís Domènech i Montaner, Bartomeu Robert i Yarzábal, Albert Rusiñol i Prats, Sebastià Torres i Planas, Carles de Camps i d'Olzinellas and Domènec Sert i Badia. See Charles E. Ehrlich, *Lliga Regionalista, Lliga Catalana, 1901-1936*. Barcelona: Alpha, 2004, 84-8.

231 The *tió fresco* was a popular dance performed during the Carnival festivities across many of the Catalan-speaking territories. The dancers, usually men, held a small torch in their hands, and as the whole group leapt and danced around in circles they had to try to light a piece of paper (the *tió fresco*) pinned on the back of each individual's shirt. Here Lynch is referring to one male individual as the *Tió Fresco*, being chased by a number of youths. See "Ball del Patllari" in Francesc Pujol and Joan Amades (eds.), *Cançoner popular de Catalunya*, vol. 1. Barcelona, 1936, 370.

But it must not be thought that the Catalonians are more unanimous than any other race under the sun. They, too, have what the Irish call their West Britons, and these are not necessarily aristocrats, for I know Catalan aristocrats who detest the Castilian and who would infinitely prefer French or English domination to his. At the time of the war with America it is said that more than one influential house was ready to run up the American flag in welcome to the American Fleet in case of invasion of the port of Barcelona. The Spanish-Catalonians belong chiefly to the leisured classes, who would suppress in ordinary intercourse the unimaginably ugly Catalan dialect and reserve it for purely literary and philological purposes. As a real language it is so poor and incomplete that in order to revive it the Catalonians are compelled to turn to Roussillon and to all sorts of lost mountain refuges, to incorporate forgotten antique and peasant words in their revival. Between this contemptuous and unpatriotic party and the advanced party there is room for the moderate *Catalanistas* who only demand autonomy, or more properly speaking, local government. These are content with Spanish customs and Spanish national decisions – in a word, with Castilian rule, in all general matters pertaining to the joint welfare of Spain, but wish to see Catalonia a separate and self-governing province. Considering the antagonistic differences of the two races, this latter arrangement is wise, sober and essential. Races cannot agree in open hostility any more than dogs, but while civilisation makes for extended boundaries and is opposed to the formation of small States, some such concession must eventually be made to racial animosities if Spain is not to be swallowed up in one of these ever recurring crises. Besides, Spain is greatly to be blamed in all her contests with Catalonia as well as with her colonies. I once travelled on a big liner bound for South America, where all the passengers were Spaniards; it was long before the war with America and there was only one word amongst them for Spain – stepmother. An influential Catalonian told me that once a Castilian adventurer, to whom a minister was indebted, was stranded in Barcelona and wrote for help to the minister at Madrid. The minister happened to have nothing in the way of patronage or pension to offer him, but gave him permission to erect a lavatory in any part of Barcelona he chose. The Castilian sent plumbers and workmen to operate in front of a Catalan nobleman's palace. "What's this?" cried the marquis.[232] Altercations ensued, and as Don Fulano[233] had the law on his side, he received a pleasant cheque to desist. He then carried his operations in front of another palace with like results, and after various peregrinations of the sort, left Barcelona wealthier even than he entered it. But the proceeding was not of a nature to mend matters.

232 Here Lynch may be referring to the installation of a *vespasienne*, or public toilet, situated in Plaza Urquinaona, in front of the Sentmenat property, where Nannie Lynch resided for a period.

233 "Mr Whoever".

Whether, however, the Catalonians please you or not, their province offers innumerable attractions to the traveller. And not only in our day; St. Paulonius [*sic*] of Nola wrote of Barcelona and Tarragona to Ausonius as long ago as the 4th century:

> Caesaria est Augusta cui, cui Barcino amoena
> Et capite insigni despectans, Tarraco pontum

Again in the *Ausonii Epistola*e we hear of the Catalonian oysters as famous: "Tarraco et ostrifero superaddita Barcino ponte".[234] Barcelona is to-day what the old Barcino was, "agreeable" – *amoena*. It is something more, an exceedingly brilliant modern town, with broad boulevards, verdure and plenty of gaiety for those who mistrust the picturesque in a setting of implacable dullness. You must not believe, when you have crossed the high rampart of the Pyrenees, that you are in Spain, though the habits, looks and speech of the people are strange enough for romance. On a warm summer's night all the town at the frontier comes out delightedly to meet you. Your arrival is their daily excitement, and maids and swains flirt outrageously while they inspect you between two languorous glances. From Narbonne onwards your ear has been familiarised with the harsh dialect of Catalonia, yet hitherto it has been somewhat softened by French intonation, but at Port Bou it is brutal and barbarous. There is nothing so gross to the civilised ear except its sister Mallorquin. And yet a philological and literary movement like the Félebriges [*sic*] of Provence exists to inculcate a passion for this hideous dialect. It has produced one man of real poetic genius, Verdaguer, the pendant of Mistral,[235] who has written some lovely mystical "canciones", and one long pretentious epic, *Atlantides* [*sic*], which

234 Saint Paulinus, Bishop of Nola (Italy), was born in Bordeaux and taught by the poet Ausonius. He was ordained a presbyter in 393 or 394 during a stay in Barcelona. The original reads: "Caesarea est Augusta eui, Barcinus amoena/Et capite insigni despectans Tarraco pontum?" (this land which has its Saragossa, pleasant Barcelona, and Tarragona looking from majestic heights down to the sea?) (140-1). The second quote, from a letter by Ausonius, observes: "Nunc tibi trans Alpes et marmoream Pyrenen/Caesarea est Augusta domus, Tyrrhenica propter/Tarraco et ostrifero super addita Barcino Ponto" (Now for thee beyond the Alps and stony Pyrenees, Saragossa is thy home, Tyrrhenian Tarragona is nearby, and Barcelona built above the oyster-bearing sea) (106-7). See Hugh H. Evelyn-White, transl., *Ausonius. With an English Translation*, vol. 2. London: Heinemann, 1921).

235 Jacint Verdaguer (1845-1902) is considered a towering figure of the 19th-century Romantic and revivalist movement, the *Renaixença*, aimed at modernising Catalan language and literature after a long decline. Ordained a priest in 1870, he cultivated a lyrical and religious poetry that acquired wide popularity among his fellow Catalans. He also wrote patriotic texts and two epic poems, *L'Atlàntida* (1877) and *Canigó* (1886), which earned him further renown abroad. His funeral gathered a crowd of over 300.000 people who bade him farewell as a national hero. Throughout his life Verdaguer maintained close ties with the Provençal revivalist movement known as the Félibrige, and with one of its founders, the poet and lexicographer Frédéric Mistral (1830-1914).

literary Catalonians assure you is greater than anything Mistral has written. I prefer the mystical songs, some of which are quite mediaeval in their charm, freshness, quaintness, deft simplicity and delicacy.

The coast line may be followed as far as Tortosa at the mouth of the wide and sullen Ebro, or leaving the sea, you may wind through the mountains. Of an early summer morning I know nothing to approach the gaiety of Roussillon, with its little fishing villages so brightly coloured, its musically named bays, breaks of foam-touched blue against the blue arch of a radiant heaven, with tall ships and sailing boats in relief between; its clear bold mountain lines shadowed with verdure and blinding with light; its flowing rivulets that gleam like silver in the fresh sunshine; its little hills, with now and then a church spire, a historic monument, a romantic ruin to set the traveller dreaming. Forests here and forts there, vineyards beyond, and down below a long stretch of sanded beach or a deep wild valley. And what lovely suggestive names onward from Narbonne! Not that you will find anything to match the unrivalled, almost aching charm of St. Louis' dead old town, Aigues Mortes, with its salt lagoon and its exquisite walls. But there is an indescribable charm in such words as Elne, Argelès, Port Vendres. It is only when you cross the dividing rampart and leave the French frontier behind that you part with these romantic names. Port Bou is your first Catalonian station, pronounced *Port Bow*. Who could dream in a port so unmusically named? But by no means unpicturesquely situated; the great mountains are too insistent around and about us, and we are at the bottom of a desperate ravine. The train literally cuts its way through huge rocky walls, and up somewhere, as high as the loftiest notion of heaven, a slip of azure spans them. From this onward interminable tunnels through mountain passes overhanging the sea, with tantalising brief visions of a strange landscape. Accidented shore line and rocky heights, with behind the splendid ramparts of waveringly hued peaks. I have seen these Eastern Pyrenees at all times of the year, in all moods of nature. They are most glorious in early spring, when the sun is out, full and warm, but the snows are not yet melted. Then you will see their blanched tops and icily veiled shoulders hard and glittering against the rounded white clouds, as soft as a kitten's white breast, beside them, and beneath the snow mantle waves upon waves of indigo shadow, with crevices as inky as night, as profound as fathomless water, and such a glistening sheen of new verdure and such perfumed promise of opening bud and leaf! The strange note of palm and cactus lends an added charm to the scene. The painted houses, first seen then, are by no means so tawdry as they afterwards appear. The morning lights of a summer day are like the morning lights of life – they cast a spell over everything. Later on I passed again when the Spanish pinks were all aglow, and the rills and rivulets gleamed like gold in the deep scintillating rays of sunset. But there were no indigo shadows about the mountains, no snowy hoods upon their arid rocky heights. It was so much less beautiful

that I hailed with pleasure the softer shades and lines of sunburnt Roussillon. Autumn is another beautiful moment in strange Catalonia. I entered it once at such a time when the world was flocking to Barcelona for the Columbian Centenary.[236] Never have I seen such an exhibition of rollicking gaiety in my life. The *Rapide* was hailed like a tram by everybody, men waving sticks and umbrellas, and whole families skurrying across sunlit meadows. They sat on the floor, on each other's knees and shoulders, and I am convinced not one paid for his place. The *Guardias Civiles*, mildest of Iberian gentlemen, smilingly beamed upon the general hilarity. The earth revealed a mellow, mirthful beauty, and the dews shone like diamonds upon leaf and flower, upon the radiant herbage. I had no thought to complain when the complaisant company landed me and its densely packed train, like a sardine barrel without an empty spot unoccupied, exactly four hours behind time. Who wanted to travel at a quicker speed when all earth and humanity was in such a state of uproarious felicity? I have visited Barcelona many times since, but I own with sorrow I have never been able to renew that enchanting hour.

Northern Catalonia has its places of note, its churches and queer old towns as well as magnificent mountain scenery. Figueras and shoreward Ampurias, with its Roman antiquities, are worth a visit, and Gerona should certainly not be missed. The city is beautifully situated, the lower town upon the Oñar, the cathedral heights far above, reached by flights of staired streets, well walled and turreted. Of sombre and sullen aspect, with the harsh winds whistling down its tortuous narrow streets, and stone stairs on all sides, zigzagging down to the Mercadal, one accepts it readily as the home of a legendary heroism. That immortal *hidalgo*, Álvarez, is the only figure we connect with it – who would wish for a finer? We stop in front of the house in the cathedral square in which he lived during the memorable siege, and then go and look at his monument in the chapel of St. Narcissus, an insignificant modern work of art, and are glad to remember that heroism is a thing of all times and of all races.[237] The cathedral, with its splendid stone stairs and lovely cloisters, is of course the ostensible object of our visit to Gerona, and San Pedro and San Feliu are the other sights to see. Charming walks surround the bleak, stern city among the hills and

236 Even though the Barcelona city council organised several events in 1892 to commemorate the fourth centenary of Columbus' first voyage, here Lynch may well be referring to the World Fair hosted by the city from early April until late December of 1888.

237 As military governor of Gerona (Girona, in Catalan), General Mariano Álvarez de Castro (1749-1810), one of the most lauded Spanish heroes of the Peninsular War, commanded the local forces during the third siege in less than a year that the city had been subjected to by the Napoleonic troops. The nearly 5.000 civilians and soldiers who defended Girona, scantily armed, poorly fed, and warned not to surrender on pain of death by General Álvarez himself, kept a French army 18,000 strong at bay from May until December 1809. The city finally capitulated on 10 December 1809. Álvarez de Castro died in the fortress of Figueres on 22 January 1810.

along the water way, and down in the Mercadal you will find here and there an odd Italian note. The little arched streets vaguely recall Padua, and one remembers Florence in looking from the Puente Isabel down on the greenish river with the houses built upon it. After you have seen Gerona, the wise thing is to take at Empalme the coast line which is lovely and gay and diverse.[238] Of course, if you wish to see Breda and the famous Sierra de Montseny, you must choose the inland route, and this will give you an opportunity to see Granollers and break off here for Vich and Ripoll. But it is all mere lazy enjoyment along the coast. Sapphire waters, huge rocks sheltering little villages straggling out of orange groves and gardens, and on the verge of Tiana the delightful valley of Montalegre. Here in the beginning of the 15th century two students, leaving the University of Barcelona, stopped, and were so enchanted with the spot, that one of them cried, "If ever I become pope I'll build a monastery here". Years afterwards a poor monk, Juan de Nea, was summoned to Rome to find his old schoolfellow become Nicholas V. "I have not forgotten", said the pope, "my engagement to build a monastery at Montalegre". And thus was built the Chartreuse on this exquisite spot.[239] Badalona, the ancient Baetulo of the Romans, is also a charming spot, all plain and gardens, with foliaged hills behind and the sea in front, enlivened by white sails poised on the blue like the wings of countless butterflies.

Barcelona is the richest, the finest, the most brilliant town of Spain. It combines two things rarely found together – commerce and beauty. It is superbly situated, and through the break of almost every street you catch a glimpse of the delightful hills that circle it. Contrast it with such busy centres as Manchester or Liverpool, no busier, and you will see what a wonder it has accomplished in remaining thus open, sunny, gracious and gay. It breathes an air of wealth and is not destitute of art. Roman, Goth, Moor passed there, and even now it cannot forget that it was once the Athens of the troubadour. It is associated with great names, too: Isabel the Catholic, Columbus and Charles V; and did not the adorable Quixote himself come here, and his creator, greater than all these? It has much that is pleasant and unique to offer: the Rambla on a fair May morning, when the roses and pinks are abloom, and are stacked in such array as you will

238 The so-called "Empalme" station (literally meaning 'junction') is currently known as Maçanet-Massanes. It was the meeting point for the coastal and inland trains travelling from Barcelona to Girona.

239 The legend of the two students and the visit to Rome mentioned by Lynch is lacking in historical evidence, but Fray Juan de Nea, a Carthusian monk, did play a chief part in the construction of the main Gothic buildings of the Charterhouse of Santa Maria de Montalegre. The works began in 1433 and were completed in 1463 but were not commissioned, as legend has it, by Pope Nicolas V. However, the Pope helped the community to preserve its jurisdiction over the neighbouring lands amid disputes with the Crown. The Charterhouse, located today on the outskirts of the metropolitan area of Barcelona, still remains in use as a Carthusian Monastery.

see nowhere else, on either side, with an arch of gold-shot purple below where the sea draws a darker line beneath the turquoise of the sparkling heavens. And the Park with its glorious magnolias, its airy splendour, and the Liceo with its luxurious boxes! Barcelona is not a provincial town; it is one of the world's capitals, the capital of ambitious, turbulent, enterprising, intelligent Catalonia. When we have seen it, purse-proud, wealthy, prosperous and flaunting, we understand its dissatisfaction with its inferior position towards smaller, less brilliant, poorer and second-rate Madrid. We understand too, its secret wish to dominate as sovereign and mistress all Roussillon, Majorca and Valencia, wherever the Catalan family of dialects is spoken. For this is the ambition of the *Catalanistas*.

Near Barcelona is one of the earth's wonders – Montserrat. Pity it is that Catalonian energy has not devised some means of tolerable existence in that unique spot, whereby travellers may enjoy the marvellous scenery without the seemingly indispensable disadvantages of dirt and discomfort. The monks have built huge hideous barracks called *hospederías*. They give beds, linen, rudely furnished cells, for which you pay according to piety or purse, not less than a peseta a night. The hotel where you may feed, unless you bring up provisions from Barcelona and choose to use the kitchen attached to your cell, is dear and the table wretched. No need to insist on the discomforts. The wealthy Catalonians who have visited Montserrat once will tell you that they are waiting for the day when the monastery will belong to some civilised power like France or England to revisit it. If only these *hospederías* could be knocked down and comfortable cottages, lodging-houses and a few modest and inexpensive inns replace them, who would not linger for months at Montserrat? But alas! – in spite of the stupendously beautiful scenery, when the three days of your permitted stay have ended, you ask nothing better than to take the train back to Barcelona and civilisation, and the first thing you do is to plunge into a bath to cleanse your unhappy person of the odours of sanctity pertaining to Montserrat. But these are small things to dwell upon when, from the moment you leave the village of Monistrol, you dwell in the heart of inexhaustible surprises. Your upward path by cogwheel railway on a circling swing round the extraordinary stone mountains is a panoramic unfolding of towns, villages, plains, valleys, bridges, the sweeping curves of the yellow Llobregat which roll in and out of view with an infinity of charm and effect. If you are pious, you will visit the ugly church with its costly marbles and gilt, and mount the stairs to inspect with awe and faith (kissing her mantle) the image of the Mother of Christ, a middle-aged, coarse-featured, black face, wrought like so many others by St. Luke and supposed to be brought to Spain by St. Peter. If you listen to the Spaniards, ever the worst of guides, you will be induced to waste time and strength in visiting the Grotto of Collbató, and your perfidious muleteer will guide you to a far-off village along a sun-baked road that he may eat there at noon, instead of

skirting the shorter escarped path to the Cave. The road from the village is the vilest and most perilous I have ever travelled. The sunrays were flailed fire; the dreadful zigzagging path just a scarce visible thread of dust up an almost vertical rock, without shade of tree or bush. I have had the good fortune to see Montserrat once in a fog, and nothing could be more unimaginably beautiful. When the morning sun began to melt the fog, the grey peaks were touched with rose as they emerged from their delicate white veil, looking like ethereal isles. Then the veil slowly sank into the cups of the valleys and became a mere sun-shot mist, and the sun travelled brilliantly down the slopes of the mountains and pierced into the shadows of the crevices. It was accomplished with such swiftness and surety, that it was almost like assisting at a miracle to watch it. Soon big dabs of violet shade were cast in and about the glowing green of foliage and flowered heath, and the threads of water glistened like the facets of jewels in the increasing radiance of light. Another lovely effect I remember was a summer rain along the exquisite road to Santa Cecilia. At intervals a dense shower would wipe out the landscape and leave nothing for the eye but a wall of grey vapour. Then with the rapidity of magic the sun would sweep away this wall, and behold the earth lovelier, clearer, more joyous than before. As soon as the shower began, we had to shelter under a wall of rock, with open umbrellas held in front as a kind of tent, and then when the rain rolled off, start on refreshed and enchanted. We were like the young scholars at Montalegre in the 15th century, only instead of a monastery, we wanted to stay and build merely a comfortable cottage at Santa Cecilia, overlooking Monistrol and the long green and flowered valley of the Llobregat, gratefully contemplating sweeps of gorge and plain, perfumed slopes, and little white and yellow towns between the curves of river bends and olive glades. The most famous point is, however, San Jerónimo, which is poised on the utmost peak above the wooded slopes of Montserrat's fairest flank. The view is the most magnificent I have ever seen. Towns and villages sink into insignificance when the eye embraces the whole Pyrenean range, the mountains of Navarre, the vast blue sheet of earth's Middle Sea, and against the dazzling heaven a bank of cloud which is the Balearic group of islands. Such a vision of earth's grandeur, such immensity in detail of mountain, sea, and plain make an unforgettable picture. Man dwindles to the proportion of an ant, and only the gods here could hold social intercourse. As for the mountain, prodigious, ineffaceable, who can describe the strangeness of its aspect?

The broad high road of Tarragona offers a picture of an enchanting glow of colour and diversity of charm. You turn from the deep and dappled shadows of the pine-woods to the little scented hillsides, so airy with their exquisite clearness of form, down past the glades that fill the blue hollows with the delicate brightness of their foliage, to the pulsing indigo of the Mediterranean, gay with the white and brown sails of the feluccas, the

red sashes of the boatmen, and the painted barques rocking rhythmically. Rounding the battlements and crags of that noble mediaeval memory, the castled heights of Altafulla, we tread an aromatic heath and the plain rolls away, a bloom of vine-mist in the purple and amber of the famous Priorato vineyards.[240] Here and there a fortress to tone the blaze of the sunlit hills, aflame at the heart as if the eternal light had burnt the soil a deep red, and Tarragona massed against the forward horizon, a legend still despite its squalor, its ugliness, its decay. Carthaginian, Roman, Moor and Goth have helped to build up the legend. Prehistoric walls, in rude contrast with the finish and elegance of the Roman Aqueduct on its tier of arches that span the wide valley, the ruined fort and ramparts of San Fernando, and the long bridge of Las Ferreras upon an immense line of double tiers of arches. Tarragona cannot be described as an engaging town. In olden days it was the superior of Barcelona, but there is to-day no other evidence of this than that of its great cathedral. Romans and Goths favoured it, for remains of which races now it is one of the most interesting though ugliest of Spanish cities. Augustus wintered here, hence its pride, but when the Moors came they made a ruin of it and went to dwell in fair and flowery Valencia. The city manages to feed its vanity by claiming Pontius Pilate as a citizen. For a southern town I found it inconceivably smutty. I cannot tell why it suggested to me coal and dust, but when there was not dust in the air there was decidedly coal. The tortuous streets of the lower town are only clean when in their opening they reveal a little fringe of clean sea, and as I sat on the light brown pier that runs out from the mouth of the Francolí, the town, racing upwards along the horizon, looked a tomb of dead splendour massed against the hot stillness of the blue beneath the flail of sunfire. The opposite pier under the fort of Milagro looked sleepier still, with all the boatmen and sailors lying asleep beneath the rim of their boats, or flat, head downward upon the unshaded stones. Laneways and dark steep steps lead from the dusty plateau to the upper town; the Rambla is bright if you forget Barcelona, and *plazas* laid out without grace or charm are on one side an intolerable glitter of sunlit wall and discoloured foliage, on the other dense patches of shadow in the aching light. Here you have as consolation the glorious cathedral, and outside, when the sun has set, an unshadowed walk in perfumed wilds is pleasant enough. A long street makes a prettily devious line to the market place, with quaint shops and queer projecting balconies, and the square caps and blankets of the men are in grotesque contrast with the outline of leathered leg and jaunty jacket. Round by the Paseo of Santa Clara, where the wealth of Tarragona is congregated, a charming walk high above the sea wall, with delightful

240 With production dating back to the 12th century, this wine-producing county (Priorat, in Catalan) is known for its fertile soil and microclimate.

gardens, is the one picturesque bit by daylight. In the breathing stillness of night Tarragona, like every other southern town, takes on an alien beauty. To wander there among the vague streets of the lower town, with mysterious glimpses of discoloured sea revealed beneath the paler obscurity of the starlit sky, or in a white moonlight sending silver ridges of dancing moonbeams across to the dim skyline; or to see it in the alluring hour of dawn, when it wears a clarity, a remoteness, a sweet clear coldness, is to credit it with attractions it does not possess.

Better than the town are the fragrant hills as you leave it, and the constant blitheness of the sea road. Here the silver stroke of olive against a red fold of earth, there the brown sail of a *chalupa*[241] between two blues, little fishing villages between high gardens and broken beaches, and a loose terrace here and there roofing the water. But after Hospitalet the loveliness of scenery leaves us, and we are in arid Spain. You may see a pinewood and a broad bar of silver water along a craggy torrent bed, and soon the marshes and the lagoons of the Ebro show themselves. The half Provençal brightness of Catalonia lies behind. Gloomy Amposta, a quaint, dirty, walled little town, two miles away from the station, is not acquainted with the traveller's presence – so I gather from the astounding sensation created by mine. I got out of the diligence on the market place; the usual confident airy traveller come to see what there was to be seen. Three hours later the same diligence picked me up a limp mass of indignation, revolt and surprise. What I saw I do not know, I can only remember what I felt. The whole market place left its business, its stalls, to stare at me. Presently all the shops of all the streets emptied themselves to form the procession that escorted me along my miserable way. At first I could not believe my eyes, then I doubted my ears, then I began to fear I had suddenly gone mad and imagined myself pursued and persecuted by several hundreds of persons. I stopped at the top of a street and gazed back in questioning terror. All the several hundred persons stood too and quietly gazed at me. I said to the nearest "Qué hay?" and they all shouted "Qué hay?"[242] and burst out into wild shrieks of laughter. I went on, blazing scarlet, while the whole town escorted me in silence, dozens walking abreast of me, dozens in front of me, backwards, hundreds behind me. I tried to look as if I were examining the Roman Tower, in deadly consciousness all the time that while I was examining it, the town was examining me. I ventured to open my lips again, and asked another spectator if it were Spanish courtesy to molest a stranger in such an extraordinary fashion. My barbarous Spanish was imitated with another general burst of hilarity, and children danced round me like demons. There were no means on earth of getting away

241 Small boat, sometimes with two masts and sails.

242 "What is it?" "What's the matter?".

from this walled and moated little town for three mortal hours, no hotel, no police protection, nothing, and all the town was evidently assisting at a most interesting spectacle, to judge from the singular intensity of the universal gaze fixed on my unfortunate self. It was only after two hours of torture, during which I pretended to inspect the sights of Amposta, that on passing a grocer's shop, a woman in the doorway, the only one who had remained at home, dear excellent creature, came out upon the pavement and thundered vociferously against her fellow citizens. She called them *Canalla*, cowards, fiends and villains with delightful volubility, and I most heartily agreed with her and accepted her offer to sit in her shop and rest.

If you would preserve a mournful and impressive picture of an old sombre town, typically Spanish and mediaeval, built high above a wide and sullen river, content yourself with the view of Tortosa upon the Ebro from the window of the train that brings you up from Valencia. On closer acquaintance the romantic charm evaporates. Here we part with all the qualities of the Catalonian; the town is one of the dirtiest of Spain; commercial instinct seems dead, and there is none of the redeeming grace and gaiety of Valencia. A proud and boorish race, who claim to stand alone, saying, "Catalonia and Valencia dwell on either side of Tortosa". Yet geographically it is the limit of Catalonia, though the wild dream of the *Catalanistas* is to extend this limit to the other side of Valencia. The lagoons and vast swamps of the Ebro make Tortosa a place to hasten away from, even if there were such a thing as a decent hotel and attractive sights to see. Walled and turreted, above the noblest of Spanish rivers, it has but the splendid view from the ruined castle upon its heights, perched above a world of water with islets of rush and reed and long osier trunks, and to leave it by the little river steamer of a late summer afternoon for the Puerto de los Alfaques is ample compensation for vile hotel accommodation. A sun setting in troubled violet and dull gold, with a brazen heat in the heart of it, lurid rays racing among the intense shadows of the reeded water, Tortosa above plunged back in all its mysterious grace of martial legend and *romancero*, town of cloak and sword, the fine old cathedral with its battlemented walls visible, and the soldiers above it in the ruined fort mere toys in the aërial space half-blotted in the stealing crepuscular dusk. And when in front shows beyond the river's mouth the immense sheet of sea, foam streaking the indigo slabs as they heave towards us, light fainting delicately out of the heavens as the stars shoot into their gathering dimness, and all the landscape softly running into grey, while shoreward still both spear and leaf are visible, and above the monotonous plashing of the wheel the muffled sound of voices reaches us from the meadowy banks where strollers linger to watch us along our way, and the air is blithe and lovely after the torrid hours, when breathing in southern lands by rivershore is a delight, you thank your stars for having come to this forgotten edge of the rebel province.

But go no further. Instantly take the steamer back, and reach Reus by the steam tram from Salou. Not that Reus is worth a glance, but anything is better than being lured down to San Carlos de la Rápita as I was for the sake of a charming name. A town so named should have something to show, but it is worse than an ordinary deception, for there is not even a street or an inn. Huts with netting for doors, lanes a nightmare of filth of every kind, slimy mud everywhere, thanks to the rice fields, which I had dreamed of as picturesque and found dull stretches of banked ponds, scarce a tree and never a flower. Nothing but olives and squares of stirless water, whose perilous banks you skirt, without a feature, a hue or sound to break the monotony. After it you are even ready to welcome the push, the vulgarity, the pretentiousness of noisy commercial Reus. Fortuny, the Catalan painter,[243] was born and buried here, and the rest is a tale of wool, leather, wine and brandy. But you can sleep in a clean and comfortable bed, and you can drink inferior champagnes, or you may take the train for Espluga [del Francolí] and visit the monastery of Poblet. If you have heard much about this great Chartreuse, you will be disappointed in it, and the Benedictine Abbey of Ripoll on the other side of Catalonia is far worthier a visit than Poblet. The landscape is not distinguished by any particular note, but the people are kindly and sympathetic, a delightful change from the boors of Amposta and Tortosa, and cleanliness here prevails.

Catalonian scenery is much more diverse and beautiful in the north. Who would miss seeing such a strange sight as the salt mountain of Cardona? Where else will you match these coloured pinnacles shooting up from a marble quarry, gemmed when the sunlight plays upon them, till a hundred hues are struck from them as from a mountain of pounded jewels, a hill for a fairy tale! Now white like marble, now transparent like crystal, and underneath white caves which in torchlight flash all the gem-like splendours of the upper earth in sunlight: red, blue, violet, green and amber – a rainbow made solid and stable. It is to be deplored that this hardy, progressive, and independent race should be ever thwarted in its development by a slower and less ambitious people who are willing to profit by its prosperity, while resenting it. The Catalans have reason to be discontented, and Castile shows herself here again inept and obstinate.

243 Mariano Fortuny Marçal (1838-74) enjoyed a brief, yet distinguished career as the leading Catalan painter and engraver of his day. He cultivated genre painting and scenes of luminous local colour, often focusing on Oriental subject matter.

19 “The Girls of Spain” (1903)

English girls, with their healthy freedom and fearlessness, their liberal education and independence, would find the life of the Spanish girl intolerable. But in Spain only the poor girl (and she is the exception) who has brains enough to think, and heart enough to feel, discovers its irksomeness and inadequacy. For the rest, it suffices. It offers them all they have been taught to desire: plenty of time to dress, lots of purposeless needlework to do, over which they can chatter and exclaim to their heart’s content; the window-frame, or balcony, where they may sit for hours, holding dumb converse with their eyes and those of the lover below; then the late afternoon walk on the Plaza, expensively dressed for the admiration of the town or villages, refreshed with caustic comments, on the clothes of other girls and women, and ordinary gossip. This is the routine of their days until marriage, and even then there is little change.

It is not to be wondered at that these youthful representatives of a race, whose fundamental characteristic is the most profound and incurable selfishness, should regard the rest of humanity with the liveliest indifference. It has been my privilege to see and hear a good deal of Spanish girls, and I can say that I have now a pretty extensive acquaintance with the entire race. The woman of the peoples are [*sic*] the cream of the race. But in the upper and middle classes, the girls are simply crude and placid-going animals, without an idea or a sentiment that is not personal. Utterly deprived of mental culture, their physical attractions consist in a charming smile, lovely skin, and soft luminous dark eyes, with fine eyebrows and quantities of dusky hair. Sometimes, but rarely, you will find real beauty and an imperial grace of carriage; frequently you may count upon a placid, unintelligent gentleness.

Let us consider her training from infancy. She is brought up with her elders – for in Spain there is no nursery – and once they leave swaddling clothes and the nurse’s arms, children sit at table with their parents, and are only separated from their mothers when they are old enough to be given in charge to a foreign governess. The convent school is merely a resource for preparation for the First Communion, which, with the Spaniards, is a ceremony nearly as important as marriage or baptism. Noble and bourgeois alike employ the foreign governess – English, French, German, or Swiss. But the Irish governess is the most popular.

The subjects of talk around her are: gossip, dress, servants, and the prices of things. Babies in Spain have a knowledge of the value of money that is perfectly astounding. When they learn English, the two words they pronounce first are “cheap” and “dear”. Their niggardliness is phenomenal. That the aged, who have learnt by sharp and incessant experience the blighting lesson that money is hardly earned and easily spent, should be mean, is but one of the many bitter consequences of their battle. But most

unlovely is it to find at the tenderest age a complete absence of generosity, of recklessness, of impulsiveness in money matters; a grudging mania of parting with a penny; a familiarity with the complaint that everything is "too dear"; an unwillingness to give, to repay, to spend.

From earliest infancy they are familiarised with the deplorable variances between language and intention. They hear their parents assure the most indifferent stranger that their house is his, and everything therein at his disposition, while they are aware that if the stranger had the indiscretion to beg a glass of water he would be classified as the very last of men. This is not precisely the atmosphere in which a love of sincerity and the practice of Oriental hospitality may be cultivated.

As for the growth of intelligence, what chance has that in a land where women, capable of opening a book, are regarded frankly as either mad or immoral? An unmarried woman, of fifty years of age, could not read a harmless novel if some married relative, mother, or aunt, had not previously digested its contents to assure her that there was not a line in it capable of deepening the colour in the cheek of fifteen. But at fifteen, girls may sit in the balcony and ogle the young men below. However, the law against reading is no hardship for the Spanish girl. She dislikes literature in every form.

She lives and observes with eye and ear, and this she does consumedly well. She hears and sees everything, and remembers everything she has seen to the minutest detail. In matters of toilet her eye in infancy is that of an adept of fifty, but give her a lesson to learn and remember, and you may break your heart in a futile effort to make some advance in her training.

Languages, on the other hand, she is quick at. To do her justice, she generally writes and spells a foreign tongue a great deal better than her own. That remains one of the inexplainable mysteries for the intelligent stranger, why Spaniards of both sexes should spell and write their own language so vilely. Is it the lisp that is responsible? or the confusion of b's and v's, and mute b's and vowels? A perfectly bred *Madrileña* will talk her pure Castilian delightfully, with precision and elegance, who will write you a letter to startle and puzzle you. H's where there should be none, omitted where they should be placed, b's and v's inextricably mixed, and grammar in a hopeless confusion. This is part of the nation's *cachet*. Once upon a time it was the sign of a gentleman in England to spell atrociously, and write still worse. Let us remember that the Spaniards stand still upon the edge of the sixteenth century. They have not recovered yet from the death of Philip the Second, practically their last sovereign.

But the single thing she excels at is needlework. In this she eclipses every other race. The woman who earns an honourable livelihood by her needle; the bourgeoise who, having large demands upon her purse, will save an honest penny by turning a dress, or mending a rent; the chatelaine who whiles away enforced leisure by working delicate tapestry on dainty

embroidery – all alike claim our respect and admiration. But to train girls neither in the interests of household economy nor beauty; to sit hour after hour stitching uselessly away at useless stuffs, with empty minds and emptier hearts, with no ideas, hopes, aspirations, thoughts, above this miserable futility, which consists in decorating washing towels and dusters with all sorts of hideous devices in coloured threads, is surely a national iniquity. It is not demanded that every woman shall be trained to write, to paint, to play a musical instrument, to build houses or make roads. Vocation, taste, talent (for genius is so rare in both sexes as not to count) will decide the choice of the exceptions. But what the average girl should be taught to do is to think, to feel, to judge; to understand the broad issues of life.

And in reckoning up the list of the rudimentary feminine virtues, it must be added to their praise that snobbishness is no feature with them. They receive no national training as we do in worship of titles and the golden calf. In a land where hospitality is not practised there is small call for ostentation or servility, with the fine result that nobles and valets may jostle unconcernedly upon the public place, and the noble will find the valet no less a gentleman than himself, and dare not treat him uncivilly. In private life, pride of bearing or insolence are conspicuous by their absence. A duke will salute his servant, and a duchess will kiss her maid. Servants will address youth and maid with family names as long as themselves by their Christian names, and neither dreams of regarding it as a liberty. When you tell them of British pretensions, even among the lower middle classes, where the very babies must be called Master and Miss This and That, they arch and smile with a superior air they are wont to assume when they learn of trans-Pyrenean barbarities and affectations. It is fitting in their esteem that the offspring of a Spanish duke or *marquesa*, whose blood has become anaemic from very antiquity, should be simply addressed as Paquito or Concha by their dependents and inferiors as well as by their friends and relatives. I know of a little aristocrat who, independent of her father, one of the greatest nobles of Spain, is a marchioness in her own right. Though eleven years of age, the child, who has danced with the King, is not allowed to know it, lest her pretty and most gracious simplicity should be spoiled, and is called by all around her Mercedes. At the palace, in accordance with her rank and personal title at the children's ball, she was addressed by the chamberlains and nobles as "Marguerite" [*sic*] (little marchioness),[244] and on her return she begged her father to explain why she was so called. "I suppose because I am a marquis", replied her father evasively, though, had the child been bright enough, she might have retorted that her sister Pilar did not receive this official title. Once I heard a foreign governess inquire

244 It is likely that the child was addressed as "Marquesita" (that is, Little Marchioness), as Lynch indicates in brackets.

of a young marchioness for her baby boy attacked with measles, "J'espère que Monsieur le Bébé va mieux", she said. The marchioness replied with Spanish courtesy, which in its more outward manifestation is certainly the most genial and precious of the world, and when the foreigner moved away, I remarked to her that *Monsieur le Bébé* had quite taken my fancy, that to my unaccustomed ear it sounded both quaint and graceful. "She meant it well", said the Spanish noblewoman, "but how extremely ridiculous! A baby is always a baby". How winning this Spanish simplicity!

I will cite another example of the lack of snobbish pride. Children are so little in the habit of hearing talk of birth and blood, which taken for granted are never discussed at all, that once the question of a very decided *mésalliance* arising at table before a girl of sixteen, belonging to one of the oldest and most distinguished historical houses of Spain, she turned to her governess and asked in English: "Am I of good family, Miss –?" This is, of course, a proof also of the Spanish girl's ignorance, but when ignorance means a very charming ignorance of one's own social value, it takes on the quality of a virtue. Another girl of brilliant name and degree once implored her governess, about to return to her own land on vacation, to obtain for her an invitation from her people to accompany her thither. The governess bravely explained the difficulties, as her parents kept a grocer's shop in a modest little town, and that it would be impossible for them to house the heiress of a palace. "How delightful", cried the Spanish girl in glee. "Do, Miss –, get them to invite me; I'll help in the shop. I'm sure I should be awfully clever in measuring out pounds of tea and sugar, and really and, truly, I give you my word, I wouldn't rob any sweets or almonds, or if I did, I promise most faithfully I'd pay for them". It was the time of her first ball, but that she would have relinquished as an ordinary excitement for the pleasure of going to England and assisting in a country grocer's shop.

There is another winning quality to be taken into consideration in our summary of the characteristics of the Spanish young girl. From earliest years she is taught to regard sickness as sacred. Indeed, one of the strong reasons why sickness is honourable among the well-bred Spaniards lies in the excessive strain and sacrifice it imposes on others. Hence the obligation of breeding to take every possible precaution against illness. The meanest servant in sickness is personally looked after, with an indefatigable devotion, by her masters. I have known the case of an English nursery-maid, so objectionable and disagreeable to the other servants of the establishment that these refused to attend her in an attack of bronchitis. The duke and duchess, her masters, took their turn in sitting up with her at night, and ministering to her in the most menial services. In a land where sickness imposes such solemn duties upon the community, it is not surprising that children are bred in terror of it. But the attitude of the silliest girls towards the sick is admirable. They sacrifice their pleasure, their distractions without a murmur. They are unweariedly patient and at-

tentive and tender in these hours, and their whole minds are given to the question of remedy and help. Neither night service nor daily privation is found a hardship. The invalid alone exists. Such devotion naturally implies a considerable amount of tyranny for the sick person, and no small share of blame should he or she add to the exigencies and hardships of a national virtue by insubordination or recklessness. In Spain you are expected to take care of your health for the sake of others, if you do not feel disposed to do so for your own. And this view is a sufficiently just one where the invalid is not permitted to retire into congenial solitude, and there be ill at ease. It has a pretty effect on the young girls, imbuing them with an immense sentiment of duty to the physically stricken, but it is irksome enough for the invalid. I own it is quieter and pleasanter to be ill with less blaze of trumpets to announce the event to an awed household, less hush of atmosphere, less insistence on remedy often futile, if not noxious, less pose on either side. Its advantage lies in a discouragement of affected maladies, and in a silent endurance of pain often splendidly heroic.

Spanish girls are spoiled to a degree it is not possible for us to conceive. The surprising thing is that these same spoiled children, whose parents were their slaves, instead of exacting a similar servitude from husband and children, become in turn the slaves of their own children, and are docile and easy wives. The Don describes himself as "Lord and Master" in his house, and the woman does not dream of disputing his sovereignty, however autocratically she may have reigned in her father's house. But his rule is no imperious one, if we except Catalonia. The Catalans are regarded by the rest of Spain as a rude, coarse, and authoritative race. It would be difficult to name a more antipathetic one. But elsewhere the Spanish husband is mild, attentive, domestic, interested in his wife's whims and caprices, studious of her dress and wishes, ready to bear his share of all her trials, illnesses and occupations, without inflicting any of his upon her. This is why Spanish women are so contented with their dull and dreary lot. As girls they have no hardships to bear, no bread to earn, no rebuffs and humiliations to endure. They are merely dolls, to be dressed and amused and fed by their indulgent parents, and by-and-bye to be married to some equally indulgent husband, who will be cast into a flutter of alarm and anxiety if their finger ache. In payment for their merely decorative or domestic position in life they are not asked to submit to the yoke of daily etiquette. In the house their dress is simple to slatternliness. Neither husband nor father expects anything in way of the picturesque or the formal about him. That is reserved for the public gaze. The servants market, select, cook, and serve the daily meals, so that housekeeping is not a very onerous task. Among the well-to-do, curling pins are not allowed at table, and the laws of breeding lay no inconvenient restrictions upon the tone of the voice. Maid or matron may scream and yell about the house at her own sweet hysterical will, and not in the least alienate her husband's affections, or

draw upon herself the exasperated anger of her father. The women return this complaisance with an equally placid and wonderful endurance. In patience and mutual good-will each sex completes the other.

The parents live for the children, the children live for themselves. The young girl may not wander from her elder's gaze, but Pablo or Juan is always at hand with much eloquence ready to share her servitude, and as a slave she is a personage of stupendous importance for a creature so empty of heart and head. A kindly, simple young animal, a creature of instinct and of extensively penetrable guiles, vilely trained, but naturally courteous. Not assuredly the worst page of humanity.