

AN AMERICAN IN SEVILLE

Traces of the Auto da Fes of the Inquisition Found Everywhere.

A FREE-THINKING SPANIARD

Catholic and Protestant Views of the Passion Week Processions—A Collection of Relics.

SEVILLE, April 12.—All Spaniards venerate the name of Isabel la Católica, nor is the impressionable De Amicis the only foreigner who has trembled and wept before the enshrined memorials, jewel box, mirror, missal, and crown of her royal womanhood. She is a precious figure in poor Spain's sunset revelry—a saint beneath a conquering standard, a silken lady in a soldier's tent. Yet this peerless, Queen, merciful, magnanimous, devout, "the shield of the innocent," caring supremely for the glory of God and the good of her country, gave consent, albeit reluctant, to the establishment of the Inquisition, Christianity's chief scandal and Spain's most fatal blight. So ironic were the stars of Isabel.

Wherever one moves in Spain the sickening breath of the auto da fé lingers in the air. In such a square, we read, was once a mighty holocaust of Jews; beneath our feet, we are told, is a mass of human bones and cinders. This sunny Seville, with her parks and patios, her palms and orange groves, a city seemingly fashioned only for love and song, had her army of nearly two score thousand martyrs, who, dressed in the hateful San Benitos, yellow coats painted with flames and devils, were burned to death here in our gay Plaza de la Constitucion, then known as the Plaza de San Francisco, and in the Quemadero beyond the walls. As one mingles with some outdoor throng, all intent on pageant, dance, or other spectacle, one shudders to remember that just such dark, eager faces were ringed about the agonies of those heroic victims. For there are two sides to the Spanish Inquisition. If Spaniards were the inquisitors, Spaniards, too, were the dauntless sufferers. The sombre gaze of the torturer was met, as steel meets iron, by the unflinching eye of the tortured. But "the unimaginable touch of Time" transforms all tragedy to beauty, and red poppies, blowing on the grassy plain of the Quemadero, translate into poetry to-day that tale of blazing fagots.

THE HOLY HOUSE OF SEVILLE.

Religious liberty now exists under the laws of Spain, although the administration of those laws leaves much to be desired. In three old conventual churches of Seville gather her three Protestant congregations. Beneath the pavements of two of these heretic strongholds old inquisitors sleep what uneasy sleep they may, while one of the Protestant pastors, formerly a Catholic priest, has quietly collected and stored in his church study numerous mementoes of the Holy Office. Here may be seen two of those rare copies of the 1602 translation of the Bible, by Cipriano de Valera, whom the Inquisition could burn only in effigy, since the translator, who had printed his book in Amsterdam, did not return to accompany the Familiars to the Quemadero. Here are old books, with horrible woodcuts of the tortments, and time-stained manuscripts, several bearing the seal and signatures of "the Catholic Kings," these last so ill written that it is hard to tell the name of Ferdinand from that of Isabella. Among these are royal commissions, or licenses, granted to individual inquisitors, records of auto da fé's, and wills of rich inquisitors, the sources of whose wealth would hardly court a strict examination. Here, too, is the standard of the Holy Office, the very banner borne in those grim processions. Its white silk is saffroned now, but the strange seal of the Inquisition, a bleeding Christ upon the cross, is clearly blazoned in the centre, while the four corners show the seal of San Domingo.

The Inquisition prison, the dreaded Holy House of Seville, is used as a factory at present, and hereby no longer secures admission there, but I looked up at its grated windows, and then, with a secret shiver, looked down on the ground where the Spanish pastor of antiquarian tastes was marking out with his cane the directions of the far-reaching subterranean cells. We slipped into an outer court of the fabrica, where the two señores, effectively aided by as many sturdy lads, cried up and flung back a sullen door in the pavement and invited me to grope my darling way down some twenty crumbling steps, overgrown with a treacherous green mold. There was no refusing, in face of the cloud of witnesses whose groans these stones had heard, and I took a heart-breaking plunge into the honeycomb of chill, foul-smelling, horror-haunted dungeons, whose roofs let fall a constant drip of water and from whose black recesses I was the unwilling means of liberating a choice variety of insects. Let Seville, as the ages pass, forgive her inquisitors, who knew not what they did, but may she rear a monument as beautiful as the Giralda to those high-hearted men and women of her noblest blood whose loyalty to what they held for truth not the utmost agonies could break. Spaniards of every creed might well be proud of Spain's shining host of martyrs.

OVERHEARD IN THE BALCONY.

The Holy Week pageants naturally give rise to controversy. Catholics and Protestants, standing close in our narrow balcony to watch the glittering processions, were as frank in discussion as the bounds set by Spanish courtesy permitted. Our hosts would not oppose their guests, nor the guests offend against the holdings of the house, nor would any Spaniard on such an occasion take issue with a foreigner, but the visiting Madrileño felt free to dispute with the calling Sevillano, especially when their bodies were stretched two-thirds over the balcony railings.

"Bravo! What luxury! What splendor! This doesn't look as if the power of the Spanish Church were waning, eh? See that tunic! See that canopy! What wealth! What magnificence of wealth!"

"Wealth! It's a miser's hoard. All that waste of gold, plastered over those useless trappings there, ought to be stripped off and put into circulation. What, man! This is the nineteenth century!"

"True. So much the better. At the end of the nineteenth century there is one country left in Europe where religion counts for more than political economy."

"Religion? Honor to the word! But does not religion include charity? Half Andalusia goes starving and in rags, and your Sevillan Maries here wear fortunes on their wooden backs. Such shows are an insult to the poor. Why, man! You know that the Virgin of the Kings, in your cathedral, has sixty of those gorgeous mantles—satin, velvet, damask, silver tissue, gold lace, what not? If she heeded the bidding of Christ, fifty-nine of them would be given to the needy. All our poor repatriados might be clothed with only half of her wardrobe."

"Ah! Charity is a good word, too. But there are many forms of charity. Isn't it one of your modern doctrines that the best alms is work? Well and good. The more superb and prodigal these processions, the greater are the crowds of sightseers that flock to Seville, bringing bustle for us all from the proprietors of the Hotel de Madrid to the old women who peddle gingerbread."

"Yes, for three or four days in the year, and no longer; I could invest those idle millions paraded through the streets in ways far better for the industrial interests of Seville."

"Many thanks! Business is much; devotion is more."

"You look with clouded eyes."

"The only cloud here, señor, is that made by the incense."

At this point the son of our host dexterously stepped between with cooling lemonade.

SPANISH LONGEVITY.

But the most uncompromising heretic I have encountered in Spain is an old philosopher, well on his way to the nineties, yet brisk and hardy yet. Longevity is much the fashion in the Peninsula. They have a saying in Ronda that men of eighty there are only chickens, but one should not believe all that they say in Ronda. Did we not clamber, slipping on wet stones, down a precipitous path to peer, from under dripping umbrellas, at what our guide declared was an old Roman bridge? "It doesn't look old and it doesn't look Roman," was our dubious comment, but our highly recommended conductor, who is the English-Spanish natives of Gibraltar Rock are called, assured us that it was built in the days of Julius Caesar, but had been wonderfully well preserved. We eyed him thoughtfully, bearing in mind that he had already pointed out the statue of a long-dead poet as a living politician, but we meekly continued through the lashing rain, to follow his long footsteps over the breakneck ways of Ronda, wildest of crag

aeries, where race after race has left its autograph. The Roman columns of the church make the Arab cupolas look young, and put the Gothic choir altogether out of countenance. A bright-shawled Spanish woman, who we fondly hoped might be a smuggler's wife, drew us delicious water from a Roman well in a Moorish patio, where a mediæval King of gentle memory used to drink his wine from cups wrought of the skulls of those enemies whom he had beheaded with his own sword. But not all this, and more, could efface our doubts as to that Roman bridge, which, indeed, we found, on a belated perusal of our guide-books, had been erected by a Malaga architect less than a century and a half ago.

But, however it may be as to Ronda octogenarians, I will wouch for my old philosopher. Extreme age has written its deforming marks on face and figure, yet he runs up the steepest stairs, reads the finest print, fills his days with a close succession of labors and amusements, and scoffs at religion as airily as if Death had passed him on the crowded way and would never turn back to look for him again.

He is nominally a Catholic, but of that class to which a large proportion of the Spanish men belong—indifferents. He does not go to mass or to confession, and frets prodigiously when "that old wife of mine" gives pesetas to the priest. He cackles with mirth over the Holy Week processions and the Church ceremonies in general, and will laugh himself into a coughing fit full in the face of a bedizened Virgin.

LITERARY PASTIMES.

At our first meeting he offered, with great kindness, to come and read Spanish with me. As I had invaded Spain for the express purpose of studying the Spanish drama, I took a volume of Calderon from my trunk and cheerfully awaited his visit. But it was a matter of several visits before I could open my Calderon. The jaunty old cavalier arrived, brimming over with chat and anecdote, and when at last I hinted at the reading, produced with pride from his inner coat pocket a little, paper-bound geografía that he had written himself for use in the Spanish schools, and proceeded to regale me with extracts from its pages. I looked severely at my girl companion, whose eyes were dancing in a demure face, and endeavored to profit by this unexpected course of instruction. The author chuckled much over his sagacity in having arranged the subject matter of his book in paragraphs and not by question and answer. In the latter case, he explained, the children would learn the answers without reading the questions, a process bound to result in geographical confusion. The little volume, as is the wont of schoolbooks in other lands, tended to give to its students a disproportionate idea of the importance of their own country. Spain and her colonies were treated in seventy pages, Great Britain and her colonies in three, France in four, while America, from Greenland to Patagonia, was handled in a single entry, one figure each, and those absurdly small, being set for "her population, army and navy." The Confederacion de los Estados Unidos was barely mentioned as one of the five "States" of North America.

But the only feature of his book for which the author felt called upon to apologize was the catering to popular superstition, as in stating, for instance, that in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela is adored the veritable body of St. James. He cast a quizzical glance at me in reading this, and then laughed himself purple in the face. "One has to say these things in this country," he gasped, still breathless from his mirth. "Drops of water must run with the stream. Bueno! You know that Spaniards call the Milky Way the road to Santiago? And multitudes make the precious pilgrimage yet. If only there were a shrine where people might be cured of being fools!"

Quick-witted as the old gentleman was, he presently detected a lack of geographical enthusiasm in his audience. His literary vanity smarted for a moment and then he fell to laughing, declaring that ladies always had a distaste for useful information. "That old wife of mine" could not abide arithmetic. He digressed into an explanation of the Roman notation, making it quite clear to us wherein IX. differed from XI, and with antiquated courtliness of phrase, even for Spain, asked our gracious permission to cause himself the pain of departure.

He often reappears in his wiry arm, reached through the Moorish bars of the outer door, would give its own peculiarly vigorous twitch to the bell chain looped within. A maid leaning over the railing of an upper story would call down the challenge inherited from good old fighting times: "Who comes here?" And his thin voice would chirp the Andalusian answer: "Peace."

On his second visit he fairly gurgled with pleasure as he placed another volume with his name on the title page before me. Since I did not incline to soild reading, behold him equally ready to supply me with the sweets of literature! This, too, was a school book, a somewhat hap-hazard collection of Castilian poems, with brief biographies of the authors represented. Its novel educational feature was the printing each poem in a different type. The result was a little startling to the eye, but the editor was doubtless right in claiming that it made the reading harder for the children, and so developed their powers through exercise. Here, again, he was ashamed of the fact that fully two-thirds of the poems were religious.

"But what can one do in this country?" he asked testily. "All the reading books have to be like that. Bah! But he will not read these pious verses. The others are much more entertaining."

Determined not to wound him again by any lack of interest in books of his own shaping, we sat patiently through page after page of that juvenile school reader, but when, with a pamphlet on spelling and punctuation, we had completed the list of his works, I once more called his attention to Calderon.

DELIGHTED WITH CALDERON.

This struck him as a capital joke. He had never read Calderon himself, he had hardly heard of Calderon, and that a foreigner, a woman at that, should insist on reading Calderon, was funny enough to make his old sides ache. There were modern authors in plenty, who must certainly write much better than an out-of-date fellow like that. He had books that he could lend to me. He had friends from whom he could borrow. But nothing would please me but Calderon! Why under the whimsical moon should I set my heart on Calderon?

"Bueno!" he cried at last, whisking the mirthful tears from his eyes. "Vámos á ver! Let us go and see!"

I opened the classic volume at the Catholic Faust-drama, "El Mágico Prodigioso," and we began to read, soon passing into the great argument between Cipriano and Lucifer as to the nature of God. Our guest, sensitive to all impressions as he was, became immediately amazed and delighted.

"But this is lofty!" he exclaimed. "This is sublime! Good, Cipriano, good! Now you have him! What will the devil say to that? Vámos á ver!"

At the close of that tremendous scene he shut the book, panting with excitement. But nevertheless there was a twinkle in his eye. He knew now why I craved this Calderon. He was evidently a religious writer, and women were all religious. It was an amiable feminine weakness, like the aversion to geography and arithmetic. But his indulgent chivalry rose to the occasion. Having learned my taste, such as it was, he would gratify it to the utmost.

"If you would only come and see my library," he proposed. "I have exactly the book there that will please you. I have not read it much myself, but it is very large, with most beautiful pictures, and it tells all these old stories about Lucifer and all that. I am sure it is just what you would like. Will you not do your humble servant the honor of coming to-morrow afternoon?"

I ran over in my mind our engagements for the morrow. He mistook the cause of my hesitation.

"Indeed you need not be afraid to come," he urged. "My house is as safe as a convent. That old wife of mine, too, will be sure to be somewhere about. And you can bring the silent señorita with you."

I was aware of a slight convulsion in "the silent señorita." She could speak all the Spanish she chose, but she found the eccentricities of this visitor so disconcerting that she affected ignorance, and he supposed her mute preference at our interviews to be purely in deference to the Spanish proprietress.

My youthful chaperon, much elated by this reversal of our natural positions, duly attended me the next day to our friend's surprisingly elegant home. He was forever crying poverty and telling me, with the tears that came to his old age as easily as the laughter, how the hardships of life had beaten out of him every ambition save hope to "gain the bread" until his death, but we found him luxuriously housed, and I was afterward informed that he was one of the richest men in the city.

AN ANDALUSIAN HOUSE.

He ran with that wonderful sprightliness of his across the marbled court to meet us and ceremoniously conducted us up the handsome staircase. He led us through all "our house," typically Andalusian, with statues and urns of blossoming trees set in the open patios, Moorish arches and bright-hued tiles, shaded balconies, tapestried and curtained beds, brasers and rocking chairs, and in every room images and paintings of the saints, at which he made irrelevant grimaces.

There were family portraits, too, before three of which he broke down into weeping—the son who had died in the prime of manhood, the daughter lost in her fair maidenhood, and, where the stormy seas shook him from heat to foot, the Benjamin of his heart, a clear-eyed young soldier who had fallen in the Cuban war. The tears were

still streaming down the quivering old face when we turned silently away—for what word of comfort would Americans dare to speak?—and followed him to his study.

He was of extravagant repute in his locality as a scholar and a man of letters, and his study was all that a study ought to be—well furnished with desk, pigeonholes, and all the tools of literary labor, and walled with books. Among these was an encyclopædia in which, to his frank astonishment, he found an article of fifteen pages on Calderon. The great volume I had come to see lay open on a reading stand. It was a Spanish Bible, with the Doré illustrations. I wanted to look at the title page, but my eager host, proud to exhibit and explain, tossed over the leaves so fast that I had no opportunity.

AN ORIGINAL COMMENTATOR.

As he was racing through the Psalms, impatient because of their dearth of pictures, my eye was caught by the familiar passage: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so my soul panteth after Thee, O God."

With prompt curiosity, he popped down his white head, in its close-fitting skull cap, to see what I was noting, and instantly went off into an immoderate gust of laughter.

"Muy bien!" he wheezed, as soon as he could recover anything like a voice. "But that is very cleverly put. He was a witty fellow who wrote that Just so! Just so! The deer goes to the water because he means to get something for himself, and that's why the priests go into the church and why the women go to mass. It's all selfishness, is religion. But how well he says it!"

"No, no!" I exclaimed, for once startled into protest. "He is saying that religion is the instinct of thirst."

The incorrigible old worldling took this for another jest, and, as in gallantry bound, laughed harder at my sally than at poor King David's.

"Excellent! Perfect! So it is! So it is! Religion is the instinct to fill one's own stomach. Just what I have always said! 'As the hart panteth after the water brooks'—ho, ho! I must try and remember that."

As we went on with Calderon and the love story of the play developed, my fellow-reader, always seeking to ferret out the reasons for my interest, began to spin new hypotheses as to this conundrum in woman-kind who had strayed his way. For when I am smitten with self-reproach to feel myself in any sense making light of one whose kindness toward us was inexhaustible, and whose glass of life is dim with years and sorrows, I take refuge in remembering that he found me far more than equally diverting. A woman unhusbanded and unconcerned, not only outside of convent walls, but coolly roving the wide world over, babbling strange tongues and spelling out old books—in all his lengthened span of days he had never hit on a phenomenon so infinitely comical as this!

His enthusiasm for Calderon soon led to a lament. As the plot thickened he ceased to be of the slightest help in any difficulties that the text might offer. In vain I would beseech him to clear up some troublesome passage.

"Oh, never mind!" he would say, vexed at the interruption. "They didn't write very well in those old days. And I want to know which of her three suitors Justina took. Three at once! What a situation! Vámos á ver! I hope it will be Cipriano."

As the spell of Calderon's imagination passed more and more strongly upon him, this most eager and sympathetic of readers quite accepted, for the time being, the poet's Catholic point of view, trembling for Cipriano and almost choking with agitated joy when Justina, calling in her extremity upon the name of God, put Lucifer to flight. But after we had read the drama to the end, through its final scene of triumphant martyrdom, he sat silent for several minutes, and then shook his head.

"Not true; it is not true. There is no devil but the evil passions of humanity. And as for Cipriano's definition for God—it is good. Yes, it is great, yes, but who can shut God into a definition? One might as well try to pick up the ocean in a teaspoon. No! All religions are human fictions. We have come, nobody knows whence or why, into this paltry, foolish, sordid life, for most of us only a fight to gain the bread, and afterward—Bueno! I am on the brink of the jump, and the priests have not frightened me yet. Afterward? Vámos á ver!"

KATHARINE LEE BATES.

CUT THE CHINAMEN'S QUEUES.

Lieut. Lieber's Effective Method of Suppressing Celestial Looters in the Philippines.

Reference has been made in recent despatches from Gen. Otis at Manila to the means adopted by the Army authorities to put an end to looting by the Chinese followers of the American Army in the Philippines. The ingenious plan for dealing with the Celestial marauders originated with Lieut. William Lieber of the Twenty-third Infantry, son of the Judge Advocate General of the Army. Interest will therefore attach to the views of this young officer as to actual conditions in the active service and his description of the operation of the measure against Chinese looting. Under date of March 9 Lieut. Lieber wrote the following letter to a friend:

"Here I am with my Captain (Stephen O'Connor, aged sixty-one,) huddled up under a tree and about four miles from Manila. My company, or the company I am with, rather, has been on the firing line for nearly two weeks, so I have heard lots of the fighting but have seen very little. Once in a while the insurgents drop around our way, but they hardly ever stay long enough to allow our men to dirty their guns. My Captain does not believe in firing at a person until he is within about 100 yards, and the insurgents seem to think that the proper range for sharpshooters is about 600 yards, so you can readily see that ten rounds of ammunition will last our company some time. I am thinking seriously of making a sling shot, as it seems a shame to disappoint the poor 'nigs' altogether."

"Once in a while I am sent out with ten or fifteen men, and we move as far forward as possible and give the sharpshooters a treat. They are almost always found in trees, and it makes it comparatively easy to find them. Strange as it may seem to see me put down in black and white that I hate to go out on these little jobs, it's so, and I'll tell you why. The insurgents so far have not even sent a bullet near any man in the company, and, although they blaze away all day and most of the night, they have done absolutely no harm, and it really makes no difference whether they are where they are or not. When I go out with a small detachment of men, and we find a 'gent' in a tree or elsewhere, we always present him with a volley, and I know of no case where the volley was not accepted. The insurgents are very careless in burying their dead, and in many cases it is impossible for us to do so; consequently the result at times is awful."

"The Filipinos in some respects are like our poor class of country negroes. They all keep about six or eight dogs around their shacks. When our troops advanced and drove the 'nigs' to where they are at present they burned every hut and house as they passed, as the insurgents used to hide in them and when our men passed they would be fired upon from these places. The fires have resulted in filling this part of the country with homeless and starved dogs, and at one time there were plenty of chickens running loose. The chickens have disappeared in various ways, but the poor dogs are gradually starving to death. What I am trying to lead up to is this, that it is not an uncommon sight to walk around the country here and find the body of a Filipino that has simply been eaten up by the dogs. Knowing that, as I have seen it, for myself over and over again, I hate to kill any more. Of course, duty is duty, and I have made up my mind to carry out my orders to the letter, but that does not prevent my saying I dislike some parts of the work."

"The Chinamen were the worst trouble we had. They were out in the country by the hundred, looting the deserted dwellings. Capt. O'Connor ordered his men to arrest all they saw on the road, or in that part of the country, with anything but vegetables in their baskets. You should have seen the amount of stuff that was brought in, most singed. There seemed no way of stopping this looting, and the Captain was racking his brains what to do to stop it. He thought that if one or two of the men were shot in the presence of the others it might stop it, but Chinamen seem to be such a harmless lot of people, and a shooting with limited sense, that we decided shooting was a trifle too much."

"I told the captain I thought I could find a way to keep them from our section if he would allow me to try it. He said, 'Go ahead and try.' So two of the men and I picked out two Chinamen of the twenty we had as prisoners, and the two with the longest queues, and before all the others I cut the queues off, and then let the whole bunch loose after asking each if he intended to return. The last two days we were there we did not see a Chinaman, and I am quite sure they will never go back to that part of the country. One of the queues was quite oily, so I burned it; the other is on my wall here."

"Two years ago I little dreamed of ever indulging in Indian warfare, by catching some poor devil and taking his scalp, but I've done it now."