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## ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN SPAIN.

BY  
AN OLD RESIDENT.

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## Introduction

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Variableness of outward practice of Christianity—The like as to that of Mahometanism—Roman Catholicism most subject to that modification—Excesses of Roman Catholicism in Spain accounted for by Spanish history—The Goths and Moors of Africa—Their conversion to Christianity—The aborigines of America—Traditional coincidences with scriptural truth—National character of the religion of Spaniards—Religion of the affections—Santa Teresa—Amatory propensities in connection with religion—Knight-errantry—Motto of Spanish nobility—The four primitive orders—Loyola—Religion the pretext for wars of Spain—Three distinct features of the national character of Spaniards, illustrated by Isabella the Catholic, Charles V., and Philip II.

Christianity, although of divine origin, and, consequently, like all that participates in the essence of Divinity, immutable in its doctrines and creeds, submits itself nevertheless, in outward practice, to the incidents common to all human institutions, and receives an impression from the particular character of the people who observe its rites, and subject their conduct to its precepts. Every religious idea lays hold on the heart and understanding: consequently the state of the affections and the intellectual bias of each nation must communicate to the worship it professes a particular influence, which is seen, not only in the way in which ceremonies are practised, or in the organization of the hierarchy, or in the style and language which man uses in addressing the Deity, but in the entire system of actions, relations, and thoughts, which constitutes what is called worship.

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Worship participates in the impulse which a nation has received at its origin,—from its historical antecedents,—from its political system,—and from the peculiarities which predominate in the formation of its intelligence. The Greek polytheism did not distinguish itself from the Roman either in its theogony or its rites; but there is no doubt that the former was more poetical, more artistic, and more scrupulous than the latter. The Romans, being brought into close contact with all the nations of the earth, and having become subjugated by the insolent despotism of the Cæsars, opened the doors of their Pantheon, not only to the Goths of Egypt and of Gaul, but to monsters of cruelty, and to men sunk in every class of those vices which had stained the throne of Augustus. The Greeks, lovers of science, had placed their city of Athens under the protection of Minerva; but Rome was too proud to humble herself by playing the inferior part of the protected. In order to provide for her own security, she declared herself a goddess, and erected her own temples and altars. The Roman priests were warriors and magistrates; those of Athens were philosophers and poets. The same observations apply to Mahometanism. In India it has always

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shown itself more contemplative, more tolerant, than in Arabia, Turkey, or on the northern coast of Africa, and when it propagated itself in the southern regions of Europe, its stern inflexibility was not able to resist even the influence of climate; the perfumed breezes of the Betis and the Xenil despoiled it, in part, of the austere physiognomy which had been impressed on its whole structure by the sands of Arabia. Even the severe laws of the harem were relaxed in the courts of Boabdil and of Almanzor, for the wives of those two monarchs, openly, and without shame, took part in the pompous fêtes of the Alhambra and of the *serrania* of Cordova.

Of all the religious systems hitherto known, none allows itself, with so much docility, to be modified by external circumstances which constitute the national character as does Roman Catholicism; and there are many causes for this: Roman Catholicism exercises an infinitely greater dominion over the senses than over the reason and intelligence; the objects of its veneration, of its meditations, and of its devotional practices, are infinitely more various and numerous than those of any other sect of Christians; it introduces itself, so to speak, to all the occupations of life, in all hours of the day, in the trades, professions, amusements, and even gallantries of individuals; it fetters their reason, and deprives it of all liberty and independence; and, above all, it raises up in the midst of society, a privileged and isolated class, superior to the power of the law and the government; into the hands of that class it puts an absolute and irresistible authority, which is exercised by invisible means, but means far more efficacious and terrible in their effects than those of the civil power. From this universal and irresistible predominance it results that the entire existence of the Roman Catholic is a continual observance of the worship which he professes, and consequently, that Roman Catholicism, at the same time that it entirely modifies man, must, of necessity, in its turn, receive, in some degree, the impress of that temper which nature has bestowed upon him. Thus we see that Roman Catholicism is more zealous, more enthusiastic, more turbulent, in Ireland, more artistic in Italy, more philosophic in Germany, more literary and discursive in France, more idolatrous in the States of South America, more reserved and modest, more decent and tolerant, less ambitious in its aspirations, and less audacious in its polemics, in England than in any other part of the world.

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As to Roman Catholicism in Spain: we see thrown in its face its cruel intolerance, its puerile practices, its profane language, its blind submission, or rather the absolute slavery in which it places the believer with respect to the priest. There is much truth in these charges; but all of them are accounted for by an observance of history, and by a knowledge of the natural character and circumstances which have contributed to foster and strengthen religious sentiments in Spain.

The intolerance of Roman Catholicism in the Peninsula, carried to tyranny, and, frequently, even to ferocity, has been a consequence of the religious wars of six centuries,—wars which the Goths sustained with unwearied perseverance against the Moors of Africa. The Goths had embraced the Christian religion with all the ardour and sincerity peculiar to a nation but recently delivered from a violent and savage state; for, although a generous race, they were ignorant and coarse in their habits. Their conversion to Christianity not only entirely modified their moral and religious notions, and introduced among them a greater elevation of feeling and an amplitude of ideas, but associated, intimately, the religious with the poetical sentiment, in such a manner that, in their eyes, every enemy of Christ was the enemy of the whole nation; difference of creed, therefore, according to their rude code of international laws, was a legitimate cause of war. In their eyes the unbeliever was a political enemy. Mere contact with an unbaptized person was considered a pollution. They believed that all who did not worship Christ were worshippers of the devil, and that Mahomet and the Moses of the Jews were nothing more than the representatives and agents of the fallen angel. Whilst those ideas were gaining ascendancy, the clergy, the only depositaries of letters and of knowledge, were rapidly possessing themselves of power, riches, and influence, and endeavouring to conserve and confirm those advantages by all possible means. Of those means none was so convenient, in times of continual violence and warfare, to the habits of a nation just emerging from a savage state, and which recognised no other merit than physical force and warlike valour, as that of encouraging those sanguinary and ruthless propensities, sanctifying them in some way or other by religious sentiment, and stirring up and inflaming the passions of the nation, with a view of exterminating all persons who did not acknowledge the jurisdiction of the church and the power of its ministers. Thus it happened that Christianity, from a very early period after its introduction to Spain, was deprived of that spirit of meekness, suavity, and tolerance, impressed upon it by its Divine Founder, and became possessed of a spirit of the most implacable resentment against every person who had not gone through the baptismal ceremony; and thus, also, it was that the religion of the country degenerated into a violent and revengeful sentiment, and took part in all the excesses and all the aberrations of the human passions; thus it was, in fine, that the national spirit became predisposed to the persecution of the Jews, Mahometans, and Protestants, by means of that execrable tribunal, the Inquisition.

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Immediately after the conquest of Granada, in which these cruel and destructive habits were openly displayed, an occasion presented itself for giving still greater scope to their exercise. The subjugation of the Continent discovered by Columbus was a war of religion no less than of ambition and of conquest. The mere circumstance that the aborigines of America had not received the light of the gospel was sufficient to induce Spaniards to regard them as so many enemies of God, and as slaves and worshippers of the devil. In the various forms of religious worship which prevailed in those vast territories were embodied certain principles which might, if carried out, have been of great service to the conquered nation. In nearly all of those forms, the unity of God was acknowledged, and also, in many of them, the necessity of a spiritual regeneration. In Mexico, and that part of the country now called Central America, was preserved

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a traditional remembrance of a severe chastisement inflicted by the Supreme Creator on rebellious humanity, but accompanied with a promise that the species should not be annihilated. That tradition taught that God had sent into the world his Son, called *Teot-belche*, in order to repeople the earth;—that this personage had been shut up in a floating house during the time of the great flood, and was afraid to venture out, until he had seen an eagle bringing in its mouth a branch from a tree—a sign that the waters had abated, and that vegetation had re-appeared. Other great coincidences with revealed truth discovered themselves in the religious creeds of the people of Mechoacan, Guatemala, and in those also of the inhabitants of Peru, where the dogma had acquired a certain degree of elevation and purity, very different from the sensual ideas so common among the ancient Asiatics. The conquerors, therefore, whilst attempting to make proselytes to the true faith might have availed themselves of those antecedents, and could easily have corrected such notions, although founded on a tradition having the weight of ancestral authority. The right moral ideas found already impressed on the minds of these aborigines, especially those of Peru, might have been encouraged and amplified. Instead of embracing the system indicated by the mild and conciliatory spirit of Christianity, the Americans, *en masse*, were considered, from that moment, as enemies of God, and compelled, sometimes by force, to receive baptism, without any previous explanation of the origin and design of that rite; at other times they were tortured with the greatest cruelty, under a notion that in the extremity of their agony they might be induced to renounce the only creed which had come to their conviction. Many thousands of that unhappy people were exterminated, for they did not even understand the language in which doctrines the most sublime and marvellous in history were attempted to be enforced.

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It has already been observed that this rancorous extravagance of the religious spirit in Spain had its origin in a political and patriotic struggle; but long and sanguinary as that was, it could not eradicate the primitive type of the nation, nor prevent its characteristic qualities from reflecting themselves in worship, devotion, and every thing else that constitutes a national religion. Thus it was, that, with those intolerant and persecuting propensities, were also associated, in Spanish Catholicism, the gorgeous, romantic, and poetic, which are still preserved among that semi-oriental race. The Spaniard, endowed with a lively imagination, appears to identify himself with the objects of his endearment; his soul is transported by them, and he dresses them up in his imagination till he fancies they reciprocate his own affections. This vehement expansion of sentiments frequently opposes his reason, and transforms his real existence into a perpetual vision. Hence also we find that his devotion is not only tender and sympathetic, but passionate and warm. His fervour in prayer arrives at such a pitch as to produce copious tears. The language of Spain's mystical writers, especially that of the elegant Santa Teresa de Jesus, contains the same expressions as those which are used in addressing profane objects of the affections. One of her most celebrated spiritual songs differs in nothing from those which might have been written by Ovid or Tibullus. Its burden is this:—

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Cubridme de flores,  
Que muero de amores. [15]

The word *amores*, in the plural, does not signify merely the abstract feeling of love, the application of which is as various as are the objects which inspire it; for example, the divine love, the parental, the filial, and the sexual. *Amores* signifies courtship, flirtation, interchange of sentiments between two lovers; and yet we find this word, at every turn, in the prayers and ejaculations of devout Spaniards.

The distinguished woman to whom we have alluded carried, even to an incredible excess, this mixture of the sacred affections with the profane. In her voluminous writings, unrivalled in purity of language and elegance of style, she considers herself, always, as the bride of Jesus Christ, to whom she addresses herself with the same transports of love, and with the same demonstrations of tender submission and endearing respect, that might be used by an affectionate and dutiful wife to her husband. It requires but little knowledge of the human heart to see, at once, that in this mixture of two sentiments so opposed to each other as are that of the love profane and that of the love divine, the latter is liable to succumb to the former; and, in truth, this danger can only be averted by minds as favoured and as pure as was, without a doubt, the mind of that extraordinary woman. It is generally the case, and commonly observed in Spain, that the sensual element dominates over the mystical, and corrupts it. The common mass of mankind employs devotion as an instrument favourable to worldly views and to the material interests of life. In Andalusia, enamoured girls confide to the Virgin their ardent sorrows and desires, as the following couplet will show, and which is sung with frequency and is very popular in that province of the Peninsula:—

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La Virgen de las Angustias,  
Es la que sabe mi mal,  
Pues me meto en su capilla,  
Y no me harto de llorar. [16]

With these amatory propensities was naturally bound up that spirit of knight-errantry which so much distinguished the national character of Spaniards among all the other nations of Europe; a spirit which neither the course of centuries, nor intestine nor foreign war, nor even revolution itself, although it has transformed in a few ages the temper of modern nations, has been able to blot out. The Spaniard was completely carried away in a transport by his religious practices, his gallantry, loyalty, bravery, exalted notions of honour, and other qualities of the mind,

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impregnated as they were with that poesy and wild romance which are delineated with so much propriety and skill by the immortal Cervantes.

The motto of the Spanish nobility has always been, "My God, my king, and my lady,"—a very significant one, and one which described in a lively manner the predominating sentiments of the nation and the equal degree of veneration and enthusiasm which those three objects excited in the minds of the people. The Spaniard is always as disposed to brandish the sword in defence of the religion which he professes, as in that of the king whom he serves or of the lady whom he loves. The processions and all the feasts of the church are invariably accompanied by a military show. The four primitive orders of the nation, viz., Santiago, Alcantara, Calatrava, and Montesa, were, in their origin, institutions as religious in their character as the order of the Templars and as that of St John of Jerusalem. Even in the present day, though they have degenerated, they preserve still much of their primitive character. The knights, it is true, do not observe celibacy, as in ancient times; but they still have churches in which they celebrate sumptuous festivities; they take an oath to defend the Catholic religion and the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin, and to each of these orders there still pertains a certain number of convents of nuns, who wear the habit and carry the cross of their respective orders. These nuns are called *Commendadoras*, and none can be admitted into their numbers but ladies who are descended from an ancient nobility, preserved for many generations from any mixture of plebeian blood.

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The celebrated Ignatius de Loyola, founder of the order of the Jesuits, carried this singular amalgamation of piety and of a belligerent spirit to such an extreme as, in our times, cannot but appear ridiculous. On the day on which he was made a knight, it being then the custom that a candidate for such an honour should choose for himself a lady to whose service he might consecrate his arms, and whose image should be constantly before him, his election fell upon the Virgin, as in the same manner did that of Durandarte on Belerma, and that of the celebrated hero of La Mancha on Dulcinea.

In all wars which have been waged by Spaniards, from the times of Pelayo down to those of Espartero, religion has been one of the motives which have impelled them to arms. In the war of succession of 1770, which gave the throne of Castille to the grandson of Louis XIV., the dispute was between two nations equally Roman Catholic—Austria and France. Nevertheless, the circumstance that Great Britain had embraced the cause of the archduke was sufficient for considering the war as a religious one; and those who fought for Philip V. regarded the extirpation of the heretical subjects of the House of Orange as the consolidation of the Bourbon dynasty. In our own times we have seen these same sentiments predominating in the civil war of Don Carlos, whose partisans considered their enemies as impious and as atheists, words which in their dictionary were synonymous with "constitutional and liberal." Most of the proclamations emanating from the press of Oñate spoke of the dangers which threatened Roman Catholicism, in case the Christine party should triumph.

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Thus far we have spoken of the influence exercised by the national character on the religion of Spaniards. That influence has not been lessened by the circumstance that some of their monarchs have exercised it, and, among others deserving particular mention, the three gigantic models, viz., Isabella the Catholic, Charles V., and Philip II. Each one of the distinctive features which we have hitherto noted in the religion of Spaniards is represented in history by one or another of those three sovereigns: Isabella represented the tender, affectionate, and correlative; Charles, the knight of chivalry and the warrior; Philip, the cruel and sanguinary persecutor.

Isabella united to her eminent qualities, to her profound policy, to her unrivalled valour, to her constancy in the prosecution of her designs, and to the elevation and grandeur of her views, a heart full of tenderness and benevolence, and an ardent disposition to contribute, by all possible means, toward the good of her fellow-creatures. Persuaded that religion was the greatest good which it was possible for man to enjoy, all her anxiety was concentrated in extending that benefit to the greatest number of human beings. It was this which induced her to show herself benevolent and compassionate toward the Moors of Granada after the conquest of that city; it was this, also, which induced her to lavish her gifts upon, and afterwards to take under her protection, such of those Moors as submitted to baptism. All the incidents of her private life, all her letters, many of which are still extant, show that she was actuated by the most ardent spirit of Christian charity.

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History accuses Isabella of having established the Inquisition in Spain. This great blot in her character, the origin of many of the misfortunes and of all the intellectual drawbacks which that nation has experienced, explains, if it cannot justify, itself, by the circumstances in which, at that time, the people of the Peninsula were placed. After the surrender of Granada, there remained in the kingdom a great part of the Mussulman population. The queen fostered the hope of their conversion to Christianity and omitted no means to realise it. But the Moors, with very few exceptions at the beginning, resisted every effort whether by persuasion or by promises; they became but the more firmly addicted to their own faith, and being prohibited the public celebration of its rites, they practised them in secret, with all the zeal and enthusiasm which the rigours of intolerance invariably produce in the persecuted. The clergy, who imagined they saw in the religion of Mahomet the worship of Satan, nay even warriors themselves who had wrought prodigies of valour and shed their blood in order to exterminate that religion, could not regard its prevalence with indifference, nor endure the thought that it should survive the ruin of the capital of the Saracenic empire. Bitter complaints were made to the queen on account of the impunity with which such excesses against her authority were committed. To her indulgence the principal persons of the state attributed the obstinacy of the Moors who persisted in their errors, and the

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perfidy of the converted who were accused of continuing in them after having submitted to the ordinance of baptism. Religious phrenzy had arrived at its climax; men's only occupation seemed to be that of building churches, destroying mosques, and ostentatiously displaying the triumphs of the new creed over that which for many centuries had polluted the soil. It was impossible that Isabella could long resist these continuous remonstrances. The institution of the Inquisition was proposed to her as a last resource to maintain the purity of the faith, and that woman, superior to the age in which she lived, and naturally affectionate and charitable, had the unpardonable weakness of ceding to the councils of the implacable Torquemada.

Among the qualities for which Isabella was remarkable none were more admired by contemporary writers than her humility. In proof of this we have but to follow the line of conduct pursued by her during the whole course of her existence. She humbled herself before the church, whose voice she believed she heard through the lips of her confessor.

We have referred to the cruel character of Roman Catholicism in Spain: is not the Inquisition a proof of it? Experience shows how easily habit familiarises us with spectacles most revolting to those feelings of pity and compassion which Nature has bestowed upon us. Habit always destroys the essential qualities of our moral constitution, sometimes associating ideas of pleasure and enjoyment with those of blood and destruction; as, for example, it happened in the games of the circus under the Roman emperors; nay, some have even looked upon homicide and torture as religious duties, and a part of the worship due to the Divine Being! Fanaticism naturally engenders that sacrilegious alliance, and man, under its irresistible influence, becomes more frightful in his hatred, more cruel in his hostilities, than the beasts of the forest.

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The Inquisition inaugurated, in Spain, a sanguinary fanaticism which consecrated, as religious virtues, the blackest crimes that man can commit against his fellow-creatures; and although it must be admitted that many thousands of human beings perished in the flames for their religious opinions under the reign of Isabella, yet the natural suavity of her mind, influenced as it was by the tender and passionate, repressed, to a considerable degree, those intolerant impulses with which Torquemada was wont to impose upon the good sense of Spaniards. Isabella was liberal, even in the sense which that word conveys according to the language of modern politics. [22] She, doubtless, consented to the formation of the bloody tribunal; and hence the annals of even her reign are stained with some of those hecatombs which were more frequent in a subsequent era, and banished from the Spanish peninsula those mental energies which, at that time, were enabling human reason to recover her rights, and Spain once more to occupy that eminent position assigned her, by Providence, in the scale of creation.

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History cannot accuse the Emperor Charles V. with having lent himself, as a docile instrument, to the intolerant devices of the clergy. Charles was never the sincere friend of the court of Rome. On the contrary, no Christian monarch ever treated that court with greater contumely, or in a manner more hostile and effectively prejudicial to its prosperity and influence. The war which he made against the Pope, and which terminated by the invasion of Rome itself, involved that court in all the ills of a destructive conquest. The pillage and burning of the public temples and of private houses, the violation of the nuns, the massacre of the citizens, were not enough to satisfy the fury of his soldiers. Released suddenly from that respect which, from childhood, they had been accustomed to show towards the practices and ministers of religion, they now openly ridiculed them in the streets of Rome, representing mock processions, dressing themselves up in the splendid and ornamental attire of cardinals and bishops. Their spirit of profanation and impiety arrived at the extreme pitch. They composed satirical and other songs against the Pope—one of these in the form of a parody on our Lord's prayer—and sung them in the public streets, and even under the windows of the pontifical palace.

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To those deeds, which proved how little the heart of the emperor was disposed to favour the doctrines of Roman Catholicism, we could add many others which the patient investigation of German writers have discovered in the archives of Italy. A tolerable knowledge, however, of the occurrences of that reign will be sufficient to convince us that Charles V. was not sincerely religious until age, infirmities, and misanthropy, had brought upon him the misfortunes which attended the last years of his life, and induced him to abdicate the crown, and retire to the solitudes of Yuste. It is already known that, at the beginning of Luther's rebellion against the Roman church, Charles resolved to avail himself of the terror which the name of that celebrated reformer inspired in the hearts of Roman Catholics, in order to intimidate the court of Rome and humiliate its pride. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that, with this vacillation of principles and declared antipathy to Rome, Charles should have regarded, in his dominions, if not with manifest favour, at least with cold indifference, the propagation of what were then called, by Spaniards, the new doctrines.

Under his reign, notwithstanding the austere character of his minister, the Cardinal Ximenes de Cisneros, the Inquisition dared not, in Spain, commence a system of intolerance.

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One proof of this assertion is to be found in the progress which, at that time, Lutheranism made in the Peninsula. To those days belonged, in truth, the illustrious victims who were subsequently sacrificed on the altar of fanaticism, and whose names may be found by the reader in the celebrated work of M'Crie, or in that of De Castro. [25]

Philip II. ascended the throne, and the whole aspect of the unhappy nation, delivered over by Providence to the hands of that implacable enemy of humanity, was entirely changed. Philip's inclination was to hate and persecute; and religion, in name, afforded him the pretext for giving

vent, with impunity, to those propensities, and covering with a sacred veil all the excesses of a bloodthirsty and revengeful heart to which he could abandon himself. Some writers have doubted the sincerity of his religious sentiments, considering them as mere pretexts, of which he availed himself in order to suggest false motives for his bitter spirit in the war which he carried on against Henry IV. of France. And, in truth, what sincerity could there be in the religion of a man who lived in perpetual adultery; who seduced the wives of his most faithful servants; who paid assassins to get rid of men he disliked, and afterwards relentlessly persecuted these same persons hired by him to commit such crimes? How could faith, devotion, hope, charity, and self-consecration to God, exist in combination with vices the most degrading to human nature, and a system of conduct diametrically opposed to the letter and spirit of the gospel? But, without discussing those questions which more properly pertain to the severe tribunal of history and will be found fully examined in the works cited, it is sufficient, for the present purpose, to indicate the reign of Philip II. as that epoch in which an intolerant fanaticism extended its roots wide and deep in the hearts of Spaniards,—a fanaticism which, until but a few years previous to our own times, formed one of the most conspicuous elements of the national character. The frequent repetition of the *autos de fe*, in which the terrible spectacle of burning human victims alive was countenanced by the presence of the court,—the furious harangues of the friars,—the excommunications fulminated from the pulpit against all those who did not prostrate themselves as slaves before the power of the church,—and, above all, the example of the monarch, who was always ready to exalt the clergy above other classes of the community, and whose domestic and foreign policy was founded, invariably, on the principle of the identity of the altar and the throne, were circumstances more than sufficient to mould the genius, the habits, the affections, and even the literary tastes and domestic intercourse, of any nation in the world. Hence the entire existence of the nation was, so to speak, exclusively religious. The mass, confession, processions, and *novenas*, [26] were the occupations which consumed all the days and all the hours of life. The priesthood was the grand social supremacy. All the riches of the nation were in its hands. All consciences ceded to its voice, and were directed by its influence. The king favoured all its pretensions, enlarged its privileges, and put into its hands the highest dignities and employments. The bishops occupied the principal posts in the councils of Castille, of the finances, and of the Indies; to many of these bishops embassies and vice-regal appointments were confided; and, in the provinces, the civil authority was eclipsed before their influence, for they became usurpers of its most important functions. Those were the palmy days of the Inquisition, when, secure of the monarch's favour and co-operation, it gave itself up, without restraint, to that spirit of hatred which constituted the chief ingredient of its institution, and covered the Spanish peninsula and its colonies with suffering, with tears, and with blood.

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As those ideas and sentiments entirely absorbed the minds of Spaniards; so, on the other hand, all public action was concentrated in the king, he having silenced the voice of the Cortes and abolished the charters (*fueros*) of the municipalities, to which had pertained all the political and civil legislation of Spain from the foundation of the monarchy; in fine, as the severity of the fiscal laws opposed an insuperable barrier to all sorts of industry and enterprise, it is not surprising that it should have transformed, as in effect it did, the national character, or that the whole social and domestic life of Spaniards should be nothing short of an entire and absolute consecration to the church and its ministers, to religious ceremonies, and to the exercises of devotion and penance. In all the hours of his life, in all professional and lucrative occupations, in all functions incident to public employments, nay, even in his very amusements, the religious idea is always present to the eyes of a Spaniard; sometimes, indeed, severe and gloomy, at others majestic and solemn, but always overwhelming him with the weight of its preponderance, and assuming the rule and arbitrament of his thoughts and actions. The following pages will offer to the reader sufficient proofs of this truth; and in each of the scenes which they present will be discovered, without difficulty, the features of the sketch which, in this introduction, we have endeavoured to trace. We have written them without anger and without partiality, and we propose to insert in them no facts, or even statements, but those gathered from personal observation, and which no Spaniard will dare to deny; facts which many sensible and upright men in that nation worthy a better condition, do most bitterly lament.

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It may be right to add, as an undoubted fact which cannot be too often referred to or too widely made known, that among all classes of Spaniards, and even among the clergy themselves, are to be found men eminently pious; men who, although outwardly submitting to the exigencies of the worship which they are bound by their present laws to profess, are not ignorant of the true spirit and doctrines of Christianity, and who, perhaps, only need a more intimate acquaintance with scriptural truth in all its purity to be transformed into a visible part of the faithful and chosen flock of Christ, and enabled to adopt, in all its latitude, the true gospel as the rule and standard of their faith and conduct.

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The publication of this work, at the present juncture, has no other object than to accelerate that desired transition, the influence of which may give fecundity to the noble qualities of a nation under all aspects interesting, worthy, and capable of figuring in the foremost rank of the polished and regenerate.



THE SPANISH CLERGY—Their primitive state—Their subsequent organization—*Barraganas*—Immoral practices of the clergy—Their wealth, and its sources—Their territorial possessions—Their influence and incomes—Their opposition to the sciences—Their ultramontane principles—The “pass” of the Spanish sovereign necessary to the validity of the Pope’s bulls—Doctrine of the Jansenists favoured by the ministers of Charles III.—Port-Royal and San Isidro—Parish priests—Sources of their income—Many of them good men, but deficient in scriptural knowledge and teaching—Their preaching—Abolition of tithes by the minister, Mendizabal—Effects of that measure—Poverty and present state of the clergy—Their degraded character and unpopularity—Their timidity in recent times of tumult—Ecclesiastical writers of the Peninsula—Power of the Inquisition curtailed by Charles III.

Among the northern nations which invaded Europe, on the fall of the Roman Empire, the Goths were those who most distinguished themselves by the promptitude with which they embraced Christianity, and by the sincerity and constancy with which they observed its precepts and adhered to its dogmas.

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When they founded the Spanish monarchy, they were in a complete state of ignorance and barbarism; and as the clergy were at that time the sole depositaries of the little that was known of the dead languages, science, and literature, they were the counsellors of the sovereigns, the directors and prime movers of the public power, and the oracles of the court, the nobility, and the people. The Councils of Toledo, which were true legislative bodies, better and more methodically constituted than the assemblies of the great barons, not only legislated in religious and ecclesiastical matters, but in all political branches of the administration and of the government. To these celebrated assemblies is owing the *Fuero-Juzgo*, the most ancient of the codes promulgated in the new monarchies founded on the ruins of the empire. But what gave most renown to these assemblies was the system which they embraced with respect to the relations between the court of the Gothic kings and the pontifical see. In no Catholic nation was the ecclesiastic independence consolidated with greater vigour than in the Spanish church of those times. In truth the Pope, as such, exercised no authority whatever, directly or indirectly, either in the discipline or the administration of that church. He was acknowledged as the first of its bishops, but only as equal in power to each of them. Thus it was that the bishops of the Spanish peninsula had formerly no need of recourse to Rome for the presentation of candidates, the investiture of ecclesiastical dignities, or for matrimonial and other dispensations. Spain presented, at that time, an edifying spectacle of pure and evangelical Christianity, resembling that which prevailed in the primitive ages of the church, when neither councils nor traditions, nor the *motu propria* of popes, had corrupted the dogma and the ritual. In the fourth Eliberitan council, celebrated in Granada, not only the worship but even the use of images, pictures, and sculpture, was prohibited in the temples, a prohibition before unheard of in the annals of that age,—an age in which the practice of invoking saints had become familiar, and more importance was beginning to be attached to the pomp of rites than to true piety and sincere devotion. The Spanish clergy, it is true, were then powerful, and could do much; but there is no reason to think that they abused such power, or that their conduct was regulated, at that early period, with a view to their temporal interests. That golden age, however, was of short duration; at least there are strong grounds for believing that, under the reign of Alfonso the Wise, the manners of the clergy had become greatly corrupted, and still more so under that of John II. Their ambition had so far increased as to provoke the rigour of the laws and of the civil authority. It is proved by the codes of that time, by several chronicles, and a variety of other documents worthy of credit, that the greater number of the clergy were living openly in a state of concubinage. The term *barraganas* formed part of the ordinary language of the people, as well as of that used in legislation, and was applied to designate the paramours of the ecclesiastics: indeed, these *barraganas* were commanded by certain sovereigns to dress in a peculiar manner, so that they might be distinguished from virtuous women; while other sovereigns insisted on their also living in separate buildings, called *barraganerias*, one of which, according to tradition, was situated in that spot in Madrid now called Puerta del Sol. In one of the ancient codes is to be found a regulation, in virtue of which it was ordered that no clergyman should have more than one *barragana*!

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Many of the bishops were accustomed to take these creatures with them on official visits to their dioceses. This scandal began to disappear under the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, “the Catholic sovereigns,” and from that time the clergy, by slow degrees, began to give to their body a more compact organization, and to introduce among their ranks a stricter discipline. Those amendments, however, did but tend to augment their influence and their power. But what most contributed to the aggrandisement of that privileged class was the wealth which rapidly accumulated in their treasury and in all their establishments.

This wealth flowed from a variety of sources. The church took its tithes and first-fruits; and this income, slender and precarious as it was during the wars against the Moors and the lengthened dispute between the crowns of Castille and Arragon, increased, afterwards, to such an extent as to produce most incredible amounts so soon as order had once become consolidated under the firm rule of Isabella; for, then, all kinds of useful labour began to fructify, especially those of agriculture, which had to sustain the weight of these onerous burdens.

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But besides that source of income, the churches were daily enriched by the donations which they received from the munificence of kings and magnates. The most meritorious act of devotion and of religion, according to the popular notion of those times, was the endowment of a church with lands, flocks, and plate. These fits of generosity were held to be sufficient to absolve the donors

from all their sins, and at the hour of death, when the terror of future punishments burdened the soul of the ambitious politician, of the assassin, of the adulterer, and of the usurper of others' goods, a very handsome legacy, and sometimes the abandonment of all he possessed, was considered as a safe passport to the enjoyment of treasures in heaven. The priest, called to administer the last consolations to the patient, never lost an opportunity of exacting these imprudent donations; and so long did this abuse endure, and to such an extent did it arrive and predominate in the public customs of the age, that, under the reign of Charles III., the Council of Castille promulgated a royal order, declaring that all such testamentary dispositions made at the hour of death, in favour of chapels, churches, convents, and other religious establishments, should be null and void.

The opulence which the Spanish clergy enjoyed from the conquest of Granada until the period of invasion by the French, cannot be reduced to calculation, nor even to any accurate conjectures. It was said of England that, previous to the Reformation, the clergy possessed a fifth part of the whole territory within the British Isles; of Spain it may be said that the proportion amounted to one-third. The lands most productive, and the estates in the most choice situations, certainly belonged to the Spanish clergy; and there were cities, such, for example, as Toledo, Cuenca, Leon, and Santiago, in which nearly the whole territory belonged to their respective cathedrals.

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Several other circumstances tended to strengthen the imperium of the church. Many young men of noble families took holy orders, with a view of aspiring to the rich prebends belonging to the cathedrals; in the universities and in the colleges the best organised and most popular study was that of theology, in which many Spaniards excelled. At the same time, by means of the confessional, the clergy got power over the conscience; they knew all the secrets of families as well as those of the state, and there was no grave matter, concerning any class of society, which was not submitted to the decision of some dignitary of the church. The magnificence of the edifices consecrated to worship, the frequency and the pomp of religious ceremonies, the alms which the bishops distributed, the public works which they paid for, and the absolute direction of all charitable establishments, of which they had taken the command, were so many other favourable supports to that supremacy which they had assumed and maintained in society.

During the reigns succeeding that of Philip II., the condescendance of the government, the submission of the people, and the acquisition of riches by cathedrals, colleges, and parish churches, were greatly augmented.

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The incomes of the archbishops, bishops, and canons, rose to an incredible amount. The sees of Toledo, Seville, Santiago, and Valencia, were endowed with much greater revenues than even some of the states in Germany. Great as have been the efforts to investigate and ascertain with exactitude the precise returns of these sees, it has not been found possible to obtain any data worthy to be relied on: and in truth, all years were not equally productive; for those revenues depended in a great measure on the abundance or scarcity of the crops. It is, however, certain that the archbishop of Toledo, in particular, did not receive less, annually, than £150,000. Some prebends, particularly those called archdeaconries, were estimated at £6000 a-year, and these were sometimes disposed of, by the crown, in favour of a cardinal or foreign prince.

Besides the clergy employed in the cathedral and parish churches, there were many in orders without income or benefice of any kind, and who yet contrived to get a very decent and comfortable living by means of the influence which they exercised in rich houses, where their presence was regarded as a blessing from heaven. There was scarcely a family of consideration and of wealth in any town in Spain that was not under submission to some individual of the clergy. In this way, and deeply interested as they were that the people thus prostrate at their feet should not have their eyes opened, the clergy made war against the cultivation of the sciences and the propagation of useful knowledge.

The Spanish church, however, produced many and very eminent writings on those particular sciences which, at that time, formed part of the general course of their studies. It also sent forth many distinguished poets, orators, and learned men, but never was disposed to protect or to cultivate those sciences which give to man a power over nature: thus it was that mathematics were most shamefully neglected; in physics the absurd doctrines of the Peripatetics predominated; and the name of philosophy was given to a puerile and complicated dialectic which had neither the merit of ingenious classification, nor that subtlety of argument which distinguished the school of Aristotle.

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It is easy to conceive from this situation in which the clergy was placed, that, in point of ecclesiastical discipline, Spaniards were extreme ultramontanes. The clergy acknowledged the Pope, not only as the vicar of Jesus Christ,—not only as the head of the visible church, but as superior to all councils and kings, as the possessor of the keys of heaven and as the absolute legislator in all matters of faith and conscience. On many occasions the bishops and the cathedral authorities consulted the court of Rome as to whether they ought to obey or disregard the authority of the monarch; at other times they disobeyed it openly; and, in spite of the efforts made by the Chamber of Castille to maintain the cause of the throne and of the law, the fear of provoking a revolution on the part of the lower classes, entirely the creatures of the clergy, paralysed, on more than one occasion, the zeal of the magistrates and the action of the military chiefs.

The Spanish laws required that, in order to give validity to a pontifical bull, it should have the approbation, or, as it was called, *the pass* of the crown. Sometimes, and by virtue of the representation of the Chamber of Castille, the government refused that pass, and on such

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occasions the clergy became greatly irritated, the bishops energetically insisting upon its being given, but urging their demands with such vehemence, as even to threaten the monarch himself with the terrible penalty of excommunication.

The clergy sustained the excesses of the pontifical authority, and acknowledged the principle of the universal sovereignty of the Pope. All notions or opinions that proposed to re-establish the discipline of the first ages of the church and to defend the rights of the bishops, considering their authority as equal to that of the Pope in jurisdiction, and inferior only in dignity in the hierarchy, were considered as dangerous and as heretical as that heresy most opposed to the articles of the faith. Yet, at the beginning of the reign of Charles III., the progress of Jansenism in France had a considerable influence on the opinions of the Spanish clergy. The ministers, Campomanes, Aranda, and Floridablanca, embraced with ardour the doctrines of Port-Royal; the canonries of the collegiate church of San Isidro, in Madrid, which had belonged to the Jesuits, were all conferred on wise and virtuous clergymen who were generally known as confirmed Jansenists. Indeed there were very few of the Spanish clergy who assisted in that establishment that were not addicted to the same doctrines.

Hitherto no mention has been made of the parish priests. In the ancient organization of the clergy these ecclesiastics participated, in some dioceses, in the tithes; but the principal part of their incomes arose from the surplice-fees, called in Spanish, *de pie de altar*, which were those payable on baptism, interment, and marriage. The quota from these sources varied according to the pomp and luxury of the ceremonies performed. In baptisms, this augmentation of splendour consisted chiefly in music, flowers, and lighted candles, in the chapel where the rite was performed. But the extravagance of the rites of interment extended itself to a wider range; for the idea was deeply rooted in the public mind, that the greater the expense incurred in a funeral, the greater would be the efficacy of the service in favour of the soul of the departed. The sums which were wont to be spent in this ceremony are incredible; and from their results many families have been entirely ruined. This subject will, however, be more particularly considered in a subsequent part of this work.

In the yearly receipts of those parish priests there is an enormous difference, which depends on the number, the class, and the wealth, of the parishioners living within the parish. There are some cases in which those receipts amount to nearly £2000 per annum; whilst in some others the sum total is hardly sufficient to sustain an existence of misery and penury. Notwithstanding this deplorable condition, there have been, it must in candour be said, notable examples of charity, zeal, and self-denial, among the inferior classes of the parochial clergy. The poor have frequently found in their priests consolation in their afflictions and succour in their miseries. In small towns the priest is the first personage of the place. But still it cannot be concealed that there is a sad deficiency in the inculcation of the fundamental principles of scriptural truth in the exercise of his ministry; this same deficiency is equally observable in other Catholic countries. As a general rule, the only instruction which children receive from the priest is the learning to repeat from memory a very incomplete and superficial catechism. Preaching has rarely any other object than the explanation of some article of the faith, or a panegyric on the life of some saint. There are no interpreters of the gospel to be heard from the Spanish pulpit, except during the period of Lent. The preachers like rather to refer to and expatiate largely on miracles, than to unfold the morals of the New Testament; and, in general, it may be taken as a fact that the immense majority of the Spanish population, and especially those of the poorer class, have the most incomplete and erroneous ideas of the life and doctrines of Jesus Christ.

The greatest part of what has been advanced hitherto touching the Spanish clergy applies to that epoch which preceded the preponderance of liberal ideas. Since the abolition of tithes, under the minister, Mendizabal, who replaced them by moderate fixed salaries to the priests, now paid by the state, like other public functionaries, the situation of the Spanish clergy has entirely changed its aspect. No man of any respectable family now enlists himself under the banners of the clergy, whose influence is only kept up in some of the smallest and obscure towns;—in the cities it has entirely disappeared: nor does there remain in that body sufficient energy to make the least attempt to recover it. There have always been in Spain, in former epochs, some ecclesiastics, eminent for their virtues and their learning, who have commanded the respect of all classes of society, and whose word was so powerful that criminals of the most hardened description have fallen down at their feet; and even their appearance, in a town of some importance, has been followed by numerous conversions, and a great amendment of the public manners. Since the abolition of tithes, however, there is not a name in all the ecclesiastical state which has the least celebrity. There is now no such thing ever heard of as an eloquent speaker, a writer notable for his theological learning, or for works of piety and devotion. The bishops, whose titles, generally, are owing to their political sympathies, now live like courtiers and take part in the dissensions of parties; and the people regard them with an indifference corresponding to the few benefits received at their hands. There are various honourable exceptions to this rule, but these exceptions are scarce; and if there has been of late years a bishop of Cadiz, an admirable model of all Christian virtues, there are many others, such as that of Barcelona, impregnated with the maxims of the most absurd ultramontaniam, and who are the declared enemies of all that contributes to make human society moral and enlightened.

It is very common to see priests begging in the streets. Few of them are now permitted to visit in respectable families, or even to mix in general society; and the strangest of all things connected with such a change is, that the clergy themselves know the state of degradation into which they have fallen—the total loss of their influence and of their importance—without making the least

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effort to raise themselves from that state of humiliation and abasement.

On two recent occasions have been seen evident proofs of the utter prostration of that class which once domineered over the entire nation. When the famous Merino attempted, in the summer of 1851, to assassinate Isabella II., and also during the political convulsions of July 1854, from the results of which the liberal party remained triumphant, so fearful were the clergy of exciting the popular indignation, and so persuaded were they that public opinion was against them, that their prelates advised them not only to abstain from appearing in the streets in their clerical costume, but even to discontinue the use of the church-bells, with which they had been in the habit of calling their congregations to the mass and other religious exercises. This advice was followed with as much eagerness and precipitation by the clergy, as though they wished to hide themselves from public notice, or as though they had been guilty of some illicit and scandalous offence.

It is clear that, to some extent, such a transition is the result of that state of poverty to which the secular clergy have been reduced; and hence it is that many priests, particularly those in the country, have given themselves up to a variety of secular pursuits and speculations, which are expressly prohibited by the canon laws, and which appear incompatible with the dignity and character of their ministry. Some of them have become publicans, others coach-proprietors, and not a few of them smugglers on the coasts and frontiers,—a propensity, however, to which they have always been addicted, even in the times of their greatest prosperity.

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We have spoken of the ultramontanism of the Spanish clergy. Never had those doctrines more fanatical defenders, nor sectarians more fiery partisans, than the ecclesiastical writers of the Peninsula; the dogma of the infallibility of the Pope, the superiority of his jurisdiction with respect to the bishops and to the general councils, was propagated not only in books but in the pulpit and the confessional. Nevertheless the enlightened ministers of Charles III., Aranda, Campomanes, and Floridablanca (the first initiated in the school of French philosophers of the eighteenth century, and the last two in that of the learned and pious recluses of Port-Royal), after having procured from the king the abolition and banishment of the Jesuits, desired to foment in Spain the opinions which those eminent ministers of the crown maintained against falsifiers of Christian truth; and, to that end, they founded a collegiate church in the principal convent which those fathers had in Madrid, conferring its canonries upon ecclesiastics who professed the same doctrines as themselves, and who were, besides, generally venerated for the profundity of their scientific knowledge, as well as for the sanctity of their lives. The canons of San Isidro, to whom allusion has already been made, were Jansenists; and, consequently, they professed opinions diametrically opposed to those of the Spanish clergy. According to them, as has already been intimated, the episcopal dignity was equal in all those who possessed it, and the pope was no more than the first among equals—*primus inter pares*; the right to confer dispensations was not vested exclusively in the court of Rome, but each bishop could exercise it with equal authority in his diocese; external discipline of the church belonged of right to the regal authority, as also did that of presentation to benefices; the bulls and other papal precepts were not to be obeyed without the indispensable requisite of the monarch's approbation; and, finally, the Pope, as well as the rest of the bishops, was inferior in authority to the general council, in which was concentrated the legislative power of the church, whether with respect to the dogma or discipline and administration.

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The boldness of these tenets excited the displeasure and irritation of the Inquisition; but the power of that formidable tribunal had already notably declined. Charles III. had taken two means calculated to militate against its preponderance, to humble its pride, and deprive it of the faculty of exercising its sanguinary vengeance. In the first place, the penalty of death was prohibited, and it could only impose the punishment of confiscation, imprisonment, and banishment. In the second place, he ordered that one of the judges of each tribunal of the Inquisition should be a secular person; and, for the discharge of the duties of these functionaries, men were selected in whom was reposed all the confidence of the ministers. The inquisitors knew that, once committed to those coadjutors, they could not expose themselves to the beginning of a struggle in which all inferiority was on their side. The canons of San Isidro were not, ostensibly, persecuted; but no means were spared to discredit them in public opinion. Thus it was that they lived isolated, and were regarded with mistrust by all the clergy; and with them disappeared from the Peninsula the only element of opposition to the tyranny of Rome, which had been notorious in the Spanish Church from the times of the Gothic monarchy.

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## CHAPTER II.

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MONACHISM—The superiority of the monastic over the secular clergy—Reasons for it—Orders of monks—The Carthusians—Their advancement in agriculture and love of the fine arts—Their seclusion and mode of living—Only learned men admitted to their order—Their form of salutation—Curious adventure of a lady found in the cell of a Carthusian—The Hieronimites—The Mendicant orders—"Pious works"—The *Questacion*—Decline of Spain accounted for—Vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience—How vow of poverty eluded—*La honesta*—Vicar-general of the Franciscan orders—His immense income—Religious orders have produced many great and good men—Cardinal Ximenez de Cisneros—His celebrated Bible—

Corruption of monastic orders—Insubordination of friars to the bishops—The Jesuits—  
Deplorable reputation of their literature—Pascal, Escobar, Sanchez, and Mariana—  
Suppression of the Jesuits by Charles III.—Their subsequent expulsion by Espartero under  
Isabella II.—Nunneries, though spared on suppression of religious houses, utterly useless—  
The Pope's attempt to perpetuate them by *concordat*—The lives of the nuns described—  
Their means of subsistence is now precarious—Convent de las Huelgas.

All the power, all the influence, and all the riches of the secular clergy, such as we have described them in the preceding chapter, would not have been sufficient completely to enslave the Spanish nation under the baneful dominion of Rome, if its unwearied ambition for command and power had not found out an instrument, much more efficacious, in the institution of Monachism, the establishment of which propagated itself on the Spanish soil with more rapidity and in greater numbers than in any other Catholic nation.

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The superiority of the monastic clergy in comparison with the secular, as to popularity and numbers, was owing to many causes. In the first place, to become one of the clergy, two things were necessary, and neither of these were within the reach of the lower classes of the people, viz., theological attainments and a *congrua*, which latter word comprehended the property, income, or pension, indispensable to ensure to the aspirant a proper and competent maintenance. In many rich families there was, besides the entail (*el mayorazgo*) pertaining exclusively to the eldest son, another inheritable portion—the mortmain (*main-morte*), as inalienable as the entailed estates themselves, and designed for that individual of the family who might desire to adopt the ecclesiastic state. These inheritable provisions were called *capellanias*, and generally the brother, or cousin, or nephew, to whom this right, separated from the chief inheritance, belonged, took holy orders, but might or might not practically follow the vocation, by the exercise of those functions, the discharge of those duties, and submission to those privations, imposed on one who takes upon himself so high and responsible a calling. Although there was much laxity in the observance of those requirements, there were not wanting bishops who insisted on their most rigorous execution; so that in many dioceses there was great difficulty in gaining admission to the ranks of the clergy. But none of those obstacles presented themselves in seeking admission to the monasteries, or convents. Their doors were constantly open to the poorest and the most ignorant. In their interior organization there was a sufficient variety of employment for every class of human beings; the mason, the carpenter, the simple journeyman, possessed of no other instruments than his muscular force, was eligible to become a useful member of the holy community; and, as in the act of taking upon him the habit of the order, he had guaranteed to him a subsistence and all the conveniences of life, and at the same time that the habit itself opened to him the doors of great houses and palaces and placed him on a level with the most elevated circles, so also these two powerful allurements attracted innumerable persons to the cloisters, and multiplied in a most surprising degree the numerical force of the monastic orders.

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These orders divided themselves into two great ramifications, the monks and the friars, and composed what may be called the aristocracy and the democracy of monachism. The monks were distinguished from the friars by their immense wealth, by the possessions of their monasteries, which were generally situated out of, and at a great distance from, towns, by the dignity of their manners, and by certain peculiarities in their internal government, over which there reigned a certain spirit of retirement and love of seclusion, that separated them from worldly things and the interests and passions of profane society.

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The principal orders of monks established in Spain were the Benedictine, the Bernardine, the Carthusian, and the Hieronimites. The last two were superior to all the rest in number, importance, and wealth, and it is only respecting them that we shall treat in this chapter.

The Carthusians were opulent landowners; they lived in the midst of their possessions, and, to a considerable extent, cultivated their own lands. In these operations they rendered great service to agriculture; they practised the science with great care and knowledge; they brought their productions to great perfection. The breed of the Carthusian horses of Xeres was notoriously the best in Europe. In most of the Carthusian establishments they had schools in which education was given gratuitously to the children of their tenantry, and to those of the poor of the neighbouring towns. Under this point of view, it is certain that the monasteries of the Carthusians contributed greatly to the extension and improvement of agriculture and education in Spain. They were also notable for the stimulus which they gave to the fine arts; for their churches and monasteries were true museums of sculpture, painting, and architecture. In that of Granada, all travellers admire the beautiful paintings of its cloisters and refectory, the magnificent marbles of its chapels and sacristy, and the good taste and richness of the ornaments which cover all parts of the edifice.

The Carthusians observed, as fundamental rules of their order, silence and seclusion. They had but few acts which they performed in common, and these only on holidays. Each Carthusian lived in his cell, but each cell was a house, full of conveniences, with an extensive garden, in which they cultivated with the greatest care fruits and vegetables of the most delicious kinds. They were forbidden to give presents or even alms; but they allowed visitors to take from their gardens whatever they pleased. In Granada there was a famous Father Reyes who devoted himself to the cultivation of flowers, and from his garden all the elegant ladies of the city were furnished with the choicest descriptions. Their male friends were sent to gather them, nor was the reverend father altogether ignorant of the fair uses to which they were about to be applied.

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The Carthusian dined alone in his cell, into which his food was conveyed by means of a *torno*, a kind of revolving cylindrical cupboard with shelves, into which were put the numerous and abundant dishes composing the dinner. The *torno* being then spun round on its axis, the shelves were unloaded of their sumptuous contents by the Carthusian himself.

As these monks were prohibited the use of meat, they kept up in their monasteries a great stock of live fish and a number of turtles; these latter being a delicacy they greatly prized. The place in which they killed these turtles was called the *Galapagar*. They fed them in a curious manner: at night there was thrown for them, into a large dry tank, the carcass of a cow or a calf; and such was the voracity of the amphibious animals, that, in the morning, nothing remained of these carcasses but the bones.

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The dinner of the Carthusian generally consisted of eight or nine distinct dishes, and their friends were accustomed to pay their visits about the hour of dinner; for, as invitations were not allowed, they were dispensed with. The wines they grew were always those of the best quality, and there were no persons in all Spain who fared so sumptuously and deliciously as did those devoted recluses.

None but presbyters were admitted to the Carthusian order, and even these were generally only such as had exercised some dignity in cathedral or collegiate churches; hence nearly all of them were learned men—men of good morals and great experience in the affairs of the world. Sometimes a military man of good attainments, a person high in the ministerial office, or a member of the higher courts of justice, sought admission within their walls; and although such acquisition was considered as very useful and very honourable, they were admitted only after having for some years belonged to the secular clergy and taken holy orders.

In a kind of life so extraordinary, so distinct, and so marked among all human associations, they were unable to form relations of friendship, even among individuals of the same community. They, therefore, seldom saw and scarcely knew each other. Their salutation, when they met, was brief but expressive; the senior began with *Morir hemos*, [52a] and the junior answered, *Ya, lo sabemos*. [52b] Beyond this the conversation did not extend. Once a-year the chapter met together to decide on the urgent and important matters of business of their society; and once in three years to elect a prior and a *procurator*, who were the only two persons authorised to treat with the world without, and direct the material interests of the establishment.

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There is recorded of one of those Carthusian monasteries a narrative of a circumstance which at first was attempted to be concealed by all possible means, but at last came to be made known and fully authenticated. The case is shortly told. There was in that monastery a monk, who, for many years prior to his entering on a monastic life, had encouraged a vehement passion for one of the principal ladies of the city. The flame was mutual; but the lovers finding great obstacles in the way of their union, agreed to wait, in the hope that time might afford a favourable opportunity of realising their wishes. The father of the lady offered her hand to a gentleman very high in the hierarchy. She, not having sufficient courage to resist the parental authority, obeyed the mandate, thus sacrificing herself on the altar of filial obedience. The lover gave himself up a victim of despair, abandoned the world, and retired to the monastery. A few months after the marriage the husband died. The lady's affection revived; the flame was kindled anew in her heart; and she formed the resolution of uniting herself with the object of her first love, and of overcoming all obstacles which stood in the way of her determination. In male attire she wandered long in the neighbourhood of the monastery, informing herself most minutely of its internal position, and reflecting on the means of introducing herself to the cell of her beloved Carthusian. The stream of water which served to irrigate the gardens of the monastery, entered a wall by a large semicircular arch or opening near the garden itself. The lady, prodigal in the expenditure of money, and in the employment of faithful and trustworthy agents, procured a raft to be constructed, by means of which, all other things being prepared, she ventured through the opening, and was carried down the stream to the desired spot. The secret was kept. No one had the least suspicion of this extraordinary voyage, nor was it discovered until many years afterwards, when the monks observing that this particular one of their number had not for a length of time been present at any of the devotional exercises prescribed by the rules of their order, were desirous of learning the cause of his absence. They entered his cell, and found to their astonishment, his dead body, a lady, and four children! The civil power was, at first, about to investigate the affair, but, in order to avert the scandal that would result from such a proceeding, all inquiry was suspended, and the fate of that unhappy woman and her family was never known. The whole account seems romantic. The facts appear incredible, but they have long been established on unquestionable authority.

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Like the Carthusians, the Hieronimites had their establishments far from towns and cities. They were very wealthy, but did not cultivate their own lands; they let them out on hire, and showed great consideration to their tenants. These fathers devoted themselves, almost entirely, to teaching, to singing, and to sacred music. From their halls have been sent forth to the world many vocalists, organists, and composers, of eminence. When Philip II. built the Escorial, he confided that sumptuous edifice to the Hieronimites; and so high a position did the prior hold in the hierarchy and in the state, that he was privileged to enter, at all times, into the king's apartments without asking leave to do so, and his coachman and other servants were permitted to wear the royal livery.

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General opinion accuses these reverend fathers of too great a propensity to indulge in gastronomy, and it is related of them that, in prescribing for themselves, as a rule for their

supper rations, one dozen of mincemeat-balls (*abondigas*), they afterwards, by a supplementary rule, extended that number to thirteen, from which circumstance the number thirteen is generally called, in Spain, "*the friars' dozen*."

The inferior section of Monachism, viz., that of the Friars, is composed of many orders, among which the most important and numerous were the following: *Mercenarios*, or Friars of Mercy (*de la Merced*), founded with the exclusive object of ransoming Christian captives who groaned in the dungeons of the Barbary States; the *Carmelites*,—*calzados*, wearing shoes and stockings, and *descalzos*, without either; the *Augustines*, *calzados* and *descalzos*; the *Preachers*, or *Dominicans*; the Friars of *St John of God*, whose duty was to serve sick persons in the hospitals attached to their convents; and above all the large family of *St Francis*, divided into four great ramifications, viz., the *Franciscan* properly speaking; the *Fathers of Observance*; the *Fathers of St Diego*; and the *Capuchins*. All these orders had convents in the principal towns of the Peninsula, and its colonies. In some cities,—as, for example, Madrid, Seville, and Toledo,—there were as many as twenty or thirty of these establishments, many of which contained from one hundred to one hundred and fifty inmates; but the average may be stated, with reason, at thirty for each convent. The *calzados* orders were at liberty to hold property; but the *descalzos*, in whose number are to be reckoned all the family of Franciscans, were strictly forbidden to do so; and hence they lived, exclusively, on the alms of the faithful.

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These alms were of various kinds. Those called pious works (*obras pias*), consisted of certain rents, or pensions, granted to a convent on condition that certain masses should be said therein, during the year, for the soul of the grantor. Rich men who had acquired a fortune by unfair means, or through an extortionate usury, were induced to expect forgiveness of their sins, if they left large sums of money to the fathers of the convent the saint of which they were accustomed to worship or venerate, and to whom they usually paid their devotions. Some of those benefactors, most generously, defrayed the expenses of a religious festival, from which resulted a considerable profit to the convent in which that festival was celebrated. Others repaired conventual edifices at their own expense, or enlarged them by making extensive wings or other additions, in which there was always a profuse display of marble, bronze, and other precious materials. But the principal source of the revenue of the mendicant orders was that called the *questacion*.<sup>[57]</sup> Every morning each convent poured out from its gates a certain number of lay brothers (*legos*), each being furnished with a wallet over his shoulder; and it was the duty of each to traverse the whole town, begging alms for his respective convent. These pious beggars visited, one by one, the shops of the trades-people, and places most frequented, calling at the houses of the poor as well as at those of the rich. The alms which they thus received were chiefly in bread, meat, eggs, and every description of eatables, besides small copper coins generally contributed by the poor, and which were not the least important parts of these gatherings. In this way thousands of robust, able-bodied men, not only maintained themselves, but were enabled to live in the lap of luxury, for many years, without contributing, on their part, one farthing to the public treasury, but on the contrary diminishing, immensely, the population and the number of those engaged in cultivating the soil and in other useful labour. Was not this alone sufficient to explain the deplorable state of the economy of the Spanish Peninsula, the paucity of its inhabitants, the backwardness of its agriculture, its want of capital, and the nakedness and poverty of its fields and its towns? Indolence being, so to speak, thus sanctified, what stimulus could there be for productive labour? Why should men have fatigued themselves by arduous employments, when the convent offered them not only food, raiment, and lodging, but even a respectable position in society, without further trouble than that of passing a few hours in the choir of the church, to confess penitents, assist now and then at the bedside of a dying person, and to preach an occasional sermon, for which they always received a decent payment?

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In all the religious orders three vows were exacted, namely, those of chastity, poverty, and obedience. Of the first we shall have some remarks to make when we come to speak of celibacy in the ecclesiastical state. That of poverty was eluded in a very simple manner; individuals were held bound by that vow, but communities were entirely free to accept and acquire property; and thus it was that the greater number of the convents lived in opulence, and the friars enjoyed all the conveniences of life. The friar delivered to the chief of his community all that came to his hands, either as alms or by way of salary for the masses he had to say and the sermons he preached.

Each order had, at its head, a superior chief, called the Vicar-general; the chief functionary of each province was called the Provincial, and that of each convent the Guardian in the Franciscan orders, and the Prior in all the rest. These personages were exempt from the vow of poverty; they had, tacitly, a dispensation for the use of money, under the supposition that all they received or possessed would be by them laid out for the good of their community. Every three years the provincial visited all the convents in his jurisdiction, and it was the universal custom, that in the act of finishing his visit, the prior of the visited convent put into his hands a purse of gold. This contribution was called *la honesta*. The vicar-general of the Franciscan orders, generally a Spaniard, received another species of tribute, which put him on a level with the most opulent men in Europe. Each convent of the three Orders in all parts of the globe sent to him, weekly, the largest amount it had received for any one mass said during that week. These orders had no less than two hundred and seventy provinces, and in them twelve thousand convents,<sup>[59a]</sup> from which may be conceived the immense sums of money that came into his power. This personage enjoyed the honours of a grandee of Spain, and was always in great favour with its sovereigns, on whom he lavished money. Father Company, who occupied this post during the reign of Charles IV., was accustomed to send to the queen, Mary Louisa, yearly, large quantities of bricks made of

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fine chocolate, and studded all over, within and without, with solid gold doubloons.

The last vicar-general of the order was the celebrated Father Fray Cirilo de Alameda, now Archbishop of Burgos, well known for his attachment to the cause of Don Carlos, during the civil war between that prince and Queen Christina.

The vow of obedience was observed with the most rigorous exactness. The chief of each convent was a despot to whose mandates it was not possible to offer the least resistance. All his inferiors, except those ordained to the priesthood, spoke to him only on their knees. The most tyrannical precepts were obeyed with the greatest docility. It would often occur that the guardian, or the prior, wishing to exercise influence in some powerful family, commanded one of his friars to use all possible means of gaining an introduction, so that the end might be accomplished. In this way they became possessed of great power over the most important families in the chief cities and towns of the kingdom; and from these families they received large donations and handsome legacies.

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The penal code of the convents provided for certain offences the punishment of flagellation, imprisonment in a dungeon for indeterminate periods, living on bread and water, and public confession of sins. The mildest punishment consisted in being compelled to eat off the ground, kneeling, at the hour of the refectory. The friar who by his conduct had become incorrigible, and worthy of the severest punishment, was sent away, for the remainder of his life, to one of the convents situated in desert places.

All the religious orders of Spain have produced many men eminent for science and virtue, and among these may be reckoned one of the greatest and most distinguished statesmen that ever governed in that country,—such was the Cardinal Ximenez de Cisneros, minister of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic sovereigns, and of Charles V. This cardinal was the founder of the proud university of Alcalá; he was the conqueror of Oran, and the great reformer in all branches of the administration and of the government.

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The sacred sciences owe to him inexpressible benefits for his famous Complutense Polyglot Bible, one of the most correct and splendid editions of the sacred writings hitherto published. One of the few copies now extant of that monument of piety and wisdom is to be found in the British Museum. Such men, however, were, it must be admitted, extremely rare exceptions, which do not weaken the force of our objections to the whole system of monastic institutions.

The corruption of the monastic orders began during the earliest times of the monarchy. In the time of Isabella the Catholic, the immorality of the friars had arrived at such a height as to induce that eminent woman, led by the counsels of the Cardinal Cisneros, to demand of Pope Alexander VI. a bull permitting her to introduce a radical reform among the religious orders in Spain. The Pope resisted, but, ultimately, was obliged to cede to the Spanish court; and Isabella checked, for some years, the disorders which brought so much scandal on the nation. The fact is, that the friars formed a separate state, independent of the government, and even of the bishops; they acknowledged no authority but that of the Pope, and their communications with the court of Rome were as frequent as they were private and mysterious. The bishops often claimed the right to exercise their own authority over this part of the ecclesiastical state, but always in vain; and although the Chamber of Castille, which was the supreme tribunal, lent its support to those just pretensions, that support was always disregarded by the pontifical court. The friars never would submit themselves to the bishops, except to receive holy orders from them; and whenever these were refused, although it might be on strong and just grounds, the friar had recourse at once to Rome, and returned from thence ordained.

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We have not entered, in our list of religious orders, that of the Jesuits, because these formed an entirely separate class, and the greatest insult that could be committed against a Jesuit was to call him a friar. The Spanish Jesuits, like those throughout all Europe, were, in their exterior conduct, modest and decorous. They mixed but little with the lower classes of society, and their chief occupation was to direct the consciences of eminent persons, and particularly those of kings, bishops, and ministers. In Spain, as in all other places, they took a large share in politics, they patronised good studies, and accumulated great wealth. If jesuitical casuistry had not its birth in Spain, at least the greater part of its ecclesiastical writers, who propagated and defended that absurd and immoral conceit, were Spaniards, as may be seen on reference to the catalogue of them published by Pascal, in his *Lettres d'un Provincial*. The names of Escobar and of Sanchez have left a deplorable reputation for them in this branch of ecclesiastic literature. The treatise *De Matrimonio* of the latter contains such profound immorality, and such dangerous and obscene queries and doctrines, that the Inquisition included the publication in its index of prohibited books. But far greater scandal was produced throughout Europe by the book entitled *De Rege et Regis Institutione*, written by the celebrated Jesuit, Juan de Mariana. This man, truly great, and whom Gibbon places in the number of the most distinguished historians of ancient and modern times, wrote that work, apparently with the view of assisting in the education of Philip IV., but in reality to justify the assassination committed in France on the person of Henry III., and probably to prepare for that of his successor. Mariana sustains, with warmth, with eloquence, and with erudition, the dogma of regicide; determines the cases in which the commission of that crime is not only lawful but necessary and praiseworthy; lays down rules by which the deed should be executed, under certain and determinate circumstances; and even goes the length of excusing the use of poison, if other means fail, to get rid of a tyrant! The book was prohibited by all the governments of Europe, and burnt publicly in Paris by the hands of the common hangman.

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That culpable and highly dangerous doctrine was not the only one of the same character with



which the Jesuits poisoned the public morals in Europe. The system of ethics which they taught in their classes, and propounded from the pulpit and confessional, had for its basis the famous doctrine of probabilism, by means of which all crimes found a powerful subterfuge through which their perpetrators were enabled to avert responsibility and punishment. For all kinds of excess, that doctrine afforded excuses; and hence falsehood, perjury, robbery, and even murder and adultery, might be converted by it into innocent actions, by means of the sophisms and frauds with which that absurd theory was interwoven. To this was united, in order to exasperate opinion against such men, the irresistible influence which these Jesuits exercised in all the courts. Meanwhile the immense wealth which they were accumulating, by means of commerce with the West Indies and in South America, betrayed, in the so-called Company of Jesus, a mundane and ambitious spirit totally incompatible with that which ought to prevail in every religious and cloistral establishment. About the middle of the eighteenth century, all the enlightened men of Europe exclaimed against that company, and ardently desired its extermination; and, although many works were published against it, and the voices of many religious orders were raised in denouncing it to the pontifical throne and to the public, such was the power and dexterity with which it neutralised these hostile dispositions, that nobody dared to attack its front, until a king of Spain, the illustrious Charles III., undertook that great work, and carried it on to its consummation with as much resolution as ability.

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We have already described the characters of those good and able ministers who surrounded that monarch, and we have alluded to their Jansenistic doctrines, which were diametrically opposed to those professed by the Jesuits. But neither the upright principles nor enlarged ideas of the monarch, nor yet the influence exercised by Aranda, Campomanes, Floridablanca, and Roda, would have been sufficient to induce him to take a measure so violent, if there had not intervened a circumstance which necessarily appeared, in his eyes, an outrage on his dignity, a wound on his self-respect, and a threat against the legitimacy of his rights.

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The king was as much a Jansenist as his ministers. The Jesuits knew it, and resolved to make a secret war against him, which should terminate in his dethronement. Father Rizzio, General of the Jesuits established in Rome, gave orders to all the chiefs of the convents belonging to their institution to propagate, by means of their subalterns, as well by private conversations as through the confessional, the important secret that Charles III. was the illegitimate son of Ferdinand VI., and that, consequently, he ought to be considered as a usurper of the throne of his reputed father. The minister, Roda, intercepted a correspondence containing irrefragable proofs of that abominable intrigue; and this was sufficient to make the king resolve upon a course of action which he had refrained from for some time, at the instance of his ministers, through fear of offending the court of Rome and of bringing a scandal on the Christian world. The king had no power to suppress a religious order; but he could, as chief of the state, expel from his territory any persons whomsoever, and this was the part which he took with respect to the individuals of the Company of Jesuits. The execution of this grand design was a master-work of foresight and prudence. The civil authorities of all the towns having Jesuitical establishments, as well in Spain as in the colonies, received a sealed packet from the government. On opening the outer cover was found an order that the interior packet was not to be opened till a certain day and at a certain hour, and in the presence of the subaltern authorities, and a most severe injunction to keep even that operation secret till the moment of its execution. On the arrival of the day and hour appointed the packets were opened, as had been previously arranged, simultaneously; and then was found, in each, an order to take immediate possession of the houses of the Jesuits, to sequester their goods, and transmit, without delay of time, their persons to the nearest port, in which would be found vessels already waiting to receive them on board, and convey them into Italy. This was done, at the same instant, in all places for hundreds of leagues in extent, without the Jesuits, with all their cunning, having received a breath of information, or entertained a suspicion, as to the stroke impending over them; and, what is still more strange, without having given rise to the least symptom of complaint or disapprobation. On the contrary, the other religious orders, who had been offended by the haughty bearing of the Jesuits, and who beheld their opulence and preponderance with envy, celebrated their fall without restraint, and considered it as a triumph of the true religion over the dangerous novelties which these men had introduced.

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From that period nobody cared for the Jesuits nor thought of them, and the rest of the reigns of Charles III. and Charles IV. passed without a single voice being raised in their favour.

In 1817, Ferdinand VII., released from his captivity in France, and ruled entirely by the persecuting and fanatical party, not satisfied with having re-established the Inquisition, wished also to recall the Jesuits. The Council of Castille, which he consulted, *pro formâ*, on that business, showed itself favourable, moved by the able report of his fiscal, Gutierrez de la Huerta, a man known for his Voltairean opinions, who was suspected of having received a large sum of money to defend, with energy, the cause of fanaticism and of intolerance. The few Jesuits who have outlived their expulsion, and who are scattered over some of the towns of Italy, are returning to the Peninsula in such small numbers, that they are scarcely enough to occupy the ancient establishment of San Isidro in Madrid. Their installation, which was announced as an epoch of triumph, disappointed the expectation of the court, and of their friends. Those extraordinary beings, whose dress, customs, and even affected Italian accent, were opposed to the national habits and the ideas of the new generation, were beheld by the public with the most perfect indifference. It was said publicly that they were strangers, and that they despised their country; that they ate *maccaroni* instead of *garbanzos*; <sup>[67]</sup> and people spread about innumerable other epigrams and satires against them, regardless of the government police, and even without

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fear of the inquisitors. But what most tended to destroy their reputation was the circumstance that none of them were in a condition to instruct youth, and that, in order to fill the professorships of their college, they were obliged to take their professors from the secular ranks, some of them notorious for their independent and anti-Roman-Catholic opinions. When they began to recruit novices, they were unable to find any decent men, or known family, who would submit their children to their rule; and their noviciate was consequently composed of only ninety young persons, and these drawn from the lowest classes of society.

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For the space of seventeen years they maintained themselves in this precarious condition, without advancing one step in their popularity, and even without exhibiting any of the qualities which had given confidence to their rule in former times. Far from captivating the will of the people, they exasperated it to such a degree, that in 1834, after the death of the king, the people of Madrid, in one of those moments of madness and irritation so frequent after the scourge of the cholera, penetrated the establishment of those holy fathers, and inhumanly sacrificed them to their fury. Even to this day the mystery which covered that sanguinary catastrophe has never entirely been revealed. One thing is certain, that in spite of the religious ideas of Spaniards, and of the superstitious veneration with which they beheld a religious habit, the Jesuits were immolated without causing one murmur of fanaticism or one tear of compassion.

It is but a few years ago that the Spanish government had the inexpressible condescendence to allow a community of Jesuits to establish itself in the magnificent convent of Loyola, the country of their founder. The last revolution which happened in that country offered them an opportunity of putting in practice those absolute principles which have always governed their conduct. The government of Espartero, informed of their secret intrigues, by which they contrived to agitate the public mind in the Basque provinces in favour of Don Carlos, ordered them to be expelled to the Balearic Islands; but they, fearful perhaps of severer measures being adopted against them, and convinced of the general hatred in which they were held by the people, fled to France, from whence it is probable they will not attempt to recross the frontier.

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Monachism, then, has entirely disappeared from Spain, where only two convents remain for the instruction of those who are destined for the priesthood in the Philippine Islands. These men live within the cloisters according to the ancient regime; but they are forbidden to appear in public in the costumes of their respective orders. The preservation of those two establishments was considered indispensable for the preparation of materials for the government of those remote possessions, where the Indians are accustomed to obey the priest, and look upon him with more respect than that shown to the civil authority, and where their influence is sufficient, according to general opinion, to put down that revolutionary spirit which has despoiled Spain of her splendid dominions in South America. All this, however plausible, may arise out of a mistaken policy. New political ideas and legislation, under constitutional rule, have respected the convents of the nuns. One can scarcely conceive of this inconsistency on the part of governments which, under the name of liberty, have ruled Spain in these latter times. If the abolition of the convents of friars had for its chief ground the uselessness of those who inhabited them, it must be admitted that infinitely more useless is the life of a nun, consecrated to perpetual idleness, and without further occupation than that of assisting in the choir and in devotional practices, to which duties she could equally resign herself in the bosom of her own family.

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The religious communities of women have the same denominations as the convents of friars, and they call themselves Augustines, Franciscans, Benedictines, &c. The respective rules of their organization do not exact from them, in any case, more duties than those of a contemplative life; and, in reality, there are now but few of those convents of nuns whose inmates dedicate themselves to the task of giving to persons of their own sex even the imperfect and limited education which, after all, forms no part of that useful knowledge required by modern civilization.

The Spanish nuns are, absolutely, some of the most insignificant of beings. There is nothing recorded of them either good or bad, and for many centuries we have no account of any Spanish nun distinguished for her talents, her writings, or even for her eminent virtues. In their conversation, they display a childish simplicity and an unwearied curiosity, together with an extraordinary deficiency of knowledge as it respects the fundamental truths of the Christian faith. The amusements with which they while away their secluded lives are reduced to those of making sweets (*dulces*), dressing images of saints, embroidering scapularies, [71a] and other such-like frivolities. A celebrated living poet has characterised them with great propriety and truth in the following epitaph:—

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“Aqui yace Sor Belen,  
Que hizo almibares mui bien,  
Y pasó la vida entera  
Vistiendo niños de cera.” [71b]

Except the convents of nuns of the mendicant orders, the greater part of them, in Spain, possessed, prior to the constitutional regime, considerable inheritances. These, however, having been, by a decree of the Cortes, converted and sold as national property, all their means are reduced to a bare subsistence on a small pension which *ought* now to be paid from the public treasury; but as that obligation has frequently been neglected in consequence of the repeated disturbances which have interrupted the peace of the monarchy, those unhappy women have often been overwhelmed with the greatest privations and misery. In such cases Christian charity

has lent its succour, and all classes of the state have contributed to their relief. The government, on different occasions, has prohibited the admission of novices to these convents of nuns, in order that death itself might, without violence, extinguish those institutions, which are contrary to the ideas of the age. But this salutary provision has been imprudently eluded by the bishops, and recently modified by an article of the *concordat* effected with the court of Rome a few years ago, and which is everywhere unpopular.

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One of the great evils resulting from the continuance of these nuns in Spain is, that they occupy numerous edifices worthy of a better purpose, and generally in the best situations in populous cities. Only one convent of this class deserves particular mention, on account of the great historical recollections connected with its existence, for the singularity of its organization, and for the pious object of its institution. It is called the Convent *de las Huelgas*, and is situated at a short distance from Burgos.

This magnificent establishment, founded and enriched by ancient monarchs, maintained an hospital in which a great number of invalids were attended to with the greatest care. The abbess wore the mitre and *baculo* like the bishops, and exercised both civil and criminal jurisdiction in the vast dominions belonging to the convent; she was called Señora de *horca y cuchillo*, [72] and was the chief of several ecclesiastical and secular officers. The sumptuous church of this convent contained within its walls the ashes of many of the kings and princes of ancient Spanish dynasties.

### CHAPTER III.

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CELIBACY AND MORALS.—Illicit relations formed by the clergy—Shameless avowal of their fruits—Ferocious character of love in the cloisters—Three flagrant cases—Murder of a young lady by her confessor, the Carmelite of San Lucar—His trial and sentence—Murder by a wife of her husband under the direction of her confessor, the Capuchine of Cuenca—His trial, imprisonment, and escape—Murder of a lady by the Agonizante of Madrid—His trial and execution—Scandalous occurrences in the Convent of the Basillos of Madrid—Forcible entry of the civil power—Murder of the abbot—Suppression of inquiry—Shameful profligacy of the Capuchines of Cascante and the nuns of a neighbouring convent—Mode of its discovery—Imprisonment of inmates of both convents—Removal of prisoners—Their mysterious escape—Exemplary performance of vows in some cases—Dangers of celibacy—Spanish women and their influence on society.

Religious celibacy has been justly censured, by true Christians, as opposed to the ends of creation, to the spirit of the gospel, and the good order of human society. If so severe a prohibition can scarcely be observed without great mortification and inconvenience by a few,—a very small number of men, endued with an aptitude which places them above the ordinary laws of humanity,—what shall we say to the possibility of its exercise by men with no such fitness for the task,—men of a nation whose very climate is incessantly soliciting the expansion of the sensual faculties,—a nation of whose social organization frequent intercourse in all the affairs of life between the two sexes is one of the most essential and necessary elements? We have already alluded to the state of concubinage in which the Spanish clergy were living prior to the reign of Isabella the Catholic. But we shall not be guilty of an injustice in admitting, that from that period until our own times a great number of the Spanish clergy, as well regular as secular, have borne the yoke with singular patience, and have, with exemplary self-denial, resigned themselves to the severe privation imposed upon them by that ordinance of their church. On the other hand, however, we cannot dissimulate the violent struggle between inclination and duty which they have had to sustain, and the immense difficulty of resisting a temptation which the frequent intercourse with the female portion of their charge has always offered to the clergy and friars in the discharge of their functions, especially when it is considered how prodigal nature has been to the women of the Peninsula in the bestowment of her richest personal attractions, and that great facilities have been given to the spiritual guides for the abuse of that *prestige* conferred upon them by the habit of their order.

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In large towns, the presence of the bishops, and the respect which a polished and select society inspired, were, for the most part, a check on the impure inclinations of the clergy, even when their own sense of virtue and religion was insufficient to lead them to a spontaneous compliance with their arduous but sacred duty. But in small towns where these barriers did not exist, the clergy and friars, it must be admitted, infringed, and continued grossly to infringe, frequently in a scandalous manner, the vow of celibacy which they had solemnly sworn to observe. The priest of a rural parish, who was generally the most important personage of the whole population, had so frequent and such dangerous opportunities of forming relations of an illicit character with the weaker sex, that he required a proportionate degree of sanctity, virtue, and prudence, to resist them. These relations, however, be it said to the shame of Spain, once formed, are not concealed, but are generally openly and unblushingly made known to the public. All the townspeople know very well the person who is the priest's *querida*; [75] nay more, on many occasions they have recourse to her influence over the mind of their pastor; and even the fruits of these illicit relations are commonly known throughout the parish by the name of "the children of the priest!" (*los hijos del cura*.)

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Not many years ago, in a small town in Valencia, and on a Sunday, the parishioners assembled in the square according to custom, waiting till the bell should announce to them the hour of entering the church to hear mass; hour after hour passed—no bell sounded—the people directed their steps towards the house of the priest's *querida*, where they found that he had passed the night in orgies of drunkenness and dissipation, and was, even then, in a state of intoxication.

It is worthy of note, as a remarkable circumstance, borne out by experience and by facts well authenticated, that the softer passion of the mind is, generally, in the cloisters, one of a cruel and ferocious character, quite incompatible with its natural essence. The archives of the Spanish tribunals abound with criminal proceedings against friars, for murders committed on the persons of their unhappy victims or paramours. There are three celebrated instances of this kind,—one against the Carmelite of San Lucar, another against the Capuchine of Cuenca, and the third against the Agonizante of Madrid. p. 76

The first of these notorious delinquents was a man of middle age, robust, strong, and who, until the event now referred to, had not given occasion for the least suspicion as to his morality. A young lady, of extraordinary beauty, and held in great esteem by all the towns-people for the purity of her conduct and the sanctity of her life, used frequently to attend the confessional of this Carmelite friar. He conceived for her, secretly, a violent passion, which he kept up and fostered through the constant interviews which his vocation afforded him in gaining the unlimited confidence of his penitent. But he contrived, with incredible command over himself, to suppress his feelings. He never uttered one word to the young creature which could indicate to her the risks she was incurring in seeking for his guidance and blessing. One day, however, she appeared before him on her knees at his confessional, and, with a simplicity and sweetness, such as innocence alone can command, informed him that, with the advice and consent of her parents, she was about to enter into the married state, and now came before him, as her spiritual father, to prepare herself for so important an ordinance by the previous sacraments of confession, absolution, and the holy communion. The friar heard this simple statement, received the child's confession, little as that amounted to, pronounced upon her the absolution, and administered to her the eucharist, without betraying the least perturbation or confusion in his countenance. On rising from her knees, as pure, as holy, and as fully and freely pardoned from sin as her fond and simple mind imagined it was in the power of her church and its minister to make her, the friar said he wished her to go to the vestibule (*porteria* [77]), where he would give her some counsel relative to the new state into which she was about to enter. The unsuspecting girl blindly obeyed the voice which had often before directed her in the ways of virtue; she rose, went to the indicated spot, where already stood the friar, who, without uttering one word, drew from his bosom a poniard, and thrust it into the heart of his ill-fated victim, who fell mortally wounded at his feet. With the utmost coolness, the assassin retired to his cell, wiping the gory blade on the sleeve of his habit, as if he had been performing a most innocent deed. The alarm was immediately given. The friar was arrested and thrown into prison. Proceedings were commenced, and supported by evidence which left no doubt as to the author of the crime, and the circumstances under which it was committed. The public prosecutor (*fiscal*) moved the court for the extreme penalty of death; but against this sentence arose a strenuous opposition on the part of the bishops, who pretended, in the first place, that the crime was one which ought only to be judged by the ecclesiastical authority, and in the second, that in no case could the penalty of death be inflicted on a priest. The contest was carried to the government for its decision, and the minister, Campomanes, a zealous defender of the sovereign's rights, as well as a constant enemy to the usurpations of the clergy, confirmed the jurisdiction of the civil power which had heard the cause, and declared that the Spanish legislature offered no impediment to the execution of the last penalty of the law, if the judges found sufficient grounds to warrant them in awarding it. The judges did so find, and pronounced sentence accordingly; but the king, Charles III., commuted the sentence to perpetual banishment and imprisonment. The assassin was conducted to Puerto Rico, where he ended his life, weighed down by remorse, though his hours were consecrated to penitence and prayer. p. 77

The history of the second case, viz., that of the Capuchine of Cuenca, bears a still more scandalous and atrocious character. The unhallowed passions of this great criminal had their origin also in the confessional. The accomplice of his wickedness was, too, his "daughter of confession," (*hija de confesion*. [78]) She was the wife of a carpenter of respectable character, who, not content with the influence which the friar exercised over the conscience of his wife, wished that influence might also be brought to bear over the concerns of his own modest household, and therefore frequently invited the friar to his table. The latter and his *querida*, unknown to the confiding carpenter, passed some years in a total abandonment of themselves to vicious courses. The friar began, subsequently, to imagine he observed a certain coldness or indifference on the part of his companion in guilt, and, attributing that change to a feeling of the woman's self-disgust and reproach, he had recourse to the most diabolical means of searing her conscience, and making her still more the associate of his depravity: indeed, it is not possible even to read without horror of the abominable artifices to which this monster of iniquity had recourse, although these were all minutely detailed in the written charges brought against him at his trial, and were deposed to by the woman herself, she being fully corroborated by the testimony of other witnesses secreted in a part of the house from whence his revolting conduct was both seen and heard. One step in the path of immorality and crime too often leads on to another. The friar at length imagined that the woman's indifference arose from some latent spark of affection which she still bore to her husband, and he resolved on sacrificing the life of the unfortunate man whose connubial rights seemed to stand in his way. Full of impatience for p. 78

the consummation of the diabolical project when once he had determined on its execution, and having given to his victim a strong soporific, which threw him into a heavy sleep, he proceeds to urge on the faithless wife to the act of stabbing her unconscious husband. This tragedy she performed with one of the unhappy man's own instruments of trade, under the guidance of the friar, who first ascertained and indicated to her, by the pulsations of the doomed man's heart, the exact spot into which she was to give the instrument its fatal plunge.

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The extreme docility of the woman in the hands of the friar, as disclosed in the evidence, can only be explained by the absolute control which he held over her conscience and her will; and, doubtless, even that control arrived at such a pitch, that, at last, the yoke became insupportable, if we may judge from the declarations which she made during the trial, for she appeared to take credit to herself for the revelations which she then made of all the disgusting particulars connected with the crimes of that detestable culprit.

Immediately after the perpetration of the crime, the civil power seized the persons of both the guilty parties, and began to prosecute judicial inquiries, with the greatest secrecy, under the clandestine supervision of the bishop. The proceedings were prolonged to an indefinite period, until the friar had been six years in prison, within which interval the woman died. In a popular commotion which occurred in Cuenca in consequence of an invasion by the French, all prisoners were set at liberty, and this execrable miscreant disappeared.

The *Agonizante* of Madrid <sup>[81]</sup> (which is the third case) also murdered the companion of his vices, on her own bed too, in which they had passed the preceding night. The true motive of this murder could never be satisfactorily ascertained. But the friar having been taken *in flagrante*, the judges could not hesitate for a moment in passing sentence of death upon him. All the Spanish clergy had recourse to Ferdinand VII., and used their utmost influence to obtain a pardon, or at least a commutation of the sentence; but the king was inflexible, and the criminal died at the hands of the executioner, by the *garrote*, in the Plazuela de la Cebada, in Madrid.

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Under the same reign of Ferdinand VII., the Convent of the Basilios of Madrid was the theatre of most scandalous and sanguinary atrocities, which had their origin in the relaxed manners of the inhabitants of that establishment. The friars were accustomed to introduce by night into the cloisters women of ill fame, and this custom had grown into something like a right or privilege, which the friars were resolved to maintain at all hazards, as it was afterwards proved; for the abbot, who until then had connived at these irregularities, wished all of a sudden to adopt a system of the utmost rigour and discipline, and to reduce the friars to the severe observances of their order. The convent was situated in the most populous part of Madrid. One night in the year 1832, loud screams were heard by the inhabitants of the opposite houses, and by people who were passing in the streets. The civil authorities were called to the spot, and informed of the circumstances. They demanded entrance at the doors of the convent, but the friars refused to comply. Force became necessary. The gates were broken open, and the officers rushed in. All, however, that the public could ever learn of that nocturnal invasion was simply that the head of the unfortunate abbot was found in one cell, and his trunk in another. Ferdinand VII. did not on that occasion display the same degree of indignation and severity as he had done towards the *Agonizante*. He was at that moment in all the plenitude of his despotic power, and this mysterious affair of the convent of the Basilios was buried in the most profound oblivion.

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These terms of harmony have always existed between the Spanish monarchs and the clergy, who have been accustomed to lend themselves, reciprocally, to the interests and persecutions of each other; and hence it is that a great number of crimes similar to that just referred to has never before been brought to light. Some of these, however, have been of such a nature and magnitude, and accompanied with such extraordinary circumstances, that, in spite of the efforts made by the clergy to conceal them, they have not altogether eluded the public curiosity. To this class belongs the celebrated case of the Capuchines of Cascante, the recollection of which is traditionally preserved, and is still the subject of many a conversation, although to the present day we are not aware of any account that has been published on the subject of that shameful transaction. There still exist those who either were children in the time of Charles III., or who heard, from the lips of their fathers or grandfathers, all the particulars of that flagrant case, as well as of the extraordinary sensation which the discoveries then made produced on the public mind. The facts, which appear indisputable, are these:—Towards the middle of the reign of that sovereign, a prelate of one of the districts of the province of Arragon had good reason to believe that there existed intimate and criminal relations between the nuns and the friars of two convents situated in the same town. It had been observed that the number of foundlings had been for some time considerably on the increase, many of which were left, by persons unknown, in the houses of poor women, who received with them very considerable sums of money. At first, no suspicion whatever fell on the friars, who continued their offices of preaching, saying mass, confessing penitents, and giving ostentatious indications of their leading humble and ascetic lives. A diligent watch was instituted by the authorities, but as far as exterior observances went, there was no reason to believe that any suspicious persons from without ever entered the convent of the nuns; it was therefore thought right to have an internal examination of that convent, a measure never had recourse to by the authorities but on occasions of the gravest kind.

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The result of this step was, that in the interior of the edifice was discovered a door leading to a subterranean passage or tunnel which crossed underneath the principal street of the town, and led direct to the convent of the Capuchines. All the inmates of both establishments were immediately taken prisoners; a judicial examination followed, when it was found that for many years the societies of these two convents had been living in a state of concubinage,—that even

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the outward doors of the two houses were seldom shut at night,—that the friars had free ingress to the convent of the nuns, where both sexes gave themselves up to the most dissolute abandonment in drunkenness, gluttony, debauchery, and all sorts of carnal excesses. The authorities found more than they had expected, and began to repent the course they had taken. The trials, however, were pushed forward apparently with all usual formalities, but the judges were exclusively ecclesiastics, and everything was conducted with profound caution and secrecy. The prisoners were removed to several towns in Arragon, and kept apart from each other, in different cells; but in one single night they all disappeared, and were never afterwards heard of. The only part which the civil authority took in this mysterious affair was to command the two convents to be pulled down, and salt to be sown on their foundations,—a ceremony which was accordingly performed, and one which the laws of Spain then required as to all houses which had been the scene of any atrocious offence.

It may hardly be necessary to reiterate what we have already more than once insisted on, as a well authenticated fact, that in the midst of all such irregularities and crimes as those detailed to show the unnatural and violent character of celibacy in the clergy, there always have been, in Spain, a large number of persons of both sexes, who have been privileged to take up and bear this cross of privation with singular resignation and constancy. But those efforts on the side of virtue, that perpetual conflict with sentiments most grateful to the human heart,—and that separation of an entire class, constituted in society self-acting, without any relation of endearment towards a general society,—may be considered as some of the grave inconveniences of Roman Catholicism, or rather as some of the most formidable obstacles which that faith opposes to the regular habits and to the peace of families.

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The dangers of celibacy in the clergy are perhaps more serious and more inevitable in Spain than in any other country of Europe. The Spanish nation is, generally, renowned for its chivalrous sentiments, for the violence of the tender passions, and for the influence which the fair sex exercises, not only in all the domestic but in the civil and political relations of life. There is, in the society of the Spanish lady, a distinctive feature of character, called *franqueza*, which, above all others, gives her the greatest charm in the eyes of a foreigner. She is eminently sociable, and is the life and essence of Spanish society, in which she maintains an imperium over all tastes, affections, and operations. Besides this, it is the universal custom of Spaniards to be constantly going in and out of one another's houses without ceremony or invitation; and this frequent contact with Spanish women, generally pretty, but almost always amiable and graceful, naturally produces intimate relations, and not unfrequently reciprocal attachments. One may conceive of such a thing as a cold, repulsive resistance to such attractions in the dreariness of a desert, or even within the four walls of a cell; but when such influences are not merely occasionally, but unceasingly brought to bear upon the senses, they too often leave impressions which, by a law of our sinful nature, are capable of reciprocating so as to produce their corresponding effects. Hence humanity, unless upheld and strengthened by a superior power, is too often insufficient and prone to give up the contest.

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In Spain, the inferior classes of society have always, until of late, submitted not only to the influence but to the authority of a priest or a friar; and it may well be conceived how easy it is to abuse this power in the intercourse which such functionaries have with ignorant and weak persons. In small towns, the inhabitants of which are devoted exclusively to labour, fathers and husbands pass the entire day in the fields, whilst the priest remains at home without a witness of his conduct or his actions. No domestic hearth is at liberty to exclude him. He is authorised by custom to enter all houses, at all hours, where he is received and treated almost as a god. These are facts which can be vouched by all Spaniards, by whom they are spoken of without the least reserve. In laying them before the English public, we disavow all idea of calumniating an entire class of Spanish society. Our object is to point out one of the causes which, in our opinion, enters into the number of those which, most effectively, have contributed to the decline of so sensible and generous a nation.

## CHAPTER IV.

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THE MASS—Its introduction but modern—The Spaniard Lainez opposed it—On what grounds—Description of the ceremony—Its religious and secular peculiarities—Sacerdotal vestments worn while celebrating it—High and Low Mass—Both performed in an unknown tongue—Consequent indifference of the congregation—Mercenary character of the mass—“*Masses for the intention*”—Masses for the dead—The solemn mass on Christmas eve, or *Noche buena*—Its profane accompaniments—Passion week—Thursday—Good Friday—Adoration of the Cross—Processions—Anecdotes of Isabella II.—Brilliant rites and ceremonies on the day after Good Friday—Uproarious conduct of the faithful on that occasion—The mass as celebrated at Toledo—Judicial combat, or judgment of God.

The mass is the chief rite in the Roman Catholic worship. The obligation for all members of that church to hear it, on every Sunday and every feast-day, is imperative and absolutely indispensable; and the infraction of it is considered a mortal sin. Although the obligation does not extend to those days of labour on which masses are said, yet pious and devout persons go to hear it, and this act is considered as eminently commendable and meritorious.

The introduction of the mass into Roman Catholic worship is of an epoch comparatively modern. In the first centuries of the church, the divine offices were but those of singing hymns and psalms, reading the Sacred Scriptures, and the sermon. These rites being terminated, a collection was made among believers for the relief of their poor; and the portion of these alms which was *sent* to such of them as could not attend the place of worship was called *missa*, or *sent*, from the participle of the Latin verb *mittere*, to send.

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Many have been the disputes between Roman Catholic writers themselves touching the epoch at which that part of the ceremonial called the mass, used in the present day, was first introduced. There is no doubt that many ages of the church passed away before it was considered as a sacrifice; and even the Council of Trent were much divided in their opinions on this point, and the fathers vacillated much before they decided respecting it. The Spaniard Lainez, general of the order of Jesuits, was one of the most strenuous opposers of the novelty, and gave the same reasons for his opposition that all Protestant writers have alleged against it, viz., that the New Testament abolished the sacrifice, or rather, that ancient rites and ceremonies were superseded by the great sacrifice of the Saviour of the world himself on the cross, and that the idea itself involves the profanation that mortal and sinful man can sacrifice on his altars at his will the immaculate Lamb of God. These powerful objections were only met with excuses of convenience and utility. The Council wrestled with the reformed doctrines, and contended that its own system must necessarily be entirely different from that taught by the Reformers, not only in substance but even in its accidents. Reform denied Transubstantiation, and therefore the Roman church thought it convenient to fortify that dogma by bringing it daily before the eyes of the people, and constituting it an essential part of their worship.

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If, in a Protestant point of view, the mass is considered as an attack on the true spirit of Christianity, as upholding not only transubstantiation, but also the doctrine of intercession of saints, yet still, in the eyes of a good Roman Catholic, it is a rite full of elevated thoughts, devout prayers, and highly proper and religious ideas.

The first part of the mass, from the *Introite* to the *Offertory*, is composed almost entirely of fragments of Scripture: such are, first, the *Introite*, generally taken from the Psalms; secondly, the *Collect*, which is the same as that in the Protestant Book of Common Prayer for Sundays; thirdly, the *Epistle*, which is part of a chapter out of the prophecies, or out of one of the epistles in the New Testament; fourthly, the *Gradual*, also taken from the Psalms; and fifthly, the *Gospel*, which, as its name indicates, is a portion of a chapter taken from some one of the four evangelists. The parts added by the popes are, first, the *Kyrie Eleyson*, taken from the rites of the Greek church; secondly, the *Gloria*, which is a magnificent outburst of the most elevated religious sentiments; and lastly, the *Symbol* of the faith.

The *Offertory*, which is the second part of the mass, is one series of prayers, in which the *Canon* is prepared, by offering up the host (which has to be consecrated in order to obtain upon it the blessing of the Most High), and by invoking the intercession of the saints, and enumerating all the graces and favours implored through the medium of the sacrifice. The priest, in this part of the ceremony, washes his hands; he concludes with the *Preface*, an act of thanksgiving, in which are explained some of the mysteries of religion applicable to the day on which they are celebrated. Among others of this latter class, the preface for the Trinity is admired for its conciseness, and the elegance and accuracy with which the composition explains that great mystery, in terms which cannot be objected to even by any Protestant church.

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After the offertory follows the canon, which is the preparation for the consecration, and is also composed of prayers, in which a spirit of penitence, and the invocation of the divine protection in the solemn act about to be celebrated, form prominent features. The priest next takes the host, pronounces over it the words of consecration, and elevates it, so that the people may see and adore it. He does the like with the chalice, and then prepares himself for the communion, which consists in his eating the host and drinking the wine in the cup. Twice afterwards he pours wine and water into the cup, and drinks off the contents, which are called the *ablutions*. He pronounces other two prayers or thanksgivings, blesses the people, and dismisses them with the formula, "*Ite, missa est*," "Go, the mass is over." Still, however, he continues to read, on ordinary days, in the first chapter of St John's Gospel, or, on other solemn days, from the other evangelists.

All this is accompanied with various ceremonies, genuflections, and changes of position. For example: the prayers are said in front of the altar; the introite, the collect, and the epistle, on the right; the gospel on the left; the priest, at certain parts of the ceremony, turning his back upon the altar, and his face towards the people. In celebrating the mass, it is required that the priest be dressed in certain vestments, which are, in no small degree, complicated. Some of these are white, and of linen. Others are of silk, and in colour varied according to the solemnity of the day. For example: on the feast-day of a martyr, the ornament is red; on the feasts of the Virgin, and on those on which are celebrated any of the mysteries of the life of the Saviour, it is white; in masses for the souls of the departed, of which we shall treat hereafter, it is black; the violet colour is used in Advent and in Lent; the green on some particular Sundays. The cathedral of Seville alone enjoys the privilege, in all the Roman Catholic world, of using the sky-blue colour on the day whereon is celebrated the Conception of the Virgin.

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On the altar at which mass is said, there ought to be, at least, a crucifix, two wax lights, and a slab (*ara*) of stone. The cloth which covers the chalice and the exterior adornment of the altar, called the *frontal*, must be of the same colour as the ornament of the day.

There are two kinds of mass, high mass and low mass. The first is generally performed by three priests, viz., the officiating priest, the subdeacon, who chants the epistle, and the deacon, who chants the gospel. In the high mass, the choir sings many parts of it, and the organ is played at times by way of accompaniment, and at other times as a solo, during the offertory and the canon. On these occasions incense is burned to perfume the altar, after which the deacon perfumes the officiating priest; and if persons of authority or distinction are in attendance at the office of the mass, the acolytes perfume them with the incensories.

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The most extraordinary, and, we may justly say, absurd thing in all this complicated series of practices and ceremonies is, that the whole of them are performed in a language which the people do not understand, and consequently they play the part of mere spectators, without having one single religious idea communicated to the mind, or one devout sentiment to the heart. The people see nothing more than a man dressed in a certain manner, moving from one side to another, and from whose lips are proceeding words which are absolutely void of sense. Hence proceeds that species of indifference with which the people regard that spectacle, an indifference which degenerates into profanation and levity. In Spain, particularly, it is quite common for lovers to converse with each other during the mass; and the turbulent crowds which rush in towards the conclusion, the noise, the haste, and, sometimes, the bad expressions which fall on the ear, in the precincts of the edifice, form a strange and scandalous contrast to the sacred character with which the church seems anxious to invest the sacrifice of the mass. The greater number of those persons who assemble to witness it, particularly the humble classes, believe they have complied with the obligation they are under to hear the mass, if even they only *see* the priest; and so wearisome has this duty become to the majority of Spaniards, that the most popular priests are those who say the shortest masses.

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We have heard such and such a father spoken of with enthusiasm who says the mass in twelve minutes, although it appears impossible even to read the parts composing it in less than eighteen or twenty. On the other hand, when a devout and scrupulous priest recites these offices with due deliberation, and performs the ceremonies with a becoming degree of solemnity and decorum, the church is deserted. The popular phrase in such cases is "Father So-and-so is heavy in the mass,"—(*El padre tiene la misa pesada.*)

There are some persons who, during the mass, read their prayers translated into Spanish; but this is really a French custom, and wholly inadmissible among a people the great majority of whom are unable to read. But the most objectionable thing in the mass is its mercenary character. The object which induces a Christian to pay for a mass, is to recompense the priest for applying the merits of the sacrifice to *desires* and *intentions*, sometimes not very pure, on the part of those who pay.

Thus they pay for a mass to obtain the health of a sick person, security during a journey, a good result from a speculation, or the preservation of a soul from the fire of purgatory. Even robbers will give a certain portion of their plunder to a priest to say a mass for their next adventure. The ordinary phrase in these cases, at the time of paying the father for the mass, is this:—"Say a mass for my *intention*;" so that the priest has recourse to the throne of the Most High, immolates the most sacred of victims, believes that he introduces to his own body that of the Saviour, and all this without knowing why or wherefore! He who orders a mass and pays for it has no need to reveal to any one his object or intention; and if he likes to be silent, it is a want of discretion and of delicacy on the part of the priest to question him on that point.

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The price of a mass varies from a shilling to one pound sterling. A high mass is much dearer, and its price depends on the pomp and ornaments bespoken by the person desiring it. In wills and testaments it is very common to order a number of masses to be said for the soul of the testator; and even in recent times, it has been a common practice to found what are called "pious works." These consist in giving to a church a sum of money, a rural or a city property, bound by an obligation to say so many masses in the year for the soul of the donor.

Whenever it happens that this obligation is disregarded, and the required masses are not said, the Pope concedes a "bull of composition" (*bula de composicion*), which, in effect, commands that a single mass shall serve for all those which have been omitted. This kind of legislation will appear incredible to all those who are ignorant of the irregularities of the court of Rome; but every person who has lived in Spain knows that it is of daily occurrence.

One of the most solemn masses in the year is that which is celebrated on Christmas-eve at midnight, that being the hour at which, it is supposed, the Saviour of the world was born. It is called "The mass of the cock," (*misa del gallo*), as having an allusion to the hour in which it is celebrated. The hilarity of the Spaniards on this occasion is expressed in a way more analogous to that accompanying heathen rites, than to any which should pertain to Christian worship. Under pretext of taking part in so happy a commemoration, they abandon themselves, during the whole night, to the most noisy demonstrations of joy. Numerous parties of men and women perambulate the streets, singing couplets, called *villancicos*, which are exclusively applicable to this feast, and playing on two species of musical instruments, having the most abominable sound, called *raveles* and *zambombas*, which are never used but on this occasion. The churches are filled with people, who are far from conducting themselves with that decorum and moderation belonging to the place. The jovial dispositions then manifested are encouraged by the organ, on which are played waltzes, polkas, and even the vulgar songs heard at dances of the lower classes; and these performances are distinctly heard whilst the priest is saying the mass. In general, the believers, after having taken a part in the service, give themselves up to all the disorders of

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excessive eating and drinking. Nothing in modern times approximates so nearly to the orgies of antiquity as this celebrating "the good night" (*la noche buena*) in Spain. Sometimes the civil authorities are obliged to put a check upon them, but we believe there is no instance in which the clergy have made the slightest attempt to repress such scandalous disorders. We cannot see how the most zealous Roman Catholic can justify a practice so opposed to the true spirit of Christianity, and so deeply rooted in the public manners, that, in the eyes of most Spaniards, any person who would dare to censure it would pass for an unbeliever or a heretic.

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There are two days in the year on which it is prohibited to say mass at all; these are, Thursday in Passion-week and Good Friday. The English tourists know the eminently dramatic character which distinguishes these feasts at that season of the year in St Peter's at Rome. All the offices of the seven days of that week are well calculated to excite the imagination, and awaken in the coldest hearts the most lively sympathy with the great events then commemorated. Every thing connected with those rites breathes grief and sadness, and there is a certain mournful solemnity in them which harmonises with the scenes of our Saviour's passion. The chapters of the four Evangelists, containing the narrative of that great event, from the going up of our Lord to Jerusalem to the crucifixion, are chanted by three priests, each one taking a distinct part. One takes the words in which the evangelist recounts those events; another the words put into the mouths of Judas, Pilate, Peter, and the other persons referred to in the narrative; and the third, whose voice is generally a profound bass, the words of the Saviour. The solemnity of the Thursday has for its object the institution of the eucharist, and the long series of ceremonies in which this grand mystery is symbolised, concludes by conducting, in solemn procession, the consecrated host from the great altar of the church, where it has been preserved all the year, to a wooden sanctuary in the same church, more or less richly adorned, called the monument (*monumento*), which is dressed up with a profusion of jewels, lights, and flowers, and remains all night guarded by some of the devout, and, in towns which contain a garrison, by military sentinels. Some of those monuments are, in truth, works of architecture of great merit; and among them that of the cathedral of Seville is distinguished for its gigantic dimensions, and for the richness and elegance of its structure.

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In the offices for Good Friday, the host is restored to the altar, with a ceremony as solemn as that of the day preceding; and the services, which are very long, refer to all the scenes of the crucifixion, including all the passages in the prophecies and other parts of the Old Testament in which the event is prefigured or foretold. After the offices are gone through, the cross is placed on the ground, supported by a cushion, and all the faithful, from the highest personages of the state down to the meanest subject, bow down before it, kiss it, and leave some piece of money on a plate placed by its side. In the royal chapel of the palace are placed, close to the cross on this occasion, the files of the proceedings against criminals who have been condemned to die. The sovereign, in the act of adoration, takes into his hands one of those files, which signifies the granting a pardon to the culprit whose trial it contains. There is a pleasing anecdote related of the young Queen Isabella II., that, being but a girl when she for the first time took a part in this ceremony, and on being informed of its signification, she took up *all* the files placed before her; by which act of grace a free pardon was extended to all the delinquents. <sup>[98]</sup>

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During the whole night of Thursday until the Friday, the faithful go about the streets in numerous companies visiting the different monuments. Every foreigner who is present at these peregrinations would take Spaniards for the most devout people in the world. The whole population are at that time circulating through the streets. The use of coaches or other vehicles is prohibited, and the churches are never empty. The different regiments of the army, the functionaries of the tribunals, and every public body, all these visit the monuments headed by their respective chiefs. The queen sets the example, accompanied by all the nobility, her ministers, and all the high officers of state. A sedan chair of great magnificence is carried in the rear for her Majesty's use, in case she should become fatigued.

On the Saturday after Good Friday only one mass is said, viz., high mass, after the consecration of the oils and blessing the water for the service of the daily ablutions of the faithful. This mass is dedicated to the resurrection, and its rites have a character really striking and romantic. When the offices commence, the altar is entirely covered with a black veil, the church is in darkness, and not a single light to be seen in the whole space. But on the intonation of the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, the veil divides itself into two parts, and is drawn to the sides, which operation, suddenly performed, discloses hundreds of lights and a most splendid profusion of ornaments. Then the bells, which have been silent for the two preceding days, are set a-ringing,—pigeons are let off upon the wing,—every one makes the greatest possible noise, striking the benches of the church, firing rockets within its walls, and salvos of artillery in the squares. Some churches enjoy the privilege of saying only low masses (*misas rezadas*) on this day.

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We have spoken of the obligation of all to hear mass on Sundays and feast-days; and we should add that this is the only act of devotion required from Spaniards on those days. By the words, "observe the feasts," is understood, in Spain, that after joining in the mass, as before stated, believers are at liberty to dedicate the day to every species of diversion and profanity. In France and in England, it is obligatory also to attend vespers on the Sundays. Not so, however, in Spain, where, in the evenings, scarcely a person is to be seen in the churches.

All truly religious men who read the foregoing remarks, and in which there is not the least exaggeration or departure from the truth, will imagine, doubtless, that the modern ecclesiastical authorities of the peninsula have, at least, attempted to rectify all that is absurd and irreverent in those practices, and to strip a ceremony so august and imposing as that of the mass of all that a

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want of true devotion, and that ignorance and neglect on the part of the clergy, has introduced to that ceremony,—nevertheless it is not so; the clergy themselves appear to co-operate in those attempts to pervert the ideas of the nation. The proof of it is, that being ordered by all the councils, especially that of Trent, to preach a sermon, during the high mass, explaining the gospel for the day, as is done in all other Roman Catholic countries, yet in Spain no such practice is observed, except in poor and small towns; so that the Spaniard is not only wanting of that spiritual aliment which the reading of the Bible is able to furnish, but also of a person to explain those parts of Scripture which he has been hearing read, and in a strange language, during the mass. Preaching, as has already been stated in our introductory chapter, is in Spain reduced to panegyrics on the saints, and to Lent-sermons,—which, in truth, have only reference to the gospel for the day; and although this spiritual food is administered but seldom and in small quantities, that is to say, eight or ten times from Ash-Wednesday until Palm-Sunday, there is no doubt whatever of its beneficial effects, and that by its means some temporal improvement in the habits of the people evidently results from it. But, that season over, the flock is abandoned by the shepherd, these slight impressions wear off, and the people return to the same godless and mundane system of life.

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In the cathedral church of Toledo there is a particular chapel in which the mass is celebrated, according to the rite called Mozárabe, introduced, as its name indicates, in the time of the occupation by the Moors, by the Christians who lived under their yoke in that city. The Roman Catholic ritual having been made prevalent all over the peninsula by the Great Isabella, and adopted in all the churches, the faithful of Toledo still wished to preserve that form of ritual which they had practised for many centuries. Although this portion of Spain's ecclesiastical history is wrapt in great obscurity, and has given rise to many disputes among learned men, yet it is certain that in order to decide between that authority which wished to extinguish those remains of antiquity, and the people who desired to preserve them, recourse was had to what then went by the name of "the judgment of God," viz., a formal duel, attended with all the ceremonies which the feudal system had imported into Europe. The partisans of the Roman ritual placed their defence of it in the hands of one knight-errant, and those of the opposite party confided theirs to the care of another. He who defended the Roman rite was conquered in the fight; and although the conditions of the combat were not entirely observed, because the cathedral and the other churches of Toledo were, after all, reduced to the authority of the Pope, yet a chapter of canons was instituted, to whom was conceded the privilege of saying mass according to the ritual of the conquerors.

## CHAPTER V.

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DEVOTION of Protestants scriptural and reasonable—That of Roman Catholics poetical and affectionate—Religious enthusiasm leads to insanity—Mental devotion as distinguished from physical—Nature of Roman Catholic devotion accounted for by the worship of images—Intercession of saints—Saint Anthony—The illiterate guided by bodily vision rather than spiritual discernment—Horace confirms this—Illustrated by popular errors—Sensual and poetical elements were introduced to devotion by the Greeks—Destruction of images by the Emperor Leo the Iconoclast—Opinion of Pope Leo the Great—Images adorned like human beings perplex the mind between truth and fiction—Familiar examples—Money-contributions for adornment of images—Belief that saints can cure certain complaints—List of these—Saint Anthony of Padua's miracles—The fête of *San Anton Abad*—Virgin Mary, and her innumerable advocations—A list of several—The Rosary—Statues of the Virgin—Immense value of their wardrobes and trinkets—The most ugly of those statues excite most devotion—Virgin of Zaragoza—The heart of Mary—Month of Mary (May)—Kissing images—Anecdote of the Duke of A--- and his courtesan—Habits and promises—Penance.

Devotion in Roman Catholicism is totally distinct in its essence from that of Protestantism. The devotion of Protestants is scriptural and reasonable; that of Roman Catholics poetical and affectionate. The Protestant considers God as a spiritual being, and, as such, incomprehensible, the only object of worship, the only fountain of grace and pardon. The Roman Catholic represents the Eternal in material forms, accessible only through the indirect medium of intercession, and addresses him with the familiarity and tenderness peculiar to the human relations between a father and a son. In prayer the truly devout Roman Catholic weeps, afflicts himself, gesticulates, touches the ground with his forehead, kisses it, strikes his breast, and reveals, by his whole physiognomy and exterior actions, a vehemence and intensity which his physical frame appears scarcely able to sustain. His prayers are full of poetical exclamations, which are called *jaculatorias*; and in addressing the object of his devotion, he feels more complacency in accumulating sonorous epithets, and in repeating groans and sighs, than in imploring, by properly-constructed and continuous phrases, the protection and mercy of the Almighty. Roman Catholic devotion gives a perfect idea of ecstasy, and shows that religious enthusiasm, carried to the utmost extreme, agitates the nervous system, and produces effects very similar to those of mental abstraction; and, in truth, in those asylums provided for the insane, we find many of their inmates to be persons who have fallen into that deplorable state through religious enthusiasm. There are other cases in which these excesses in devotion have ended in catalepsy; and some of those women who have been celebrated for the supernatural state in which it has been pretended they lived for many years, without food, and insensible to all

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external impressions, have been rather the unhappy victims of mental disease than the instruments of wilful imposture.

Perhaps some one may ask why, seeing that the mysterious principles of the Roman Catholic faith and those of the Protestants are equal, there should be so much difference in their devotional characters, the one being opposed to the other? why in the one case it is entirely mental, while the other largely participates in a physical nature? why in Protestant devotion there is thinking and reflection, while in that of Roman Catholics all is feeling and affection? The problem is resolved in a single expression,—the worship of images. p. 104

This practice, which neither the fathers nor the councils have enforced or authorised to the extent to which it has been carried by modern Roman Catholics, and especially by Spaniards, exercises so powerful an influence, or rather so irresistible an imperium, over the mind of man, that it entirely perverts his reason, and radically extinguishes in it the difference between the spiritual and the physical world. This great enigma, the solution of which the Eternal has, in his wisdom, reserved from mortal creatures, loses all its obscurity and ceases to be a mystery to the man who converses with a figure made of wood or painted on canvas; for he not only believes that it sees him, but that it can protect him, grant him favours, and even obtain for him salvation. In vain it will be said that the Roman Catholic sees in the image a symbol, an emblem, a representation. It is not so. In his eyes the image is the saint itself, and therefore he adorns it, covers it with splendid attire, surrounds it with flowers and with lights, kneels down before it, confides to it his griefs, and asks its intercession. If the object of veneration and of worship were the saint itself,—that is to say, a beatified spirit, which is supposed to dwell in heaven, and there enjoy the favour of the Eternal Being,—the prayer made and the homage rendered would be to that pure essence, and would be purged of all the external accidents of humanity. But not so do Roman Catholics generally pray. In order to pray it is necessary for them to have a material object; they must enter with that object into similar relations as those which exist between man and man; they must bring down the saint to their own level, instead of endeavouring to lift up themselves to the level of the saint, by means of a communication purely spiritual. p. 105

The proof of this is, that, among the images which represent the same original and the same type, there are some which are believed to have more power, and to be capable of working more miracles, than others. The Saint Antonio, for example, which is venerated in one church in Madrid, called La Florida, is much more popular than the Saint Antonio venerated in another, called the Church de los Portugueses. In Burgos there is a crucifix to which infinitely more solemn worship is paid than to one in any parish church, or even in any chapel of the same city. The popes have encouraged this absurd aberration of the human mind, by conceding, and permitting the bishops to concede, indulgences to certain statues, certain pictures, and even certain engravings, which represent objects of devotion. The person who prays in front of that favoured object gains so many years of indulgences; he who prays to the same saint, but before another statue, another picture, or another engraving, obtains nothing. Of course, all these concessions which are obtained are paid for in ready money. p. 106

Now to the point. Are not these means the most efficacious that can be imagined in order to materialise religion, and to subjugate it entirely to the senses? Is it not infinitely more easy and shorter, especially for rude and illiterate men, to believe in what they actually see, than in any metaphysical notions, far above the reach of their understanding, like those of a spiritual kind? From very ancient times it has been thought that the impressions which the mind receives through the medium of sight, are more striking and efficacious than those which are communicated to it by all the other organs of the senses. Horace has followed out this idea in his well-known lines:—

“Segniús irritant animos demissa per aurem  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ  
Ipsi sibi tradit spectator.”

*De Ar. Poe.*, 180.

Thus it is explained why men imagined for many centuries that the sky was a solid superficies, and that the earth was a superficial plane, bounded by the horizon; that the sun moved round the earth; that the existence of the antipodes was a chimera; that the dew fell in the same way as the rain from the upper regions of the atmosphere; and other popular errors which science has corrected, but which were in a certain way justified by the undeniable testimony of the senses. How difficult then is it, on such evidence, to doubt the existence of a soul in a human representation to which one speaks as to a person alive, and to which are tendered all marks of respect and veneration, and before whom even the priests, those masters of the people and depositaries of all true doctrine, kneel down as would a son before his father, a subject before his sovereign, and a culprit before his judge? Who would forbid this delusion to that simple and ignorant mind, whose relations with the exterior world form the only source of all his knowledge and all his feelings? p. 107

The Christian religion, purely spiritual in its dogmas and practices, never would have admitted into them this profanation of their sublime essence, if the Greek empire, by virtue of the great religious revolution conducted by Constantine, had not been placed at the head of Christendom. But the Greek Christians were descendants of those who had condemned Socrates, and had not been purged, nor have they yet been purged, of their sensual propensities, of their artistic tastes, and of their attachment to whatever is pompous and ornamental. When the Emperor Leo wished

to uproot this abuse, and ordered the images venerated in the temples to be destroyed, his orders were executed with so much imprudence and cruelty, and the persecution raised against those who participated in the common error was conducted in so sanguinary and implacable a manner, that the general opinion rose against the new doctrine, and the name of *iconoclast* denoted in that day one of the most odious forms of heresy, and one most severely condemned by the apostolical see. [107]

The Latin Church was long preserved from that contagion. When John, the patriarch of Alexandria, consulted the great Pope Leo, whether it would be right to adorn the Christian temples with pictures representing pious objects, that eminent man answered him, that he could only be permitted to have the representations of the historical facts related in the Bible, in order that those believers who were unable to read might in this way instruct themselves in sacred history, but that great care must be taken that such a practice might not degenerate into idolatry.

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We have already mentioned the fact that the Council of Granada prohibited the worship of images; but when the thrones founded by the invading nations of the north became settled, their monarchs—men profoundly ignorant, and exclusively devoted to war and conquest—placed their consciences and the direction of public affairs in the hands of the clergy, who were then the monopolisers of learning and literature. The clergy spared no means of consolidating their power, and it was their interest to brutalise the people, in order to domineer over them with the greater facility; and nothing could contribute more certainly to carry out that view than the puerilities of a worship solely limited to the adoration of the physical man. The pageantry of processions, the jewels, the splendid vestments and ornaments with which their images were covered, the miracles attributed to them, and the incense burned on their altars, were so many other soporiferous drugs administered to the understanding to lull its energy, and deprive it of every devoted thought and of all liberty of examination. There is, moreover, in the representation of a human being of the size and colour of life, a certain character of reality, which at first sight cannot do less than make a profound impression on the mind, leaving it for a time in a state of some perplexity between truth and fiction. That immovable attitude, those fixed eyes, those features which never alter the expression of the grief or the joy impressed upon them by the hand of the artist, have in themselves something of the awful and mysterious, which powerfully affects us, despite our reason and experience. How many persons are there who could look, without shuddering, on the statue of Fieschi, the celebrated French murderer, in the collection of Madame Tussaud? How many, on coming out from the chamber of horrors, in the same establishment, resolve and vow never to go into it again? How many, who would not, for any money, pass a night in the apartment in which these disagreeable objects are exhibited? And to what extreme may not that imperium extend, which these works of art exercise on the imagination, if, in addition to their resemblances to nature, superstition endows them with a supernatural power, and when reason persuades us that they hear what we say to them,—that they receive our homage, and are able to favour us with their protection?

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But the Roman Catholic clergy have had another motive for promoting a belief in such things, viz., the immense wealth which they draw from them in the name of oblations, alms, and legacies. To contribute money to the adornment of a saint, and to the celebration of rites which are consecrated to it, is a meritorious work, which ensures its protection to the contributor. By this fiction the people have been made to believe that every human complaint, every one of the misfortunes that can occur in life, depends on some particular saint who defends their respective devotees against it. Saint Ramon favours women in the season of parturition; Saint Demas preserves travellers on their journeys from robbers; Saint Apollonius cures the toothache; Saint Lucy heals diseases of the eyes; Saint Lazarus cures the leprosy; Saint Roque the plague; Saint Joseph protects carpenters; Saint Casianus and Saint Nicholas preserve children; Saint Luis Gonzaga, young people; Saint Hermenegild, soldiers; Saint Thomas Aquinas, students; Saint Gloi, silversmiths; and Saint Rita, superior to all the celestial court, obtains, by her mediation, the *realization of impossibilities!* [110]

And yet, after all, the most popular of all the saints which the power of the Vatican has placed on its altars is Saint Anthony of Padua. The miracles which he wrought in his life are quite out of the ordinary course, and some of them appear rather preposterous and ludicrous to the incredulous. On one occasion, when he was preaching by the sea-shore, and his audience had gone away, the fishes came out to hear him. Whenever he was present at a banquet, and a plate or a soup tureen was accidentally broken, he joined the fragments so completely together that the piece recovered its former integrity. The superior of his convent forbade him to perform miracles; but, one day, seeing a man falling from a high tower, he ordered him to remain suspended in the air until the superior should give the saint permission to let him fall without injury. The devotees of Saint Anthony treat him with great familiarity, and even punish him when he does not satisfy their desires. When they wish to obtain some favour from his protection,—for example, to draw a prize in a lottery, to find a lost cow, or to find a husband for a damsel,—they burn tapers before his image, and adorn it with flowers. If they do not still obtain his favour, they place the image with its face towards the wall, in the darkest corner of the house, and even treat it with other indignities, of which decency forbids the mention.

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The solemnity of the day of San Anton Abad, the protector of all horses and mules, is of a different kind, and is considered as one of the most noisy and brilliant of all public amusements. The equestrians of the city, mounted on their steeds, which, on this occasion, are splendidly caparisoned, give three gallops round the church dedicated to the saint, and, on finishing the

third, they receive from the hands of the priest the blessed barley, which is designed that night as provender for their happy animals. The streets are filled with people anxious to witness this grand exhibition of luxury and of horsemanship, and the balconies are filled with ladies, whose plaudits compensate the dexterity of the heroes of the feast, or rather of the day.

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But of all the devotions of Spaniards, none is so general, none so fervent, none so varied in its forms and ceremonies, as that which has for its object the mother of the Saviour. All travellers know that Spain is the classic country of *Mariolatry*; and certainly, if we could divest it of the idea of intercession, which is its foundation, we should find in it much of the poetical, the affectionate, and much of analogy to the temper of a people in which the imagination predominates, and which still preserves many traits of the knightly spirit of its progenitors. Mary is, in the estimation of Spaniards, a tender mother, the confidante of all their woes, and the support of all their hopes. In their prayers to her, they are prodigal of the most expressive epithets of endearment and admiration. They call her the spouse of the Holy Spirit, the door of heaven, the star of the morning, the tower of David, the tower of ivory, the house of gold, the ark of the covenant, the health of the sick, the queen of heaven, the queen of angels, of prophets, of apostles, of martyrs, and of virgins. We will not do Spaniards the injustice of suspecting them capable of believing that Mary is superior to God in power, but there is no doubt that there are in that country many benighted souls who, when they have addressed their prayers to God, asking some special favour which has not been granted, have recourse to the Virgin under a persuasion that through her means they shall obtain it. Innumerable authors of religious books have written, and it has daily been repeated from the pulpits, that the Virgin never denies a favour to her devotees; that in the mere fact of being her worshippers, they have salvation assured to them; and that it is enough to implore her by name, in order to preserve both body and soul from all danger. "Hail, most immaculate Mary!" (*ave Maria purisima*) is the formula with which a visitor salutes persons in a house, and the response is, "conceived without sin" (*sin pecado concebida*) [113] These words are engraven on the façades of many public buildings and private houses. They are used also by way of exclamation in familiar conversation, in order to express surprise and admiration. Relate to a Spaniard some extraordinary act,—as, for example, a murder, an incendiarism, an earthquake,—and you will hear him exclaim, "Ave Maria!" just as an Englishman would say, "Dear me, is it possible? You don't say so!" Such is the prestige that hovers about the name of the Virgin in the national customs of Spain.

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Although the Virgin is in the eyes of Spaniards but an only being, and although they do not believe that there is more than one mother of God, yet the devotion which they tender to her is diversified in its forms according to the various *advocations* which the clergy have invented, which the popes have sanctioned, and to which the liturgy has given an official character. But the word *advocation* extends itself to a special name, a name significant of that with which the name of the Virgin is coupled, and which is sometimes derived from the facts in her history, from the endowments of her mind, or from the places in which her image has miraculously appeared. To the first class pertain the Virgin of the Nativity, the Virgin of Candlemas, the Virgin of the Assumption, the Virgin of Grievs, the Virgin of the Seven Grievs; the Virgin of Anguish or Agonies; and the Virgin of Solitude. To the second class, the Virgin of the Conception, of the Rosary, of Mercy, of Remedies, and of Pity. To the third class, the Virgin of Carmen, of Zaragoza, of Guadaloupe, of Copacabana, of Olivia de la Victoria, of Peñacerada, of Regla, of Cavadoraga, of Montserrat, of Nieves, of Fousanta, of Atocha, [115] and innumerable other places.

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The Virgin of the Rosary is so called, because it is before her image that her devotees pray the rosary. This pious exercise consists in a paternoster and ten *Ave Marias*, repeated five times. The advocations of the Virgin *de las Carretas*, the Virgin of the Dew, and some others, are of an origin now unknown. In truth, this multiplication of the same religious type has no fixed limits.

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But the most extraordinary thing in this peculiarity of Roman Catholic worship is, that not only is the Virgin not worshipped at all without some one of these titles which a mistaken piety has conferred upon her, but that every one of these titles has a particular class of persons singled out from among the faithful, so that some are the devotees of one Virgin and some of another; and they who profess such devotion, for example, to the Virgin of the Rosary, never pray to the Virgin of Grievs. To such a point does this exclusive affection arrive, that the devotees are apt to dispute among themselves as to the respective merits of the advocations to which each consecrates his worship. In some cities and towns the inhabitants are divided into parties, some defending one Virgin, and some another, which state of discord has resulted in angry disputes, animosities, and even acts of violence.

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The statues of the Virgin are of two classes; some are made entirely of wood, including the draperies. Among these are some of superior merit. [116] Others have only the head and hands of sculpture, the rest being only a kind of frame-work, fit to support the dress, which is made of worked velvet and other rich textures.

The statues consecrated to a popular *advocation* have immense treasures, consisting of clothes, of crowns and collars, bracelets, and other trinkets, brilliants, pearls, emeralds, and other precious stones. The custody of these things is confided to one of the principal ladies of the city, and she is called the mistress of the robes to the Virgin (*camarera mayor de la Virgin*), and it is her duty, assisted by other ladies of inferior degree in the sacred household, to dress and undress the statue, varying the costume and ornaments according to the solemnity of the day.

Some few of those advocations require particular colours to be observed in the vestments appropriated to the respective statues; the Virgin of Carmen, for example, must be dressed in

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white and dark grey; that of the Conception in white and blue; that of Griefs in blue and red; that of Solitude in white and black, and so on. The greater number of those statues of the Virgin have in their arms a figure of the infant Christ.

It is worthy of remark, that the images which most excite devotion are generally those which are most ugly and most disproportionate. The Virgin of Zaragoza, the devotion of all Spain to which touches the borders of enthusiasm, and on which statue Ferdinand VII. conferred the office of field marshal (*capitan general*), is very small, and has the appearance of a carbonised mummy.

Roman Catholics, not satisfied with this indefinite multiplication of the personality of the Virgin, this innumerable variety of names and attributes ascribed to the same individuality, have gone a step farther, and worshipped one part of her body separately from the rest; and this singular idea has given birth to another, viz., "devotion to the heart of Mary,"—recently adopted in France, propagated in all the Papal dominions, converted into an especial rite which the Church of Rome celebrates with mass, vespers, and other services comprised in the missal and the breviary. If, by the words, "heart of Mary," is to be understood that muscle which serves as the centre of the circulation of the blood, or the common metaphor which attributes to the heart the affections, the desires, and all the other acts of the will, it is a mystery which hitherto has not been explained either by the Roman Catholic church, or any of the devotional books which have been written on the subject,—it is a dilemma from which Roman Catholics never will be able to escape; and, in the first case, nothing can be more preposterous than to divide adoration between the entire person and one of its parts; and, in the second case, the object of adoration is reduced to a mere verbal artifice, depending on vulgar custom or on the caprice of men. If the heart of the Virgin is adored under a supposition that it is the centre of the most pure and virtuous sentiments, why has there not been adoration of her head, which is supposed to be nourished with noble and elevated thoughts? Why not her womb, in which lay the Saviour of the world? Why not her hands, which nursed him, and performed all those various acts and offices which are dictated by maternal solicitude?

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The practice of consecrating the month of May to the Virgin, and designating it the month of Mary, has the same origin, and been in the same way brought into general use in the Roman Catholic world. The religious feasts of those thirty-one days have a certain character of splendour and of gladness, which makes them resemble those of the Greeks and Romans consecrated to Flora. The altars, on which is placed the image of the Virgin, are adorned with an extraordinary profusion of feathers, flowers, rich silks, and precious jewels; the smoke of incense ascends perpetually before the image; the temples are illuminated by numerous candles, chandeliers, tapers; troops of women, dressed in white, surround the image; and the most celebrated singers from the public theatres chant hymns to the accompaniment of the organ and a numerous orchestra. Enough has been said to enable the reader to perceive the strict analogy that exists between the worship of saints and true idolatry; but still, Spaniards have carried the personification of these fragile works of men's hands far beyond the idolatries of ancient and modern times. Not content with addressing words to them, as if they possessed intelligence and the sense of hearing, they kiss their feet and their hands, as though the marble, the plaster, or the wood, of which they are made, were sensible of these demonstrations of tenderness. To kiss an image is an act of merit which confessors recommend, and one to which the popes have conceded spiritual privileges.

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There is an anecdote related in Madrid, which proves to what an extreme vices deserving the severest censure may be associated with the grossest superstition. There was in that capital, towards the end of the reign of Charles IV., a grandee of Spain, the Duke of A---, who professed especial devotion to an image of the Virgin, which he was continually kissing. Having taken under his protection a notorious courtesan, whose house he furnished sumptuously, he ordered an image of the Virgin to be placed in a corner of the staircase, which he never ascended without bestowing his accustomed tokens of affection upon that representation of the object of his devotion. One day, however, the favoured paramour had capriciously elevated the image far above the reach of the lips of her protector. Deprived of the exercise of his daily ceremony, the duke contented himself with throwing up his handkerchief against the image, and on its descent kissing it as an object which had been blessed by its mere contact with the idol!

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We could adduce several other proofs of the belief, prevalent in the minds of Spaniards, that images can exercise many of the faculties of animate objects, and therefore are capable of reciprocal intercourse in the same way as living persons. For example, if it is intended that an immoral act shall be committed before a picture, or a piece of sculpture, representing the Virgin or any saint, in the first case it is turned towards the wall; or, in the second, it is covered over with a sheet, in order that it may not be a witness of the sin. In asking a favour of an image, it is a common practice for the devotee, in order to propitiate it, to inflict upon himself some punishment or privation; such, for example, as that of absenting himself from the theatre, or the bullfights (*corridas de toros*), abstaining from eating dessert, or from going to the promenade, balls, and routs. This is called making a *promise*. To wear the habit (*llevar habito*) signifies to dress modestly, and in clothes of a dark colour, and without any ornaments, until the desired favour from the image be obtained, and, at the same time, wearing a medal of the Virgin on the arm. Those persons who desire to carry these acts of penance and mortification to a greater degree of perfection, adopt much severer practices and even more painful, such as putting hard peas into their shoes, wearing *cilicios*,—which are belts made of hogs' bristles, and having sharp iron goads which penetrate the flesh,—sleeping on the ground, and other foolish practices.

All those inflictions are performed only when the favour stipulated for with the Virgin or the

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saints is obtained; so that if what is asked be not granted, the devotee remains absolved from the conditional obligation which he has contracted.

The practice of self-scourging has been established in the Roman Catholic Church from time immemorial. In the religious orders, particularly those of the Capuchines, there were appointed days, such as Good Friday, on which a whipping, self-inflicted, was a rigorous obligation. Among devotees it is a voluntary act, except when imposed by the confessor by way of penance. The number of lashes depends on the time which it takes to pray the *Miserere*. The instrument employed is exactly the same as that known to the English as the "cat o' nine tails."

There is a society, or brotherhood, designated the school of Christ ("*La Escuela de Cristo*"), very much addicted to this self-castigation. They meet together regularly in a subterranean chapel, which is kept in total darkness during their exercises. The priest who conducts them ascends a pulpit, and all his performance consists in the most lamentable exclamations, which excite not only the grief, but the horror, of the hearers. Every thing in these meetings breathes obscurity, and is calculated to appal the human mind. There nothing is heard of the goodness of God, or of his mercy, but, on the contrary, he is represented as an inexorable tyrant, always disposed to punish with the most horrible pains those who have offended him.

## CHAPTER VI.

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FEAST-DAYS—Processions and Novenas—Corpus Christi—How performed in Seville, and the sacred dances of *los seises*—How in Madrid—Procession of Holy Week—The *Santo Entierro*—Clerical processions—Procession of the Rosary—Rites of Roman Catholicism—Jubilee of forty hours—*Romerías* or pilgrimages.

From the time at which the true spirit of Christianity, under the dominion of the popes, began to be corrupted, and experience taught what effects might be drawn from material worship, founded chiefly on pomp and a complication of religious ceremonies, the Roman Catholic clergy, especially those of Spain, have never ceased to multiply and vary the means of occupying the imagination of men with exterior acts of an apparently religious character. One of the principal abuses emanating from this idea has been the invention of feast-days, which are ordered to be observed as days of rest in the same manner as Sunday. So numerous are the feast-days in the Spanish calendar, that there is scarcely a month in the year which does not contain three or four of them. The chief mysteries in the life of Jesus Christ, viz., the nativity, the epiphany, the passion, the resurrection, ascension, and others,—the celebrated epochs in the life of the Virgin Mary, and some of her advocations, and the apostles, and a few favourite saints,—are the objects to which those different feast-days are consecrated; and as on these all kinds of labour are suspended, and as their number, including Sundays, forms nearly a third part of the whole year, the vacuum they leave in productive labour and in the exercise of professional avocations is incalculable; so that feast-days may be enumerated among the various causes tending to bring about the poverty of the nation. But besides these days, there are others, called days of mass, on which it is obligatory to attend that rite, although it is lawful to pursue secular occupations.

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Among the most popular exercises of worship, and from which the clergy draw most profit, are worthy of note those of *processions* and *novenas*. In the most important among the former, that of *Corpus Christi* is the chief, and most observed. In that procession, it is the practice to carry about the streets the *host* and certain images of saints. This rite was established in the twelfth century, in consequence of a dream or vision had by a woman of Liege, in which it is pretended this practice was commanded to be introduced to the church. At first, almost the whole church opposed the innovation, but, by degrees, the interests of the clergy prevailed, and the popes at length made this procession of Corpus Christi obligatory. In Spain, it is celebrated with all the pomp and ostentation imaginable. In the poor towns and villages, the priest carries the consecrated *host* in his hands; but in rich cathedral towns, an expensive tabernacle or canopy of silver, generally a master-work of art, is provided for the purpose. It is called *La Custodia*. That of Seville is divided into three bodies or compartments, and adorned with bas-relief, admirably executed, and having in the lower part an urn of gold containing the host. This production is a gem, and always attracts the wonder and amazement of foreigners. The structure, when carried about, is adorned with flowers, lights, bunches of grapes, and ears of wheat. The procession is composed of all the religious communities, all the brotherhoods, the clergy of all the neighbouring parishes, the municipal body, all public officers, and the most notable persons of the city, all carrying lighted candles in their hands. It is headed by detachments of cavalry, and surrounded by a numerous body of infantry, with a military band. In some towns it is usual to have in these processions immense giants, made up of pasteboard, similar to those seen in pantomimes at English theatres, and, as may be supposed, the laughter which these ridiculous exhibitions excite in the spectators contrasts greatly with the august character wished to be given to the ceremony. The cavalcade stops at various intervals during its progress, and on these occasions the priests burn incense before the perambulating temple; and thereupon an ecclesiastical choir chants, in succession, the stanzas of the famous hymn, *Tantum ergo Sacramentum*,—a poetical composition, attributed to Thomas de Aquinas, and which, although written in rhyme, according to the practice adopted on the degeneration of the pure Latinity, and although the verses have a species of jingling which never met the approbation of the literati of

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the Augustan age, nevertheless they contain lofty sentiments, and explain in an ingenious manner the dogma of transubstantiation. The following may serve as an example:—

“Tantum ergo sacramentum  
Veneremus cernui,  
Et antiquum documentum  
Novo cedat ritui.  
Suppleat fides complementum,  
Sensuum defectui.” [125]

In the procession of Corpus Christi in Seville, which is the most celebrated one in all Spain, and which attracts an immense concourse of people from all parts of the province, the moving temple is preceded by a troop of chorister boys, called *los seises*. These boys are dressed up with much elegance in the picturesque Spanish costume of the fifteenth century, and, in the progress of the procession, they dance with large castanets to the sound of an ancient kind of music, much admired by those able to form a judgment on such matters. This custom had its origin in the will of a devotee, who left a considerable sum of money to be so employed, under a condition that the custom should terminate when the dresses he had ordered for the boys should be worn out; but the canons invented a very ingenious plan, by which the custom has been perpetuated. When one of these dresses begins to fail at any particular part, they order that part alone, the sleeve for example, to be replaced, so that all these vestments have gone through innumerable transformations from the foundation of the custom down to the present time. It is related that a certain pope, having been informed of such a custom, and seeing in it a profanation of the sacred ceremonies, attempted to suppress it, and reprehended the canons for their want of discretion. These canons, however, begged his holiness to suspend his judgment until he should behold with his own eyes what had so much offended him; and with that object one of the canons went to Rome, taking the boys with him. The pope at first most positively refused the sought-for condescension; but at last he yielded to the canon's entreaties, and the exhibition took place in presence of the whole conclave of cardinals, presided over by the head of the Roman Catholic Church. The sacred dance made so great an impression on that respectable company, and so excited the admiration of the august personages who witnessed it, that the pope changed his opinion, and sanctioned the practice which before he had condemned. [127]

In the rear of this ambulant temple goes the archbishop, the bishop, or principal ecclesiastical personage of the diocese, under an awning or canopy, supported by silver rods, and carried by eight of the chief citizens, and then come the civil authorities, with the functionaries of the tribunals, and the head officials of the public service.

As this feast always falls in spring, the serenity of the atmosphere, the perfumed air of Andalusia, the innumerable flowers thrown along the line of the procession, the balconies splendidly adorned, and full of beautiful women dressed in the highest state of luxury, the charms of music, and the brilliant display of uniforms, embroidered vestments, and other gay appearances which catch the eye of the spectator on every side, form a spectacle eminently picturesque and romantic, which seldom fails to make a lively impression on the exalted imaginations of the inhabitants of those regions. On these occasions, more particularly, may be observed the dexterity with which the Roman Catholic clergy avail themselves of every opportunity of profiting by human weakness, and of that imperium which the senses exercise over the mind, to augment the number of their proselytes and consolidate their power over the conscience.

In Madrid the parts of the streets through which the procession is to pass is shaded by awnings, and the pavement is sprinkled with sand. The ceremony over, all belonging to the elegant and fashionable class of society go at once to the *Calle de Carretas*, which is one of the streets in the line of the procession, and one which, on this occasion, may certainly vie with the far-famed Long-champs of Paris; for there the fair rulers of fashion display those tasteful changes in their personal attire which are to be in vogue during the remainder of the spring.

The processions of Holy Week are of a character entirely different from those of Corpus Christi. In the latter all is animation and joy, singing and triumph; but in the former every thing is sadness, seriousness, and grief. All the sculptured figures, called *pasos*, which are of the natural size and colour, and are carried about in those doleful processions, represent the principal scenes of our Saviour's passion,—such as his prayer in the garden, the treachery of Judas, the judgment of Pilate, and the crucifixion. In Seville, the processions of Holy Week are of an extent and character renowned all over Christendom. There they bring out one of these *pasos*, in which are seen the twelve apostles seated at table, with the slight anachronism that their chairs are of the most elegant description that can be manufactured in London or Paris. In the processions we are now describing, besides all those persons we have named as taking a part in that of Corpus Christi, are innumerable *penitentes*, who are men in masks, dressed in tunics of a white, black, or brown colour, their heads covered with an enormous cone, of the same colour and form used by the magicians or astrologers represented in English theatres. In Granada those tunics, which are called *chias*, are of black velvet, embroidered with gold or silver, and having a train of six or eight yards in length. The diversity of colour denotes the brotherhood to which the penitent belongs; and these brotherhoods, among which are many of opulence, bear the expenses of the procession.

In some small towns, instead of images of wood, living persons represent the personages of sacred history, and, generally, the young people of both sexes most distinguished for their fine



personal endowments are selected to figure on those occasions. Even in Seville, where these ceremonies are performed with something more of decency, may be seen, following a *paso*, a number of children dressed up so as to represent angels, and each of them carrying an instrument connected with our Lord's passion, viz., the nails, the sponge, the lance, and the crown of thorns. There are also three persons to represent three of the principal doctors of the church who have defended the dogma of transubstantiation. In the midst is placed one young girl who plays the part of Veronica; and it is but a few years ago that she who was performing this part, not being adequate to the fatigue of the day, followed by a severe cold, was taken ill, and in a few hours died from the effects of her exertions and exposure. It is usual to reward the young woman who plays this part with an ounce of gold.

In a certain country-town in Spain there are two *pasos*, one representing our Saviour and the other the Virgin, and when the procession turns to enter the church, scarcely has the former been introduced when the second approaches, but before she can get within the porch the door is shut, and thereupon the whole concourse of attendants burst out into bitter sobs and crying, deploring that the mother of our Lord is denied the favour of following her Son into the sacred edifice.

The most solemn and brilliant of all the processions of Holy Week in Seville is that of the holy burial (*Santo Entierro*), the name of which indicates its object; and the expenses which it occasions are so considerable, that it is celebrated only once in four or five years,—an interval of time necessary for the brotherhoods to accumulate the required amount, which, according to assurances from persons likely to know the fact, does not fall far short of four thousand pounds sterling. The figure which on this occasion represents the dead body of our Saviour, and which is a fair work of art, is placed in an urn made of large squares of glass, in framework of silver, and adorned with extraordinary magnificence. Behind this goes the image of the Virgin, also the size of life, in a cloak of black velvet embroidered with silver, on her head a crown of gold, and in her hand, as if to wipe away her tears, an exceedingly rich cambric pocket-handkerchief, embroidered and trimmed with the most costly Brussels lace. There is also in this procession a figure emblematical of death, which is represented by a human skeleton at the foot of a cross. Such is the importance given in all Andalusia to the procession of the holy funeral, that the year in which it is celebrated forms an epoch in the history of Seville, and for many years, both before and afterwards, nothing else is spoken of. Many persons from Madrid and other principal cities, and even the English *employés* of the garrison of Gibraltar, are present in the Andalusian capital on these occasions.

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As a proof that Spaniards themselves, and even the clergy, consider these ceremonies as a mere mundane spectacle, it is related of a king of Spain that, having gone to Seville at a time very far distant from the Holy Week, he was favoured by the authorities and the chapter with all the rites, feasts of the church, and processions, appropriate to that holy occasion.

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In all the towns of Spain the last week of Lent is celebrated by processions. Where there are no *pasos*, or groups of statues, to represent the scenes of the passion, these are substituted by real men and women, among whom are distributed the parts of the Virgin, the apostles, Pilate, and the Saviour himself;—and this profanation does not excite the least scruple in a nation calling itself Christian.

It is certain that this abuse greatly prevailed in all the nations of Europe during the middle ages, and that such was the origin of those so-called *mysteries*, which, in reality, were but a species of sacred dramatic representation that preceded the true comedy, and turned the porch, and even the altar, of the sanctuary, into a theatre. But those customs disappeared at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and have not since been in use except in Spain.

Besides the processions of *Corpus Christi*, and those of Holy Week, there are several others paid for by the clergy themselves, by the brotherhoods, or by the public, according to the favourite devotions in the respective localities. The city of Valencia is particularly noted for its attachment to this class of exhibitions. There is scarcely a week in the year in which two or three processions are not celebrated there, in which a great majority of the people take a part. On these occasions all useful labours are suspended, and the sums which are spent in ornaments, music, and, above all, in wax, are beyond calculation. Every individual in the procession carries a wax candle in the hand. The images of the saints are adorned with great profusion. The balconies of the houses make an ostentatious display of rich festoons and garlands; while the presence of the authorities and of the troops, which serve as an escort to the clergy, the flowers which cover the streets, and the music, both military and religious, which never fails on these occasions, form a whole more like a public amusement than any part of religious worship.

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In many of the towns in Spain, and particularly those of Andalusia, there is a nocturnal procession called the Rosary (*el Rosario*), for those who compose it go along either praying or singing those prayers of the rosary to which we have already alluded, when describing this part of devotion. The Rosary of the Aurora is another procession which goes forth at daybreak, to the great nuisance of the more peaceable inhabitants, who are then enjoying the sweets of sleep. In Toledo this nuisance has reached such an extent as really to be one of the gravest character. Before the procession sets out, there are certain heralds sent round the town, each having a bell in his hand which he rings continually, and at the same time calls out with all his might this doggrel couplet:—

“El Rosario de la Aurora!

In some places the nearest relatives of some person recently deceased assemble together, and then all the full concourse are seen directing their steps towards the cemetery, and there to collect round the grave of the departed, whilst the relatives kneel at the tomb, and the clergy recite a part of the office for the burial of the dead. It cannot be denied that this part of the ceremony is extremely imposing and romantic.

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The rites of Roman Catholicism may be divided into two classes, viz., those required by the liturgy, and for which it establishes fixed rules approved by the councils, such as the mass and the administration of the sacraments; and, secondly, those invented and practised by the devotions of the faithful, which are without any fixed limits. Among these, the most notable are the Jubilee of Forty Hours, and the Pilgrimages (*romerías*).

The Jubilee of Forty Hours consists in the public exhibition of the consecrated host during the whole day, enclosed in a *custodia*, which has already been described. It lasts three days, and these are alternate in all the churches of great cities; so that there is not a day in the whole year, except the Thursday and Friday in the Holy Week, on which the host does not receive this kind of worship. At night-fall the *custodia* is covered with a curtain, which is generally made of rich gold and silver lace. This act, at which an officiating priest presides, and during which hymns are chanted and accompanied by music, usually attracts a great concourse of the devout. In the mornings the eucharist is uncovered with the same ceremonies.

The Pilgrimages or *romerías* are devout expeditions made to certain celebrated sanctuaries on the days of the saints to which they are dedicated. Those sanctuaries are generally situated out of the towns. Some of them are convents, others mere chapels; but in both one case and the other, large sums of money are collected on those occasions. In ancient times, in Spain, as also in all other Roman Catholic countries, these pilgrimages were acts of sincere devotion, which imposed the necessity of confession and communion. The devout passed all their time in the church,—in the morning hearing mass, in the evening reciting prayers dictated to them by a priest from the pulpit. On these occasions it was usual for enemies to be reconciled, confessing their most grievous sins, and celebrating other acts of true repentance and piety. But in modern times these usages have been much relaxed; the greater part of those who attend such pilgrimages give up the entire day to dinners, dancing, and other amusements. Many serious disorders have generally resulted from such customs, and the authorities have been under the necessity of suppressing them. In olden times the two sanctuaries of Santiago in Galicia, and of the Virgin del Pilar in Zaragoza, drew together immense crowds of devotees, not only of the Peninsula and other Spanish dominions, but from all parts of Europe; and the offerings which were made to the images in those temples, in money, and in jewels, and other precious things, amounted in value to sums which would, if named, be considered fabulous. In the present day, however, that zeal has considerably cooled, although the practice of attributing to those images, and others called *Milagrosas*, the cure of all human disorders, is not exploded, but still prevails. Whenever cases occur in which an individual believes that he has been restored to health by means of the *Milagro*, it is customary for him to deposit, in the chapel of the image he venerates, a small model or representation of that member or part of the body restored to health by the prodigy. These objects in great abundance adorn the walls of such edifices, where may be seen innumerable arms, legs, eyes, mouths, and so on, of silver or of wax, according to the circumstances of the persons so favoured. People, who have been cured of their lameness, leave in the chapel the crutches which they made use of during the continuance of their infirmities.

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The processions *del Viatico* are worthy of note in this chapter. These are of two classes, and may be thus described. When a sick person is threatened with approaching death, the priest of the parish carries to his house, in his hands, the consecrated host. This he does with the greatest solemnity, preceded by a procession of great numbers of devout people, bearing in their hands large wax candles; and when the patient happens to be a person of distinction and rich, the procession is accompanied by a band of music. Before this group goes a number of people who are constantly ringing a bell. All persons who meet this concourse kneel down and take off their hats as it passes; and if a body-guard happen to be in the route, the troop immediately forms and goes through certain evolutions peculiar to such occasions, which consist in every soldier bending his knee and inclining his arms to the ground, whilst the drums beat the royal march. A piquette is then detached from the troop and follows the priest and escorts him to the church. If the procession in its route meets a carriage, no matter how high a personage may be in it, he cedes his place at once to the priest, who goes in it to the sick person, and returns in it to his parsonage. The monarch himself forms no exception to this rule. Ferdinand VII., after his return from France, subject entirely to the clergy, and desiring to give them his support, performed this customary duty on several occasions. But as the clergy abused this courtesy and the facility with which the sovereign was made to lend himself to their wishes, and as it became a fixed plan to set out at such a time and in such a direction as to make these processions fall in his way as he was returning from the Prado, the custom was at last found insupportable; and, therefore, it frequently happened that, on seeing the lights preceding the *Viatico*, the king ordered his coachman to turn back and take another direction, so as to avoid the inconvenience of coming in contact with the procession. Queen Isabella II. has been frequently obliged to discharge this act of devotion. On those occasions she not only placed her carriage at the disposition of the officiating priest, but, with a wax candle in her hand, formed part of the procession, entered the house of the patient, however humble, assisted in the ceremony, kneeling on her knees, and if the sick person was poor, defrayed the expenses attendant on the illness, and, if death ensued, on the

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burial of the sufferer. To those who believe in the doctrine of the bodily presence of Jesus Christ in the eucharist this act contains a sublime lesson of humiliation and reverence; for to see the pomp and power of an earthly potentate resigned, so to speak, before the presence of God, must certainly be to them a spectacle both moving and edifying.

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Those persons who are prevented by acute, although not dangerous, diseases, from attending the churches in compliance with the paschal precept, are also privileged to have the *viatico* in a splendid procession once a-year. This ceremony is attended by all the brotherhoods and principal people of the parish. The grandees of Spain, and the richest inhabitants of the neighbourhood, send the best of all their carriages on those occasions. The balconies are covered with ornaments, and the fair occupants scatter abroad a profusion of flowers, and copies of rude engravings of devout subjects, which are called *aleluyas*, towards the coach in which the priest is conveyed. Numerous bands of music accompany the cavalcade, which is escorted by a strong detachment of troops. Every time that the priest descends from the carriage to enter the house of some infirm person, the soldiers perform those military honours which already have been described, and during the performance the band plays the royal march. In some parishes, the proprietor of the carriage, or one of his principal people, assumes, *pro hac vice*, the office of coachman.

Under the title of processions may conveniently be placed those of the funerals of such persons as have left sufficient funds to defray the expenses exacted by the church on such occasions. Until within a very few years ago, it was the custom to convey the body to the dead-house of the church, with the face uncovered, in some religious habit, which was called the shroud (*la mortaja*), and the body was borne on the shoulders of the brotherhood of some society. Now-a-days, however, it is usual to convey it in a closed coffin, and on a funeral car. In Madrid, some of these cars are on such a scale of luxury and sculpture as but ill accords with the character and nature of the ceremony. The body is preceded by the poor of the charitable institutions, with lighted candles or tapers in their hands; and the clergy follow it, chanting the office for the dead. The undertaker is a personage entirely unknown in Spain. The church takes possession of the body, and keeps it until the time of interment, and the bill of expenses for the offices which the church performs frequently amounts to a sum absolutely ruinous. There is a Spanish city of which it is recorded that no sooner has a person breathed his last sigh, than the surviving family are importuned by deputations from the different religious communities, offering their respective services to conduct the interment on the cheapest scale of prices.

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We have several times had occasion to allude to the strange contrast formed in Spain between the superstitious character of Roman Catholicism there professed, and the mockery which, at the same time, is made of the most sacred objects and venerated practices. The most notable example which we have of this moral phenomenon is *The funeral of the sprat*, or, as called in Spain, *El entierro de la sardina*, which is performed yearly in Madrid. On Ash-Wednesday, the day on which the follies of the carnival cease, and on which the people proceed, at once, from dancing and revelling, to the church, to receive the ashes which the priest rubs in form of a cross on the forehead of every believer, and in the evening of the same day, the population of Madrid meet on the shores of the Manzanares, where they witness the caricature of a solemn funeral, the body interred being that of a dead sprat. This absurd feast is truly one of bacchanalian character; in it are committed a thousand excesses of many kinds, among which that of drunkenness, especially among the lower classes, greatly prevails. There is not in any modern society a more faithful copy of Pagan festivities than that we are now describing, as witnessed every year in Madrid. The clergy have often protested against this stupid ceremony; but all their efforts to procure its abolition have been fruitless, and the authorities have retroceded before a practice so deeply rooted in the public habits, and so analogous to the gay temperament of the people of the Spanish capital. In the year 1851, it having been reported that the government was going to prohibit this horrible profanation and mockery of one of the most solemn ceremonies of the church, all the periodicals of Madrid, except those under the influence of the clergy, put forth the most energetic remonstrances. In the Cortes the most violent debates took place on the same subject, and appeals were made to the cabinet; nay, there were symptoms of an approaching vote of censure on the ministers, in case they should have the temerity to think of abolishing the obnoxious practice. Senor Madoz, who afterwards became minister of *Hacienda*, put himself at the head of this opposition, and displayed great ardour; and in spite of the religious periodicals accusing him of inconsistency, and quoting a passage from his own writings, in which he advocated the suppression of the feast as a blot on Spanish civilization, the question was too popular to be easily given up. Warm debates followed, and the subject took an aspect so serious, that the government, seeing itself exposed to a *crisis*, was obliged, to save its own existence, to come to the Cortes and declare solemnly that it would not offer the least opposition to the *Entierro de la sardina*, the funeral of the sprat. After this triumph, the interment of the sprat was performed with a splendour never witnessed before. The whole city attended the procession; there were thousands of coaches and vehicles of every description, besides an incredible variety of masked characters; guitars and castanets resounded for more than twelve hours on the *pradera* adjoining the Manzanares. The burlesque of the religious ceremonies was greater than ever; and the history of Madrid never recorded a day on which was consumed so great a quantity of wine and *escabeche* (a kind of pickle of different sorts of fish), being the classical refreshments with which the people of Madrid honour that ceremony in taking leave of the carnival, and furnish themselves with strength to bear up against the fastings of Lent.

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PURGATORY—Deliverance from by devotions of survivors—Those devotions described—Difference between dogma of purgatory and other dogmas—Modes of drawing out souls—Masses for the dead—Legacies to pay for them—External representations of images and pictures—Day of All Souls and its practices—The Andalusian Confraternity of Souls—*Mandas piadosas*—Debtor and creditor account between the church and purgatory—How balanced—Bull of Composition—Soul-days—*Resposos*—*Cepillo*, or alms-box—Financial operation—Origin of bills of exchange and clearing house—Wax Candles—Their efficacy—Cenotaphs—Summary of funds, and reflections on their misapplication.

In the year 1802, the Inquisition of Granada celebrated an *auto-de-fé* against a teacher of languages, who lived at Malaga, for having said and written that the true purgatory was the purse of the friars and clergy. All persons who have considered the immense gains which the Spanish clergy have drawn, and continue to draw, from the belief in purgatory, will agree that the unhappy professor did not wander far from the truth. According to the doctrine, generally admitted among the Roman Catholic clergy, upon this dogma, which the Roman Catholic Church alone receives, the liberation of souls suffering the torments of fire in purgatory, or, what is much the same, their admission to the joys of the celestial state, does not depend so much on the culpability of the defunct individual as on the devotion of those who survive. It is taught in the catechism, it is preached in the pulpit, and enforced in the comments of theological works, that the souls of those condemned to purgatory can be ransomed and drawn out by means of prayer, penance, alms, and religious rites; and that one of the works of charity, most meritorious in the eyes of the Almighty, is the use of those means to abbreviate the duration of punishment of the sufferers. Hence it is that what is called in Spain devotion, with reference to souls in purgatory, is one of the most striking characteristics of religious life in that country. Nobody there has hitherto ventured to examine whether this belief is or is not conformable to the sacred Scripture, and to the doctrines of the first centuries of Christianity. p. 143

Purgatory in Spain, and in all Roman Catholic countries, is a dogma as sacred as that of the Incarnation and that of the Trinity, with this difference,—that the latter mysteries, and all those relative to the Saviour, place man in a position of immense inferiority with respect to their object, whilst purgatory, on the contrary, gives him an effective power, the object of which is nothing less than the salvation of souls. It is scarcely possible to conceive that to a being so weak as man could ever be attributed a power equal to that of Divinity itself. This creature, man, whom we see occupied in his business or his diversions, impregnated with profane ideas, and perhaps on the very point of committing crime, or of abandoning himself to criminal excesses, is supposed to be capable, even in these very acts, to open the gates of heaven to the soul of a relative or of a friend, and this, too, without any effort of his conscience or his will, but simply by taking out a piece of money from a purse, laying it on the plate of the sanctuary, or saying a paternoster. p. 144

Many and various are the methods which have been invented “to draw out souls from purgatory.” The principal of these is “the mass of the dead;” and it constitutes one of the most lucrative sources from which the Roman Catholic clergy derive their revenues. As a general rule, when a testator makes his will, he bequeathes a certain sum of money to be laid out in masses, which are to be said as suffrages for his soul. These sums are sometimes more than sufficient to pay for a thousand, or even two thousand, masses. The relatives or friends pay for other masses for the same object, and many devout persons contribute large sums to draw out, indiscriminately, those souls which are most ready to avail themselves of such generosity. In all acts of devotion, including the daily and common mass, a prayer is introduced in favour of departed souls; and in order to exalt the imaginations of the faithful, by means of external representations, which, as we have seen in preceding chapters, form the grand arm of Roman Catholicism, they present, in painting, or engraving, or in statuary, figures of human beings surrounded by flames, and extending the hands as if in the act of imploring the compassion of their friends. In truth, in order to see this there is no need to go to Spain; for even in London, that great centre of civilization, and at a few paces from Temple-bar, some of these impious caricatures are exhibited for the edification of the English public. p. 145

On the day of All Souls (*el día de difuntos*), in Spain, we find exhibited in the churches the most disgusting representations, such as human bones, skulls, and entire skeletons; the churches are kept in profound darkness; and nothing is omitted to inspire terror and move the hearts of the devout. In the middle of the church is placed a large table with a silver plate, two immense wax candles, lighted, and some of the figures just alluded to. A priest, seated by the table, is imploring, in the most pitiful language, the generosity of the attendants. “He who puts a half-dollar in this plate,” said the priest in one of the churches in Cadiz, “draws out a soul from purgatory.” An Andalusian, as great an epigrammatist and jester as are generally the natives of that agreeable province, on one of these occasions took out from his purse his half-dollar, and put it on the plate, saying that his intention was to rescue the soul of his father. At the end of a moment or two he asked the priest if the soul of his father was now drawn out of purgatory, and on being answered by the oracle in the affirmative, very quietly re-took possession of his coin, with this pungent observation, “Very well then, my father is not such a fool as to return to purgatory after having succeeded in entering heaven.” Ridiculous and irreverent as this incident may appear, it cannot be denied that the logic contained in it is irresistible.

In every parish in Spain there is a confraternity of souls (*hermandad de animas*), whose treasure is composed not only of the contributions of the faithful, but of vast properties and metallic recompenses called *censos*, which always, in fact, consist of available money. The pious legacies (*mandas piadosas*), which abound in all the provinces of Spain, form a capital of incalculable amount. They call *mandas piadosas* those rustic or urban securities which have been left by testators with the sole object of investing their products in masses to be said for the dead. The church receives these proceeds, and pays for the masses. It often occurs that the number of those masses is so immensely great that there is not a sufficient number of priests in the neighbourhood to discharge the duty of saying them; the incomes, therefore, received by the clergy accumulate, and are disposed of for other purposes. Thus the church becomes a debtor to purgatory for thousands of masses which, though paid for, remain unsaid. In these cases the clergy have recourse to the pope, and demand a bull called *bulle de composicion*, for which the datary at Rome exacts a considerable sum of money. In fact, this bull is to compress, by a science which appears very like that of chemistry, the virtue of four or five thousand masses unsaid into only one which *is* said; so that if four or five thousand or more souls ought to be drawn out by means of the like number of masses, one single mass alone, through the medium of the bull, produces this grand result; and by this homœopathic process the consciences of the debtors are pacified.

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It may easily be imagined that these practices lead to the greatest abuse. Before the suppression of the friars, the convents were the great depositaries of this species of treasure. The bishops, and even the government itself, have often desired to look into these accounts in order to see whether the will of the testator had been exactly complied with in the application of the funds to their intended purposes. But the prelates of the respective orders have always most tenaciously resisted any such encroachment on their faculties and jurisdiction. It is quite certain that the incomes from these *mandas piadosas* were frequently laid out in repairing convents, erecting new chapels, celebrating religious feasts, and purchasing rich ornaments, and other precious objects, for augmenting the splendour of the sacred rites and ceremonies. When, at the end of the year, the account came to be stated of this branch of the church's industry, and there appeared to be a vast disproportion of masses said in comparison with the sums received, the procurator of the order in Rome solicited a bull of composition. The account was thus balanced, and every thing nicely adjusted.

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Although, on every day in the year, the suffrages of all classes may be offered in favour of souls in purgatory, there are some days especially privileged and set apart in the calendar for the purpose, with this note affixed to them, *dia de ánima* (Soul-day), and on which the effect of the suffrage is supposed to be infallible; that is to say, that each devout person draws out as many souls from purgatory as pieces of money which he draws out of his purse to pay for the like number of masses, or other acts of devotion to be performed. On those days, a large placard is erected at the church-doors, and bearing this inscription, "*Hoy se saca ánima*," (To-day souls are drawn out). The churches are full of people, and the contributions of money are numerous and abundant.

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The prayer especially consecrated to the drawing souls out of purgatory, and which forms an essential part of the office for the dead, is called in Spanish *responso*. It is composed of three anthems taken from the book of Job, a paternoster, and a collect, and ends with the formula, *Requiem eternam dona eis, Domine*. When the prayer is in favour of all souls, the *eis* remains in the plural; but if it is in favour of one particular soul, then the singular *ei* is used. On the day of All Souls, when an innumerable crowd of people assembles in the cemeteries, the priests also attend in great numbers to say *responso*s, at so much a-piece, for those who desire them. In a certain Spanish city, which we forbear to name, we have seen these priests rival each other in lowering the prices current of these precious performances. One was crying out, "I say a *responso* for tenpence;" <sup>[148a]</sup> and another, "I say it for fivepence." <sup>[148b]</sup> This may appear incredible, but it is an undeniable fact.

In all Roman Catholic churches there is a *cepillo* (alms-box), nailed to the wall, and having this inscription upon it, "*Para las benditas almas del purgatorio*," (For the blessed souls in purgatory), for the reception of contributions: and the circumstance has given rise to an operation of mercantile character which is certainly very ingenious, and to which some Spaniards attribute the origin of bills of exchange. The priest of a parish of Andalusia, for example, has occasion for a certificate of the baptism or of the burial of some person in a parish of Arragon or in Navarre. The fee for this document is usually two pesetas. As it is almost impossible to send so small a sum from one extremity of the Peninsula to the other, the priest of Arragon or of Navarre draws two pesetas from the *cepillo*, or alms-box of his parish, and the Andalusian priest puts the same sum into the *cepillo* of his parish, *or he says two masses as an equivalent*. In this way purgatory is converted into a kind of clearing-house, which wonderfully facilitates the transaction of business in the funds of the ecclesiastical market.

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A circumstance peculiar to the worship celebrated in favour of souls in purgatory is the prodigality of lighted candles which are consumed on those occasions. There is no doubt that the object of this practice is to expose to the view of the faithful a lively image of the flames by which these souls are tormented in their probationary state. A traveller, worthy of credit, assures us that the wax consumed with this object in the city of Granada alone (in which there are about forty churches), on the day of All Souls, amounted, a few years ago, to the incredible sum of £10,000.

The cenotaphs placed in the churches when the funeral rites of some rich man are celebrated,

are, in truth, nothing but perfect pyramids of burning flames produced by wax candles. It is a common belief, maintained in the pulpit and in the confessional, that the brighter these candles burn the more efficacious will be the suffrages. The royal family of Spain has had the good taste to avoid this error. In the magnificent monastery of the Escorial, where the remains of deceased members of the royal family are deposited, all show is reduced to a sumptuous carpet of black velvet, worked with gold, and spread out upon the floor, on the centre of which is a cushion of the same materials, and upon that a royal crown of gold. At the extremities are placed four immense candelabra of solid silver, called *blandones*, with their corresponding wax candles of various diameters and sizes.

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From what has been said in this chapter the reader may form some idea of the immense sums of money which the clergy absorb by virtue of this belief in the dogma of purgatory. When he reflects that those contributions are upon a more liberal scale than any others which the Spanish nation pays, and that the product is sunk by the most unproductive of all the classes in society, he will then be able to arrive at some conjecture as to who and what are the Roman Catholic clergy of Spain. These contributions, be it remembered, are paid, on every day in the year, in all parts of the Peninsula, and by persons of every category in the nation, from the very meanest to the most elevated in rank. The means employed to wring these sums from the contributors are infallible in their effects. The attack is made, indiscriminately, by appeals to charity, family affection, and reciprocal duties of parents, children, brothers, and sisters. The act of liberating a Christian soul from the dreadful torments which purgatory is supposed to inflict, however opposed to reason may be the idea of operating by material fire upon the incorporeal essence of the soul, is considered superior, in the estimation of every sensible and Christian heart, to any succour which can be given to hunger, misery, nakedness, or other numerous corporal afflictions. In this way the money which might be spent in wiping the tears from the cheek of the widow and the orphan, and be applied to the erection of useful human institutions, is prodigally spent in a mysterious and incomprehensible operation, which, after all, is a purely human invention, and which, by its practical results, and the great amount of wealth it draws to the Roman Catholic Church, bears a greater affinity to a financial operation than to any religious duty.

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It would be almost impossible to calculate the advantages which would have resulted to the Spanish nation from those great resources, if the product had been applied in the construction of roads, canals, or other useful labours. But this immense capital being thus spread about in small fractions, the inevitable consequence has been a continual draining of the public wealth, the perpetuating of a theological error (contradicted by Holy Scripture, and by the true doctrine of the church of Christ), and that pomp and splendour which the clergy are enabled to assume by such abundant means, in addition to the funds received by them from other sources.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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Auricular Confession, a sacrament inseparable from that of communion—Obligatory on all once a-year—Plan of discovering defaulters—How punished—Evils of confession—Power of the priest—Four evils pointed out—Discoveries in the Inquisition in 1820—Facility of obtaining absolution—Louis XIV.—Robbers and assassins—The confessional—Practice, how conducted—Expiatory acts—Refusal of absolution—A husband disguised as his wife's confessor—The injunction of secrecy on part of confessor—Advantages of the knowledge he gains—Jesuits advocate the confessional—No fees for confession, but gratuities are generally given.

Confession is one of the sacraments of the Church of Rome. Roman Catholicism, at least in Spain, requires that all believers shall celebrate that sacrament, as well as the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, at least once a-year. Confessors amplify this obligation, and require their penitents to observe both these sacraments frequently. Devout persons who aspire to greater spiritual perfection practise these observances once a week. Still, however, the church is satisfied with an annual celebration of them by each of its members, and fixes the period for that performance at Easter. The infraction of this rule is considered a mortal sin, and the clergy use every possible means to enforce the precept. The two sacraments are inseparable, and to obey the injunction of confession and communion is called "to comply with the church," (*cumplir con la Iglesia*).

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The method employed by the clergy to discover delinquents with reference to these obligations, is as rigid and severe as any that can be devised by the most despotic civil authority. About the middle of Lent the priest and one of his assistants form a general census of all their parishioners. In the acts of confession and communion, the penitent receives two tickets, which certify his obedience to the paschal precept, and when the assigned period is over for these observances, the priest goes from house to house to gather the tickets; so that it is impossible to conceal any infraction of the rule. Until within the last few years, it was the custom to write the names of all defaulters upon a board, exposed to public view in the churches, by way of punishment of the delinquents; and, consequently, those who were the subjects of this punishment were badly looked upon by the towns-people, and considered as atheists and heretics. The result of this absurd penal code was, that men preferred sacrilege to dishonour, and complied externally with

the precept, making an imperfect confession, receiving the eucharist in a state of culpability, and committing, consequently, in the eyes of a Roman Catholic, one of the blackest crimes. Whether it was on account of a grave inconvenience resulting from this mode of punishment, or by virtue of that decay in the ecclesiastical influence in Spain, so notable in recent years, we cannot determine, but that practice has now been completely abolished; and even in Madrid and the principal cities of the kingdom, the "complying with the church" has lost its compulsory character, and been reduced to those who truly believe in its efficacy. It is true that the clergy still give tickets, as testimonials, to those who perform acts of confession and communion, but they have not the temerity to go from house to house to collect them as formerly, and the clergy who would venture to demand them would be exposed to mortification and rebuke. Still, however, in some families, the children are bound in duty to prove before the paternal tribunal their compliance with those obligations, by means of those official documents; but even this test is easily evaded by the purchase of the tickets, which are publicly sold in the churches by the sacristans and other inferior agents of the priesthood, for the moderate sum of a *peseta*, (ten-pence.)

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The practice of confession, however, is not quite extinct, particularly among the inferior classes of society, and it is natural that the clergy should represent it as absolutely necessary to the salvation of souls, looking to the great advantages which they themselves derive from it. By means of the sacrament of confession, the confessor makes himself the absolute master of the conscience of his penitent,—not merely of his own secrets, but of those of his whole family; he directs all their operations, and superintends all their domestic concerns, as well as their social and even their political affairs. The confessor has constantly suspended over the head of his penitent the terrible menace of eternal punishment. It is not the pure and genuine law of God which the devotee observes,—it is the law of God explained, augmented, or diminished, and often distorted, by the voice of a fallible man, only his equal, and perhaps vastly inferior to him in point of erudition and purity of morals. The devotee has no right to obey God in the way he understands the precepts imposed upon him by God and God's church. In his view, God and the church are a sort of concrete centred in the confessor. The confessor not only directs him, but punishes him with the severest penances that a confessor can enjoin, for the penal code of the confessional not only embraces the religious practices of fasting, alms, scourging, and other inflictions, which are entirely at the disposal of that terrible judge, but he has, or assumes to have, the power of denying absolution; that is to say, of condemning the soul to the terrible state of mortal sin, of interposing himself between the sinner and the divine mercy, and of annulling the consoling hopes of Him who in compassion to human weakness has said, "I have no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live." The confessor is just as frail, as mortal, as subject to human weakness, as susceptible of human passions and vices, as the penitent himself. The character he assumes to perform, by the imposition of his hands, does not allay in him either the violence of appetite, or the claims of self-interest. How is it possible to believe that, in the exercise of his ministry, he can entirely rid himself of sentiments of hatred, sympathy, rancour, and envy, with respect to the man or woman who kneels at his feet, imploring through him the pardon of sin?

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People greatly deceive themselves who imagine that the confessional, at least in Spain, bears the least analogy to the case of a man who, burthened with sorrow and repentance, comes in confidence to deposit the weight of the burden which oppresses him on the bosom of his friend. No; do not believe that the penitent hopes to find in the confessor a kind consoling guide to wipe away his tears, pour into his bosom the balm of hope, and present to him an endearing hand which may lead him in the way of holiness. The confessor is an implacable judge, who speaks with gentle smiles or bland insinuations, but who tears out, with an imperious tone and formidable menaces, the secrets of the heart, and not only those which may be connected with crime worthy of deep contrition and sincere repentance, but even others which pertain to an order of things exempt from the sinfulness attaching to human actions. The confessor has an absolute right to know every thing without exception. The most insignificant actions, and even the most innocent ones, must come to his knowledge. He is not content with the spontaneous declaration that the penitent feels disposed to make of all infractions of duty; but he insists on examining the case with the most scrupulous minuteness, and takes as much pains as would a clever, cunning lawyer to extract every particle of evidence from the witnesses for or against a culprit on his trial. Under this last point of view, auricular confession may be considered as the most tyrannical, odious, and unmoral institution, which superstition, leagued with sordid interests, could ever have invented.

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Innumerable are the abuses made of this wicked instrument by the Spanish clergy, and which have resulted in the abandonment of the confessional by every educated, discreet, and intelligent man. Of those abuses we shall only point out four of the most important, and which have most efficaciously contributed to bring auricular confession into disrepute.

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*First.* The great interest of the clergy being to consolidate the papal power, the confession serves to ascertain the extent of hostilities raised against that power by philosophy, impiety, the tendency to religious reform, and the general spirit of the age. The confessor asks every penitent whether he has any prohibited or simply profane books; if he, or his parents, or his friends, listen to the conversation or discourse of heretics, or murmur against the ecclesiastical power, or satirise the conduct of the clergy, or even attend balls, theatres, or other profane amusements. Many confessors give to these things infinitely greater importance than to the infraction of the Decalogue. If the answer to these questions is in the affirmative, then the confessor requires, under pain of refusing absolution, that such books be given up,—that all further communication

with the enemies of the church be discontinued,—and that such carnal entertainments as balls and theatres, and the like, be renounced for ever.

*Secondly.* As the exorbitant ecclesiastical power of the Church of Rome is bound up intimately, and by a well-known analogy, with absolute power and civil despotism, the confessional is converted into a political engine by a true espionage, by means of which is discovered every liberal tendency, every germ of conspiracy or rebellion, and every thing that can offend the supreme authority.

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In the epoch of the restoration of Ferdinand VII. to Spain, after his captivity in France, when the persecution of the liberal party became the essence of that monarch's policy, the confessors were actively occupied, by command of the bishops, in these odious examinations and inquiries. Thus, the wife was made to denounce the husband, the son the father, and the friend the friend. Peace, thus disturbed, flew from the abodes of families; the clergy acquired new rights to the hatred of the nation,—for many were the persecutions to which the accusations, thus dragged from the weakness of penitents, gave rise. Freemasonry was considered then not only as a political crime, but as a challenge to pontifical bulls, which were fulminated against the mystery with violent anathemas. The penitent saw himself obligated to accuse, before the tribunal of the Inquisition, any persons whom he knew to be members of a lodge, although bound to such persons by the ties of kindred or friendship.

*Thirdly.* The most dangerous use of the power of examination, which the confessor exercises, is that of interrogating persons of the weaker sex. A woman who once kneels before a confessor renounces from that moment the most noble, the most pure, and the most amiable of the sentiments which can animate the bosom of her sex. The searching voice and tone of her judge breaks down with violence, at once, all those barriers which modesty and self-respect by turns have raised up in her heart and conscience. Not only is she compelled to reveal the positive acts, gestures, and words, containing the least element of culpability or blame against the chastity and purity of her habits, but even the most vague and inevitable thoughts,—those against which woman recoils with indignation, and which she would even blush and refuse to give an account of to herself,—have all to be expressed and uttered by her lips without the least palliation or disguise. It is a fact generally admitted in Spain, and one spoken of without reserve in all classes of society, that the most uncontaminated and pure maiden rises from the confessional as well instructed in things of which before she was absolutely ignorant, as though she had come from a house of the vilest character. It is enough to indicate the nature of this abuse, in order to form some idea of its pernicious consequences. Women worthy of credit have declared over and over again that their first visit to the confessional opened the way to their perdition, by inflaming the imagination with ideas of a most voluptuous and obscene nature, and exciting their curiosity on subjects which had never before even entered into the mind or conception. Should any person doubt these statements, let him turn to any book of Roman Catholic devotion, which contains what is called, in ecclesiastical language, "examination of the conscience." The famous treatise, "*De Matrimonio*," cited in our introduction, by the Jesuit Sanchez, for the use of confessors of married women, contains particulars so filthy, and pictures, descriptive of certain sins, so utterly disgusting and obscene, that even the Court of Rome has been obliged to order all copies of the work to be bought up and suppressed.

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*Fourthly and finally.* Another of the great dangers of the indefinite authority of the confessor, with respect to penitents of the weaker sex, is the facility it offers for seduction.

Consider the situation of a single man in the presence of a young and beautiful woman, alone with her, and master of her conscience and all the secrets of her heart. How much denial, how much virtue must he not possess to resist the temptation which such circumstances bring before him! That great crimes do very commonly result from such circumstances in Roman Catholic countries, is proved by the existence of the penalties which the canon law imposes on the authors of such crimes, in the book which goes by the title of "*De Solicitante in Confessione*." In almost all the cities of Spain are recounted scandalous examples of this class of abuses, and it is generally believed that in the greater number of the cases, criminal relations between the clergy and women of all classes had their origin in the confessional. When the people in Spain rose against the Inquisition in 1820, and sacked the archives of that tribunal, they found numerous informations by modest women against their confessors, who had assailed their virtue in the confessional. The interests of the clergy required that a veil should be thrown over those excesses, and thus we find but very few instances in which the Inquisition awarded punishment to the culprits.

With such efficacious instruments of power and of influence, it is not surprising that the clergy and friars should wield an authority, without limit, over all the affairs of families. Spaniards, who are old enough to remember the moral state of their country towards the end of the last century, are well aware that there was scarcely a family of any importance in Spain which was not blindly subjected to the advice and even orders of some individual member of the priesthood. Nothing could be done without such advice and sanction. The clergy had great influence in the marriages, domestic disputes, business, studies, and even diversions, of all who recognised their superiority. They prohibited the reading of the most innocent books,—even those respected by "the Index." They exacted acts of devotion, such as masses, romerías, novenas, and others, from which there resulted constant droppings of money into the coffers of the church. In short, it may be taken as a fact, that, until the period of the French invasion, the true government of the Spanish nation had been a theocracy in the hands of forty or fifty thousand individuals, freed from all responsibility with respect to the civil power, united among themselves by the bonds of a

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common interest, and forming a privileged caste, considered generally as the depositaries of divine power. All this rested upon the basis of confession.

But the most deplorable inconvenience of these practices, and that which makes it incompatible with the public morals, is the facility of pardon offered for those criminal excesses and to the most abandoned depravity. He who can be assured of the efficacy of a remedy which is at his disposition every moment does not fear exposing himself to temptation. The most obstinate sinner, the perpetrator of the most atrocious crimes, knows that he has in his hand, already, p. 162  
absolution for all his excesses,—that he is free from all responsibility and all consequences,—and, in a word, that he can transform himself into a saint or an angel by the mere performance of the rite which his church prescribes. If, after this purification, he returns to his old habits, and gives himself up to his wicked inclinations, the same process of absolution is at hand, and can be repeated as often as he pleases; and as the administration of this sacrament, on the part of the priest, becomes, through force of repetition, a mere matter of routine, it can hardly be supposed that the words he utters can carry along with them any efficacy, as they might be expected to do if they were those of a truly devoted minister of Jesus Christ. To assure oneself of these truths, let any one attend a Spanish church on one of those days on which it is necessary “*to comply with the church,*” and draw near to those confessional-boxes which are there erected for the use of the penitents. He will there see people successively throw themselves down on their knees before a priest, pronounce a few words, hear a slight admonition, and then rise up to make way for another person who in his turn does the like, and so on during the day. Can any one believe that this almost insignificant ceremony is sufficient to impress on any mind that profound feeling, that intense grief for past sins, and that firm resolve to sin no more, which are the true signs of contrition and repentance? Can it be believed that the treasures of divine mercy and forgiveness are open to all comers, who, persisting in their sinful course, think fit to come, and, as a matter of right, demand them as they would passports at the office of the police? p. 163

It is well known that even Louis XIV., notorious for his open and profligate as well as habitual adulteries, had a confessor, and complied with the duties of confession and communion in the presence of his whole court. In Spain, robbers, assassins, and the most corrupt of the people, pursued by justice for their crimes, and who are the terror of society, always confess and receive the eucharist at Easter, but without ever amending their lives or even intending to do so.

The priest, before saying mass, in which rite he is about to identify himself with what he supposes to be the very body of our Saviour, is bound to purify himself previously, so that in that awful ceremony the holy elements may not enter a temple wherein dwelleth sin. The greater number of those priests say mass every day, but seldom are they seen, before assuming the sacred vestments to officiate at the altar, to prepare themselves by means of confession, as the rules of their religion most strictly enjoin. There are innumerable towns in Spain in which there are no other clergymen than the parish priest. In what state then must *his* soul be when he approaches the altar to eat and drink, as he professes to believe, the body and blood of Jesus Christ?

These considerations are so obviously natural and simple, that it has required six centuries of civil and religious oppression to hide them under the weight of ignorance and the fear of punishment. Nevertheless, the invasion of the French, the political revolutions which have followed, intercourse with foreign nations, and other causes which have co-operated with these, have at last begun to open the eyes of Spaniards, and confession is daily falling into disuse, particularly among the educated classes of society. Even in these same classes, however, there are many persons who, although persuaded of the truth of all that their clergy teach them, refuse to confess, and declare that they will do so only at the hour of death. Confession is, in the present day, more common in the inferior ranks; for these move in a sphere without the pale of civilization, and consequently are yet under the clerical power. Still, there are villages in Spain in which the bad example of the priest, and the enmity which is manifested towards him by the inhabitants, prevent the compliance with those sacraments, so that for years together the great majority of the people never think of purifying their consciences in the way prescribed by their church. In the eyes of a true Roman Catholic, these people are therefore living in a state of complete reprobation, and are destined to perdition. And yet, how can a human being throw himself at the feet of a man whom he despises? How can he ask absolution of a man who he knows requires it more, perhaps, than himself? And, above all, how can he confide the consciences and souls of his daughters to a man who carries seduction in his eyes and pollution on his lips? p. 164

The act of confession is practised after the following manner:—First of all, the penitent makes, whilst alone, a private examination of the heart and conscience, according to the instructions of books written with this special object in view, some of which have justly merited the censures passed upon them by the English press, in citing them by way of argument against Parliamentary grants in favour of the college of Maynooth. The hour of confession arrived, the penitent kneels before the priest, who is seated in a kind of sentry-box, called the confessional, open in front, and having the two sides of trellis-work, by which the priest is separated from actual contact with the woman who comes to confess. This confessional is placed in the church. Those who have visited the churches and cathedrals on the continent of Europe may have seen several of them in almost every one of these. Thus the confession may be said to be made in public, for the rite is most frequently performed when there is a crowd assembled, so that persons nearest to the confessional can often distinctly hear much of what passes between the confessor and his penitent. Now, only consider the situation of a woman observed, at least, by so many witnesses, p. 165

who, even though they do not hear her words, can, by the alteration of her features and visage, understand what emotions of mind she is enduring whilst undergoing the painful process.

The parties thus placed, the ceremony then begins with an act of contrition, which the penitent pronounces.

Then follows the self-accusation of sins, in the order of the ten commandments, or the Decalogue, and the other five of the Roman Catholic Church. The priest frequently interrupts this self-accusation with leading questions concerning the most minute particulars of the act which is the subject of accusation. For example, suppose the accusation to be this: "I accuse myself, holy father, of having uttered a falsehood." The priest interrupts: "On a light matter, or on a serious one? was it for personal interest? was it in order to stain the reputation of another? and if so, was the person calumniated a man or a woman? and was that person married or single? a member of the civil authority, or one of the clergy?" This introductory part being ended, the priest begins a fresh tack, and interrogates the penitent upon infractions not specified in any of the commandments. For example: If the penitent is accustomed to pray the rosary; if she frequents churches; if she contributes her money towards the support of divine worship; if she knows, and omits to denounce, impious persons, heretics, and enemies of the church; if she prefers the society of worldly men to that of the clergy and friars; if her parents, brothers, husband, sons, relatives, or friends, read prohibited or dangerous books; if she orders masses to be said for the souls of the dead; and other things of a similar kind. Then follows an exhortation to show the turpitude of the sins confessed and the necessity of repentance, and the priest concludes this peroration by the imposition of penance or other expiatory act. Here the confessor has an open field before him, in which he shows the fecundity of his imagination,—prayers, paying for masses, fasting, alms, corporal mortification, pilgrimages to sanctuaries, privation from theatres, balls, and parties, and other penalties of a similar nature, which form the criminal code of the confessional tribunal; and here it is easy to imagine what a latitude this faculty offers to gratify hatred, show revenge, flatter the powerful, and make things pleasant to those who have the power of conferring favours. The act concludes with the words of absolution, which is a formula consisting of a few Latin phrases.

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The priest has the power of refusing absolution, but which however he seldom ventures to exercise, for there is no penitent, be she who she may, that would not sooner make the most terrible sacrifices of her self-respect, than expose herself to such an affront. There have been instances in which refusal of absolution has provoked the penitent to personal vengeance against an inexorable confessor.

There is a fact well known in Spain, which proves the abuses to which the practice of confession may lead. A husband who suspected the fidelity of his wife, knowing that she was accustomed always to go to the same church and the same confessional to confess, dressed himself up as a friar, and taking care to conceal his face with the capucha, entered the church and sat down in the confessional. The unlucky woman fell into the snare, and confided to her husband the particulars of her faithless conduct. The result was, as the reader may readily suppose, a great outcry among the clergy against such profanation and sacrilege; but the man who was guilty of this delinquency being high and powerful, escaped punishment.

The canon law imposes on the confessor the most inviolable secrecy, and provides severe penalties for the least infraction. This injunction, it must be admitted, is most scrupulously obeyed; but then it must be considered, that, if the prohibition favour the penitent by preventing the disclosure of her frailties, it equally favours the clergy themselves, by making them the masters of all consciences, and lifts up to their own eyes the veil which is supposed to conceal the infirmities of their fellow-creatures.

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It is not difficult to calculate the advantages the clergy are able to draw from this intimate knowledge of the interests, and the ambition, hatred, and other passions of the mind most dangerous to the quietude of families. One would think it impossible that there could exist a human society in which a privileged body of men were to be found, invested with the faculty of penetrating into those mysteries which are generally supposed to be open only to the Almighty. But it was for the possession of this very faculty, that the Jesuits, so clever in discovering and practising the means of their greatness and influence, abandoning their vulgar ambition, their mitres, and other ecclesiastical insignia, fixed all their hopes and attention on the confessional. Before the extinction of that order, confessors of the popes, kings of Europe, and the chief persons of their courts, pertained to it. Leo X., Louis XIV., Louis XV., and Catherine de Medicis, may be looked upon as regulators who qualified that temperament of Christian morals which domineered over the world under the imperium of those reverend fathers.

The administration of the sacrament of absolution does not figure in the tariff of regular parochial dues, payable for baptism, marriage, and burial. That act, according to the canons of the church, must be gratuitous. But in Spain, since the abolition of the tithes, which brought with it that state of poverty under which the clergy now groan, there has been introduced a custom of slipping a few pieces of money into the hand of the confessor at parting. This gratuity varies according to the means of the penitents; but the average may be taken at a dollar and a half. May not the probability of a larger or a smaller fee on these occasions, as portrayed in the aspect of the giver, have an influence, more or less, in proportioning the amount of severity in the penance imposed?

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FASTS AND PENANCES—How observed—Indulgences—Spain is privileged by the Bull of the Holy Crusade—Description of that bull—Prices of copies—Commissary-General of Crusades—His Revenues—Their shameful application—Copy of that bull—Other acts of penance—The *Disciplina* or whipping—*Cilicios*.

The Roman Catholic Church prescribes two kinds of mortification with respect to food, viz., fasting and abstinence from meat. Fasting is obligatory during the whole period of Lent, and on the eve of each principal feast-day in the year. To comply with this obligation, it is enough to eat a mere formal meal on these days, consisting of some light vegetable diet in the morning, and again in the evening. This observance, however, admits of some indulgence, and confessors are wont to absolve many of their penitents from its severity, under pretext of their having to do hard work, or to contend with physical infirmity. The clergy, besides the fasting common to all the devout, are bound also, during the holy week, to abstain from eggs, milk, and all sorts of food which come under the denomination of *lacticinio*, or any thing of which milk or eggs form a component part. Friars and nuns fast, also, during the whole of the period called advent; and when those obligations are truly performed, there is no doubt that they have a considerable influence on the physical constitution. Medical men are authorised to consent to its infraction by their patients. In some religious communities of both sexes, but especially in those of the Capuchines, the fast-days are multiplied to such an extent, that they compose the greater number of days in the year.

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Abstinence from meat varies in the different bishoprics, according to the established custom or the bishop's will. In France, for example, in some dioceses they never eat animal food on Fridays or Saturdays; in others, Friday only is a fast-day, but in all of them abstinence from meat is obligatory during the whole of Lent, Sundays excepted.

Spain is a country privileged in this respect. By virtue of a contribution paid to the government, and which the latter divides with the Pope, Spaniards are absolved from the greater part of all those duties. The origin of this privilege dates from the time of the crusades, when the popes, in order to meet the expenses of those expeditions, imposed this tribute on Spaniards, in exchange for the dispensation. In course of time, however, this usage was abolished; but Charles III. solicited of the Pope its renovation, with a view of depriving the English of the vast sums of money which they received in Spain from the produce of the stockfish (*bacalao*) of Terranova. This singular institution, called the Holy Crusade, occupies a great number of public officials, and had produced immense sums previous to the general change of ideas brought about in Spain by the war of invasion by the French. In every year, at the beginning of January, the Commissary of the Holy Crusade, who is generally a high personage among the clergy, and his attendants, set out in carriages, with a procession consisting of his subalterns and the municipal body-guard of the city. In one of the carriages is unfurled and exposed to view the standard of the Holy Crusade. From that day the sale of the bull is opened, and several thousands of copies of this bull are printed. The price of each copy is about sevenpence. The printing is executed in a very inferior manner, and the paper used for the occasion is of the most inferior quality. The bull in substance states that the contributor, having paid the money required for it, is authorised for a year to enjoy all the prerogatives which it concedes to him. By its influence, the days of abstinence from meat are reduced to Ash-Wednesday and the Fridays in Lent, the last three days of the holy week, and the eve of the great festivals.

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The Commissary-General of Crusades, the absolute master of this enormous public revenue, is bound to deliver a part of the profits to the treasury, and to lay out the rest in works of benevolence in such manner as he, in the exercise of his charity, may think fit. This important office is usually conferred on some one of the clergy who may happen to be a favourite of the court; and almost every person who has attained this distinction has been notorious for his luxuriousness and prodigality. It is related of some of them in the time of Ferdinand VII., that having exhausted all inventions in the culinary art, in the splendid banquets given by them frequently to the chief persons of the court, they have even placed upon their tables live sardines, brought from a distance of three hundred miles through a country in which there were no regular roads, swimming in sea water, in large glass bowls, and after gratifying the guests with the amusement which such a spectacle afforded, the little finned creatures were then sent to the kitchen, and served up as a dish of the greatest delicacy.

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It is a public thing in Madrid, and one which is spoken of without the least disguise, that a large portion of those funds is set apart as pensions of considerable amounts to the mistresses of grandees, and persons in high offices of the state, and also in order to political and other purposes, far alien to the objects of the institution. The Roman Catholics of other countries are scarcely able to credit that so monstrous an abuse of the pontifical authority really exists, it not being possible to conceive that, for a paltry sum of money, Christians can remain exempt from an obligation considered sacred by Catholicism.

We have alluded to the small sum paid to obtain that exemption; but the tariff of the Holy Crusade exacts a larger sum from the nobility and persons of high dignity. To those a bull is sold, which is called *Bula de ilustres*, which costs from eight to twelve shillings; and in order to leave the door open for the augmentation of those revenues, there is a clause which says that every person purchasing them is bound, as a matter of conscience, to contribute according to his

ability.

In order that the reader may have a right idea of these bulls, we insert a translation of one of them, which doubtless will be interesting:—

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The Bull published and sold every year in Spain, and by which Spaniards, and all Catholics resident in Spain, are authorised (provided they purchase a copy of it) to eat meat on certain days of the week and throughout Lent, when Catholics in all other parts of the world are bound to abstain from eating meat.

M.DCCC.LII.

Summary of Faculties, Indulgences, and Graces, which our Most Holy Father Pius IX. (who now governs the church), deigns to concede, by the Bull of the Holy Crusade, to all the faithful who, being in the kingdoms of Spain and other the dominions subjected to his Catholic Majesty, or coming to them, shall take it, giving the alms [174] assessed by us for the same, expedited for the year 1852.

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A long time ago, when infidel people made a cruel war against the Catholic nations, and by their arms placed divers regions of Europe in great danger, with risk to the faith and to souls, our Catholic kings obtained apostolical letters from the Holy See, by which were conceded many spiritual and temporal graces, during some years, to those who might leave the Spanish dominions to fight against the infidels, or who might assist those military expeditions with special aid, contributing, to some extent, towards the expenses of such necessary purposes. The same indulgence, with some additions or declarations, was repeated many times afterwards by the Roman pontiffs, and the necessity for continuing that war having ceased on account of a change in the times, the last prorogations of this indulgence were upon condition that the alms collected should be laid out and employed in other pious objects. H. M. has recently obtained, by entreaty of the Holy See, a further prorogation of the said indulgence, with a view of applying the alms collected in respect thereof towards the expenses of divine worship, in aid of necessitous churches, or in the endowment of priestly seminaries, in order, by this means, to repair the damages caused by the public calamities which have afflicted us. Our most holy father, benignantly hearkening to the entreaties of H. M., has not hesitated to make this ample concession in favour of the objects indicated, and for the benefit of our queen and of all Spaniards. In order, therefore, to have temples worthy of God, to whom they are consecrated, and to form a clergy capable of fulfilling their high and divine mission, our most holy father, Pius IX., listening benignantly to the supplications of H. M., did, by the bull issued at Gaeta on the 8th of May 1849, give us the privileges, indulgences, and graces, contained in the bull of the Holy Crusade, the execution of which is committed to us. Therefore we, Don Manuel Lopez Santaella, priest, Knight Grand Cross of the royal and distinguished Spanish order of Charles III., archdeacon of Huete, dignitary of the holy church of Cuenca, president of its illustrious chapter, preacher to H. M., member on his own right (*individuo nato*) of the royal junta of the Immaculate Conception, and of various literary societies, only judge of the new liturgy, president of the apostolical commission of the subsidy of the clergy, of the tribunal of the grace of the *Excusado*, and of that of the general treasury of *Espolios y Vacantes*, [176] senator of the kingdom, and apostolical commissary-general of the Holy Crusade, and other pontifical graces in all the dominions of H. M., with a view of making them known to the faithful, and that they may be able to avail themselves of so precious a treasure, reduce them into a summary in the form following:—

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In the first place,—To our lady the queen, who with constant care and diligence watches over the propagation of our holy Catholic faith, the splendour of the worship, and the decorum of the temples; and to all the faithful Christians who are on the Spanish territory, or who may come to it within the year, reckoning from the day of the publication of this bull, and who shall contribute to such holy ends with their alms, taking this summary, and having our authority to enjoy the graces in it contained, his holiness concedes the same plenary indulgence which has been accustomed to be conceded to those who went to the conquest of the Holy Land, and in the year of Jubilee; if contrite for their sins they shall confess them with the mouth and receive the holy sacrament of the eucharist, or, not being able to confess, desire truly to do so.

Item,—To those above said, his holiness concedes that even in time of interdict (provided they have not given cause for it, nor been an obstacle to its being raised), and having permission for it from the commissary-general, even one hour before daybreak, and another after noon, can within the same year celebrate, if they are presbyters, or cause masses to be celebrated and other divine offices in their presence, and in the presence of their familiar friends, domestics, and relatives, and receive the eucharist and other sacraments (except on Easter-day), as well as in churches where, on the other hand, it is permitted in any mode of celebration whatever of the divine offices during such interdict, as in a private oratory set apart solely for divine worship, and that it may be visited and appointed by the ordinary; and that they may assist at the divine offices in time of interdict, it being their duty, provided they use it for the said purpose, always to pray to God for the prosperity of the Roman Catholic apostolic Church, for the peace and concord of Christian princes, and for the other pious ends already expressed. In like manner, it is conceded to them that their bodies may be

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buried in the said time of interdict with moderate funeral pomp, as if they had not died excommunicated.

Item,—That during the said year of publication, they being in the said Spanish territory (but not out of it), may eat meat, by the advice both of their spiritual and corporal physicians, in all times of fasting throughout the year, even those in Lent, and in the same way, at their own free will, eat eggs and *lacticinios* (any thing made up with milk), so that it is understood the obligation to fast will be satisfied by those who eat meat, as much as it will be by those who strictly observe the form of fasting. In which pardon are comprehended the religious persons of all military orders, but excepting from it all patriarchs, archbishops, bishops, inferior prelates, regular ecclesiastics, and secular presbyters, who may not have attained sixty years of age, and, out of Lent, all of them may have recourse to such pardon in respect of eating eggs and *lacticinios*.

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Item,—As to the faithful who contribute their alms in form aforesaid, and who, in order to implore the divine aid for the ends above expressed, shall fast voluntarily on days not appointed as fast-days, or, being lawfully hindered from fasting, shall do some other pious work at the free-will of their confessor or parish priest, and pray to God for those ends; as often as they shall do so, so often shall they be released and freed mercifully by the Lord for fifteen years and fifteen times forty days from the penance imposed on them owing to whatever cause, and shall, besides, be made partakers of all the prayers, alms, pilgrimages (even those to Jerusalem), and of all other good works done in the church militant, and by every one of its members.

Item,—Those who devoutly visit, on each one of the days of the *Estaciones* of Rome, five churches or altars, or in default of such five, five times the same altar, and pray to God for the expressed ends, shall obtain a plenary indulgence, as well for themselves as also, by way of suffrage, for the deceased persons in whose favour they make such visit and prayer.

Item,—In order that all those, and each one of those before-named, may pray to God with more facility, and more efficaciously implore his divine aid, it is conceded to them that they shall be at liberty to choose a secular or regular confession from those approved by the ordinary, and to obtain from him plenary indulgence, and remission of whatever sins and censures, even those reserved to the apostolical see (except the crime of mixed heresy, and, as to ecclesiastics, the censure treated of in the constitution of Benedict XIV., *sacramentum Pœnitentiæ*), once in their lives, and again in the article of death; imposing on themselves salutary penance, according to what the crimes demand, and so that if satisfaction may be necessary they may give it of themselves, or by their heirs or others in case of impediment. All vows also, excepting those of ultramarine, chastity, and religion, may be commuted by the same confessor for the performance of some other good work, and some contribution towards the said ends.

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Item,—If death shall occur within the said year without confession, in consequence of the death being sudden, or for want of confessors, still the same plenary indulgence shall be extended as if they had died contrite, and as though they had been confessed at the proper time determined by the church, and had not been negligent in doing so through confidence in this concession.

And it is declared that in each year it shall be competent to take two summaries of the said bull, and thus enjoy, twice within that period, all the indulgences, graces, and privileges, which are above expressed.

And to us, the said apostolical commissary-general, his holiness concedes that we may be able to dispense and compound for any irregularity whatsoever, provided it shall not arise out of any wilful homicide, simony, apostasy from the faith, heresy, or bad inception of orders; and in like manner to absolve those who shall have contracted matrimony, there being impediment of secret affinity, arising from previous illicit copulation, one of the contracting parties being ignorant of it at the time of the contract, in order that they may be able to celebrate it anew between themselves (although it be secretly) for conscience' sake; and also, in order that they may, after celebrating the matrimony, and contracting a similar impediment, demand their conjugal rights; and we, earnestly desiring the good of souls, authorise the confessors, in order that (in the article of death, only and without the obligation of giving account to us) they may use these our faculties, and apply the privileges and indulgences contained in this summary, to those who, being extremely poor, are not able to pay for it; and those who, truly penitent, desire to obtain these graces, imposing upon them the obligation of afterwards taking them if they have an exit out of danger in the case for which they have recourse to it.

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And inasmuch as, besides the other faculties, his holiness concedes to us power to suspend, during the year of the publication of this bull, all indulgences and graces, similar and dissimilar, conceded by apostolical authority to any churches, monasteries, hospitals, pious places, universities, brotherhoods, and private persons, in the said kingdoms and dominions, although they may be in favour of the fabric of the chapel of

St Peter at Rome, or of any other similar crusade, even containing clauses contrary to such suspension, as also that we may re-validate in favour of those who participate in the indulgences and graces of this bull what we may have suspended:

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From henceforth, therefore, using the said apostolical authority, we suspend, during the year of publication of this bull, the said indulgences and graces, which, as aforesaid, we have power to suspend, so that no person whosoever is able to publish, preach to, or profit, any one in common or in particular, except he takes and has this said bull, in whose favour only we re-validate them, in order that they may be enjoyed by those who may have them, supposing that our pass and examination shall have been previously obtained; provided, that neither at the time of publishing or making them known to the faithful, or in distributing the summaries of them, nor before, nor afterwards, on any occasion or pretext, shall they ask alms of any kind for the churches, sanctuaries, hospitals, congregations, or other pious communities, at whose instance they may have been conceded; for if such are asked, it is not our will to make the said re-validation; on the contrary, we desire that the said suspension shall remain in force, in order that not even those who have the bull of the Holy Crusade shall be able to gain the indulgences which, in manner aforesaid, are published, circulated, or distributed.

On the other hand, by virtue of the same apostolical authority, which also has been to us conceded, we suspend the interdict, if such there be, in whatsoever place wherein this bull shall be preached or published, for eight days before and eight days afterwards.

And we declare, that those who wish to enjoy its indulgences and graces must take (purchase) and retain this summary of them, printed, sealed, and signed with our seal and name, in order that no one can err touching the graces to them conceded, nor any one usurp them, and that every one may be able to show by what faculty he uses them. *And* inasmuch as you, *John Doe*, contribute the alms of three *reales de vellon* (about 7½d.), being the amount which, in virtue of apostolical authority, we have assessed, and take this summary (which you must take care to have written out in your own name), we declare that power is conceded to you to use and enjoy all the said indulgences, faculties, and graces, in form aforesaid. Given in Madrid the seventh of January 1851.

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*Summary* of the days of the *Estaciones* of Rome, on which, by concession of his holiness, plenary indulgences may be gained by those who, having taken this bull, devoutly visit five churches or altars, or, for want of these, one five times, praying to God for union and concord between Christian princes, and for the ends of the church; and also, on each day of making the same visit, they may draw a soul out of purgatory by virtue of such plenary indulgence.

### **Days on which a plenary indulgence may be gained.**

On each of the four Sundays in Advent.

On the Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, of the four *Temporas* in the year (the beginning of each of the four seasons of the year).

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On the three Rogation days in May.

On the eve of the Nativity of our Lord, and at each of its three masses.

On the days of St Stephen, St John the Evangelist, and the Holy Innocents.

On the day of our Lord's Circumcision, and on that of the Epiphany.

On the Sundays of Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima.

On all the days in Lent.

On the first eight days after the Resurrection.

On the Feast of St Mark.

On the day of our Lord's Ascension.

On the eve of the day of Pentecost.

On the six days following Pentecost.

### **Days on which a soul may be drawn out of Purgatory,**

+ On Septuagesima Sunday.

+ On the Tuesday after the first Sunday in Lent.

+ On the Saturday after the second Sunday in Lent.

+ On the third and fourth Sundays in Lent.

+ On the Friday and Saturday before the fifth Sunday in Lent.

+ On the Wednesday of the octave of the Resurrection.

+ On the Tuesday and Saturday of the octave of Pentecost.

(Signed) \* D. MANUEL LOPEZ SANTAELLA. [SEAL.] Madrid: Press of the Holy Crusade.

In numerous families the tax of those bulls is very heavy, for the master or mistress is bound to purchase a copy for each member residing under the roof, including all the servants.

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Within the last three years, the office of commissary-general of the Crusade has been abolished, and the collection of the funds arising from this source has devolved on the bishops of the respective dioceses.

Besides fasting, there are other acts of penance and mortification practised by the truly devout, and some of these have already been noticed in former chapters. The *disciplina* (whipping) was the most in use when Roman Catholicism flourished in Spain without a rival. It was very common, in the processions of Holy Week, to see penitents with their shoulders naked, whipping themselves in public with so much severity as to cause them to be literally covered with blood. We know a town in Andalusia in which this is encouraged by the clergy; but in that place the penitents receive money in exchange for the floggings which they inflict on themselves, and which sometimes have laid the foundation of bodily complaints that have terminated in the death of the victims.

Some penitents make a vow to go, with naked feet, and even on their knees, from their houses to a certain sanctuary; others wear *cilicios* (hair-shirts) or girdles around their bodies; these practices, however, are now almost entirely abolished, and are observed only in some of the few convents of the religious orders remaining in the present day.

In times of great calamities, such as earthquakes and epidemics, this spirit of penance is resuscitated and exercised with great fervour; public prayers are offered up, and sermons are preached, which inspire terror and increase the natural fear and alarm attending the catastrophe. On these occasions the churches are filled, and nothing is heard in them but shrieks of grief and expressions of repentance. But the misfortune overpast, all those external signs of religious sentiment disappear, and society at large once more returns to the usual routine of business and pleasure.

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## CHAPTER X.

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FALSE MIRACLES, RELICS, AND RELIGIOUS IMPOSITIONS—Veneration of crucifixes and statues or images—Their power of healing—Picture at Cadiz—*Lignum Crucis*—Veronica—Bodies of saints—How procured—Inscriptions—Lives of saints—Maria de Agreda—St Francis—Scandalous representation of the appearance of the Virgin to a saint—Fray Diego de Cadiz—*Beata Clara*—Her fame and downfall—The nun, Sister Patrocinio—Her success, detection, confession, and expulsion—She returns, and is protected by a high personage—She is again expelled, but again returns and founds a convent—Its disgraceful character and suppression—Her flight towards Rome—Occurrences on the road—Her return to Spain.

It is easy to conceive the abuse that may be made by the clergy of the credulity of a nation in which such ridiculous and absurd practices prevail as those to which we have already alluded. The priest is considered, in Roman Catholic countries, as the representative of Jesus Christ, the only depositary of true doctrine, the only dispenser of celestial favours, the agent of the supreme authority of the Pope,—in a word, the infallible oracle, to whose teachings the faith cannot be opposed, and whose mandates must not be resisted under penalty of incurring a mortal sin. Thus all his words carry the stamp of irresistible power. The Spanish clergy have always known the resources they could draw from this position, and they have abused it in order to establish numberless false miracles, which, at the same time that they add to their prestige, greatly augment their treasure. There is scarcely a cure of an infirmity which human flesh is heir to, that is not attributed to some prodigy from heaven. There is scarcely a town in Spain in which they do not venerate a crucifix which has perspired, or a virgin's statue which has moved its eyes. In some places they pretend to believe that bells are rung without being touched; in others, roses grow, out of their proper season, to serve the festivals of the church. At the time of the expedition of the Earl of Essex to Cadiz, the English took their swords and cut asunder a certain painting of a religious subject in one of the churches, whereupon the edges of the cut canvas began to bleed, and the blood remains there to this day, and may be seen by the curious in one of the parish churches of that city! They relate numerous cases in which the host when profaned has, when broken, sent forth blood. If a sacristan omits to light the lamp which burns at night before the eucharist, the lamp lights itself. There are innumerable persons in Spain who believe that he who is born on Good-Friday has a cross on the roof of his mouth, and the faculty of curing diseases by mere contact with his hands, or even a piece of his garment. The palms which are blessed on Palm-Sunday, and the candles burnt on Good-Friday before the sacrament, have power to preserve houses from thunderbolts. The same faculty is attributed to a small bell blessed by the priest. In times of drought, which are the greatest calamities that afflict the

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Spanish soil, a favourite image is taken out and conducted in procession, in order to implore genial showers of rain. Thanks to the invention of the barometer, and a practical knowledge of the aspect of the weather, it almost always happens that this ceremony is followed a few days afterwards by a copious supply. But it would require an entire volume to enumerate all the errors and superstitions of this description which have been propagated by the clergy in Spain, and which form the chief props of their power.

Relics have served as efficacious instruments to accomplish that end. The *lignum crucis*, pieces of the cross on which the Saviour suffered, are profusely distributed not only in the churches, but in the private houses of many persons. In most of the cathedrals are preserved and shown to the public, on certain occasions, some of the thorns which composed our Saviour's crown; in others, fragments of the Virgin's veil; and in the cathedral of Jaen, *the face of God*. A description of this last-named wonder may not be unacceptable to some of our readers, and therefore we give a description of it in the words of a living English writer:—"According to the tradition of the Romish Church, a lady called Veronica met our Saviour in the street of Amargura, in Jerusalem, bearing his cross, on the way to Mount Calvary; and perceiving the perspiration running down his face, she offered the use of her handkerchief, which our Lord is said to have used, or to have permitted Veronica to use, in wiping the sweat from his temples. In performing this operation, the handkerchief happened to be folded into double, treble, or quadruple, and it was found that an exact impress of the Saviour's visage was indelibly stamped on every fold! These portraits, they say, have been preserved, and are certainly venerated as sacred relics in different places. One is exhibited in Rome, another in Padua, and a third in Jaen, in Andalusia. A public exhibition of this *holy face* is permitted, annually, on a certain day appointed for the purpose, when a plenary indulgence is granted to all who go to look upon it, to confess and to receive the holy communion. It is only the most ignorant and superstitious who are found to believe in this fable; indeed, it has now become proverbial with a Spaniard, when told of any thing that seems impossible, to say, *Eso y la cara de Dios estan en Jaen*,—That and the face of God are in Jaen."

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The bodies of saints exposed to public veneration in many churches are almost innumerable. The authenticity of these holy remains is founded on pontifical bulls invested with all necessary formalities. The way of procuring these remains of corrupt mortality is very easy and simple. It consists in gathering up, in the catacombs of Rome, some of the infinite numbers of bones there deposited; there is never wanting some devout antiquarian to discover that they are those of a saint or a martyr, and the assertion is supported by old parchments of remote ages, made in Rome, where the profession is of great use. Those testimonies are presented to the Roman Datary, and by means of a fixed sum found in a tariff comprising many other articles, the pontifical sanction is obtained, and then the bones become converted into objects of general devotion.

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The inscriptions on Roman altars and sepulchres in the pagan ages are used to support those inventions. All the world knows the history of the celebrated saints Perpetua and Felicity, whose beatifications have no other foundation than the words *perpetua felicitas*, so very common on the monuments of that nation. The improbability of some of the fictions has been such, that in Spain itself, in the face of that respect there shown to the things pertaining to religion, there have not been wanting pious men who have dared to doubt the authenticity of some of those saints. In a certain city in Andalusia, in which are venerated the bones of two Christian soldiers who were martyrs, and are the declared patrons of that city, and as such to be worthy the devotion of the inhabitants, it has been proved recently, from the examination of certain documents, that those supposed martyrs were nothing more than two Roman soldiers who had fallen in an action near the walls of that city.

But the lives of the saints are the great repositories of false miracles. There is no extravagance which has not been resorted to by the authors of those biographies. The miracles of their heroes occupy more space than do their virtues. The Roman Church never canonises any human being, of whatever eminence his piety may have been, if it is not proved *to its satisfaction* that he had the power of altering the laws of nature, and availed himself of divine omnipotence in order to serve his friends, and even to satisfy their caprice. For example: one saint has been able to traverse the seas with no better vessel for his use than his own cloak; another used to bring down rain from heaven in times of drought; almost all of them cured the most dangerous maladies by merely their blessing; and there are but few of them who have not even raised the dead with the like facility. The famous *beata* Maria de Agreda has written many volumes, wherein she records the continuous revelations with which she was favoured, and her familiar conversations with the Saviour, to whom she always gives the title of spouse. On one occasion, when sweeping the cloisters of her convent, she being unable through debility to take up the dust, the infant Jesus came to perform that office for her. In the work entitled, "*Conformidad de San Francisco con Dios*," it is said, among other wonders, that the saint formed a statue of ice and breathed life into it, in the same way that God did to Adam. That saint had his hands and feet perforated like those of Jesus Christ on the cross, and the Roman church consecrates a day in the calendar and a special festival with its corresponding service to "the wounds or sores of St Francis" (*Las Llagas de San Francisco*).

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But all these extravagances of the imagination are exceeded by the impiety and scandal of the appearance of the Virgin to a saint who implored her favour. It is related of her, that on this occasion she sent forth from her bosom a stream of milk, which the saint received in his open mouth, in a kneeling position, at a few paces from her feet. Paintings of this may be seen in the cloisters of many convents in Spain.



Hypocrisy, interest, and ambition, have found in this frightful credulity an ample and open field for their labours, and in which they have gathered abundant crops. It would, however, be an act of injustice, of which we would desire not to be guilty, if we did not admit that some of the most heroic virtues have flourished in the cloisters, and that the annals of the religious orders have handed down to posterity names which are worthy of admiration and respect. The name of the Capuchine Fray Diego de Cadiz must be still fresh in the memory,—a man no less remarkable for his poverty, self-denial, and humility, than for the sublime eloquence with which he contended against the vices of his times, and drew sinners into the paths of virtue. Such was the reputation of this good man, that the churches were unable to hold the multitudes who came to hear him preach. He therefore usually delivered his sermons in the public squares, where he was eagerly and devoutly listened to by people of every class and denomination, including Protestant reformers, who came to hear his denunciations against the enemies of God and the church. But by the side of this and some other models of religious consistency, how many hypocrites are there who have abused the simplicity of Spaniards, ostentatiously displaying, in public, self-denial and penitence, whilst giving themselves up, in private life, to every kind of iniquity! A convent lucky in having a man of this class possessed in him an inexhaustible fountain of presents and money. Sometimes those excesses arrive at such a point, that the attention of the bishops is called to them; but when searching inquiries were set on foot, the friars with all haste removed the delinquent to some distant place where he would be out of the reach of the bishops. Two facts of this kind may serve to illustrate this chapter.

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Towards the beginning of the present century, there was in Madrid a *beata* [194] called Clara, of whom they relate such prodigies as filled the capital from one end to the other with astonishment, and induced society to believe that this *beata*, Clara, was a being highly favoured by Providence. She lived in a private house, under the pretence that the malady under which she laboured prevented her residence in the *beaterio*. She was always prostrated on her bed, and never took any kind of food except the consecrated host. The nobility and persons in the upper ranks of society, including canons, bishops, and other learned personages, came to consult her, not only on matters of conscience, but of ecclesiastical discipline and state-government. She never permitted her face to be seen, but kept it covered with a kind of veil which entirely concealed her features. Gifts of every kind were showered upon her, and when money was given to her, which was always in large amounts, she declared that the article was of but little use to her, for she always gave it away to the poor. In short, nothing was talked of in Madrid but this most wonderful woman, whose presence it was believed was sufficient to obtain blessings from heaven; and even the queen, Maria Louisa, herself, wife of Charles IV., sent her frequent messages. Clara's fame increased. The renown of her name reached Rome, and made a profound impression in that city. The Pope granted her the unheard-of privilege of having the holy eucharist kept in her room, a privilege never conceded but to churches, cathedrals, and convents. In her room was erected an altar on which the priests said mass. There the holy communion was received with outbursts of devotion, and sometimes with ecstasy. In short, the woman was considered as something more than mortal; nor can that be surprising, when it was believed, on her own assertions, that she existed without other sustenance than the body and blood of Christ.

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There was in the same quarter of the city a pastrycook called Ceferino. It had been observed that this shop was the nightly resort of a female attendant of Clara, who made purchases of the most delicate and savoury articles of this good man's manufacture, nor could he imagine from whom she came or where she went, for instead of going into the vicinity with the precious load, she invariably made off in a direction for the heart of the city, and was soon out of sight. One night, however, one of Ceferino's workmen was determined to follow her closely. He did so, and after many an artful dodge through streets, lanes, courts, and alleys, she entered the house of *beata* Clara. The fact was kept secret from the public, but information was given privately to the police, who late at night entered the suspected dwelling, and there surprised Clara and her confessor, who were both elegantly dressed, and sitting at a table profusely served up with viands and wines of the most *recherché* descriptions. The inquisition at once seized their persons, and proceeded to try them for their crimes. The confessor, who was a young robust Franciscan friar, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment in one of the most severe convents of the order. The *beata* Clara was paraded through the streets of Madrid, *honeyed and feathered*, and mounted on a jack-ass, and then sent to be imprisoned in a house of penance for the remainder of her life.

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The other fact which we have alluded to and promised some account of to our readers, dates in more modern times; indeed, all the actors in that far-famed farce are still living.

Under the regency of Espartero, it was currently reported in Madrid, that in a certain convent of that city there existed one of the order whose name was Sister Patrocinio (*Sor Patrocinio*), and who, like St Francis before alluded to, had in her hands and feet the *stigmata* or open sores which correspond with those of our Saviour, made by the nails and spear in his crucifixion. This rumour, and many acts of the nun, produced an extraordinary sensation in Madrid, and especially when it began to be believed there was some political legerdemain connected with the prodigy, for the confessor of this woman, who now occupies one of the episcopal chairs of Spain, and gave his testimony to the case, seemed to be upon very intimate terms with the royal family, and had very lengthened conversations with some of its members. As at that time the political world was agitated by the question of the political pretensions of Don Carlos to the throne of Spain, the government, which held, or at least professed liberal opinions, thought that possibly the case of this miraculous woman might have some connection with the absolute views of the clergy,

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particularly as the miracle was everywhere spoken of. Thirsting, therefore, to prove the truth of the alleged fact, which was that the sores or wounds of this Saint Patrocinio were open and bleeding in the same way as if they had been the results of nails lately driven into her feet and hands and a spear thrust into her side, the government ordered the lady to be examined by the most celebrated medical man of the day, who instantly discovered that the wounds or sores were produced by the mere application of lunar caustic. He applied to them the usual remedies. Patrocinio was watched day and night to prevent a re-application of the caustic, and the openings were soon healed.

On this discovery of the truth, the nun was banished to a convent in one of the provinces; but a few years afterwards so many and such clever intrigues were employed, and by such high personages, in her favour, that she obtained permission to return to the capital, where in her convent she became the point of attraction and assembly of all that portion of the clergy most opposed to the constitutional system, and where she received the constant visits of one of the most exalted personages of the kingdom. She no longer, however, had recourse to the open sores to deceive the people, whose eyes have been opened in the way already described. The extraordinary beauty with which nature had endowed her person was the means of which she availed herself to enslave the will of her august protector. The government of General Narvaez, which was then in power, thought it expedient to put an end to these scandalous scenes; and the more especially as it was impossible not to see that their influence was brought directly to bear on the gravest political questions. Thus was that woman a second time expelled the capital; but a second time was she permitted to return to it on the fall of Narvaez's cabinet. Vain beyond all measure with her triumph, she abused this new era of the victory she had obtained, and founded a convent in that city, of which she declared herself the superior, and into which no other nuns were admitted than such as were both young and pretty. This establishment was the resort and rallying-point of the most elevated of the clergy and nobility; and to the scandal of the nation, the high personage already so often alluded to there passed his evenings with his courtezans, giving rise to the free circulation, and without any disguise, of anecdotes of the most immoral and yet ludicrous description. But such unbridled turpitude could not last long without provoking the activity of the civil authority. The convent was suddenly suppressed, and Sister Patrocinio was put on the road to Rome, accompanied by her favourite novice and two of the clergy. The extreme slowness with which she proceeded on her journey was attributed to a certain delicate state of health, the gravity of which had become so urgent, that on reaching a town in the south of France she was obliged to suspend her march, and having been detained there for some months until the expiration of the time necessary for cure and convalescence after such infirmities, which was in short the sole object of her journey, instead of pursuing her tour to the capital of the Roman Catholic world, she was permitted a third time to return to Spain, where she now lives in obscurity and contempt.

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Since the foregoing was written, the following account of her own confession has appeared before the public, and may very properly conclude this chapter:—

“But we have one word more yet to say on the subject of these wounds, to convince our readers of the ridiculous farce that was enacted at the convent. The medical men were not singular in denying their supernatural origin. The *saint* herself, when she found she was in the power of justice, and out of the hands of nuns and friars, made the following most curious and decisive statement. Our readers will imagine that they are perusing a romance of the middle ages.

““On the 7th of February, the further declaration of Sister Patrocinio was taken, who, after having made an avowal of *being truly penitent*, and that she cast herself upon the mercy of her Majesty the Queen Protectress, declared that from the time of her taking the veil, down to the 7th July when the convents were suppressed, her confessor was friar Benito Carrera.—That she afterwards had for confessor the vicar of the convent; for although friar Joseph de la Cruz wished to be her confessor, and spoke to her once or twice to that effect, she did not consent, because from the first she knew that he was not of very strong understanding, for he had proposed to her to leave the convent, in order to go to Rome, and ask permission to found and establish a convent, with many other extravagant propositions; showing her at the same time a very rare print, which contained many allegorical devices.—That no doubt her confessor, friar Benito Carrera, knew what were the ideas of friar Joseph de la Cruz; and he had told the abbess that she ought not to permit declarant to go to confess to him; and for that reason she did not see him again.—That one of the nuns being taken ill during her (declarant's) noviciate, Father Alcaraz, a capuchin of the padro, came to attend her; and then she saw him, and had a conversation with him upon different matters.—That a few days afterwards, she was called into the visitor's parlour, and found that said father Alcaraz was there alone; that he addressed her in a solemn tone, as if he was preaching, and said that St Paul was very urgent on the subject of penance; [200] and then he took out a little purse which he carried in his hood, and told her that it contained a *small relic that would produce a wound if applied to any part of the body*; that this wound ought to be kept open, so as to occasion suffering and mortification, that so, by offering to God our pain by way of penance, we might obtain pardon for sins already committed or future.—That after this he gave her a most solemn injunction, commanding her to apply the relic to the palms and the back of her hands, to the soles of her feet, to the left side, and *all round her head in the manner of a crown*; and charged her most strictly upon her obedience, and upon peril of the most terrible punishments in the next world, *not to*

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*disclose to anybody how the wounds had been caused; and if she was asked, she must say that she had found them upon her supernaturally.—That being terrified by the threats of eternal punishment and the divine anger, she obeyed his command, and never disclosed the matter either to the abess or to her confessor, or to any other person whatever.—That it was believed by the community in all good faith, that it was a miracle; that she never attempted to apply ordinary medicines for the healing of the wounds, which, though they closed apparently, broke out again, always being attended with pain, until she left the convent and had them cured.”*

## CONCLUSION.

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The picture which we have sketched of the religious state of Spain, explains all the history, all the peculiarities, and all the vicissitudes of that great nation, from its conversion to Christianity down to our own times. It was the religious principle which inspired Spaniards in all the great actions by which their name has been immortalised during their sanguinary struggles of six centuries against the Saracenic power; but in that magnificent epoch of their national existence, there were many circumstances which concurred in drawing forth the great failings of the Roman Catholicism of the present day. In the first place, all Christendom was Catholic, but that creed was not stained with the abuses and errors which, many ages afterwards, provoked the grand work of reformation. In the second place, society in general was wanting in those energetic attractions which led, in our age, to the cultivation of the arts and of the sciences, to the exercise of lucrative professions, and to speculations in credit, commerce, and industry. Finally, the time of the popes' aggrandizement had not yet arrived; as yet, Rome had not begun to exercise over the Western nations that pernicious influence which afterwards degraded her religious doctrine, nor that proud preponderance which threw back kings and governments to the class of humble subjects of the Vatican. In Spain, at least, religion was not so material nor so dramatic as it became in subsequent ages; the mendicant orders, which contributed so much in later epochs to the corruption of religious doctrine, had not been founded, nor had the multitude of new devotions, which afterwards complicated the simplicity of worship and converted it into a code of forms and ceremonies, been invented.

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Before the conquest of the Moors, as has already been observed in the body of this work, Spaniards were truly Catholics, and nothing more than Catholics. At that period, they had no other knowledge than that acquired from the study of Christian truth; excepting the military, there was no profession but that of the ecclesiastic; the arts, still rude, and almost denuded of invention and of ideality, were limited in their application to religious objects; and even architecture itself was not ostentatious of its grandeur and its beauties, nor were its plans and resources developed in great dimensions, except in the erection of those proud cathedrals, which, like those of Burgos, Seville, Palma, and Toledo, still excite the admiration of foreigners, and continue to be objects of study to the artist. [202]

Animated by so vigorous a principle of action, the only one which was capable of exciting the enthusiasm of their energetic but simple minds, Spaniards became the admiration of the world for their prowess, for the elevation of their sentiments, for their conquests in the East, where the Arragonese humiliated even the throne of the Cæsars, and, above all, for the innumerable series of exploits and sublime feats of valour and patriotism with which they succeeded in expelling from Europe the Saracenic dominion, then about to extend itself from the shores of the Garonne to those of the Tiber.

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What a difference do we perceive between the Spaniard of those times and the abject and degraded vassal of the princes of the Austrian dynasty! Religious sentiment was not less energetic, it was not less profound, in the second epoch than in the first; but it was a sentiment perverted by superstition, envenomed by fanaticism, and which, far from associating itself, as before, with the propensity to illustrious deeds and grand enterprises, consecrated itself exclusively, moved by the former, to the most puerile rites and ridiculous exterior practices, and, influenced by the latter, to the most abominable excesses of persecution and intolerance. Thus it is, that from the time of Philip II. down to that of Charles II., the history of Spain presents nothing but an uninterrupted series of blunders in the government, of intrigues and disorders in the court, and of crosses and misfortunes in the national affairs. In a word, it sets before us a treasury without credit and without money, an army without discipline and without organization, tribunals sold to power:—and everywhere we perceive recklessness, ignorance, poverty, and immorality, which are the inseparable accompaniments of mal-administration.

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It was not possible that a nation forming part of the great European family could long continue in such a condition. At the present time we distinctly discern that the progress of civilization keeps pace with the perfection of religious ideas. The most cultivated nations, the richest and most nourishing, are those which have most purified their creeds,—those which have put farthest from them the material element introduced to worship by superstition and fanaticism,—those who come nearest to the spirit and letter of the gospel in the relations of man with the Divinity. Spaniards have begun to penetrate these truths; they have compared their actual condition with that of other nations which have embraced the doctrines of the Reformation, and, above all, have felt that great void left in their religious and moral condition by the want of true Christianity, of

the pure dogma taught by its Founder, and of the truth to be discovered only in those inspired pages containing the treasures of revelation.

This exchange of ideas is one of the most striking facts of the present age, and more especially when it is considered that it is taking place at this instant by a spontaneous movement, which installs itself in different parts of the Peninsula; not, as in other ages and nations, in consequence of a proselytism headed by an apostle or a reformer, but of a *necessity strongly felt*, and which imperiously demands the object that alone can satisfy it. In Spain,—yes, in Spain,—the Bible is read, and people write and speak freely against the errors of the Church of Rome; nay, the Cortes denounce the vices of the clergy, and defend liberty of conscience; they propose means which, a few years ago, would have been visited with the most cruel persecution, and with the *brutum fulmen* of anathema. The government expatriate reactionary bishops without so much as a murmur from the people against these strokes of severity; many priests, enlisted under the banner of Carlism, have been taken by the troops, and shot as common culprits, without a single voice having been raised in their defence. The new doctrine on the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary has been attacked with irresistible arguments in a pamphlet published in Madrid, without either the authorities or the clergy having offered the least obstacle to its circulation. The law authorising the sale of the church property is executed with the general consent and approbation of the nation. Finally, the efforts made by certain well-intentioned Englishmen to propagate sound doctrine in the Peninsula have been generally received, not only with a becoming appreciation and gratitude, but with an eagerness and relish approaching to enthusiasm; and the persons who have set on foot this pious undertaking receive, almost daily, letters from Spaniards of all classes, urging them to persist in a work which, manifestly, has a direct bearing on the minds and manners of the people.

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The beneficent designs of Providence cannot be manifested more clearly. A movement in favour of the ideas of reform, and a prevailing disposition to read the Bible, are showing themselves simultaneously in many Roman Catholic countries, without any concert between themselves, and without any reciprocal intimation or knowledge of what is going on in each of those countries. The recent occurrences in Florence are notorious, so are those in Genoa, and even in Rome itself, where, to the political exasperation against the pontifical government,—whose existence is owing simply to the presence of three thousand French soldiers,—is united the contempt which the lax habits of the clergy and the puerile ceremonies of worship inspire in the minds of all men who have received the least education. This is precisely what is now taking place in all the ramifications of the great Spanish family.

We have already alluded to the state of abasement and degradation in which the clergy of the Peninsula now find themselves,—clergy who, for many centuries swimming in opulence and surrounded by a splendour which almost eclipsed the throne, have been the true regulators of the public spirit of the nation, the keepers of all consciences, and who formerly composed the most influential and powerful among all her social categories,—these clergy who, to-day, barely maintained by the public treasury, have been reduced to impotence, and become, as it were, a nullity,—they are excluded from all social intercourse with the elevated classes, and are deprived of all means of recovering their ancient predominance. With this decay of the depositories and agents of the papal authority and of the ultramontane ideas, other circumstances, which it was impossible to foresee, co-operate, in order to destroy those two scourges of humanity,—circumstances which promise better days for evangelical truth in that nation so long enslaved by superstition and fanaticism. Not only does the actual government harbour ideas of religious liberty, and endeavour, by all possible means, to curb the pride and reactionary spirit of the bishops, but many of the most elevated public functionaries abandon the Popish creed, and openly favour the propagation of the Bible and of the different writings which have been recently published in London in the Castillian language, and in which the doctrines and practices of the Roman Church are attacked with the arms of logic and erudition. One of these publications, entitled "*El Alba*," which is issued in numbers at indeterminate periods, finds so much favour in all classes of Spanish society, that its editors are constantly receiving letters of encouragement to persevere, such as those already alluded to, from many cities in the Peninsula, as well as reiterated demands for supplies of the work. "*El Alba*" is read publicly in the guard-house of the national militia of Madrid, and has, it is said, been reprinted at the common expense of the journeymen printers of that capital, without the least obstacle.

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Whilst these things are happening in the very cradle of the Spanish nation, the republics of South America, formed out of the fragments of the ancient colonial power founded by Charles V., enter simultaneously into the religious movement, without any previous concert with the ancient metropolis. These dispositions manifested themselves in Buenos Ayres from the earliest days of its independence. The Protestants, without the least difficulty, obtained permission to have a cemetery for the burial of their dead, wherein are publicly performed the funeral rites of the Anglican Church, at which ceremony may be seen assisting, very often, not only the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the city, but even the clergy and friars of the dominant church. Under the government of the illustrious Don Bernardino Rivadavia, these good tendencies towards religious liberty acquired greater force and development, and Protestants are able to meet together on Sundays to celebrate their worship without that circumstance causing the least surprise, or even exciting the curiosity of the people. Rivadavia, in 1828, founded, in the vicinity of the capital, a colony composed entirely of Scotch families, who were permitted to erect a chapel in a building expressly set apart for the purpose, and there was not so much as a murmur against the project. The iron despotism of Rosas could do nothing against this bias given to the public opinion; and although the colony dissolved itself in one of those political convulsions so frequent in that

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country, the Protestants of the city still preserved their privileges. Rosas did not show himself much disposed to tolerate the abuses of the power of the Roman Catholic clergy, and he banished the Jesuits, in whose hands was placed the education of youth. The Bishop of Buenos Ayres has been, during the dominion of that extraordinary man, entirely subservient to his power.

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In Chili religious fanaticism has always predominated, sustained by an archbishop, by a numerous clergy, and by many convents of friars and nuns; yet still, in Valparaiso, the principal seaport of the republic, there exists a Protestant congregation, composed of many hundreds of English, German, and American citizens. They have a chapel, as also a chaplain, whose stipend is borne, in equal moieties, by the congregation and the government of her Britannic Majesty. Many Spaniards attend the divine services performed therein, and we have good grounds for believing that some of those attendants, particularly that portion of them composed of the fair sex, have abjured the errors of the Roman Catholic communion. The rising generation is impregnated with ideas of religious reform, and we have seen works of some of the young writers of that country in which the prejudices of former times are openly attacked, and principles of independence and religious liberty proclaimed,—a course of action which, in other epochs, would have provoked the scandal and indignation of the authorities and of the nation at large.

In Lima, the capital of Peru, a city abounding with convents, and celebrated for the wealth and power of its secular clergy, Dr Vigil, a priest of irreproachable conduct and profound learning, has published a voluminous work, in which he attacks and pulverises the pretensions of the Roman Court, defends the independence of the bishops, and demonstrates, in the most luminous manner, the necessity of an ecclesiastical reformation, differing but very little from that which was most dexterously and successfully headed by Luther. That work of Dr Vigil was condemned, and its author excommunicated by a pontifical bull; and yet, despite this circumstance, the book circulates from hand to hand freely throughout Peru, and the doctor himself lives in perfect tranquillity in the midst of his fellow-countrymen, respected by all, and employed by the government in the distinguished post of director of the national library.

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In New Granada this reformation has proceeded from the government itself. The archbishop and the Jesuits have been banished from the territory of the republic, the legislative power has sanctioned the liberty of worship, and the public writers employ themselves in enlightening the people upon the falsity of the Roman doctrines, and the necessity of undoing the work, which, ever since the discovery of the new world, has been set up and perfected in it by the enemies of the true faith of Jesus Christ.

If the publication of this present work shall contribute, in any manner, to the intellectual emancipation of those favoured portions of the human race, its author will have received the only recompence which he desires.

THE END.

## Footnotes:

[15] Cover me with flowers,  
For I am dying of love.

[16] The Virgin of Anguish,  
She it is who knows my grief,  
Because I go to her chapel  
And am never tired of crying.

[22] Isabella foresaw the advantages of free trade at a time when all Europe groaned under the yoke of the most severe prohibitions. Not only did she abolish all those which the fiscal legislation of Spain prior to her times had sanctioned, but she had the merit of being the founder of the first tribunal of commerce, and of expressly ordering that in all matters of mercantile contract, shipwrecks, &c., submitted to her judgment, barristers should take no part, so that the course of justice might not be obscured with pedantic arguments and formal technicalities.

[25] The Spanish Protestants and their Persecution by Philip II. By Don Adolfo de Castro. Translated from the original Spanish, by Tho. Parker. Gilpin, London, 1851.

[26] *Novena*. A devotional practice applicable to the worship of all saints, and consisting of music, prayer, mass, &c., and of *nine* days' duration.

[52a] "We must die."

[52b] "We already know it."

[57] Importunate and unwearied begging.

[59a] On the portico of the Franciscan convent, in Granada, is to be seen a large marble slab, on which a sonnet is engraved, the first two lines of which are:—

"En provincias doscientas y setenta,

Tiene Francisco doce mil conventos." [59b]

[59b] "In 270 provinces,  
Francis has 12,000 convents."

[67] A kind of chick-pea, much used in Spain, especially in the *olla podrida*.

[71a] A kind of talisman hung round the neck of devout persons, which sometimes is supposed to contain relics of saints, pious prayers, or images of the Virgin.

[71b] "Here lies Sister Belen,  
Who made sweetmeats very well,  
And passed her whole life  
In dressing wax figures" [*of the infant Christ*].

[72] The great feudal lords who had jurisdiction over their own lands were so called, because on the limits of those lands they fixed a gallows (*horca*), with a large knife (*cuchillo*), as a symbol of their privilege.

[75] Loved one, or sweetheart.

[77] The vestibules of the convents are called the *porteria*. They lead to the cells of the friars, and are distinct from the entrances to the church. All women are prohibited from entering these portions of the cloisters.

[78] This name is given to a female who confesses to one ecclesiastic exclusively, making him also the spiritual director of her conscience. Some persons who profess to be extremely religious divide these functions between two distinct persons, one of them being the confessor, and the other the director.

[81] Agonizante was the name of a religious community. The principal duty of its members was that of administering to the wants and last religious consolations of the faithful at the hour of death.

[98] There are numerous other anecdotes of her Majesty, which tend to show she is possessed of some of the best qualities which can adorn the mind of a queen, and tend to make her popular. Some of these will appear in the following pages. We shall at present but give one. Passing one day, when quite a child, along the Prado in Madrid, the eyes of a poor little girl, without shoes or stockings, were directed to the royal carriage and caught those of her Majesty. Perceiving the queen's eyes were fixed on her, the little urchin dropt a courtesy, and held out her hand in the attitude of supplication. Her Majesty halted, beckoned the child forward, saw her naked feet, and having no money, in a moment took off her own shoes and threw them out of the carriage-window to the girl, desiring her to try them on, which she did, made another genuflection, and walked off with them, to the great delight of her royal benefactor.

[107] An anecdote referred to by Gibbon, in the part of his history relative to the sect of the *iconoclast*, confirms all that is advanced in the text on the powerful influence of worship to images, as it regards the character of devotion. When the soldiers of Leo broke in pieces the image of a saint before whom daily prayers were wont to be offered up, a pious individual gave vent to this bitter lamentation, "Now I can no longer address my prayers to heaven; now I have no one to hear them!"

[110] Santa Rita is called by Spaniards "The advocate of impossibilities,"—(*La abogada de los imposibles*.)

Thus, it is not uncommon for a young lady to say to a suitor whom she refuses, and who imploringly asks her what he shall do to gain her favour, "Go and invoke Santa Rita."

[113] Spaniards have not waited for Pius IX. to come and acknowledge the immaculate conception as a dogma of the faith. This belief has existed in Spain from time immemorial. Murillo has immortalised it in his master-works, and Charles III. declared her to be the patroness of Spain, commanding her image to be placed in the badges of the order which he founded under the title of "The Royal and Distinguished Order of Charles III."

[115] The Virgin of Atocha is the patron of the sovereigns of Spain. Her image, which is small and of a colour as dark as a mulatto, appeared, as tradition asserts, at the spot on which the chapel was afterwards erected, and in which, in the present day, it is deposited. This chapel is situated near the magnificent promenade called the Prado, in Madrid, and was formerly part of a convent of Dominican Friars, converted, after the suppression of the religious orders, into barracks for sick soldiers. When the court is in Madrid, the sovereign goes every Saturday evening to this sanctuary with a great procession of grandees and guards. The Virgin of Atocha has an immense fortune, consisting of jewels and trinkets which have been presented to her by the monarchs. Among these presents, one is the distinguished velvet dress, embroidered with gold, worn by Isabella II. at the time she was wounded by the Priest Merino.

When her Majesty felt she was wounded by the poniard of this assassin, and saw him seized by her guards, her first words were, "Pray, spare the life of that man!" This is another proof of Isabella's kind and forgiving disposition, especially when it is considered that she uttered the words spontaneously, without prompting or premeditation, but on the spur of the moment.

[116] Spaniards have greatly excelled in the sculpture of wood,—a branch of the fine arts which does not deserve the disdain with which modern writers have treated it. In many churches in Spain there are admirable productions of this kind, of a perfect execution, expression, and design. The statue of the Virgin of the Conception, placed in the choir of the cathedral of Seville, a work of the celebrated Montañes, will rival the most celebrated masterpieces of modern sculpture.

[125] The Roman Catholic Church has adopted, for its hymns, the poetry of the low Latinity of the middle ages. Among these is distinguished for its originality that which is generally sung in the office for the dead. The two principal verses are these:—

“Dies iræ, dies ilia,  
Solvens sec'lum in favilla,  
Teste David, cum Sybilla.  
. . . . .  
Tuba mirum spargens sonum,  
Per sepulchra regionum,  
Venient omnes ante thronum.”

We cannot resist the opportunity of giving the late Sir Walter Scott's metrical translation of this sublime ode, a translation which, as a hymn, is generally sung in Protestant churches:—

I.

“The day of wrath: that dreadful day,  
When heaven and earth shall pass away!  
What power shall be the sinner's stay?  
Whom shall he trust that dreadful day?

II.

“When, shriv'ling, like a parch'd scroll,  
The flaming heavens together roll,  
When louder yet, and yet more dread,  
Swells the high trump that wakes the dead,—

III.

“Oh, on that day, that wrathful day,  
When man to judgment wakes from clay,  
Be thou, O Christ! the sinner's stay,  
Though heaven and earth shall pass away!”

We also find in this collection the hymn which is sung to the Virgin of Griefs in the Holy Week, and which begins thus:—

“Stabat mater dolorosa  
Juxta crucem lachrymosa,  
Dum pendebat filius.”

[127] This game dance is repeated in the cathedral of Seville on the 8th of December, the day of the immaculate conception of the Virgin, and during eight days afterwards, which are called an *octave*. In the present day this cathedral, as we have said elsewhere, has also the singular privilege of using ornaments of a sky-blue colour, which is not permitted by the church on other feast-days. These ornaments are of an incomparable value, and the chief one of them, called *capa pluvial*, is richly embroidered with pearls and precious stones.

[148a] “Digo un responso por una peseta.”

[148b] “Yo lo digo por media peseta.”

[174] The word *alms* in this case does not mean alms given away to the poor, but the money invested in the purchase of a copy of this bull, published and sold by the commissary-general, or by the different archbishops and bishops.

If we consider that the bull is printed on a small piece of very inferior paper, and that it is sold for 7½d., and that every Spaniard in the Peninsula and its colonies is bound to purchase it, at the risk of incurring a mortal sin every Friday in the year that he eats meat without this authorization, we may form some idea of the enormous revenue derived from this source by the Spanish Church, and by the Roman See, which has a profit in the speculation. The Spanish Peninsula contains at the present moment, on a very low calculation, fifteen millions of inhabitants, the Philippine Islands four millions, and Cuba and Porto Rico together something more than one million. In Spanish America, from Mexico to Cape Horn, there are nearly sixteen millions of inhabitants subject to the Catholic Church, and his holiness grants to them likewise the privilege of the *Holy Crusade* bull, with the further advantage of being allowed to cook their fish or vegetables with hog's lard or beef and mutton fat, on those days too on which not even Spanish Catholics are allowed to eat meat.

[176] The name given to the administration of episcopal property in the interval between the death of a bishop and the consecration of his successor. A part of the revenues of such sees

during the vacancy went to the public treasury, and the other to the church treasury.

[194] They so call certain women, who without being in the cloisters use the habit of nuns, and live in common together, in establishments called *beaterios*.

[200] What Roman Catholics generally understand by repentance.

[202] This spirit was preserved down to the time of Isabella of Castille. After the conquest of Granada, Gonzalo Fernandez de Cordova, known by the name of "the great captain," and to whose valour and military foresight was owing, in a great degree, that glorious conquest, erected in the precinct of the same city a proud palace which was destined for his own use. The queen wished to see it ere it was scarcely finished, and after having examined it minutely, turning to Gonzalo she said,—“Gonzalo, this house is too good for a man; God only ought to live in it.” The hero, yielding to the suggestion, delivered up the edifice to the Hieronimite monks, in order that they might found a convent therein. The monks, grateful for so generous a gift, resolved, on the death of Gonzalo, to inter his body in the church of the establishment; and on the exterior of its tower they wrote in enormous letters the epitaph of its founder in these words:—

“Gonzalvo Ferdinandez de Cordova,  
Hispanorum duci,  
Gallorum et Turcarum terrori.”

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