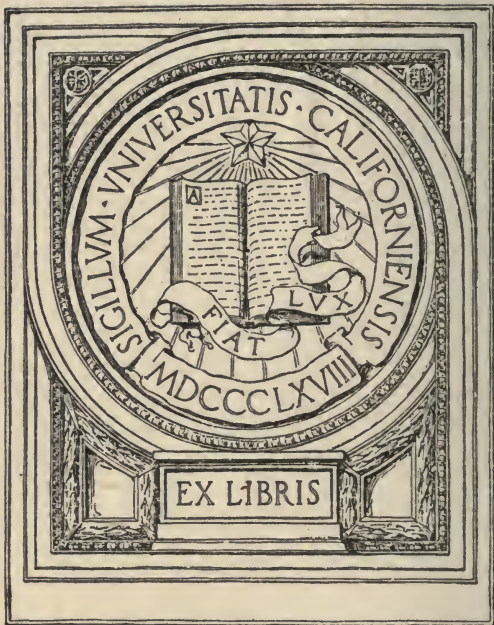


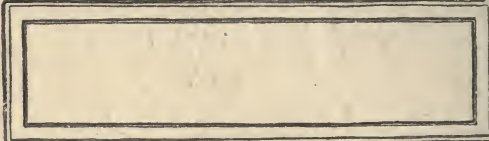


A CORNER OF SPAIN

WALTER WOOD



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**A CORNER  
OF SPAIN**





TO VISIT  
ASTORIA



GALICIA'S GOLDEN SANDS.



A CORNER  
OF SPAIN  
BY WALTER WOOD  
WITH AN INTRODUCTION  
BY MARTIN HUME

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JAMES POTT & CO.  
LONDON : EVELEIGH NASH

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ANNOUNCED

Printed by BALLANTYNE & Co. LIMITED  
Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, London

## PREFACE

THIS book does not pretend to be a history or a complete record of Galicia. Its purpose is to show something of the life and character of a little-known part of Spain, and to deal with things seen and done by the visitor who travels under competent and comfortable guidance. I have written either of what I experienced or on the authority of prominent residents with whom I came in contact in my wanderings.



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"A LAND OF MOUNTAIN AND FLOOD

## INTRODUCTION



## INTRODUCTION

I STOOD upon the salient bastion of an ancient fortress towering high above a swift and placid river. Below and around me swept line upon line of crumbling walls and grass-grown moats, the scene of many a bloody struggle in the evil days of old. From a hundred grim embrasures peeped rusty cannon, harmless now, and dark-eyed children sported upon the battlements that once had belched defiance and destruction to the foe across the stream. For this old white town, cramped within its triple ramparts, is the last vantage ground of Portugal; and on the other side of the Miño straight before me is Galicia, the unconquered land of the Gael, a land of mountain and flood, of mist and sunlight, such as are all the western promontories in which the mysterious Celtic people have finally found a home after ages of unrecorded wanderings.

The scene as I looked upon it from these old battlements of Valença is as fair as any that Europe can offer. Down in the valley on both sides of the stream the maize-fields are reddening in the autumn sun, and between them, and terraced on the hill

slopes above them, vines, heavy now with great masses of black grapes, are trained over slender posts of grey granite, forming endless arcades of fruit and foliage. Then higher up, climbing the steep skirts of the mountains, vast forests of darkling pines throw into relief the majestic summits, bare and boulder-strewn, upon which the ardent southern sunlight glows and quivers, whilst deep purple shadows fleck the tints of old rose and cinnamon where the sunlight falls. Across the majestic iron bridge that spans the Miño, the one modern note in all this scene, there rises an ancient city clustered upon a rise crowned by square battlemented towers. Some old feudal fortress it would seem; but closer acquaintance proves it to be a Christian cathedral built at a time when bishops girt the sword and donned their armour to fight the infidel and defend their faith with their lives.

Tuy, the first city of Galicia, is a relic of a past age. Its tortuous narrow streets, mere alleys a few feet wide, are like those of the prehistoric Celtic city of Citania in Portugal: deep channels worn in the living rock and patched where necessary with flat slabs. The city itself is as silent as the grave, and the frowning old castle-cathedral, with its tinkling bell calling to worship, almost alone indicates the presence of the living. A mediæval writer calls Tuy "lately a city of pagans," but for well upon ten centuries now the brave old Romanesque church has stood aloft unmoved like a cliff to resist the incursions of the enemies of the Church.

But Tuy, quaint and suggestive of thought as it is, can hardly be considered a typical Galician city; for the best and most picturesque regions of Galicia are those which surround the glorious fjords cut deep into the land that entitles the little "Kingdom" to be called the Norway of Spain.

The scenery up the Miño to Orense is, as Mr. Wood has mentioned, one of the most fascinating series of river views for fifty miles that Europe can show. Foaming and tearing its way between dark gorges, broadening here and there into smiling little valleys, the mountains terraced almost to their distant summits with mere steps upon which crops are raised, the river passes through infinite phases of beauty. But the towns, and even villages, are few and far between in these wild regions, and the suave and beautiful inland bays, with the sweet valleys and soaring sierras that surround them, will form for visitors the main attractions of Galicia.

I have here little to add to Mr. Wood's glowing descriptions of many of the places he visited, except to confirm them fully and completely from long and intimate local knowledge. To come comfortably and safely from brumous England in the spring or autumn in less than sixty hours to this enchanted land is almost like a sudden change of world. This vivid light sharpening all the outlines and vivifying the colours to almost fierce intensity, can surely not emanate from the pale, misty sun we left but two short days ago; these azure seas landlocked by the eternal hills of pines and gilded

summits, seem a different element from the sullen turgid grey of the Channel waves. And the chaffering folk in the markets of Vigo clad in brilliant colours, vehement in their bargaining as if life depended upon the price of the glowing fruits and glittering fish which they buy and sell; do they belong to the same human family of sad-faced people we have left behind us? Look at these hardy fisherfolk, and still more at the husbandmen and graziers in the inland valleys, and you will recognise their close resemblance with some of our own people. These, you will say, might well be Connemara folk, and in many respects besides personal appearance these Gallegos are like their brother Celts in other western lands indented by the sea. The bays of Western Ireland from Donegal to Kerry; the lochs of Scotland from Ross to Argyll; the waters that run deep into the Breton land from St. Michel round to Morbihan, all breed upon their banks and valleys men of the same race as these, though none of them are so untouched by outer influences, except in the matter of language, as these Gallegos. Wanderers are they and workers throughout their world: they have none of the Castilian's haughty assumption of superiority independent of circumstances. Throughout the Peninsula, both in Spain and Portugal, in many parts of eastern South America, wherever a poor wage may be gained by hard work; harvesting other people's crops, carrying other people's burdens, there you will find the patient Gallego, hardy,



frugal, and honest, yearning like a true Celt for his own home and his own kin again: sometimes, indeed, though rarely, so overcome by the homesickness as to be unable to resist the craving for his native hill-side before even he has amassed the few crowns that will enable him to provide some little comfort for him and his.

This Celtic instinct and need to wander in search of work in order to render less hard the lot of the weaker ones left behind, is the main reason for the almost universal labour of the women of Galicia in tasks elsewhere usually allotted to men. The constant drain of the best and strongest of the male population of Galicia by emigration is the saddest phase of Galician life. Something like twenty thousand Gallegos emigrate to the Argentine Republic every year. They are usually men of the soil, crowded out by a vicious system of taxation and the infinite subdivision of the soil amongst a multitude of peasants owning their tiny crofts. The soil and climate of Galicia are the best in Spain and the people are by far the most laborious; and yet it is calculated that three-quarters of the poorer classes in the province are only kept alive by remittances sent by the hardworking sons, husbands, and brothers in America. Not less than eight millions of pesetas (£280,000) thus finds its way, mostly in very small sums, annually to those who stay at home living upon the hard fare and keeping the wolf from the door as best they may by constant toil upon land or sea.

But a better time, it is hoped, is dawning for this favoured land. The unrivalled fishing grounds are providing now not only food for those who live upon the shores. All along the Ria of Vigo and elsewhere factories are working, preserving and packing sardines for the markets in the world. The abundant vegetables and fruits, which according to the altitude upon the hill-sides may be gathered from early spring to late autumn, are likewise being preserved for export to countries less abundant than this. Other industries, too, are awakening after the stifled sleep of generations, and if the burden of taxation upon land and labour can be lightened in its incidence there may yet be sunshine for the humble cottages of the Galician valleys, and prosperity flowing from the labour of Gallegos in their own land rather than from remittances from abroad. The living of these poor, patient folk is incredibly frugal; and like that of their kinsmen in Western Ireland inferior in stamina. Maize bread, and *brona*, a coarse millet bread, is the staple food with potatoes, though wheat of the finest quality can be grown; and the province which provides cattle for the consumption of half Spain, and once did a splendid trade in oxen with England, feeds its own population mainly on fish, varied by an occasional meal of cow-beef too poor for export.

Of all this the casual visitor sees nothing, and perhaps cares nothing. He drives through a smiling land greener than Kerry, more sunny than

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PEASANTS IN THEIR SUNDAY BEST



FISHWIVES

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the overrated French Riviera: he lingers in abundantly supplied markets, where all the fruits of the earth and ocean seem spread in glowing heaps: he spins in a comfortable motor-car along good roads cut upon the steep sides of mountains, and at every turn of the tortuous way admiring some new enchanting prospect of far-flung valley, towering cliffs or smiling fjord. The white cottages with their attendant conical dovecots and tiny granaries, their cobs of maize hung to ripen in fringe-like rows from their verandahs, are, it is true, mean and dark within; but they form a gracious note amidst the lush green of never-failing vegetation. Not even in the depth of winter is the landscape free from flowers. In February the wallflowers are in full bloom in the crannies of ancient masonry, and the sweet-scented mimosa is bent down by the weight of its masses of yellow flowers; a few weeks later the starry white and crimson camellias grow in the open with marvellous luxuriance, and by the middle of April the cherries are ripe in the sheltered valleys.

The air blows soft and moist from the sea through most of the year, tempering the ardent sun even in the height of summer; and this fact, which accounts for the marvellous verdancy and fertility of the soil, also brings with it frequent showers and mists drifting up the Rias, especially in the winter and early spring. But the rains are seldom of long continuance, and the sunshine invariably follows close upon them, drying everything with wonderful

rapidity and leaving the country more sparkling and green than ever.

Through such a country as this the traveller may go by motor-car or railway from one fjord to another, rarely long out of sight of blue water most of the way from Vigo to the *bellisima* Noya, by the holy town of Padron, where the body of St. James first took harbour on its miraculous voyage from the Holy Land to the country that thenceforward was to be its home. In old times it was part of the great pilgrimage after worshipping at the shrine of the Saint at Santiago to trudge on to Padron, the Iria Flavia of the Romans, and the ancient Galician verse says :

*“ Quien va á Santiago  
E non va al Padron  
O’ faz romeria ó non.”*

Through the Middle Ages a stream of pilgrims wended their way from all Christian lands to Santiago. The innumerable stars of the Milky Way are called by Spaniards “the road of Santiago,” expressive of the vast concourse of the faithful that flocked to the Galician shrine.

I have before me as I write a naïve relation of a German priest, the envoy, by the way, of an emperor seeking a Portuguese bride, who thought it his duty on the way to worship at the sainted tomb of Santiago. His narrative marks quaintly the immense difference that has come over the world since the mid-fifteenth century in which he

wrote. On arriving at Astorga the band of pilgrims who travelled together, and of which he and his colleague formed part, were advised to go no farther for the present, as one of the great rieving territorial nobles, who afterwards gave Ferdinand and Isabella so much trouble to crush, was ravaging Galicia and making war on the all-powerful favourite of the King, Don Alvaro de Luna. The pilgrims being very numerous, decided to run the risk, confiding in the harmless and meritorious character of their journey. Not far from Pontevedra, however, they fell in with a strong force of freebooters, who at once attacked them, wounding many and stripping the whole company to the skin. On their knees, and in mortal terror, the Emperor's envoys showed their credentials and prayed for mercy, but no attention was paid to them, though they invoked Santiago and all the other saints in the calendar. They were allowed, at last, to go on the way with their companions, despoiled and, as the narrator says, "full of pain, suffering and anguish, passing through towns burnt and sacked by the marauders."

At last arriving at Pontevedra some kindness was shown them, and, on foot still, the whole band trudged on to Santiago. After visiting the shrine there they walked, as in duty bound, "with certain pilgrims from Ireland," to Padron, where beneath the waves they were shown the stone ship that had brought to the port the body of the apostle. Then to another shrine at Finisterre also they went on foot, and finally, their religious duty being ended,

they proceeded on their matrimonial mission to Portugal.

The streets of Santiago can have changed but little since those far-off days of pious pilgrimage, when from all points of Christendom came the countless thousands to expiate sins or seek salvation. As the big omnibus from Cornes station bumps and rumbles into the streets of the ancient city, almost the only vehicle that ever invades them, a plunge is made into the centuries of long ago. Narrow slab-paved streets with dim arcades on both sides, above which houses of unimaginable antiquity are reared. Scallop shells adorn the fronts of many of them, indicating that they were formerly pilgrims' lodgings, and carved coats of arms with knightly casques above remind us that in the old days nobles, too, lived in the streets of the holy city. It looks almost an anachronism for men and women in modern garb to wander through these silent streets and to tread the very slabs worn thin by the pilgrim shoon of the centuries of faith so long ago.

Though lacking its sacred associations, Pontevedra in its way is almost as quaint as Santiago. Standing at the head of its lovely Ria, just where the river Lerez joins the bay, it is surrounded by gracious hills backed by the Sierra high aloft. No words can exaggerate the luxuriant character of the vegetation all around. As elsewhere, maize and vines floor the valleys and lower slopes with abundant fruit trees and a wilderness of flowers. Above are the oaks, sycamores, and chestnuts, then higher still



the grave solemn pines, crowned at last by bare rocky summits glittering and gilded in the sun. The ancient Plaza and Calle Real of Pontevedra, with arcade-arches so low that most Englishmen have to stoop to enter them, must present the same aspect as in the Middle Ages; these very houses and arcades must have stood as now when Columbus sailed in his Pontevedra ship to discover the New World. Whether the great "admiral of the ocean sea" was, as some have not hesitated to assert, of Pontevedran origin himself it is difficult now to decide; but certain it is that many of the Spanish sea-dogs who guided the *conquistadores* into the unknown were men from Pontevedra and the adjoining port of Marin.

All Galicia is historic ground for Englishmen. Its bays and harbours have been the resort of our ships in peace and war from time immemorial, and here in Pontevedra the English John of Gaunt reigned for years as so-called King of Castile in right of his wife the daughter of Peter the Cruel. Here in the country round the Sotomayors, the Sarmientos, the Fonsecaas, and Montenegros fought out their endless feuds in which the warlike archbishops of Santiago took a frequent part, until the great Isabella with iron hand and virile energy crushed them all with her *hermandad*. Here in the neighbourhood was born that Sarmiento whom we in England know best, him of Gondomar, who ruled our crowned poltroon James I. by bluff and mother wit. To the Sarmientos too belonged

that Maria de Salinas as she is incorrectly called in our annals, the devoted friend of Katherine of Aragon, and the ancestress of the house of Willoughby d'Eresby.

From Corunna, the Groyne, as our forbears translated it, sailed those numerous futile fleets that Philip destined to bring stubborn England to her knees. From the great Armada down to the poor squadron that sailed for Ireland when Elizabeth lay dying, Corunna was the trysting-place for England's foes. Here came the Desmonds, O'Donnells and O'Sullivans, who hoped to set a Catholic Ireland under the seal of Spain. Here landed the Irish bishops and priests who went backwards and forwards from Killibegs to Spain plotting and planning for Ireland's emancipation: here Drake and Norris in 1589 avenged the Armada by a bloody but fruitless siege, greatly to Elizabeth's indignation. I have told elsewhere\* the not too creditable story of this unauthorised siege in which the strong wine of Galicia proved a worse enemy to the English than the pikes and partisans of the brave Gallegan peasants and their womenkind led by the redoubtable heroine Maria Pita herself.

But all the blood feud has been forgotten long ago. The splendid soldier of British blood whose body lies buried upon the ramparts of Corunna died for Spain, as did thousands of our countrymen in that Titanic war to free the Peninsula from the grip of Napoleon; and Gallegos, high and low,

\* "The Year after the Armada."

have nothing but warm Celtic welcome for British visitors to their beautiful and long-neglected land. The British home fleet finds a frequent rendezvous in the magnificent Bay of Arosa, where Villa Garcia receives with open arms the sailors who come in peace. This beautiful Villa Garcia and its adjoining town of Carril, upon the line of railway from Pontevedra to Santiago, are destined for great things in the near future. Upon a charming wooded island, Cortegada, a few cable-lengths only from the shore, the new marine palace of the King of Spain is to be built, and the English-born Queen will be cheered by the sight of the fleets of her native land lying within hail of her summer home.

Nothing more exquisite can be imagined than a trip by sailing-boat or steam launch through this lovely landlocked bay of Arosa. Defended in the entrance by the storied isles of Ons, the great inlet looks like a vast lake surrounded by mountains on all sides. The water is so clear and pellucid that the bottom can be clearly seen many fathoms deep. A lofty island, that of Arosa, occupies a position in the centre of the bay, and on the opposite side, near the sandy promontory of Grove, the pine-clad isle of La Toja, with its wonderful healing hot wells within a few feet of the sea, possesses one of the finest hotels in Spain.

For, whatever happens with the rest of the country, this land of Galicia is going ahead at last. Gallegos who have returned rich from the Argentine are showing an increasing disposition to invest capital in native

enterprises, and the factories that are springing up around Vigo are the result. Not only can La Toja show an hotel of which any country in Europe might be proud, but, at Mondariz, the establishment in the high valley of the Tea, which Mr. Wood so justly praises, is an hotel that will satisfy the most exacting visitor. If only the terrible exodus of the able-bodied male population can be checked by making the lot of the peasant less cruelly hard than it is, Galicia should be one of the most prosperous regions in Europe.

As a proof that the present poverty and backwardness are the result of political causes it may be mentioned that thousands of Gallegos cross the Miño every summer and autumn to labour in the Portuguese fields and return with their hoarded wage to help them through the winter at home, much as the Irish harvester serves the English farmer. There are reasons for the latter, for English agricultural land is richer than Irish, and racial causes operate in this case. But the land on the south of the Miño is much the same as on the north, the climate is identical, and the Gallegos and people of North Portugal are of the same stock and speak a similar tongue. And yet the North Portuguese small farmer, well off and prosperous, can afford to hire the man in a similar position across the Spanish frontier to do his hard work, whilst in Galicia women do the work of men in their husbands' absence.

The visitor whose aim is but to pass a pleasant holiday of a few weeks in Galicia, especially without

a good knowledge of the language, cannot hope to study the unspoilt people in their own homes. Those whom he will meet in the seaports and along the bays are to some extent sophisticated and accustomed to deal with foreigners, but it would well repay a scholar interested in Celtic folklore to live amongst the peasants of some of the inland valleys for a time, to gather some of the traditions which are yet handed down from remote antiquity amongst these primitive folk. Like all their race, the Gallegos are shy and distrustful. Their superstitions and rites are for them almost sacred things, but with patience and tact many of their quaint beliefs may still be gathered from them, as they have been by the greatest of living Spanish women, the Countess of Pardo Bazan, whose books upon her native land of Galicia are redolent of the soil, as are those of another distinguished Gallego, the Marquis of Figueroa.

The peasant cultivators of the isolated valleys and mountain slopes rarely come into the larger centres of population. Each little local town has its fortnightly market, where produce and cattle are sold for money with which to pay the tax-collector and to buy the simple necessaries not produced upon the soil. To see the Galician peasant as he is, one must study him at his local fair, and on one of his long pilgrimages to a holy shrine. On these occasions, as on similar occasions with the Irish peasantry, he is for a time boisterously gay, given to singing, dancing, and music, the latter being

produced from the native bagpipes, *gaita*, and tambour. But in the long winter nights in his dark cottage, with its smoky fire of vine-cuttings and pine-cones, the Gallego, like his brother Celt elsewhere, is moody, poetical and speculatively mystic. In such surroundings as this the tale of wraiths and demons goes shuddering round, for the Señor Cura, who sternly reproves such talk when he hears it, is safe in his lonely little parsonage adjoining the village church.

But not alone of malevolent spirits is the conversation around the cottage fire. Much communing there is of America, and of kinsmen and friends who are seeking a livelihood, and sometimes, but rarely, finding not only that but a fortune in far Argentina. How Tio Pedro, a returned Indiano with pockets full of money, is coming to build a fine house in his native valley; how poor Juanito has returned ill and homesick without a dollar; how the good lad Pepe sends the large sum of ten pesetas every month to his old mother, who is looked up to in consequence as quite a wealthy woman, and so on—talk not very different, indeed, from that which goes on around the turf fire of many a hill-side cottage in Western Ireland.

And Galicia, like Ireland, is a land of saints and soldiers. From its mountain fastnesses and those of its neighbour Asturias, went forth those indomitable Christians who saved Europe and the world from the domination of Islam. This was the focus of mystic religious fervour which made the mediæval

Spanish Christian ten times a man. Here the ecstatic visions seen by star-gazing shepherds in the night foretold the final victory of the Cross ; here the blazing emblem of the redemption miraculously led the Christian hosts to combat ; hither to this land of fervid faith was wafted the body of the apostle in its ship of stone, to give heart to his own people ; and from time immemorial the stoutest priests and bishops of the Spanish Church have issued from the race that alone of all Spaniards held even the Roman legions at bay, and provided the spiritual fervour that finally rolled back the Moor. From Cæsar to Wellington great commanders have borne testimony to the martial valour of the Gallegos ; and there are no bonnier fighters even now in Spain than the thickset, stocky little chaps who are drawn, usually much against their will, to fill Spanish regiments in distant parts of the country and in North Africa.

And yet with all their fine qualities, and in spite of the fact that many of the most eminent writers, thinkers, and administrators of Spain are natives of Galicia, Gallegos are often held by Castilians in derision. To the Gallego with his half-Portuguese speech is attributed every story which requires boorish stupidity as its subject, and the "bull," which English people are fond of calling Irish, depending as it does upon the mental process being too rapid for vocal expression, is considered by Castilians as the special characteristic of the Gallego.

This is the people, and this is the land, which Mr. Wood describes in the present volume, with the aid of the excellent illustrations of Mr. Mason. To those English travellers who, deserting the beaten track of tourists, are tempted to see for themselves this unspoilt pleasure-ground, a feast of new and pleasant impressions may be confidently promised. They will find a country of loch and mountain that will make the Scottish Highlands seem trivial and tame, they will find a climate as soft as Munster and as warm as Italy, a vegetation as green as that of Killarney without the chilling mists of Ireland.

Drawbacks naturally there are. The country is backward, and some of the smaller hotels are lacking in the luxuries that English travellers expect. But progress in these and other respects is being made with giant strides. The great English liners that carry passengers from England to Vigo and Corunna in two days and a half are of course excellent, and the principal hotels of Vigo, Mondariz and La Toja, are all that can be desired. The hostelries of Santiago and Pontevedra are being greatly improved, and new modern hotels are in project. The new Association in Galicia with a branch in London for the purpose of rendering the province agreeable to English visitors is already hard at work stirring up local opinion in favour of the reforms in accommodation and locomotion that are needed, and every important interest and authority in Galicia, from the Cardinal Archbishop



of Santiago to the local town councillors, are pledged to do their utmost to make this sweet "Corner of Spain" an attractive and fitting resort for British seekers after health and recreation.

MARTIN HUME,

*Chairman of the London Committee of  
the Galician Association.*





A GALICIAN LAUNDRY

CHAP. I  
GALICIA  
AND ITS  
PEOPLE







A GALICIAN MARKET-PLACE.

## CHAPTER I

### GALICIA AND ITS PEOPLE

EVEN Spaniards are sometimes at a loss to say which part of their kingdom is Galicia, just as Londoners occasionally pause before locating Yorkshire. The Englishman confesses either that he has never heard of Galicia or does not know where the country is. He imagines vaguely that it is situated in Poland. There are, indeed, two Galicias, one north of the Carpathians and the other, of which I am writing, bounded by the Atlantic and the Bay of Biscay. Galicia includes Corunna, which is known to all good Englishmen because of the burial on its ramparts of Sir John Moore. The country, too, is associated with Columbus and the Armada, for the explorer's own ship was built at a Galician port, and the Armada finally sailed from Corunna to conquer England. Spain's holiest city, Santiago de Compostela, is in Galicia.

If you consult a map of Spain you will see Galicia at the top corner, jutting boldly into the Atlantic, with a coast-line, largely formed of glorious inland bays, of two hundred and forty miles. No

other part of the Peninsula presents such a wonderful and majestic frontage to the sea; nor does any other Spanish province afford greater contrasts of scenery and people.

This corner of Spain has a history which goes back to the times of the Phœnicians, centuries before St. James the Elder, who is to Galicia what Christ is to Palestine, preached the Gospel on its rugged shores. Romans and Moors tried in vain to conquer Galicia, and in Santiago Cathedral there is a tablet recording the triumph ten centuries ago of Christians over Moslems at the battle of Clavijo.

There is a famous legend of this celebrated fight. The Moors demanded from Galicia the tribute of a hundred virgins, from whom they meant to benefit their nation's stock, but the monstrous claim inspired the native Christians with such a warlike spirit that they slaughtered sixty thousand of the infidels and drove the Moors out of the country. Betanzos, an old-world town near Corunna, is associated with this thousand-year-old belief, and one of its quaint thoroughfares is called the Street of the Hundred Maidens.

Galicia is a land of hills. They are seen as soon as the coast is observed, and no journey can be made without beholding them. The hills are not high enough to be called mountains, but their altitude in many cases gives them a noble and dignified appearance. Richard Ford called Galicia the Switzerland of Spain; but there are no hills in the province to compare with even the range on Lake



Geneva, and nothing to equal the majestic Dent du Midi; yet those north-western heights have charms and beauties of their own, and in some respects are more attractive than the hills of Switzerland. The Alps allure the climber, but the day is not remote when the sierras of Galicia will irresistibly call those travellers who crave for splendid panoramas and are fascinated by the chance of sport. Wolves and wild boars still roam about the lonely hills, remote from man, and there is abundant fishing everywhere.

The country is well watered, a number of rivers, of which the chief is the Miño, flowing into the bays and the Atlantic through its hills and valleys. In ordinary seasons the streams are insignificant, but after heavy rains they develop into raging torrents and thunder over their rocky beds. The rivers, too, will rise swiftly and to great heights. At the end of December 1909 Galicia, like the rest of Europe, was swept by storms, and rivers rose from twenty to twenty-five feet above their normal level, destroying bridges, buildings, animals, and human life. A Galician river in flood is a striking spectacle, especially a stream like the Miño, which even in ordinary seasons is a swift and turgid water. The Miño separates Galicia from Portugal, acting as a natural frontier from the southern extremity of the province to San Gregorio. This river has been well called the Glory of Galicia, and the tourist to the country would be fully recompensed for his visit even if he did nothing more than make the railway

journey along the Miño's splendid and impressive banks.

Galicia's hills abound in granite, much of which is easily accessible and workable. In many of the country districts the peasants and small farmers, for the sake of asking, are permitted to quarry for building purposes and to secure those thin upright grey posts which are such a singular feature of the vineyards. It seems strange that in a land where trees are so abundant and timber is to be had for the trouble of felling preference should be given to granite; yet the stone is easier and cheaper to work than timber, and on the hills and roadsides men and women are constantly quarrying the brittle substance. The way of working and the tools employed are very simple. Holes are chiselled at distances of about a foot; then iron or wooden wedges are driven in and the granite block is separated. The same system of wedge-driving is employed in getting the props for vineyards, and the long thin slabs come easily away. Enormous numbers of these granite supports are used, and long high walls are often seen, built of slabs placed upright in the ground and so close together that the structure looks like solid stone.

Much has been written of the poverty of the Gallegans, as the people of Galicia are called, and the sparsity of food and drink for many of the two million people who compose the population of the country; but the appearance of the strong and healthy men and women does not confirm what writers in that melancholy strain have put on

*More of far, boote*

record. The very maize bread which forms the basis of the peasant's food has been maligned; yet no one ventures to belittle porridge as an article of diet for the conquering Scot. The comely and powerful fisher-lasses who travel the East Coast in the herring season do not live in luxury, nor do their sisters of Galicia, many of whom, in strength and figure, are their equals. Where the fisher-girl drinks coffee, tea, or cocoa, the Gallegan woman takes wine; and she can buy a tumblerful of very drinkable liquor, red or white, for a halfpenny; for another halfpenny she can get a piece of bread big enough for a sustaining meal. Even a Scotch-woman, however canny, would be hard pressed to make a midday meal at the cost of a penny. Fruit, too, is so abundant that it may be had for the picking, and vegetables are plentiful. There are grapes everywhere; and though most of the chickens and bacon go into the towns for sale, yet there are so many fowls and pigs in Galicia that the taste of poultry and pork is known throughout the country. At noon on the roadside working men and women make a far more varied meal than the rough dinner of the British labourer. In England, when the streets are fog-bound, and navvies and road-makers are content to make shift, while eating and drinking, with a warm ray or two from a neighbouring watchman's fire, the Galician worker is taking a midday meal on the shore of some glorious bay or river, or on the hill-side in romantic scenery—and in almost constant sunshine.

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In every part of Galicia there are quaint round pigeon-cots. Many of them are included in farm-buildings, to which they give an added picturesqueness; others are perched on summits of slopes, like lonely watch-towers. There are no buildings in England which have the appearance of these Galician pigeon-houses, but there are a few in Scotland, in the neighbourhood of Arbroath, with the same characteristics. The Gallegan cannot afford to cultivate pigeon-rearing as a hobby, and with him, as with many Englishmen, the birds are kept for eating purposes. Sentiment is vanquished by utility.

Maize-barns, or granaries, are universal. The granaries are oblong, narrow structures, mostly built of granite, but sometimes of timber, and raised on walls or pillars about a man's height above the level of the ground. They are noticeable features of every landscape, and some of them are romantic-looking buildings, with a cross at one gable and a pinnacle at the other. In the autumn the granaries are filled with the maize which has been gathered from the fields and stripped and dried in the sun. On village pavements, in fields, on the beach, and in all sorts of odd corners the cereal is spread out to dry, and makes glorious golden patches in the sunshine. Women, helped by children, prepare the maize for grinding into flour. Primitive methods of grinding are employed, and crude ways of baking and cooking, as you may see by entering a Galician cottage and examining the open, chimneyless fireplace—the big stone slab on which the fuel burns.



A GRANARY



A PIGEON-COT

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The cry of the night-watchman, the *sereño*, is of all Galicia's old customs one of the strangest and most famous. The *sereño* is a romantic figure, with his Spanish cloak and gleaming pike—a weapon much resembling the halberd carried by our Yeomen of the Guard. While the English policeman in the dark early hours is gloomily patrolling his beat, his fellow in Galicia is pacing the quaint streets which differ little in appearance from their aspect centuries ago, and every hour he proclaims the time or in other ways gives proof that he is about and doing his duty. The ancient town of Pontevedra is celebrated for the watchman's call. Hourly throughout the night the *sereño* chants the time, and the sonorous notes of his "*Ave Maria purissima*," Gabriel's salutation to the Virgin, has a singular effect upon the stranger, awake and listening in bed. The accomplished *sereño* will not only cry the hour, but will also, for the benefit of listeners, add interesting items of news, as, for instance, that love-making is proceeding on a neighbouring balcony. The eerie chant lingers in one's memory, and may be likened to the solemn cry from a steamer's crow's-nest in mid-ocean of "Lights are burning bright and all's well." In Santiago and elsewhere the *sereño* still does duty in the night, but perhaps the day is near when he will be ousted by the commonplace policeman. In many of the towns the watchman whistles every hour instead of chanting. There are other cries in Galicia which will interest the visitor, and amongst them is the

protracted musical announcements of the girls and women of Corunna who are selling fish. They walk along the pavement with wide, shallow baskets poised gracefully on their heads, uttering a cry which makes you marvel that human beings can maintain it without bringing on that collapse of the vocal cords which perhaps, in uncharitable moments, you desire to see accomplished.

In Galicia, as on the Continent generally, the policeman differs from his English prototype. There, in addition to being a keeper of the peace, he is a fighting man, liable to be called upon for military service. The famous Civil Guard of Spain, a force which bears the highest reputation, every member being a specially selected man of thoroughly good character, has its detachments in Galicia—the striking-looking fellows with their glazed three-cornered hats, rifles, swords, and revolvers. A couple of them are on duty at the exit of every railway station of importance, and on lonely country roads, marching on each side, you will come across a pair, carrying their rifles at the slope, prepared for action. The purpose of this system of patrol is to lessen the risk of both men being surprised at once.

✓ The Civil Guards exercise a wide influence over the people, and to them is largely due the present peaceful state of the country. The total strength of the force is twenty-five thousand men, of whom five thousand are mounted. The cavalry are armed with sabres, carabines, and revolvers. Comparison has been made between them and the Royal Irish



Constabulary, and it is a very proper one, although I think the Royal Irish is physically a finer body. The Civil Guards have great powers, and are entitled to take the law into their own hands in extremities, such as shooting down an escaping prisoner or a murderer caught in the act.

There is perfect security in travelling throughout Galicia, either alone or in parties, and even in the remotest districts the idea of personal danger, from man or beast, does not enter the visitor's mind. Probably there is not in North-West Spain any greater risk incurred than would be experienced by pedestrians from tramps on the highways of North-West England.

The ordinary Galician policeman is very much like a Spanish soldier in appearance, except in Corunna, where he wears a helmet. His sword is ready to his hand, and he often carries a revolver and a stick. He is permitted to smoke on duty; and perhaps not even the iron discipline of the Civil Guard would compel the members of the force to abandon the cigarette. A Galician policeman being at heart a *caballero*—which is “gentleman”—will spare no trouble to put a stranger on the right track, and will not only direct him to the place he wishes to reach, but will, in the friendliest manner, accompany him as far as his duties will permit, smoking contentedly and well pleased with life.

I saw only one policeman on stern duty in Galicia, and that was in Vigo, where he was conducting a belligerent lady to the police-station,

guiding her by a gentlemanly pressure on the arm. She was loudly and volubly giving her version of what had happened; and a crowd of bareheaded or shawled friends added their voices to the confusion. They were all probably swearing to things which they could not possibly have seen. At Vigo also I noticed a constable, old enough to be near the superannuation stage, trying to preserve the peace between an aged peasant and an ill-conditioned juvenile who might have been his grandson. At intervals the old man paused to cuff and persuade the boy, and the policemen seemed to form one of the little crowd which accompanied and watched the performers. I followed them for a short distance; then, as there was no prospect of an arrest, I walked away.

The constable in every land attracts one's notice and commands respect. Much at times depends on him; also on chambermaids and waiters. Both these types of servant compel attention in Galicia, if only for their odd and interesting habits. A Galician chambermaid, who from her appearance might be anything from a respectable charwoman to the mother of a promising family, does not know the meaning of ceremony; at any rate she does not stand upon it, and will break into your bedroom with the morning coffee without warning, and derive intense amusement from any timidity or embarrassment due to her abrupt appearance. She is too primitive to be disturbed by trifles, even such as gazing upon her when she tucks up to sleep on a

couch in the hall of an hotel at the foot of the main staircase—a post she occupies, apparently, to meet the necessities of belated or early-going travellers.

The Galician waiter is remote from the rest of his kind. In the two palatial establishments which the country possesses he figures, during the season, either in orthodox swallow-tails or a livery approximating to the garb of club attendants at home, but generally speaking he is not so smart. In the morning he presents a slovenly appearance, because breakfast, as Englishmen understand it, is either an unimportant or a non-existent meal, and the waiter is reserving his energies for the feast that counts, the lunch. The native is content to start the day on coffee and a roll without butter—for which omission he has reason for gratitude, because Galician butter is neither good nor plentiful—or on a small cup of chocolate and bread. If he favours coffee he takes it from a basin, with which a dessert-spoon is supplied, enabling him to deal with the liquid as he would absorb soup, or he drinks it, Christian fashion, by way of the vessel's rim. The chocolate is a concoction so thick that a spoon or bread will stand upright in it; yet the preparation is delicious in the estimation of those who like it, especially when taken with a frothy sugar, which is served in a glass of water—a creation which looks like frozen beaten white of egg, and is almost large enough to fill the tumbler. With this chocolate and bread the Spaniard bears the burden

of the day's battle until the real breakfast is served ; then indeed he makes up for any loss he may have suffered after rising.

The midday meal is heavy and bewildering, from the English point of view. *Hors-d'œuvre* will begin the feast—excellent olives, sardines, anchovies, appetising little salads and other oddments; then come heavier dishes, succeeded by soup and fish—all things reversed, as it seems, compared with English order and arrangements. There is a very palatable and wholesome dish called *caldo Gallego*, a soup which is as peculiar to Galicia as is *bouillabaisse* to Marseilles. Incidentally I may say that I had *bouillabaisse* as good in a Galician hotel as in one of the best hotels of France's southern seaport where I tried it—a dish which would have moved even Thackeray, its great admirer, to expressions of applause.

“ *This Bouillabaisse a noble dish is—  
A sort of soup, or broth, or brew,  
Or hotch-potch of all sorts of fishes,  
That Greenwich never could outdo ;  
Green herbs, red peppers, mussels, saffron,  
Soles, onions, garlic, roach, and dace :  
All these you eat at TERRÉ'S tavern,  
In that one dish of Bouillabaisse.*”

You may not eat all these good things in the Galicia *bouillabaisse* as Thackeray did at Terré's tavern in Paris ; but the *caldo Gallego* is as rich

Law of  
California



A MERRY ROADSIDE GROUP

and varied in vegetables as *bouillabaisse* is in marine delicacies. The *caldo Gallego* has the advantage of freedom from that taint of garlic which is so repellant to the English palate.

A peculiarity of service in Galician public dining-rooms is the piling up of plates before you. The stack is gradually lessened as you get through the courses. Free use may be made of your private cutlery to help yourself to salt and pepper, after the custom of the Continent. The wine is placed on the table either in bottles or decanters. There is a tendency to tire of the wine and crave for English beer. This is obtainable in the principal hotels and *cafés*, but only at a heavy charge, a bottle of ale costing more than a bottle of ordinary wine. Being specially brewed for export, the beer is not equal to the article which is bought at home. Very good Spanish lager can be had, especially in Vigo, at the bar in the Calle Velazquez Moreno, opposite the post and telegraph office. At that place, also, excellent afternoon tea is served. To my regret and financial loss, I did not discover this welcome retreat until two or three days before the *Antony* bore me from Galicia.

By the time *déjeuner* is served the waiter has become himself. He has assumed a collar and a dinner-jacket, and bustles round with every wish to please his customers. He takes a real interest in them, and, given proper treatment and consideration, there is no trouble to which he will not go to meet an expressed or implied wish. He can be

led like a lamb, but if any sign is shown of driving him he displays the mule's unpleasant attributes. I remember that at one hotel, into the dining-room of which I wandered early in the mornings, an elderly waiter, coatless and collarless, with a soiled napkin over his arm, ignored my existence for a day or two. He was performing the task of a *frotteur*, skating, in melancholy, meditative fashion, over the polished wooden floor, with a rag-bundle on his right foot. He would slide past with an air of almost grotesque seriousness, so intent on his work that he failed to see me; at least that was the impression made on my mind. Commands in ordinary English to produce some breakfast failed to move him; yet when, in due course, on entering the room, I greeted him as a man, a brother, and especially a *caballero*, he skated elegantly to the mysterious region where the coffee was prepared, and ceremoniously produced not only coffee and rolls, but also butter. One morning I desired Rocquefort—to his polite but palpable amazement—and thereafter he conceived that no British breakfast was complete without the cheese concomitant. At this hotel the butter was very good—a native product with a cheesy flavour; in other hotels Danish butter in tins was provided. Galicia can produce first-rate butter, yet the Gallegans go to Denmark for the article, and bring it over land or sea—or both—in tins. One of the remarkable things about Galicia is that although the country is so productive, still in many cases there are no



adequate systems of making the most of natural resources.

A great change, however, is taking place, and some of the richest and most enterprising public men in North-West Spain are devoting themselves with enthusiastic zeal to the task of awakening the people and making them realise the immense possibilities of the province. Energetic measures for development are being taken by the Asociación para el Fomento del Turismo en Galicia, of which prominent members are Messrs. Miguel Fernandez Lema, ex-Lord Mayor of Vigo; Manuel Olivie, the Town Clerk, who is a well-known author; Eladio de Lema, Director, *El Faro de Vigo*; Jaime Solar, Director, *Noticiero de Vigo* and *Vida Gallega*; Manuel Borrajo, President, Asociación de Cultura; Angel Bernandez, writer and secretary of the Asociación Fomento Turismo; Guillermo de Oya, President of the Asociación, and Dr. Ildefonso Zabaleta, Medical Officer of Health for Vigo Harbour. Mr. Frederico Barreras Masso, one of Vigo's most distinguished citizens, is doing much to bring Galicia into closer union with Great Britain, and all these efforts are being zealously fostered and supported by residents like Mr. Ricardo Rodriguez Pastor, of Corunna; Mr. Thomas Guyatt, the British Vice-Consul at Corunna; and Mr. R. Walker, the British Vice-Consul at Villa Garcia.

Most of Galicia's business is transacted in the open air, and much of it concerns the handling of live stock. In the larger towns, like Santiago,

there is a weekly cattle market, where dealers and peasants assemble from the surrounding country, travelling by diligence, bullock-cart, pony, mule, or on foot, and making a wonderful congregation of human beings, from the pure gipsy type to the thorough Gallegan. Girls and women are everywhere, driving cattle, carrying great round baskets crammed with fowls, which are kept quiet and in place because their legs are tied, or piloting pigs. Native swine are not amenable to discipline, and the custom is to tie a rope or piece of string to one of the hind legs and let the beast go ahead. In the market the squealing animals are imprisoned by this method. Sometimes a quicker system is adopted—that of conveying pigs in sacks slung pannier-wise across the back of a mule or pony. This practice does not apply to full-grown animals; it is the smaller fry that are subjected to the indignity.

At Santiago market a peasant drove a mule past me with two sacks from the depths of which came muffled screams. He shook the sacks, and from each a little pig was shot to the ground, uttering piercing squeals, then, after the hind leg had been secured, settling into a continuous grunt of protest. Bargaining and wrangling were going on all round me, to the accompaniment of choruses of squeals and grunts, crowing of cocks, cackling of hens, and lowing of cattle. Business was conducted on simple lines—prodding of pigs' ribs, examining of oxen's mouths and other points, and lifting and calculating the weight and general promise of table and

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A CATTLE MARKET



AN OPEN-AIR MARKET

laying birds. Prices having been arranged, payment was made ; and I was surprised to see how many fat silver dollars were poured from ancient purses and money-bags by peasants whose appearance conveyed the impression that they were almost destitute. Pontevedra is a great cattle centre, and enormous markets are held there two or three times a year. Herds of cattle monopolise the roads at these seasons, making motoring and driving a slow and laborious business.

This universal open-air life is in marked contrast to the dark and unwholesome dwellings of the lower classes in Galicia. The cottages in the country districts are in many cases mere hovels of the most primitive type, often enough without windows and admitting light only by the doorway. Fowls and quadrupeds share the establishments with their owners, and pigs grunt joyously in the room where the master and mistress and children take their rest—frequently on a bed as crude and dirty as that on which the porkers sleep. In this respect the Gallegan peasant somewhat resembles his prototype who is found in country places in Ireland which are remote from towns. In the principal centres of population, however, the people are much better housed and the municipalities exercise a far more rigid sanitary supervision.

Most things are done in Galicia on the seductive system of *mañana*—to-morrow. It is useless to attempt to hurry people. Not even the demands of telegraphy will rouse them to robust activity.

To send a telegram is a serious and impressive undertaking. First you find your telegraph office, which even in a city like Santiago is hidden in the shadow of the cathedral. Then you enter, and discover that you are in the wrong part of the premises, being in the operating office. A cigar is burning on the table, while the clerk to whom it belongs is talking with his colleague, the transmitter meanwhile tapping lazily. Even the instruments seem to be possessed with the spirit of languor. Finally an individual comes who, after showing almost pained surprise at your unseemly energy, conducts you to the proper place, and ceremoniously gives you a telegraph form and a pencil. When the message has been written and handed in, and you have put down your payment, you reasonably assume that the exhausting transaction is completed, and that you are free to depart. Not so—you are in Spain, where hurry is indecency. The change is not ready, and when it does appear the coins are accompanied by a triangular receipt torn from the message, giving details of the telegram and the price which has been paid for it. Then triumphantly you go away, blessing Spain; but the fervour of your benediction is nothing compared with your expressions on learning that the telegram has not been delivered in England because of a misread address. It is useless either to wail or to protest, since the one would be ineffective and the other too late. Stamps are bought mostly at your hotel, where the letter-box is kept to be emptied by

the postman. There are no street pillar-boxes in Galicia. I saw one, a ramshackle, red-painted structure, bearing a resemblance to a rabbit-hutch, hung outside a general store-shop in a village, and gathered that the enterprise shown in displaying the receptacle was unexampled. When an ordinary post office is not available it is customary to place letters in the hotel box.

It cannot be said that Galicia is rich in works of art. Some of the paintings which adorn the churches are neither very good nor interesting, nor are the examples in the castles such as to claim more than passing notice. But travellers will not journey to the country for the sake of seeing what they can get so well at the Louvre, the National Gallery, the Tate Gallery, the Wallace Collection and elsewhere. They will go to see the land and its people, and to wander through the old-world streets and squares and market-places, which have charms unrivalled in any region within such easy reach of England.

Two things are inseparable from the Galician—his cigarette and his umbrella. His tobacco is cheap, and much of it is good, so that he can enjoy at little cost the weed which is as much a man's necessity as luxury. For cinco centimos, a coin which sounds imposing, but whose value is less than a halfpenny, he can get seven hand-made cigarettes. True, when I bought two packets from a dark Spanish lady in a darker shop she warned me that they were known as "men-killers," but I have

smoked worse in England at a higher price. The better qualities are relatively cheap. The Galician cigarette is made of dark, dry, loose tobacco, rolled in a gumless paper, with the ends folded to keep the particles from escaping.

The umbrella answers two purposes—to keep the rain off in wet weather and to serve as a shelter from the sun. I observed men with umbrellas slung at their sides under their coats, like swords, and I suppose the crook-shaped handles were suspended from hooks stitched to the waistcoats.

At every turn there is something unexpected in Galicia. On going back to my hotel one night I wished to develop some films. I had neither chemicals nor means of doing the work, but learned that in the village there was a competent operator who would develop the exposures. I asked for directions as to how and where I should find the skilled performer. It was long before I learned that he lived in a house at the top of the village. A guide was needful, and he came—a waiter from the hotel, carrying a paper lantern with a candle. He led the way across a field, then up a rugged path, puddled with recent rain, and from that to the rocky, steep bed of a little stream running down the side of a hill they call the Devil's Boulders. The scene was such as may be found in Morocco, when the Moor or negro who pilots you carries his ancient lamp to light your path, or in the Catskills, or the Middle West, where the same friendly office has been performed for me in the dark-



ness when crossing lonely fields or penetrating woods. Up the gulley for some hundreds of yards, now stumbling on a small boulder, now plunging into deep mire with a prickly, unseen bough unexpectedly touching your face or hands—then a halt at a gateway leading from the gulley, and a hail to which there was no answer. Up the gulley still farther, and a pause and rattle at another gate, through which a light could be seen, and the answering hail. Then came an elderly man with a lighted candle and begged us to enter. We descended two or three stone stairs, crossed a small flagged yard, and went into a store-room, with heaps of onions lying on the floor and other food and articles dimly outlined by the candle and the lantern. Thence we went into a comfortable living-room, where a woman who was busy with her mending smiled upon us, and a little girl gazed at me something after the manner in which in the days of our youth we believed that our forefathers, as children, would have looked upon Napoleon if they had seen him in the flesh. This was the house of the photographer—a farmer; but he had no means, he explained, of getting artificial light for developing, and must wait till daylight before he could fulfil his task. The films were left, and the farmer led us through his vineyard to the gate. Before we reached the gulley which was our homeward path he explained that a clear little stream ran through his grounds, and that in it he washed his films, plates, and prints.

~~Vineyards~~ are everywhere in Galicia, and some of their wines are excellent, notably those from the districts of Orense, Amandi, Valdeorras, and Rivero. On the self-contained estate of Mondariz a first-rate wine is grown which is provided free for visitors. In most places the hotel charges include wine. Occasionally the vintage is not palatable enough to suit the traveller, but at a very small cost a superior brand may be had to take the place of the unsatisfactory product. A capital red wine is served without charge at lunch and dinner on board the Booth liners.

There is abundance of wine in the country; but some of the peasants do not take it, preferring the pure water from the hills. The vast majority, however, are wine-drinkers; yet there is none of that degrading drunkenness which one may see in every part of Britain. I noticed only one intoxicated person in Galicia, and that was on a Sunday afternoon at Caldas, when an aged peasant, in frilled knickers, was staggering down the road, as near the middle as he could keep, but occasionally lurching towards the gutter and the walls of the houses. He was perfectly harmless, and very affable, and occasionally paused and supported himself against a house side and reproved the juveniles who followed him and offered pointed criticisms on his state. The spectacle was rare enough to claim attention and provoke derision. In England the toper would have been unnoticed.

In the principal towns there is at least one club,

and the stranger has no difficulty in getting admission for the purpose of seeing the newspapers and spending a pleasant hour. The English clubman shrinks from the vulgar public gaze, but in Galicia the member loves to be as near his fellow-creatures as he can get. Usually he sits at an open window on the street level, within easy touching distance of the passer-by. The clubmen, like all the residents of the country with whom the visitor may come in contact, are most hospitably disposed towards him.

The British tourist has become accustomed in his own country to hotels which are more than comfortable—they are luxurious—and when he is abroad he expects their equal. In Galicia, until recently, he could not get it; yet now, at Mondariz and La Toja, he has the choice of palatial establishments which are unrivalled in Spain. The visitor may reach Galicia by way of the Channel, spending about three days in trains, or journey direct by sea, landing at the gate of Galicia, which is Vigo. For that part of the undertaking he is thoroughly equipped by the Booth Steamship Company, Limited, whose powerful and splendid modern vessels have the reputation of being the most comfortable of all that cross the Bay of Biscay.





SAN SIMON'S ISLAND, VIGO BAY

CHAP. II  
VIGO BAY  
AND HILLS









## CHAPTER II

### VIGO BAY AND HILLS

IRON cliffs confront you when you first behold Galicia, for the earliest glimpse of North-West Spain, when the Biscay has been crossed, is Cape Villano, rising, stern and rugged, north of Finisterre. The coast looks grim and cheerless, yet it is the gate to one of Europe's warm and most romantic regions. Every mile of it is linked with history, and, hidden in what look like gloomy fastnesses of the Atlantic, are sun-bathed, land-locked bays, of which the best known are Vigo and Arosa, forming two of the finest natural harbours in the world. ✓

The *Ambrose* slipped past the Cies Islands, at the seaward side of Vigo Bay, in the darkness of an early autumn morning, and steamed up the placid inland sea as day was breaking. In Galicia the dawn and twilight are briefer and more splendid than in England. The Cies Islands are some fifteen miles from Vigo, and the *Ambrose*, steaming steadily, will do the distance in an hour. Her masthead and side lights were burning brightly as she passed the lonely lumps of land which jut up like ragged

teeth on Galicia's seaboard; yet when her cable rattled and her anchor dropped within a stone's-throw of the jetty the sun was shining and the day had fully broken. Through my porthole I had seen the flashing light on the islands, and I had hurried up on deck to watch the sun rise in the east, beyond the church-topped hill which forms one of the Seven Sisters. The Seven Sisters are hills in the neighbourhood of Vigo, each being crowned with a church and bearing a special name, such as Nuestra Señora de Alba.

Vigo is Galicia's chief portal, and offers ready means of access to the other parts of the province. The town affords wonderful contrasts between the old and new worlds which jostle up against each other in every part of North-West Spain. You are in a quaint, strange world as soon as you have stepped ashore and are clear of the Customs and free to roam. In the steep and narrow streets of the old town people lead the primitive life of many generations or centuries ago. Amongst them are men clad in brigand fashion, with sombreros, and shawls thrown over their shoulders—shawls so showy and highly coloured that they might well do duty as table-cloths. You may pass from such a sight into the thoroughly modern technical school, which, founded by private and philanthropic enterprise, is equal to any institution of its size in any corresponding English town, and is helped by the municipality to the extent of three thousand pounds a year. In the afternoon the *señoritas* may

learn dressmaking and millinery and modelling in clay; in the evening the *caballeros* may grapple with appropriate subjects, under competent guidance. The working classes are educated free of charge, and the better-to-do pay ten pesetas—equal to eight shillings—a year for mental culture.

Just outside Vigo ploughs may be seen which are as crude as those the conquering Romans used, yet in the town there is a new flour-mill worked by electric power, where the product of the plough is turned into flour, and only a few men are needed to attend to the machinery. Vigo offers many of the contradictions between the very old and the essentially new which are to be found in Galicia.

There is not much to see in the way of public buildings; but there is the fish market, best visited early in the morning, when the building is crowded with women who are buying, selling, and handling the catches which have been brought in from the bay and the Atlantic; and the vegetable market, where also the women are the principal attendants. These two places give evidence of the marvellous fecundity of land and sea. There is abundance of fish and a bewildering display of fruits and vegetables. Many of the creatures of the sea are strange to English eyes, and not agreeable to English palates. There is the revolting devil-fish, and the more repulsive ink-fish; yet both, when properly cooked, are far from unappetising, and the tourist, by way of experiment, may have the fortitude to try them.

The sword-fish makes an excellent course; and there is a plentiful supply of oysters and other shell-fish. The commonest fish of all, however, is the sardine. It is larger and coarser than the sardine with which English people are familiar, being the size of a small herring, but it makes a very good dish, and the finest specimens, when cooked in oil or tomatoes, and packed in tins, are delicious. In Vigo, for breakfast, you may have a dish of big sardines, cooked to your liking, which have formed part of the previous night's catch.

Vigo's Alameda skirts the glorious bay, and is a fine promenade along which one may stroll and enjoy the scenery and study something of the local life. The road is smooth and asphalted, purely modern, yet on its perfect surface an ancient bullock-cart will come, slowly drawn by oxen. I watched one of these vehicles going towards the Custom-house, pursued by an enterprising Spanish child, who watched her chance for a cheap ride. It is no hard matter, even for an infant, to overtake a bullock-cart, and the girl clambered up and experienced the fearful joy of a stolen passage. The driver was somnolent, and the journey looked promising, until he was roused to action by the raising of the Galician equivalent to the English alarm of "Whip behind!" For a moment the infant defied him, and apparently reflected unfavourably on the driver's origin; but a swish of his long



GALICIAN CHILDREN



AFRAID OF THE CAMERA

THE  
MUSEUM  
OF THE  
CITY OF BOSTON

driving-stick made her tumble off precipitately. But her spirit was unchecked, and, pulling herself together, she accompanied him at a safe distance and continued her taunting criticism. I took a snapshot of the fractious juvenile just before she regained the asphalt, and while she was telling her compatriot what she thought of him; but an incompetent developer spoiled the exposure, as he ruined many others. It is a comforting reflection now—such is the mellowing effect of time—that though he was unable to appreciate the technical advice I gave him in English, yet he also did not realise the force of my additional remarks when I criticised his work—indeed, when I left he raised his hat, and in the politest and most polished manner wished me, so I gathered, continued health and prosperity. The Galician who has wronged you has a wondrous gift for making you understand that you are the offender.

A noble view of the surrounding scenery is obtainable from the Castillo del Castro, whose old fortifications are more than four hundred feet above the level of the bay. As the castle is in the nature of a fortress and sentries are on duty, admission is not given to the public, but the visitor may wander about freely, and the climb is worth the trouble for the sake of the panorama.

Vigo has a strong and enterprising municipality, and the city is giving evidence of what can be done by earnest and united enterprise. On the opposite side

of the bay, for example, is a prosperous community called Moyna. Eight or nine years ago the place consisted of only a few houses; yet to-day the green hill-side is dotted with white buildings, due to the development of the fishing industry. Near it is a little village nestling in a hollow at the foot of the mountains which rise from the bay in a fertile sweep; so sheltered is the spot and so balmy is the atmosphere, so continuous and beneficent is the sunshine, that from the water's edge to the summit of the range, palm-trees, which are rare in Galicia, flourish and orange-trees abound.

On every side there are majestic views, and at the head of the bay, rising beautifully from the calm blue water, is the island of San Simon. In ordinary times this is the lazaretto, or quarantine station, but for fifteen years it has not been necessary for the buildings to be used for sickness or suspected cases. San Simon is one of Spain's three quarantine stations, the other two being at Santander, on the Biscay coast, and at Port Mahón, in the island of Minorca, in the Mediterranean. The little island overlooks the inlet in which treasure-ships were sunk two centuries ago, and the buildings upon it are being modernised and equipped with scientific apparatus at a cost of £4000. The island is State property, but it is administered from Vigo by the Director of Public Health, with the co-operation of the mayor and corporation. At the end of the war in Cuba eight thousand repatriated soldiers were treated on



the island, and it speaks well for the healthiness of the place, and the devotion of the Sisters of Mercy and the skill of the doctors, that only sixty died. There is a delightful avenue of boxwood-trees, spoiled, unfortunately, by the foolishness of a former housekeeper ; excellent boating is to be had ; and just by the island there are first-rate oyster-beds and plentiful fishing. In the sand a small fish is found which has a habit of burying itself, and at low water the women go forth and dig the creature out of its burrow.

Nothing can be more peaceful and beautiful than the sail down Vigo Bay at eventide, after spending a few hours on the island ; for the sun is setting in the Western Ocean and flooding Vigo Bay with golden light, against which the seaward hills and Cies Islands stand outlined in a solemn purple.

Treasure from galleons of Spain lies buried in Vigo Bay. The story goes that at the beginning of the seventeenth century allied British and Dutch ships, under Admirals Rooke and Stanhope, attacked the famous Silver Fleet, which was lying at anchor, and captured much of the gold and silver. Some of the vessels which were not taken were sunk, and their precious cargoes foundered with them. For more than two hundred years the galleons have rested at the bottom of the bay. Many efforts have been made to recover the treasure, but Vigo Bay is deep, and so far the attempts have not succeeded. But the story is not strictly true, nor is it correct to say that the treasure-ships were

destroyed just at the entrance of the bay. The actual place of their ill-fortune was at the head of the bay, towards San Simon's Island, where there is a narrow channel. Two centuries ago there were fortifications on each side of the channel, which is called the Strait of Rande, and the ruins may still be seen at the foot of the hills. At that time Cadiz had the sole right to receive treasure from Spain's foreign possessions, and to that port a fleet of galleons laden with precious freight was bound. But there was war with England and Holland, and the treasure-ships, which were merchantmen, and of lighter draught than the opposing ships of war, were ordered to seek shelter at the head of Vigo Bay; and thither they scurried, finding refuge in the shallower water behind the entrance of Rande. A chain was drawn across the strait as an additional protection. For several weeks the hunted vessels lay securely at their anchorage, and meanwhile much of the treasure was taken ashore for conveyance to Madrid.

Fifteen hundred treasure-laden waggons, drawn by oxen, started for the capital. There is a saying in Spain that he who handles butter will get greasy, and by the time Madrid was reached the fifteen hundred waggon-loads of gold and silver had dwindled to five hundred; so that two-thirds of the precious cargoes, having escaped the clutches of the English and Dutch, had fallen into the not less rapacious hands of Spaniards. The missing treasure does not appear to have been recovered,

but in Vigo until quite lately walking-sticks and other articles could be bought which had been made from wood raised from the sunken galleons. I asked if they were still to be purchased, and was told that the supply had run out, though I gathered that I should have no difficulty in getting such a relic made to order, after the style, I suppose, of mementoes of our own *Royal George*.

The hills surrounding Vigo Bay command most glorious and extensive views. On one of them is the Castle Mos, a summer residence of the Marquis de la Vega de Armijo, the head of one of the noblest families in Spain. As castles go, it is not large, but by reason of its history and association the building is amongst the most famous in Galicia. The late King of Spain, Alfonso XII., visited it three times, as a record in the castle testifies, during the residence of the late Marquis, who was Spain's Prime Minister, and died in Madrid in 1908. He was taken from the capital to the castle, where he was buried beneath the floor of the tiny private chapel in which he had so often worshipped. The chapel is part of the interior. Outside, within the walls, is a miniature theatre, in which performers and audience were either members of the family or visitors. There is a keep which was built six hundred years ago. It forms the oldest part of the castle, and the walls are so enormously thick that to look through one of the narrow windows is like gazing down a corridor. The main room is a small armoury, beneath which

is a dark apartment, reached by a ladder from a trap-door in the floor. This basement, now used as a wine-cellar, was formerly a dungeon, and at one time held a bishop prisoner. The castle has been modernised inside, and in recent years restorations have been made to the exterior; but neither within nor without has anything been done to make it hard for the visitor to picture accurately the former house of a grandee of Spain. The old keep is in perfect repair, and the inner and outer walls stand as they were when wars raged fiercely in Galicia. The muzzles of some small old guns stick out of the embrasures, and you can raise and lower them slightly, for their trunnions are fixed in iron rings let into the walls, and one can realise what a slow business artillery firing was in the days when these quaint, open-breached ordnance were used for fighting. I was told that the guns were captured from the English in the days of Elizabeth. The castle grounds are beautiful and extensive, and full of charm and romance. There are some magnificent eucalyptus-trees; fine examples of the arbutus, whose fruit, something like strawberries, is rich and delicious; orange-trees, from which, in glorious November sunshine, I plucked sweet tangerines; and the botanical curiosity popularly known as the monkey-puzzler. Chestnuts abound here, as in Galicia generally.

Across Vigo Bay, looking like a white streak at the foot of the hills, which are bare and bleak at the tops, but fresh and green at their bases, lies the





ON THE QUAY AT VIGO



FISHERMEN'S COTTAGES AT CANGAS

little fishing town of Cangas. A small steamboat which plies regularly between the two places makes the journey across the blue water in half an hour, and on stepping ashore at the primitive pier you can realise what Vigo was like not many generations ago. There is no plan in the arrangement of Cangas; the houses are placed where they fit best, and the streets follow the houses. Oil-lamps give illumination to the straggling thoroughfares, yet inside the quaint dwellings there is electric light. Cangas has its old church, whose dimensions are out of all proportion to the size of the town to the English way of thinking, and smaller places of worship, one on the sands, built in 1711.

The church, which is named after St. James, is dark and bleak inside. I visited it the morning after All Souls' Day, and saw in the middle of the floor a high structure covered with black cloth and ornamented on four sides with skulls and cross-bones in white. Rising from the gloom, after entering the church from the brilliant sunshine, the reminder of the grave looked ghastly. The air was heavy with the smell of incense, and peasants were kneeling and praying. One old man was wiping away his tears and gazing at some object in the semi-darkness which I could not clearly see. I walked up to it, and saw that a bier, black-cloth-covered, with the skull and cross-bones in white, was resting on the floor. On the bier was an open black coffin, and at the head of the rude, oblong box were two pillows covered with

dark velvet. On the top pillow was a grinning skull; in the coffin was a khaki-coloured coarse robe, like a friar's habit, and from the sleeves peeped the bones that had once been arms. The grave-clothes and the side of the bier were thick with spots of candle-grease. A child came up as I bent over the coffin, and she waggled the skull to and fro with hideous effect, for it seemed to nod. She looked at me and smiled. Here was all the ghastliness of death without its glorious hope and promise, a spectacle that was meant to awe and overpower, yet a little girl was unaffected by the grim reminder of her own end. Near me was a door through which the sunshine slanted, and I walked out into the free, refreshing air, and listened to the song of another small maid who was nursing a child. She was one of the prettiest children I saw in Galicia, and was singing a song which I was told was an urgent prayer to her lover to come across the seas and rejoin her.

Most of the men of Cangas are engaged in the sardine fisheries, and on the beach and afloat were many of their fine open craft, which are rowed by sixteen, eighteen, or twenty oars, and can be propelled very rapidly.

At times the fishermen will contract to sell their catch, whatever it may be, at a certain price, in which case they are assured of some return for their labour; at other times they will dispose of the fish in the ordinary way, at market prices. On the north side of Vigo Bay, as on the south, there are



factories where sardines and other fish are prepared and packed for home and foreign use. One of the most popular and interesting sights of Vigo is the sardine factory of Messrs. Barreras, beautifully situated at the edge of the bay, to the east of the town. It is fascinating to watch the treatment of the myriads of fishes from the time they are brought in from the sea to the moment when the soldered box is ready for packing. Only a few hours elapse, sometimes, between the catching of the fish and the exportation of the finished product. Messrs. Barreras build their own steam fishing-boats entirely, catch their own sardines, and carry out the various processes of cleaning, cooking, tinning, and packing them for home and foreign use. The sardine trade is one of the most important of Vigo's industries, and no visitor to Galicia should fail to inspect one of these busy factories.

Sunday is the brightest day in the week in Vigo, for then the band plays at noon and evening in the Alameda, and the people promenade and laugh and talk incessantly; the places of amusement are open, and the theatre provides a satisfactory finish for the day's enjoyment. So excellent is the climate of the town that the band performances take place in the open air even in the winter months. For those who do not care for the public entertainments there are two or three good clubs. When ships of war visit Vigo the officers are made honorary members of clubs, and find the institutions very useful for seeing their country's newspapers.

I spent many interesting days in Vigo. Often, in the darkness of the early morning, from the balcony outside my bedroom at the Hôtel Continental, a stone's-throw from the bay, I watched the mail-boats, tramps, and sailing-ships come in from the sea, or the day break. A constant charm about the watching was the impossibility of foreseeing what would happen. One morning I saw a Russian cruiser squadron, grey and silent, steam up to its anchorage, and frequently afterwards, at eight o'clock, I heard the strains of the Russian National Anthem as the ensigns were hoisted. The familiar music, used sometimes in England as a hymn tune, mingled with the shore noises of bullock-carts and timber-shifting and the cries of men and women.

While the Russian squadron was in Vigo Bay a seaman was killed by the explosion of some acetylene on board his ship. On the following afternoon he was buried with all the solemn rites of his Church. At the head of the procession walked a sailor carrying a basket, from which he scattered flowers on the roadway; following him were Russian priests in their white silk vestments, chaplains from the squadron, and brass eikons were borne aloft; the bandmen from the squadron played a funeral march, and alternating with their music was the playing of a solemn dirge by the band of the 37th Regiment of the Line of Spain; there was the firing party, with fixed bayonets, the admiral

and the officers from the ships and the ships' companies, and the white coffin in the white funeral car, drawn by four horses, and surmounted by a figure of the Virgin. It was all very touching and impressive—another of the unexpected sights of this corner of Spain which is so old and yet so very new.

Vigo is the port from which most of the emigrants who leave Galicia sail, and at which they land on returning to their native country. Crowds of them may be seen frequently, with their baggage and household belongings, waiting on the quay for their ship to enter the bay, or going off in barges or tenders to get on board. The emigrants, mostly young men, are bound for South America, where some of them do very well, and come back to Galicia with capital enough to buy land and settle as comfortable farmers.

A most enjoyable journey can be made from Vigo to Redondela, eight miles away. In situation the town is considered one of the finest in Spain, and it would be hard to picture anything more beautiful and striking than its aspect at night, as seen from either of the tall railway viaducts. The larger of these is 118 feet high and 348 yards long. The electric lamps give the place the look of an enchanted city. You can glance down the shore to Vigo itself, outlined by lamps, high on the hill-side, whilst Redondela nestles in a dike scores of feet below you as you rumble

over the viaduct, thankful for once that the speed of the train is so slow. Redondela is on the road from Vigo to Mondariz. Pretty women, portly priests, and tales of war and treasure have been long associated with the lively town.

Also within easy reach of Vigo is Puentearreas, a small town which is celebrated mostly for its very fine old bridge. During a brief halt at this place in the evening I entered the church in the public square just as service was beginning, and was surprised to find the interior almost crowded with worshippers, mostly women. After the manner of the country, they carried all sorts of articles with them.

Vigo has an enterprising and resourceful daily press, and Galicia has its interests well represented by an admirable illustrated monthly magazine. This is the *Vida Gallega*, which gives to the matters of the province that attention which at home is bestowed upon current events by the London and provincial weeklies. One morning, leaving early for Orense, I observed a man at the first stopping-place alight and promenade the platform with copies of the *Faro de Vigo*, and at each station, during a period of five hours, he jumped down and disposed of his numbers. The train corresponded to our own newspaper specials, and the method of distribution, crude though it may be, is the beginning of a system which in time may equal ours. The journals were eagerly bought, the purchasers opening them at once on the platform, and either

standing to read the news or absorbing the contents of the columns as they walked away. The journey from Vigo to Orense occupied five hours; and there was the same time spent on the return, which the newsvendor made. He started at six, and arrived at Vigo late at night. That, I was told, was his daily task; yet he seemed perfectly cheerful and contented.

Vigo fascinated Borrow, who described it as a small, compact place, surrounded with low walls, with narrow, steep, and winding streets, and a rather extensive faubourg stretching along the shore of the bay. Vigo, he added, seemed to be crowded, and resounded with noise and merriment. In that respect there is little difference between the town then and now; but in other directions there have been vast changes. It can no longer be said that Vigo has only a wretched *posada* to offer to travellers, for it has the up-to-date and thoroughly equipped Hôtel Continental, facing the bay, an establishment from whose balconies you may watch the sun rise gorgeously above the hills, and see it set in a blaze of colour behind the Cies Islands.





SANTIAGO, FROM THE ALAMEDA

CHAP. III  
SPAIN'S  
JERUSALEM







NOVA  
ARQUITECTURA



SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA.

## CHAPTER III

### SPAIN'S JERUSALEM

“Now about that time Herod the King put forth his hand to afflict certain of the church. And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.”

That is the Gospel story of the death of St. James the Greater, son of Zebedee, in whose memory the city of Santiago was founded, and who remains the patron saint of Spain's Jerusalem. Tradition has it that St. James journeyed through Spain and preached the Gospel; while another story states that after he was beheaded by Herod his remains were taken to Galicia, and buried at the place on which the cathedral of Santiago stands.

The saint's sepulchre was not known till the ninth century, when it was revealed to a pious bishop, Theodomir of Iria, by a star of wondrous brilliance. At that time Santiago did not exist; but the marvel of the prelate's discovery spread throughout Spain, and wrought so powerfully upon the reigning monarch, Alonso II., that he commanded the immediate building of a chapel on the site of the grave. The structure was begun, but

so amazing was the enthusiasm with which the holy discovery was hailed that the original design of a mere chapel developed into a scheme for a cathedral, and the building was consecrated at the end of the ninth century.

News travelled laggardly in those far-distant days, yet while the cathedral was being built devout believers everywhere became acquainted with the tidings of the bishop's vision, and pilgrims hastened to pay tribute to the holy tomb. From every country in Europe the faithful travelled by horse or on foot, many of them spending months on the journey. Countless thousands worshipped at the shrine and returned to their homes; unnumbered thousands perished on the way to Santiago or back; while multitudes who reached the holy city never left it, for accommodation was limited, and pestilence swept off the pilgrims ruthlessly. At times the crowds were so enormous that the cathedral had to remain open day and night, so that they could find resting-places on its extensive floors. The primitive medical and sanitary appliances and remedies of the day were used to ward off disease, and a great censer was kept burning to purify the vitiated air of the cathedral.

Santiago is a city of romance, and my own first sight of it was memorable. A night-watchman, cloaked and leaning on his gleaming pike, watched us as we stepped from the rickety diligence which had jolted us from the railway station to the Hôtel Suizo, near the cathedral, and within a stone's-

throw of the university. It was nearly midnight, and there was driving rain, which ran in torrents down the crooked, narrow, flagged thoroughfares which serve as streets. At the station the oil-lamps dimly shone on the swimming platforms and gloomily illuminated the big bare room in which a statuesque pair of Civil Guards leaned on their rifles and the Customs officers and passengers mixed confusedly. There was an emigrant returned from South America with a ponderous trunk to open and examine. When it was passed the huge box was hoisted on to the head of a woman, and the emigrant's wife having been loaded up with miscellaneous articles, the triumphant man sallied forth, bearing no heavier burden than his umbrella.

From the oil-lamped station we drove into the mediaeval streets, lit by electricity, and as the bells began to chime the midnight hour the *sereño* strolled away on his rounds and the diligence disgorged the travellers, peasants, Civil Guards, and human oddments, who had clambered into and outside it. Bells were chiming as I entered Santiago; they rang, it seemed, throughout the night, and at daybreak clanged to summon worshippers to early Mass. The population numbers less than thirty thousand, yet there are forty-six churches, containing nearly three hundred altars, with thirty-six religious and kindred institutions. If priests and churches make a city good, then Santiago must be a veritable holy of holies.

There are many wonderful and fascinating buildings in this Jerusalem of Spain, but the glory of them all is that vast structure whose twin towers rise serenely to the blue sky, and whose golden crosses burn and glitter in the sunshine. Not an hour or a day, but many hours and many days must be spent in the majestic minster before its beauties can be adequately realised. Many books and innumerable articles have been written about it, but the greatest book of all is that marvellous work entitled "Historia de la Santa A. M. Iglesia de Compostela." The author is a canon, Antonio López Ferreiro, who has already produced thirteen volumes of his monumental undertaking, and is to complete his task with a fourteenth. A dozen years will have been needed for the publication, which will surely almost rank in time to come with Matteo's masterpiece, the Gate of Glory.

You enter the cathedral and look around in the casual manner of the visitor who is pressed for time and has a long programme to get through before he starts on the home track ; and not even that amazing Gate of Glory which stands unrivalled in Christendom may call for more than passing notice. You may have spent an hour in the building, and leave it thinking that you have seen all, and you wander through the quaint, narrow, twisted streets, gazing at the little shops, which are only travesties of business places ; at the women, who are working ceaselessly, especially at the wells, drawing water ; at the men and boys who mingle,



ONE OF SANTIAGO'S TWIN TOWERS

TO THE  
LIBRARY OF THE  
CONGRESS



and contrast the present with the passing, the student and the peasant. You visit that particular *café* which, in the afternoon, is infested by students from the university when the strain of mental toil is over, and may count a hundred of them, reckless, rowdy, and full of life and carelessness, all playing dominoes, thudding the bone pieces on the marble-topped tables like little sledge-hammers working, and filling the tobacco-laden air with deafening cries. If the students in after-life put into legal and medical work anything approaching the energy they infuse into pastime, then fortunate indeed will be their patients and clients. At eventide the students become romantic and conduct their little love affairs, and occasionally even in the unemotional morning a young man may be seen hovering in the neighbourhood of his adored one's dwelling. I saw a youth at daybreak, outside my hotel, feverishly pacing the flags. He wore patent leather boots, very tight and small, and a large-checked overcoat, a flagrant tie and a ridiculous little bowler hat. For an hour he watched and waited; then from an upper window a female voice was heard, and the youth's face assumed a fatuously rapturous expression. A few minutes afterwards the owner of the voice descended, accompanied by her parents, at the sight of whom the youth scuttled round the corner, for the better-class young ladies in Galicia are closely guarded when in public.

You leave the *café* and drift, and instinctively you have made your way again to the cathedral

precincts, gazing at the windows of the box-like shops in the building itself, in which the silver-smiths ply their craftsmanship and produce, amongst other things, vast numbers of tiny silver scallop-shells, one at least of which, obtainable for a few coppers, the good pilgrim takes away from Santiago. Unconsciously you re-enter the cathedral, and are wandering about the vast incense-smelling nave and transepts. Even to the unguided visitor there is much to see, while the skilfully piloted stranger may leisurely examine priceless relics and treasures and behold many marvellous spectacles. I had the good fortune to be shown round the cathedral during two protracted visits by Canon Leopoldo Eijo Garay, and to have the precious relics shown and explained by Canon Martin, who has charge of the treasury.

There is the beautiful Biblioteca, with its ceiling so cunningly and adroitly wrought in stone and painted and glazed that it is difficult to believe that the figures and ornamentation are not plaster. The present King of Spain himself, when visiting the apartment, declared his disbelief that the decoration was carved from solid stone, and there is pointed out a small patch of bare stonework from which the colouring was rubbed to prove to his Majesty that he was mistaken. You may enter a loft where many old and modern tapestries are hung to keep them from the ravages of moths and atmosphere; go to another loft in which are stored the grotesque giants' heads used in the procession of St. James, carefully covered to preserve them

from dust, and inspect the large room in which the tapestries and trimmings of the cathedral are kept in order and repair. In another part of the cathedral, in the nave, near the treasury, is a cupboard in which clerical vestments are kept drawn on frames—vestments that look like priceless cloth of gold. Also to be seen are the ponderous silver maces which are carried at the ceremonies in the minster, and the giant censer in its sentry-box-like case. If you are favoured you may lift the maces and try to raise the top of the censer—and may succeed in moving the silver mass a few inches from its base.

In a dimly lighted room the treasure of the cathedral is kept and Kings of Spain are buried. With cunningly devised keys the doors are unlocked, and the canon explains the meaning of the silver and gold possessions, the very extent of which is bewildering. Here are gifts from sovereigns and potentates, each a wonder in itself, yet so grouped as to form a perfectly harmonious whole. Centuries of religious devotion are represented in this one corner of the mighty edifice, and it would be hard to estimate more than approximately what is the value of the treasure, though an expert might guess at the metals' intrinsic worth.

A small Maltese cross in the centre of the ornaments on the wall which faces the door contains a piece of the true Cross, while above it is a thorn from the Saviour's Crucifixion Crown.

Golden images and goblets, carvings, pictures, fading gorgeous cushions, made by royal and noble hands, with many other gifts in various form to the Holy Mother Church from her sons and daughters, are here, and the eye almost fails to take in what the mind needs time to comprehend. More than once the treasury has been raided by invaders ; and within the last two or three years sacrilegious hands have been laid on one or two of the priceless possessions of the cathedral, but the treasury is now specially protected, and an ingenious clock is used to record the movements of the watchmen who are responsible for the safety of the relics and riches. It is said that the whereabouts of some of the lost treasures are known, and that they are not far from America.

From the treasury one may go to the high altar, above which is the gorgeous effigy of St. James, the object of the last attention of the Santiago pilgrims. The whole of the massive altar decoration is solid silver, wrought in Salamanca, and the candlesticks and ornaments around are of the same metal, which has been used with the lavishness of iron. In the centre is a small image of the Virgin, with a halo of precious stones, and many other gems flash as a lighted candle at the end of a long stick is held out so that they may be seen.

Eleven hundred pounds' weight of solid pure silver—considerably more than half a ton—was used by Salamanca craftsmen to make the wondrous

work amidst which the saint sits enshrined. At this high altar no cleric below the rank of bishop may celebrate Mass, except the canons of the cathedral, without special power being granted by the Pope. Changes are being made, even in romantic, mediæval Santiago, and it is hoped that something like five hundred thousand pesetas will be raised to carry out alterations in the cathedral.

The figure of St. James adorns the centre of the altar, with the right hand pointing to that sacred little vault below in which reposes the great silver casket containing the ashes of the Apostle; and behind him is an unassuming box in which the bones were hidden when Drake swooped down on Santiago from the coast. The original figure was made in the thirteenth century, and there it is still, but with a massive silver garment clothing it, a garment wrought in modern times by cunning craftsmen of Madrid. Ford describes the original figure as being of stone, but my own impression on feeling it, which I did after the ponderous silver back had been pulled away on its castors, was that the material is wood.

At the back of the Apostle is a little platform, which is approached by a few steps on each side. Up these staircases the pilgrims walk, and, placing their hands on the shoulders of the silver cape, kiss the back of it—the gem-studded *esclavina*—and return to the floor of the cathedral. Men and women of all ranks and countries have visited that tiny platform and leaned forward for a salutation,

and doubtless multitudes will journey thither still. It may be that a band of the well-to-do classes will visit the figure in the company, as I saw them, of peasants who come into Santiago and make their osculation and depart. These peasants, being able to visit the sanctuary often, do not trouble to acquire and take away that coveted document which it is the wish of all true pilgrims to possess—the *compostella*. This is a parchmenty form, containing an ornamental border, headed by a figure of a pilgrim and flanked by columns of scallop-shells. The border encloses a printed Latin declaration to the effect that the pilgrim whose name is written in has duly made the pilgrimage and has received the certificate, after making confession and receiving communion. The certificate is signed by a canon, with the date of the month and the year of the pilgrimage, and is stamped with a blue seal. The acquisition of it crowns the object of the journey to the holy city of Galicia, and the *compostella* remains as evidence that he has performed a ceremony which in other days was almost as essential as legal documents in proving a right to property.

Two little metal doors behind the altar lead up to the platform; another, hidden in the gloom near them, gives access to that dark chamber in which the faithful pray and worship at St. James's holy shrine, and where the cardinal conducts his own devotions. Electricity has been installed in the vault, but there are days—amongst them





RUA DEL VILLAR, SANTIAGO.



Sundays—when it is not used, and other days when the current fails to work, and at these times candles are employed to light the cavern-like apartment, into which the sunshine never penetrates. A few steps downwards, a few more along the narrow stone passage, a turn to the right, and two or three more steps—then you are in the cold and tiny chamber which contains the famous silver coffin.

The Apostle's sepulchre is about three feet long and two feet wide and the same in depth, though the top slopes somewhat after the manner of a roof. It is purely modern work, and was designed and made in the cathedral by an expert whose son is still associated with the building. There are figures round the sides of the urn, beautifully wrought images something like a foot in height, copied from the finest details in the Gate of Glory.

The dim light of the candles reveals other relics in this sacred spot—amongst them Roman mosaics and various ancient fragments in glass cases. The original walls of the vault, dating from the first century, are visible. In some places the bricks and stones have been faced with granite, but those that are uncovered show little traces of the effects of the two thousand years which have passed since they were built upon each other.

Just as you instinctively return to the cathedral, so, when you are in it, you wander to the Gate of Glory and begin to realise why Santiagoans claim that this masterpiece is peerless of its kind. The sculptor who created it spent twenty years in carry-

ing out his purpose. During those two decades—1168–1188—Maestro Matteo wrought in stone that wondrous work of which a replica exists in South Kensington Museum. Unfortunately the Gate of Glory at Santiago is so placed that its real significance and majesty are not apparent at a glance, because the portico is within the building itself, standing back a little distance from the main entrance, which is opened only for important ceremonials. Nor can the replica be seen to full advantage in its present position. Other architectural works are crowded up to it, and there is no point from which the complete copy can be viewed. Admirable though the replica is, yet it falls far short of the original in beauty, because it is painted a dirty drab, while the Gate itself still bears much of the original rich colour with which it was decorated. The replica was acquired in 1866 at a cost of £2300, and now that there is so much room in the magnificent new Museum no time should be lost in removing the work. The reproduction would form a noble decoration for one of the light and splendid galleries of the extension at South Kensington.

The Gate of Glory consists of three arches, the centre one of which gives the title to the whole—La Gloria. Twice life-size, the Redeemer is seated in the centre of the arch, with St. James below Him, seated also, and around Him are the Evangelists and elders and angels, the whole being symbolic of the Last Judgment and the victory of virtue

over vice. It is not so much the subject as the work itself which will awe and fascinate the visitor: there is so much prodigality of labour, such lavishness of design, such an amazing whole contained in so limited a space. The wondrous and magnificent group over the central arch would in itself make Santiago's Gate of Glory unrivalled amongst kindred masterpieces.

Seven hundred years have passed since Matteo finished his immortal work, yet in many ways that work appears as perfect now as it was when he put down his tools for the last time and gazed upon that figure of himself which kneels and looks towards the dim interior of the minster, as if in thankfulness for the completion of his task.

In the exquisite central shaft of the Gate there are some depressions into which the extended thumb and fingers of one's right hand will fit. I was told that these indentations had been worn into the stone through contact with the hands of countless pilgrims who believed that as a result they would be physically strong for life; and that another performance which has been extensively practised is to place one's head on that of Matteo's figure; the faithful being satisfied that thenceforward they will be spared numerous mental afflictions. As there may be hidden virtues in the superstitions I went through both performances.

The visitor to Santiago who is fortunate may see a spectacle which is unrivalled in the service of the Catholic Church, and that is the swinging of the

largest silver censer in the world. At ten in the morning of an October Friday I entered the cathedral when High Mass was being celebrated. There was much that was imposing in the procession of the gorgeously vested clergy, from the two bishops downward ; near me, fastened to a sculptured pillar, was the staff which was found with the body of St. James, and there were priceless articles in precious metals within view ; but I had attention only for the massive urn, which is six feet high.

The censer had been brought from its house in the Biblioteca and placed in position in the middle of the aisle, under the gorgeously decorated dome. It was resting on the floor, and from the ring in the top a stout rope ran upward to a combination of pulleys supported on graceful iron standards secured to four pillars. The free end of the rope was hung on a neighbouring bracket. When the time came to burn incense the rope was released and the fire was lit. Immediately the dense, sickly sweet fumes ascended and a master workman gave the signal for hoisting. The man at the rope pulled downward, and the censer swung at a height of about six feet, clear of the adjacent altar-rails ; then the leader seized the silver mass and gave it a strong push, so that it began to swing to and fro with a long, steady sweep, the fumes rising and spreading in the dim interior.

As the censer was swung it was hoisted higher ; then, each man seizing one of the cluster of smaller ropes fastened to the main rope, a regular pulling

began, and the pulleys, acting like the ropes of a church bell, caused the censer to make an immense sweep to and fro. It was fascinating to watch the growing of the sweep, until the arc described must have been equal to a hundred feet. The censer swung majestically until it seemed to strike the vaulted roof; then the pulling ceased and the great vessel was lowered. With unexpected quickness its pace decreased, and as the heavy mass swung across the railed space the master workman seized it again and with unerring judgment piloted it to the floor, a cloud of incense rising from the top and bright flames showing in the interior of the vessel. Two men, clothed like workmen, went to the censer, and, putting a pole through the ring, carried it away on their shoulders, the weight of metal being just so much as they could bear with ease.

As I watched the long sweep of the enormous urn I wondered what would happen if it broke adrift and fell into the crowd of worshippers. Legend says that at one time the censer actually did leave its support and crash through the wall of the cathedral, and that on the spot where it fell a well sprang up, to the amazed joy and great comfort of the faithful, who were thirsting for water.

Being a city of churches, Santiago is the home of religious celebrations—or festivals, as they may be called, for the people of the ancient city take life joyfully, and to them the church fills the place of the bull-ring and the theatre, neither of which exists in Santiago as a permanent institution.

One afternoon I walked into the Church of San Martin, which has some gorgeous altars, and learned that there was to be the yearly observance of the festival of Rosaria. There is no distinction of worshippers in Catholic churches, and rich and poor alike were entering, wearing little medals and bearing yard-long candles. They crossed themselves devoutly and knelt and prayed on the bare, bleak floor of the building, which is reached by descending a flight of stairs. Children, ragged and dirty, without either medal or candle, were clambering over forms, other children, prim and proper, brightly clad and clasping candles, were seated with their mothers, and *señoritas*, some of them handsome, knelt and crossed themselves and prayed—but glancing slantingly as they did so to reckon up their neighbours and the strangers. Officers and privates of a line battalion entered, and a great number of men, all bearing candles, and some hurrying as if they had just left business and were anxious to share in the ceremony. At five o'clock the procession started, headed by white-clad children bearing tiny banners, and followed by the effigy of Our Lady of the Rosary, shoulder-high, and the priests in their full vestments. The women, bearing their candles, now lighted, ranged up the sides of the open-air steps as the procession advanced, some of them, the younger, who were dressed in modern style, giggling confusedly, but others, the poorer and more primitive, very serious in their work. There was

fine full, resonant singing of the *Ave Maria* by the priests and two laymen, accompanied by a soldier and a civilian with bassoons; then, the image having left the church, the band of the 12th Infantry, the famous Saragossa Regiment, fell in and played as the procession at the slow march went along the ancient streets to the Church of San Domingo, where the last part of the service was conducted—an old church made garish inside with arc-lamps. It was a festival in which noise shared largely, for rockets were exploding at intervals, and the bells of every church we passed clanged madly, pulled by boys who, against the sky, looked like imps. A crowd followed the procession—a strange mixture of well-to-do and poor, of smartly dressed and shabbily clothed. Near me was a handsome Spaniard in a charming frock and Paris hat, side by side with a shawled peasant, and a Spanish captain chatted gaily with a friend and smoked a cigarette.

The festival of Our Lady of the Rosary may be seen in any Catholic country, but Santiago has its own particular celebrations in connection with the cathedral, and of these by far the most famous is the ceremony which takes place on St. James's Eve, July 24. The people give themselves up to enjoyment and merriment, and begin early on the morning of the 24th. At eight o'clock bands parade the principal streets, and their music is succeeded by clanging bells and crashing rockets. Amid the growing excitement and commotion there

starts that historical procession of giants which crudely represents the arrival of the pilgrims of old from all parts of the world.

These giants are created largely out of the enormous artificial heads which I have mentioned. The heads are carried elevated, so that, with the garments that the bearers employ, colossal men seem to walk along the streets. The procession starts at noon, and for an hour the clock-tower bell peals constantly and it is difficult to move along the densely crowded thoroughfares.

The giants are not the only curious feature of the celebration. There are also included in it a number of dwarfs—*cabezudos*, signifying big-heads, who strive, with great success, to entertain the juveniles of Santiago by their antics and quaint dances. There is constant mirth and music; and later in the afternoon, in the Plaza del Hospital, greasy poles are climbed, and country dances take place, accompanied by the Galician bagpipes, which give national and local airs—as well as they can be played on such unmusical instruments.

From joy to joy and noise to noise the Santiagoan arrives at darkness, and at nine o'clock the rockets, bursting from a dozen mortars, open a brilliant display of fireworks in front of the holy basilica, accompanied by coloured illuminations of the principal buildings and the crash of bells, the shouts and laughter of the crowds and the music of the bands. St. James's Eve ends in a chorus of mirth and music, and the holiday-makers have



scarcely time to recover from the excitement of the day before they are called upon to renew it.

Twenty-one mortars fired in the Plaza del Hospital at seven o'clock in the morning begin the festivities of St. James's Day. Simultaneously with the crashing of the rockets all the bands in the city burst into music. Two hours later the mayor, the civil governor, the members of the corporation, and the other principal local officials go to the holy basilica, where they join the procession round the cathedral and hear Mass between the choir and the high altar, where the civil governor occupies a seat as the king's representative.

By this time the cathedral, vast though it is, can scarcely hold the crowds who throng the nave and transepts. The cardinal celebrates the Mass, at which the giant censer is used; and a solemn feature of the performance is the ascent of the steps of the high altar by the civil governor, who, kneeling, offers in the name of the king a thousand *escudos* of gold, equal to £400, an annual gift from the monarch, at the same time pronouncing a fervent prayer, which his Eminence answers. When the present King of Spain visited Santiago he personally discharged this interesting task. Mass being finished, the cardinal pronounces the Papal blessing, and to all who have officially shared in the ceremony beautiful bouquets of flowers are given. Then follows an old and remarkable act in the performance at the high altar, before the holy Apostle, of a dance by the giants. During the afternoon

both giants and dwarfs—*gigantones y cabezudos*—show themselves in the streets and public squares, accompanied by bands and crowds of Santiago's populace and country people.

In the evening, when the celebrations at the cathedral are ended, a procession of virgins leaves the Church of Santa Clara and enters the basilica by the northern door, which is known as the Gate of Jet, and there the cardinal, accompanied by all the dignitaries of the church, receives them.

For these two days in July each year Santiago surrenders itself to revelry and enjoyment; then the city resumes its peaceful, yet always bright and interesting, life. The people have had their giants and dwarfs, bands of music and mortars, celebrations in the cathedral and their bells, and have shown that in spite of all their woes and burdens they still know how to live.

Not the least pronounced feature of the festival has been the bells of Santiago. Some of them seem to be always ringing. There are the calls to early Mass at six in the morning, and the summonses to other forms of worship throughout the day; and whenever a procession passes a church the bells clang out and mingle with the bursting of the rockets. Some of the bells are mellow and melodious, but others are like the ringing of a raucous hotel gong. There is no music or method in them; a small boy is stationed by the bells—you can see him at his noisy work—and he hammers at his task, per-

forming it with extra frenzy when service-time is reached.

In the cathedral the bell-ringer and his family live near the belfry, to be ready to answer any special call, to ring a peal or sound an alarm, for the fire-bell is at the mother church ; and there are other special bells, such as that which is rung only when a canon of the cathedral dies. One of the largest of the bells of Santiago was struck not long ago by lightning and was cracked. The crevice is still visible, though attempts have been made to fill it up with other metal. The bell dropped from its support to the stonework inside the balustrade, and there remains, out of action.

Pilgrims of old reached Santiago by the way of blood and tears, for roads were bad and shoes and sandals vanished on the weary journeys. Nowadays pilgrims travel speedily and comfortably, and organised bands set out for Spain's Jerusalem to see its wonders and enjoy its charms. In 1909, for the first time in nearly four centuries, an English band of pilgrims, headed by the Archbishop of Westminster, visited Galicia, by the Booth Line, under the guidance of the Catholic Association, and their banner is suspended in the cloisters of the holy city's minster, while on many of their walls at home are hung the coveted certificates of pilgrimage.

Modern pilgrims may visit and revisit the cathedral ; and they may also wander at will about the city, visiting the old Inquisition, near the Alameda,

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now used for business purposes, and soon, perhaps, to be converted into an hotel, the Archæological Museum, formerly the old Convent of San Clemente, the vast Seminary, the Town Hall, the Royal Hospital, built four centuries ago for the accommodation of pilgrims, the cattle market, and the city's lesser churches, the most astonishing of which is the Colegieta de Sar, famous for its leaning columns and twisted look. The palace adjoins the cathedral. It is an unassuming building, and the audience chamber, where I had the privilege of an interview with Cardinal Herrera y de la Iglesia, makes no pretence to splendour. The Cardinal is deeply interested in the visits to Santiago of foreigners, and spoke with enthusiasm of the excellent effect of journeys to the city. Proud of its wonderful past, he is alive to the necessity of modern improvements in some respects, and doubtless some of these will be carried out without in any way affecting the city's fascination. The Museum contains many of the ancient remains of Galicia, and in the Inquisition, seldom visited or mentioned, there are relics of the torture days; the Seminary bears signs of the visit of the French under Soult in 1809, when they raided the cathedral treasures and bore off something like half a ton of precious metal-ware; and in the Hospital you may see the well-kept wards, the beautiful and extensive cloisters, and the little ancient chapel. Strange though it may seem to English people, yet you may stroll unchallenged through the wards, and see how well

cared for are Galicia's sick and ailing. The Royal Hospital at Santiago claims to be amongst the very first of Spain's healing institutions. Even in November, when I visited it, there was warm sunshine in which the patients could sit or lie—different indeed from the dreary deluges of rain with which, as my home letters told me, England, and particularly London, was afflicted. I know that when, near Mondariz, I was lying on the bank of a clear stream on the hot sand, in a flood of sunshine, idly throwing pebbles in the rushing water, and watching the peasant women crossing and re-crossing an old bridge near me, my countrymen in England, whose southern shore was only two days' sail away, were shivering in steely blasts and maligning the land of their nativity. I know, too, that in such unromantic and inclement weather at home, I was seated on a green hillock to the south of Spain's Jerusalem, smoking and watching the hot sun glint on Santiago's gilded crosses. In such a place you may rest and muse and gaze towards the city, which is one of the most alluring in all Christendom.

Fascinating though Santiago is by day, yet its charms are not so subtle then as at night, when the day's work is done and the people are walking in the open air they love so well. There is no wheeled traffic in the streets—only an occasional bullock-cart or diligence is encountered—and the long, broad flags, with their wide crevices, worn smooth by generations of men and women and

children, re-echo the footsteps of the pedestrians. The arc-lamps accentuate the quaintness of the thoroughfares, and electric bulbs show up the strange interiors of the little shops.

The streets are thronged, and there is a constant chorus of talk and laughter. If the Santiagoans have cares, surely they have left them in their homes, for here you seem to come across nothing that is gloomy or depressing. The modern hat and dress are mingled with the mantilla and the coloured shawl, and the high-heeled boot adds to that chorus of sound the chief feature of which is the clank of the wooden shoe, with the softer accompaniment which comes from the thud of bare feet.

Here and there inside the buildings is a simple oil-lamp, and at times you see a small acetylene lamp on a counter, showing up, perhaps, some of the enormous round maize loaves which form the basis of the poorer people's food. If you would escape from the lighted streets and be alone, you may slip down a narrow alley and find yourself in an old-world thoroughfare, whose only light comes from some open doorway, or the stars in the ragged line of gables which open to the sky. If it is near the time of full moon you may wander on—and you will abruptly reach the cathedral, and see above you the square twin towers and the gilded spires. Again you are back at that wonderful creation which for centuries has been the pride and glory of Galicia.

The scallop-shell of Santiago has been mentioned. It is seen wherever you may go—on the walls of the cathedral, over the doors of numberless little houses, and in multitudes, in tiny silver representations, in the shops of jewellers. The origin of the shell as an emblem is legendary. One story goes that when the Apostle had been slain by Herod his body was taken from Joppa back to Galicia, to which it was borne by sea in a colossal shell. The version adds that a man of high rank who wished to accompany the remains to Galicia was not able to go in the vessel; accordingly he rode his horse into the sea and miraculously made his way by water. When he emerged from the sea both he and his horse were covered with scallop-shells. The legends are picturesque if not convincing; the fact remains that the scallop is the emblem of St. James's pilgrimage now as it has been since he gave his name to Spain's Jerusalem.

A road, newly cut, leads from Santiago to the summit of a hill towards the west, and on the top of that eminence there is a granite monument which makes the fourteenth cross to be reached by the devout visitor who wishes to complete the pilgrimage. I do not know the name of either the road or the eminence, but the one may be called the Pilgrims' Road and the other the Pilgrims' Hill. Nothing can exceed the solemn grandeur of the prospect from the monument. If it is Sunday, and eventide, the sound of distant bells will reach you, and the golden crosses on the graceful spires

will glint; beyond the city, and around it, sweeping in majestic curves, are the Galician hills, and behind you more hills, ridge beyond ridge, with darkness settling on them, so that they look like colossal rollers in the Western Ocean when a heavy gale has blown.

Covering an area which seems a mere oblong speck on the enormous surface of the landscape, Santiago stands supreme. It is the only living thing in what appears to be a dead setting. There is perfect Sabbath stillness in the air, and you see the city now, when here and there a peasant slowly climbs the winding road, as old-time pilgrims must have looked upon it at the end of long and weary journeys.

Behind you is Arosa Bay, one of the world's finest anchorages, where modern fleets may safely lie; near it is Finisterre, the grim promontory which is made by all cautious mariners who voyage north and south across the Biscay, and where Anson won his famous victory, and past which Nelson sailed to win his crowning triumph in Trafalgar Bay. In Elizabeth's time Drake and Hawkins, Raleigh and the other sea-dogs sailed along the rock-bound coast intent on war and pillage, and Drake reached that quaint city nestling in the hills whose golden crosses glisten in the sun by day and whose lights show clearly in the darkness after sunset; for Middle Ages and modernity are linked at Santiago, and the garish arc-lamp supplements the glimmer of the candle.





A LOGAN

CHAP. IV  
THINGS  
S E E N







## CHAPTER IV

### THINGS SEEN

GALICIA is a land of sharp contrasts, and the things seen include sights which cannot be witnessed in any other country within such easy reach of London. The bullock-cart creaks by the side of the railway, the peasant with a Roman plough turns up the soil within sound of the electrical machinery of a corn-mill, the swift motor-car rushes past the old-world diligence on the highway, and the incandescent burner or electric lamp keeps company with the ancient candle. Orange-groves abound and vineyards carpet the landscape, while the stately liner sends her bow-wave swishing at the bare feet of fishwives who are handling catches as they were handled in the days of Jesus. A peasant may prod and drag his team of oxen past a modern school in which his brother may be learning chemistry and his sister millinery, and the old man who has never learned to read and write listens to the machines which print the newspaper whose symbols are to him a mystery; the nun, a life-long prisoner in her gaol-like convent, hears the booming of guns in ships of

war whose purpose is to keep and further liberty, and the friar, tonsured, girdled, sandalled, kneels on the cathedral floor beside a woman dressed in Parisian gown and hat. These are amongst things seen by the leisurely traveller, but even the hasty tourist may make a passing acquaintance with many quaint and fascinating customs and peoples. The pleasure-seeker may have constant recreation and enjoyment, the student of ancient cities and remains finds material wherever he goes, and the lover of archæological and ecclesiological memorials and structures may carry out a long tour and find at the end that he has only touched the fringe of the subject.

The easy-going visitor may constantly step aside from the beaten path and encounter new aspects of Gallegan life, and learn something interesting that is not mentioned in even the best of guide-books. I think the very impossibility, as it seems to be, of getting at the real truth of some Galician matters is one of the charms of going about the country. Baedeker, omnipotent in travel, has missed many things in North-West Spain, or omitted them as being superfluous or unattractive, while details which are published in his masterpieces are at variance with other sources of information. For example, Baedeker states that the population of Pontevedra is 8500, but Murray gives the number as 21,000, a startling and bewildering difference. The discrepancy, however, is understandable, because it is one of the hardest of all things in Galicia to get reliable statistics. The Gallegan treats any demand for

census details as Englishmen deal with income-tax papers.

Wandering off the high road and through some vineyards and maize-fields not far from Caldas, I saw a fine old house. This was at the village of San Benito, where also I came across a quaint little church connected with the house by a small bridge. A few yards from the church, and just off the highway, was a curious open-air platform, used in connection with religious ceremonies at certain seasons of the year; for even this tiny hamlet attracts pilgrims, many of whom travel to get a saintly cure for warts and such-like unromantic ailments of the flesh. There was no difficulty in obtaining permission to inspect the house, which has a fine and well-preserved coat of arms in the stonework outside, and to visit the adjoining vineyards—indeed, I was well received, under the impression that I was a person of importance in the wine trade. The building is seven hundred years old, and certainly looks its age, both inside and outside; further, I was informed the vineyards yield from nine to twelve pipes of red and white wine yearly, according to the season; and the average price obtained is 205 pesetas a pipe.

After my inspection of the house and vineyards I was pressed by the proprietor, with true Spanish hospitality, to try the new vintage, which I did, drinking the white, cider-like beverage from a tumbler just as one would take water. I had

three samples, and although I was warned that pains and penalties would follow I felt no ill-effect whatever, and continued my journey stationward with every possible good feeling towards my fellow-creatures in Galicia. By that time I had left the Spanish carriage in which I had been driving, and walked in pleasant companionship along the road towards Caldas station.

There was a wonderful peace in the air, for it was Sunday evening, and work had ceased. The peasants were out and about, the women sitting, the men smoking and leaning against doors or walls, and the children playing before being put into their primitive beds. The chimes from neighbouring churches mingled with the pleasant tinkle of the bells worn by the two small horses which were drawing the conveyance.

Darkness was falling quickly, and the stars were shining beyond the hills and overhead. Peasants were coming towards us, young men and young women, laughing and chatting gaily, and some of them singing sweet Gallegan songs. In England, even in the villages, people of the same ages and condition would have been bellowing banalities from music-halls. The twilight was short and the road and country were soon in almost perfect darkness, for there were no lights or lamps of any sort. I reached Caldas station in company with a little diligence which dashed up in the gloom, indicated by the voices of the driver and passengers and the thudding of the ponies' hoofs and tinkle of their



bells, as well as by a tiny lamp in the interior of the vehicle. There was practically no illumination in the station, on the walls of which a melancholy oil-lamp was suspended, serving just to outline the figures of the waiting passengers. Nothing came out of the vast surrounding darkness except the occasional sounds of the peasants' songs, and there was something so amazingly primitive and peaceful in the evening and the place that it gave one almost a shock to have a second oil-lamp turned up on the platform and to hear the approaching train and see the head-lights of the locomotive; yet after a few miles had been covered I looked from the carriage windows upon the bright electric lights of Redondela station, and had time to take some wine and food before re-entering a train and journeying back to Vigo.

It is your duty, if only for the sake of experience, to enter one of the wayside inns of Galicia, the *fondas* and *posadas* at which your motor-car, motor-bus, diligence, or carriage draws up in travelling. It may be a place which is comparatively imposing, with bottles of spirits and wines ranged temptingly on shelves, and a right-angled counter containing sundry articles of refreshment, with a dining-room adjoining the bar, and all clean and attractive in appearance; it may be an appalling establishment from which you are fain to fly on swallowing your drink and in which you are grateful to your cigarette; or it may be a house which is neither good nor bad, but incorrigibly indifferent. Go

into them all; there is something new and fresh in each.

The first *fonda* I entered was at Porriño, and that was on a Sunday. Next door was a barber's shop, open to the air, with a priest reading a newspaper while awaiting his turn for a shave. The sign of the trade was a brass dish dangling from a chain, in contradistinction to the impressive tonsorial pole of British facial artists, of whom it would be wrong in these levelling days to speak as barbers. Peasants were entering the *fonda*, and some, men and women, were seated at bare wooden tables, breakfasting on bread and wine. At the counter I bought for a penny an excellent aniseed liqueur, and for the equivalent of a shilling came away with a full large bottle of the spirit, which experience proved more than rivalled cocoa in its comforting and grateful qualities. Incidentally, on re-entering the motor-bus, I saw a large dead rat lying in the middle of the road. Three days later, on returning to Porriño and the *fonda*, I noticed that the carcase was still there—also a decayed and dejected diligence on the pavement, a vehicle which could, however, be galvanised into active service in case of need. Porriño, however, is not a typical Galician village, and is no more representative of the charms and beauties of the country than Wigan is of England.

The visitor will often witness sights which, if not exactly pleasant, are full of interest, as showing something of the people's lives. I saw in corners



A GALICIAN FISHING-BOAT



MEN AND WOMEN ROWING UP VIGO BAY

NO. 1000  
INDONESIA

of vineyards or gardens the carcasses of kids suspended; and, driving down a village street, I observed the body of an immense pig which had been killed. The animal had been placed on the stones in front of the door of a cottage, and a man and his wife, helped by children, were heaping up branches and faggots. When I returned this material was burning, and on inquiry I was told that this was the Galician method of removing the bristles.

In Galicia you may travel in perfect comfort and security along many of the roads and into many of the towns which in Borrow's day, only seventy years ago, were infested with murderers and robbers, and the idea of danger and peril will never so much as enter your mind—a state of peacefulness which is largely due to those splendid fellows of the Civil Guard; yet wherever he went Borrow ran great risks to life and limb. Frequently he took advantage of a military escort, and at one time, travelling from Lugo to Corunna, he had the support of a band of picturesque ruffians who had all the appearance of banditti, and would have created a sensation in a Drury Lane drama.

“They were all men in the prime of life,” says Borrow, “mostly of tall stature and of Herculean brawn and limbs. They wore huge whiskers, and walked with a fanfaronading air, as if they courted danger, and despised it. . . . Their proper duty is to officiate as a species of police and to clear the roads of robbers, for which duty they are in one

respect admirably calculated, having been generally robbers themselves at one period of their lives."

Alas! these romantic ruffians have disappeared from Galician highways, and their nearest prototypes to-day are harmless peasants adorned with flowing side-whiskers, the style of decoration favoured by respectable and inoffensive British butlers.

To my lasting regret I did not thoroughly re-read my Borrow until I returned from Galicia, because Galicia fascinated him, and he covered much of the ground that I personally traversed, and looked upon many awesome sights which I, in a spirit of modernity and commerce, would have photographed.

At the bridge of Castellanos, "a spot notorious for robbery and murder, and well adapted for both," Borrow passed "three ghastly heads stuck on poles standing by the wayside; they were those of a captain of banditti and two of his accomplices, who had been seized and executed about two months before. Their principal haunt was the vicinity of the bridge, and it was their practice to cast the bodies of the murdered into the deep black water which runs rapidly beneath." Borrow added that the three heads would always live in his remembrance, particularly that of the captain, which "stood on a higher pole than the other two: the long hair was waving in the wind and the blackened, distorted features were grinning in the sun."

All this sounds very gruesome and barbarous ; yet such sights were common in England at the same time, for those were the days of public executions and gibbeting of corpses.

The things seen in Galicia do not include the woeful exhibitions of ignorance of the native language which are so common on the part of the Englishman abroad, especially in France. Even the hardy British matron who in Paris will address the cabman as *cochon* refrains from speech in Galicia, because no word of Spanish has formed part of her education. Yet a working acquaintance with the language can be easily obtained, for Spanish, though of all modern tongues the least understood by Englishmen, is the easiest to learn. Borrow declared it to be the most sonorous tongue in existence. In my own wanderings I had the constant help and guidance of an excellent interpreter, and the tourist would do well to avail himself of such skilled assistance, which leaves him free to enjoy the charms of the country and the customs and peculiarities of the people. The system also removes the need for travellers to adopt Borrow's idea of making a foreigner understand them in his own language ; that method being to speak "with much noise and vociferation, opening their mouths wide." He protests that when his fellow-countrymen attempt to speak the most sonorous of all tongues they put their hands in their pockets and fumble lazily, instead of applying them (their hands, not their pockets) to the indispensable office of

gesticulation. "Well may the poor Spaniards exclaim," he adds despairingly, "*These English talk so crabbedly that Satan himself would not be able to understand them.*" To do my countrymen justice, I am bound to say that, with a single exception, I never heard them attempt to speak Spanish in Galicia; and as for the isolated case, I was assured that his Spanish was too bad to be intelligible.



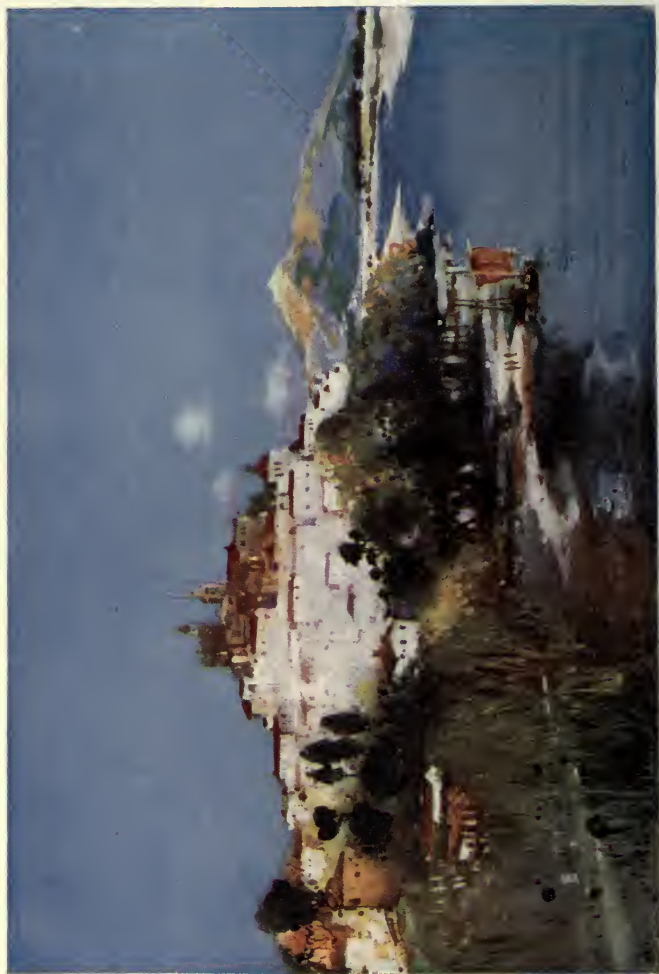


THE CHURCH AT BOUZAB, ON THE COAST

CHAPTER V  
THE ATLANTIC  
COAST AND  
THE FRONTIER







TUY, A HILL CITY ON THE FRONTIER.

## CHAPTER V

### THE ATLANTIC COAST AND THE FRONTIER

IF one could be high enough in air and had a sufficient range of vision, one would see Galicia's coast on the Atlantic side jutting into the ocean something after the manner of the jagged teeth of a colossal saw, from the fangs of Finisterre to the greater fangs southward between Muros, Arosa, Pontevedra, and Vigo Bays, and northward to Cape Ortegal. But it is not necessary to soar skyward to comprehend what Galicia's coast is like, for that can be done from the promenade deck of a liner and the tops of hills. The wild, romantic scenery at Ferrol, Corunna, and remoter places like Finisterre and Corcubion are in themselves enough to fascinate the visitor who seeks majestic solitude and primitive existence. Finisterre is a region in which several famous British battles have been fought. In 1747 Anson defeated a French squadron off the promontory, a victory for which he was made a peer. It was near Finisterre, too, that, three months before Trafalgar, Sir Robert Calder

valiantly attacked the far superior French fleet under Villeneuve and captured two of his ships; and in these waters Sir Richard Strachan made prizes of the ships under Dumanoir which had escaped from Trafalgar.

Ferrol is one of the most striking natural harbours in the world. It is best seen when entered from the Atlantic. Nature has made a canal in the iron cliffs by cutting a straight slit something like a mile in length, and through this amazing cleft vessels enter the noble sheltered basin which forms the harbour. Ferrol has one of the largest populations of Galicia's towns—over 20,000—and is famous mostly for its arsenal; the town, indeed, is Galicia's Portsmouth. Naval officers and cadets and seamen are met everywhere in the Calle Real and other streets, and splendid views of the harbour and dockyard are easily obtainable. In these days Ferrol is very different from the town which Borrow saw, for it was then suffering from the blight which fell on Spain as the result of Trafalgar.

“Grass was growing in the streets, and misery and distress stared me in the face on every side . . .” he wrote. “Only a few ill-paid and half-starved workmen still linger about. . . . Half the inhabitants of Ferrol beg their bread.” But Ferrol to-day has a cheerful aspect, and vast changes are being made with the help of foreign capital and foreign engineers. Enormous modern





FERROL, THE SPANISH PORTSMOUTH



machinery plants are being installed, and there is hope that in no very remote years Spain will be able to build all her own ships of war. She is exceptionally fortunate in the lavishness of Nature's provision of safe and beautiful harbours for her fleet's accommodation. The gigantic and costly dredgers of the Mersey and the Thames are not needed in the Galician bays. Ferrol has many attractions in its neighbourhood for antiquaries, who have found here some of the most interesting of Galicia's Celtic remains. The district, too, is reminiscent of St. James, who is credited with the founding of the ex-Colegiata de Caaveiro, a dozen miles to the east of the arsenal. This building is one of the great ancient military religious strongholds of the country, and possesses dark, damp dungeons in which captives were not able either to lie down or stand upright.

Borrow would be amazed if he could revisit Ferrol and overlook that arsenal of which he gave such a depressing description. He would find, it is true, that the Spaniards proceed in the leisurely fashion of his own generation, because they retain a love of putting off for accomplishment to-morrow the disagreeable duties of to-day. They believe in the blessed *mañana*. For a long time there has been at Ferrol a desultory kind of shipbuilding, and a vessel is to be seen on which the Spaniards have been at work for fifteen years. She is still unfinished. Again *mañana*. But new life and energy have been introduced into the

Atlantic arsenal, and under the guidance of three great British engineering and shipbuilding firms a very large amount of capital has been invested for the purpose of reconstructing the arsenal and the Spanish navy. The firms are Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., Ltd., Messrs. John Brown & Co., Ltd., and Messrs. Vickers, Sons & Maxim, Ltd., and a general control is exercised by the Advisory Committee, who are the technical guarantors of the Sociedad Española de Construcción Naval, the Spanish company which has undertaken the work. At present about 2000 workmen are employed, more than 90 per cent. of whom are Spaniards. The chief engineers of the undertaking are mostly British. The programme of reconstitution will extend over seven years, and the total sum which is being spent is £7,000,000. All the steel which is necessary for this great new enterprise is being rolled at Bilbao. Three *Dreadnoughts*, somewhat smaller in size than our own, are being built at Ferrol, the cost of their construction being included in the £7,000,000.

This Spanish arsenal has an excellent club for artisans, an institution with a large membership. The club is of a very complete character, and combines the advantages of an educational establishment with social enjoyments and sick-pay benefits.

During the Napoleonic wars Ferrol was attacked by Sir James Pulteney, who in July 1800 sailed from England in command of a secret expedi-

tion of 8000 men. The objective was the coast of France; but Pulteney, finding the task too big for him, made for Ferrol. He defeated the Spaniards in two skirmishes and took possession of the heights above the harbour. Then he suddenly withdrew his forces, owing, according to one story, to the fact that the enemy had been greatly strengthened, but in reality, it seems, because of secret instructions which had been given to him to retire. In 1805, when Napoleon had thirty-eight French ships of the line and thirty Spanish, with 170,000 men, almost ready for the invasion of England, Ferrol was one of the three ports which Spain used for her fleet's requirements. Just before Trafalgar Villeneuve took refuge in the port to escape from the British, an act which threw Napoleon into a transport of fury and made him exclaim bitterly: "All hope is gone! That Villeneuve, instead of entering the Channel, has taken refuge in Ferrol! It is all over!"

When Moore had fallen at Corunna and the town had been occupied by Soult he marched to Ferrol, which he took, with seven ships of the line and immense quantities of naval stores. The town was held for several months, during which Soult gave Marshal Ney the task of fighting in Galicia; but the rugged country and the valour of the Gallegans were too much for even the "bravest of the brave," and, believing that he had been deserted by Soult, Ney abandoned Corunna and Ferrol and marched away from Galicia.

Within convenient access of Ferrol and only two miles from Betanzos is the strikingly situated town of Puente deume. Formerly this place was noted for a bridge which was a mile long and possessed no fewer than fifty-eight arches; but this was destroyed in 1868, and was replaced by a modern structure. Betanzos is one of the quaintest and most beautifully situated towns in Galicia. It is full of historical charm, and in addition to its old churches possesses the ruins of a Moorish castle. The town rises from the banks of an inland bay, and on the journey by road between Corunna and Ferrol the visitor has an opportunity of seeing Betanzos from all points of view. First he beholds it from an altitude, nestling snugly in a hollow, then he passes through its old romantic streets, which are villainously paved and crooked, and sees the town again from a height as he goes towards Corunna or Ferrol.

The neighbourhood of Ferrol is to the sportsman one of the most alluring parts of Galicia, for it abounds in beasts and birds and fishes. Hawks and eagles frequent the lonely valley of Caaveiro, deer are numerous, and in the autumn and winter the wild boar is hunted. Salmon and trout are caught in enormous numbers, and wood-pigeons, partridges, and other game are very plentiful.

Between Ferrol and Corunna communication is maintained by steamer and diligence. The sea route is far shorter and easier than the land journey, the vessels in fair weather making the

trip in an hour and a half. But sometimes for several days together the steamboats cannot run because of strong winds or rough seas, and when I visited Ferrol they had been kept in harbour for three days owing to these causes. This meant that storm-bound travellers who found it imperative to reach Corunna to embark were forced to take the diligence and make the long and tedious land journey. To the easy-going visitor, however, that journey is full of charm and interest, including as it does Betanzos, and giving an opportunity of inspecting the Castillo de Moeche, a noble old ruin on the hill-side. There can be seen also on the roadside, not far from Corunna, a modern mansion in beautiful grounds, which was built in the hope that the present King of Spain would take it as a summer residence; but the monarch was not able to accept the offer.

From Corunna to Vigo the coast is bold and jagged, and though it does not present the imposing appearance of Gibraltar, in the south of Spain, or offer the majestic mountains of the east side of the Peninsula, yet it has in its bays glories and beauties which are not excelled by any of Spain's other natural attractions. One of those bays at least, Vigo, will be seen by all visitors who enter Galicia in Booth liners, and there is danger that they may omit some of the delights of the northern fjords in favour of a journey down the Atlantic coast to the point where the river Miño separates Spain from Portugal. ✓

To the frontier of Portugal there runs a carriage road alongside the Atlantic, which is irresistible to the motorist, the cyclist, the rider, and the walker. The scenery is varied and beautiful, beginning with Vigo and continuing to Guardia. On the one side, when the southernmost point of Vigo Bay has been passed, the pleasant village of Ramallosa is reached, with its extensive view across the yellow sands, and its venerable bridge with a weather-worn shrine in the middle. Seven miles farther on, and only fourteen from Vigo, is the little ancient town of Bayona, famous chiefly for its old castle on the wooded summit of the Atlantic shore.

There is no difficulty in getting permission to inspect this romantic residence, which has some delightful grounds from which magnificent views are obtainable. The Atlantic billows sweep up the rocks on the west side of the estate, and overlooking the sea, on the battlements, is a curious stone table, with stone seats, in the open air, with a cross which is visible from a considerable distance over the water.

One of the most beautiful of all modern lighthouses is to be erected near Bayona. The design takes the form of a colossal figure of the Virgin, who holds in her left hand a lantern which will be lit by electricity. Her right hand supports a model of a ship, sheltering against her bosom—symbol of the protection which her friendly beams afford to craft at sea. The rocky base of this remarkable structure will have a number of steps leading from



TO THE  
ABBOTTS



the beach to a terrace from which the visitor may get some glorious views of land and sea. The lighthouse will be known as the Virgin of Bayona, and will stand as a memorial to the creative ability of its designer, an architect of Madrid named Señor Antonio Palachio. ✓

Still with the refreshing breeze of the Atlantic meeting you—the ocean so near that the air is salt-laden—the coast journey is continued to Guardia, once a fortress of importance, but now a ruined relic; then, Galicia's most southerly point having been reached, a turn inland is made, and there comes into view the Miño, on the other side of which is Portugal. The river here is a fine stream, and there is in the neighbourhood that subtle interest and charm which characterise all frontiers.

The Miño is skirted until an ancient city perched upon a hill is seen on the north bank, and on the south another city, battlemented, romantic, mediæval. The one is Tuy, an ancient Spanish country town; the other is Valença, an old Portuguese fortress. ✓  
 These frontier towns have been the scenes of many battles since the days when Witiza, a Gothic king, lived and ruled in Tuy. Witiza resided there in 700; a few years later the Moors swept down upon and wrecked the town; but the Spaniards recovered it, and eventually, in the twelfth century, built the cathedral which is Tuy's most striking feature. No visitor can fail to notice the uncommon iron belfry which stands out against the sky from the

surrounding houses, which at this place seem to be packed exceptionally close together. Tuy has only one considerable street, called the Alameda, and offering no particular charm; indeed, the town's greatest attraction is its beautiful situation and proximity to Portugal.

The two nations, friendly and harmonious, have a joint bridge across the Miño, and it is a very pleasant little excursion to cross the river for a peep at Portugal. The bridge is modern and very long—400 yards. In the centre is a carriage road, above which is the railway; and on each side of the road is a footpath, from which very fine views are had of Tuy, Valença, and the river and surrounding landscape. At Tuy you may listen to the bells of Portugal, and from the grey walls of Valença fortress you may hearken to the chimes from the iron belfry on the house-topped summit of the hill on which the Spanish town is built.

Sentries allow you, being inoffensive visitors, to cross the bridge unchallenged. The Spanish and Portuguese guards take their duties easily, and are much less business-like than British or German troops. They more closely resemble the French in appearance and conduct. It is different, of course, if one attempts to take a photograph or make a sketch in the region of a fort. The use of the camera is not allowed in these places without permission, nor may drawings or sketches be made. My friend Mr. Frank H. Mason, in travelling for the purpose of illustrating this book,

crossed the frontier to Valença, wishful from the battlements to sketch Tuy. Before he could proceed he found it necessary to interview the officer commanding the Portuguese guard. Permission was readily and politely given, but while the artist secured the necessary details he was watched by armed sentries who had been told off for the purpose. It was a picturesque but unnecessary proceeding, for there does not appear to be any serious military secret about the defence of either Tuy or Valença.

The Atlantic coast has been left behind and is out of sight; but there is now an even more astonishing panorama than the ocean-fringe itself has offered, for the Miño runs through fertile, striking, and romantic scenery for many miles, acting as a frontier between Spain and Portugal. Guillarey, a railway junction near Tuy, enables the traveller to take train and steam along the bank of one of the most picturesque iron roads in the world.

Sixty miles away is the town of Orense, and for fifty-five miles of that distance the railway hugs the bank of the Miño, so closely at times that there seems to be almost a prospect of the locomotive and its carriages going into the water. From the windows of the compartments there is an ever-changing, fascinating scene; now of the river rushing wildly over boulders, or going smoothly to the sea; now of vineyard upon vineyard, Spanish and Portuguese, rising in terraces on the

slopes of the hills, and of some old ruin or towering landmark. At Salvatierra station there are the ruins of an ancient fort, seemingly on the platform itself; and across the river is Mongao, a mediæval city, which can be reached by ferry. Hereabouts is a famous wine-growing district, and so fertile is the country that it is spoken of as Galicia's granary. The river which is crossed by the iron bridge at Salvatierra is the Tea, which at this place runs into the Miño.

The scenery becomes grander and grander until Arbo is passed, and then, eight miles farther on, at Friera station, Portugal's highest mountain is seen, the Outeiro Major, with an altitude of nearly 8000 feet, rising beyond the town of Melgaço, situated on its slopes. A short distance beyond this point the Portuguese frontier, indicated by a few cottages, is left behind; but the character of the scenery remains the same as far as Orense.

Before Orense is reached there is a chance of seeing the old and picturesque town of Ribadavia, where the river Aria, on the banks of which it stands, joins the Miño. Ribadavia has a population of 5000, and in the convent of Los Dominicos possesses a building which was at one time a royal palace, though probably a crude one, for it was occupied by monarchs of Galicia when the country was a separate kingdom. The town is very quaint, and will form a halting-place for visitors who like to spend a few hours examining it while awaiting the return of the train from Orense. That town,

however, will offer more inducement than Ribadavia, especially to those who have made a particular point of journeying along the frontier and are not disposed to go beyond.

Orense is a very ancient city, celebrated for its bridge and warm baths, which for many centuries have been looked upon as marvels. These baths, or springs, have a temperature of about 150° Fahr., and as the water has practically neither taste nor smell and does not appear to possess any medicinal value, it is used for washing and all kinds of domestic purposes, even including the cleansing of slaughtered animals. There are three springs, called Las Burgas, and they yield about thirty gallons of hot water each minute.

The cathedral is an imposing building, with a very gloomy interior, and although the structure dates from the sixth century, still it will scarcely call for more than passing attention from any one who is not ecclesiologically inclined. There are, however, some extensive and magnificent cloisters at Orense, which may be viewed by permission, and there is the bridge. This is a remarkable stone structure, dating from the thirteenth century, with a length of more than 1300 feet, and containing seven arches. One of these, the central, known as the Grand Arch, is 156 feet wide. It is pointed, and the crown is 135 feet above the bed of the river—a height which looks very considerable both from the bank of the river and the walls of the bridge.

The Miño rises rapidly and to a great height,

and it was with the object of safeguarding the bridge against the sudden inundations that the arch was made so high. The bridge ascends from each end to something of a point in the centre, and is one of the wonders of Orense. A stone in the bridge records the interesting fact that that particular spot is exactly 555 kilometres—nearly 350 miles—from Madrid. Beyond the springs, the cloisters, the cathedral, and the bridge, the town has few attractions, but whatever it may lack in the shape of bricks and stones and mortar is more than counterbalanced by the glories and the grandeur of the neighbouring scenery.



**OXEN TOWING A BROKEN-DOWN MOTOR-BUS**

**CHAPTER VI  
LOCOMOTION**







TO THE  
LIBRARY OF THE  
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART



THE BULL-RING, PONTEVEDRA.

## CHAPTER VI

### LOCOMOTION

THE diligence is still the national vehicle of Galicia. It is to be met on the high roads which run between some of the chief towns, drawn by six or nine or more mules, ponies, or horses; and no more picturesque sight can be imagined than that of the primitive conveyance in a country district lumbering on its peaceful way in the hills or valleys, crowded with men and women in peasant garb, and the top piled high with miscellaneous goods and baggage. The jingle of the bells gives the first warning of the carriage's approach; then there is the thud of the hoofs and the rumble of the wheels, and the craning of heads from doors and windows. Travellers who have spent days and nights in them, cramped and crowded in *berlina* and *interior* or *coupé*, suffering many miseries and inconveniences, have dwelt on the perils and drawbacks of the diligence, which has an unfriendly habit of capsizing and killing or maiming its passengers, and whose arrival at any given place is subject to the state of road and weather and other circumstances.

The *berlina* is a small compartment in front, running at right angles to the wheels, and ranks as first class; the *interior*, second class, is behind, the seats being arranged after the fashion of a London bus; and the *coupé*, third class, is the top of the vehicle in front of the baggage. In the good weather, which prevails almost throughout the year in Galicia, the *coupé* is by far the pleasantest and cleanest of the three classes of accommodation; and, perched high in front of the diligence, the visitor has an uninterrupted view of the road, and may enjoy the scenery and look upon objects which are ceaseless in their fascination. Journeying by diligence, despite its drawbacks and discomforts, is one of the most convenient ways of seeing Galicia, and if the traveller understands Spanish there is every opportunity of learning the names of places and buildings and getting explanations of the meaning of unfamiliar customs. The driver is seldom at a loss for words or information, and what he does not know can be supplied by the conductor or a friendly passenger.

- ✓ Diligences, big and little, have their special names, some of which would be impressive if the vehicles were in keeping with them. Part of the system of Galician driving is to make an uproar from the box.

One Sunday morning I mounted a ramshackle contrivance called *El Elegante*, and took a seat beside the driver, a brigand-looking person who was unwashed and unshaved. Perched above me, under

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A DILIGENCE ON THE HIGHWAY



OXEN YOKED TO A DILIGENCE



the canvas hood, was a small Spanish boy, bare-footed, bare-legged and bare-headed—almost, indeed, bare-bodied, for his only clothing was a remnant of shirt and precarious trousers, consisting mostly of patches. He planted his feet on my shoulders to steady himself. I would have reproved him, but he had the air of a *caballero*, and the road saved me the trouble of requesting that he should cast his burden on the diligence. His feet were jerked off their perch and we were all thrown tumultuously about. Three wild-looking little ponies were harnessed to the coach, and with a frantic shouting and stamping the driver started them on their journey, flicking his long whip and cursing and blessing them by turns. Each animal, like the coach, has a name, to which it seems to be entirely unresponsive. The ponies were in no need whatever of a filip, yet the driver lashed out furiously, making a great pretence of flogging them, but doing no real hurt, and spending most of his time in disentangling the lash from the harness. Nor was there any occasion for him to break into frenzied shouts and lean forward in a paroxysm of affected energy; but he did both, and, judging from his looks at the end of the journey, he was satisfied that the success of the drive was due to his own exertions, and was not in any way attributable to the quadrupeds.

The railway system of Galicia is imperfect. Only three lines exist—the West of Galicia Railway, worked by English capital, the system which operates from Corunna, and the track which runs

along the bank of the Miño, and covers some of the most wonderful scenery in the country. In time other systems will be finished and in course of operation; but progress marches slowly in Galicia, and there is no hurry in the country. An old Spanish proverb says that by the road of By-and-by you will arrive at the town of Never; and ✓ there is the favourite promise of *mañana*, which means that certain things will be accomplished in the fulness of time. Amongst them is the completion of Galician railways. Fourteen years have been spent on one railway between Betanzos and other centres. The track is finished, but the system is not complete, and to-day, where a train should take you swiftly and smoothly across country, you jolt and jostle in a diligence, or, if you are fortunate, travel in a motor-car.

Aged engines draw Galicia's rolling-stock; yet the carriages themselves are very comfortable. The first-class compartments, by which alone the Booth Steamship Company's tourists travel, are excellently adapted to the country's needs. Many of them are built on the English plan of small compartments, but others are in the form of little saloons capable of seating about a dozen passengers. Seats after the manner of an ordinary English compartment are at each end of the saloon, and seats are on each side, leaving the centre free for the baggage which Galicians cram into every railway carriage when they get the chance.

These small saloons are about equal in size to



two English compartments, allowing for a broader gauge rail in Spain, but there are many of the eight-seated compartments which are common to England and the Continent. In these coaches the ordinary Continental system is adopted of inserting small glass panes in the partitions, so that travellers may look from one compartment to the other. The plan has its objections in the estimation of those who seek privacy, but it gives comfort to the nervous and unprotected passenger.

In England smoking-carriages are labelled; in Galicia the forbidding notice is put on the vehicle where smoking is not allowed. As a matter of fact, you may smoke anywhere and everywhere in Galicia, unless great pressure or sweetness is brought to bear on some offender against the law. Yet ladies travelling on railways may reasonably hope to escape from suffering and annoyance, for each Galician train has a first-class compartment exclusively reserved for them. Frequently, even in trains which were well filled, I observed that the compartment "*Reservado para Señoras*" was empty, the womenfolk preferring to travel with the men and the tobacco smoke.

Starting a Galician train is a serious task. Before you are allowed to enter the station your *bona fides* as a traveller must be established. The carriages are shunted to the platform perhaps half an hour before the advertised time for leaving, then at a later stage the locomotive is backed in

and coupled, and in due season, with no unseemly haste, a man in a blouse perambulates the platform and chants the Spanish equivalent for "Gentlemen, please embark," which the *caballeros* do at their leisure. The engine takes breath, as it were, and a trumpet tootles; then the driver blows the whistle, and if you are leave-taking you jump frantically on board, only to learn that five minutes pass before the train begins to move. A prolonged blast from the locomotive is the preliminary for a leisurely start—I even heard it suggested that the signal exhausted the boiler so much that a delay was needed to raise more steam.

Galician trains travel slowly, and there are protracted waits at the intermediate stations—sometimes long enough to allow the passenger to view the surrounding scenery or stroll into the adjacent town or village, certainly to give him a chance of drinking a cup of coffee or glass of wine or a liqueur at the refreshment-room, if one exists. Failing that establishment, which is primitive and unattractive from the English standpoint, a drink of water may be obtained from an old woman who walks about the platform with an earthenware vessel. At Filguiera station I saw an aged dame, wearing men's boots, dispensing water to passengers; near her, on a balcony, was an unwashed but picturesque Spaniard smoking a cigarette; and two small girls came to the carriages selling a sweet cake, made in the shape of a ring. I bought two for a copper, and they proved excellent eating.

Young and old people of both sexes took their duties easily, and the platelayers went about their business leisurely, stepping off the single track long before the warning signal of the whistle sounded, and gazing meditatively at the passing and departing train. There is little fear of the Galician worker on the line sustaining injuries, because he gets out of the way long before the train reaches him—and the train would be hard pressed to catch up even a retiring platelayer. The speed is very limited, and once when I was travelling by motor on a road which ran parallel with a track the chauffeur easily outdistanced the train, and shot triumphantly across the metals in front of the engine.

Motor-cars are not numerous in Galicia, but there are some very fine examples in use; and despite adverse criticisms, many of the roads in the north-west of Spain are excellent. The highways, to begin with, are well made, but after heavy rains they become lumpy and are neglected; but in the neighbourhood of the large towns they are well cared for, and cars run smoothly and as fast as the driver cares to go, for except in passing through towns and villages there is no speed limit.

Public motor-cars, corresponding in size, power, and appearance to the London motor-bus, run regularly between Santiago and Corunna. The *berlina* will seat eight persons, but not more than half a dozen are booked as a rule. The accom-

modation is equal to that of an English first-class compartment, the entrances being at the sides, like a railway carriage. The rear and larger part of the vehicle is given to second-class passengers, who enter at the end. In front there is room for two or three people, and a passenger may sit beside the driver and enjoy the air and scenery. The roof of the conveyance is used for baggage, of which a great quantity can be stowed. Each trunk or package carried on the roof—and care is taken that the passenger shall not burden the interior with his belongings—has pasted on it a yellow label bearing a written number. These motor-buses usually cover the journey of forty miles between Corunna and Santiago in three and a half hours. A slower service, conducted by antique-looking steam vehicles, requires five or six hours—about half the time occupied by the diligence, which you will easily overtake on the highway.

Occasionally the motor-bus will break down and need slight repairs. The passengers in that case may get out and stroll along the road, as I did. Blackberries were plentiful in the hedges, and I gathered and ate them, much to the astonishment of some fellow-travellers. Spaniards will not eat the fruit, but several of them gathered blackberries and insisted upon my acceptance. I consumed as many as I cared to eat, and as for the rest, I left them, unobserved by the donors, for the birds. One afternoon, near the frontier, I passed a motor which had broken down, and to

which a pair of oxen had been yoked, to draw the crippled vehicle away.

Railway train, diligence, and motor vehicle are used by visitors and residents in Galicia, but there are many districts, remote from towns, where the mode of locomotion is by mule or donkey, with occasional horse and pony. Everywhere the peasant woman may be seen riding on a mule or ass; and sometimes a string of mules will come along, each bearing a brightly clad, laughing woman of Galicia; or in a remote bridle-path in the hills you have to step aside into a field or hedge to make way for a handsome girl of the country who is returning to her father's farm from the nearest village, sitting contentedly on the mule which picks its way easily along the rough ground, which may be, and often is, the stony bed of a little stream.

It is well to be prepared for minor shocks in travelling. Your train may have left a station at night, and you are dozing in the dimly lit compartment. Suddenly you are fully awake, and by the light of the oil-lamp see a figure outlined—a man in corduroys standing almost menacingly over you. He is not a brigand nor a hold-up; he is merely the inspector wishing to see your ticket. He has clambered to the door by way of the footboard, and has opened it and entered unseen. When he has done his task he leaves by the same way, and proceeds to startle some other unsuspecting and unready traveller. At other

times a man in semi-uniform, with a cap bearing a small metal locomotive as a badge of office, will fall upon you for the same purpose, and then depart. At wayside stations you will see him leaning from the door of a first-class compartment, smoking a cigar or cigarette, and preparing to resume his footboard tricks when the train is again under way. But though the descent is as unexpected as the same performances in American trains, yet there is an entire absence of that aggressive, domineering attitude which in some of the United States railway officials is so offensive. The Galician ticket-examiner doubtless believes that, being a *caballero*, he is quite as good as you are, just as the American official does—except when he wishes you to know that he is better—but he has a gentler way of showing it than his compeer on the other side of the Atlantic.

In departing from a railway station, too, at night, you may be startled by the sudden opening of the door of the hotel bus, and the bursting in upon you of a man with a lantern. He is merely an *octroi* official, and his purpose is to see that you have not hidden upon or about you such dutiable goods as fowls and other eatables. The *octroi* man may be seen in all parts of Galicia, his headquarters usually being some strange little abode on the roadside, roughly built of stones.

Probably no men in Galicia feel more acutely the slowness and inconvenience of the locomotion of the country than the commercial travellers, most of

whose time is spent in getting from place to place, and not in the actual transaction of business. That remark applies, of course, to the commercials of England and the enterprising "drummers" of America; but the business representative in Galicia has to endure many hardships to which his foreign brethren are strangers.

Late one night I entered an hotel in the company of some travellers, and watched them as they took their final meal. They were preparing to make a night of it, and on asking the reason for the dissipation I was told that one of the commercials had to leave by a train which started at 2.45 A.M., that he had resolved to sit up for it, and that his comrades, in a spirit of compassion and conviviality, had agreed to keep him company until he left the hotel. One or two of them had to start at six o'clock—and these were quite usual hours for men on the road.

Time after time I met the same commercials in trains, diligences, motor-buses, and hotels, and on each occasion noticed that they had long ago acquired the art of making themselves comfortable in adverse circumstances, and had cultivated a fine disregard of the feelings of others. There is something in locomotion in North-West Spain which seems to bring out the worst qualities in travellers, and I found nothing more disagreeable and exasperating than to be wedged into a sort of diligence for conveyance to and from stations. In the darkness of an early morning I was packed in the

corner of an aged conveyance and jostled over the lumpy road without so much as a chance of escape, for the very doorway and outside platform were crammed with fellow-creatures, and the interior was packed with people who were mostly corpulent and unattractive. Once or twice it seemed as if the vehicle would capsize, and it was a disquieting spectacle to see a wall of feminine flesh bending forward as if with the sinister purpose of extinguishing me. In the gloom of one corner was a stout man, wearing a linen uniform and smoking. I assumed that he was a workman, perhaps a bill-poster, until, later, he was seated opposite to me in a first-class compartment, and I discovered that he was an officer.

It may be that you have your cycle with you, in which case you may pedal in peace, but unless you know the region well you must keep an ever-watchful eye ahead, for many of the roads zigzag dangerously along the mountain sides, and an uncontrolled machine would bring about a swift disaster. Brakes both good and strong, and at least two of them, are necessary for the cyclist's safety and his peace of mind in Galicia. That precaution would apply especially to the ordinary visitor, man or woman. There are those in the cycling world who, even in risky and unknown neighbourhoods, neglect precautions and scoff at danger. In many parts of Galicia the scoffing may be followed by a catastrophe the victim of which would scoff no more.

I saw only two or three cycles in Galicia, and one of these was a freak made of wood. The



wheels were solid discs, after the fashion of the wheels of a bullock-cart, and the whole of the frame and fittings seemed to be of the same material, unpainted, as if the masterpiece had been just finished and was undergoing its trials. The work was excellently done, and was a high tribute to the patience and ingenuity of the producer, who had clearly taken as his model an ordinary safety. The machine was being ridden by a peasant lad in a country village. When I first saw him he was ahead, coasting slowly down the steep road; but he observed the motor-car approach, and by the time I passed him he had dismounted and dragged his cherished possession up the hedge side out of harm's way. As to cycling generally in Galicia, it is quite feasible, for many of the roads are suitable, but in most places the steep, rough thoroughfares make the comfortable use of one's machine impracticable.





THE HILLS OF MONDARIZ

CHAP. VII  
MONDARIZ





MONDARIZ



MONDARIZ.

## CHAPTER VII

### MONDARIZ

THERE is one health and pleasure resort in Galicia which is in the nature of an earthly paradise, and that is Mondariz. The district has been long famed for its beauty, charm, and grandeur, and those curative waters on the success of which a colossal and palatial hydropathic institution is conducted by Messrs. Ramon and Enrique Peinador. This hotel claims to be the finest and best in the Peninsula; it is certainly the most remarkable in many ways, and might almost be compared with a *Mauretania* on land, it is so complete and self-contained.

In wandering through Galicia it is impossible not to be struck by the number of medicinal facilities that the country offers in the form of natural springs, and the careful attention which has been given to their development. Great labour has been spent, as well as money, in connection with some of these watering-places, and only by the application of a large capital, incessant perseverance, and a far-seeing sagacity could the Mondariz hydropathic

establishment be what Messrs. Peinador have made it. Mondariz is not only a resort for those who take medicinal waters in the ordinary way, but it is also a great pleasure centre of Spain. In the season Mondariz is the most brilliant place in Galicia, and its pleasures are shared by visitors from all parts of Spain and abroad. The attractions of the institution and the district are rapidly becoming known to English travellers.

The waters of Mondariz (Gandara and Troncoso, as the springs are called) contain bicarbonate of soda, and abundant medical evidence is available as to their therapeutic value. Professor Augusto pi y Suñer, of Seville University, in an exhaustive report gives some striking facts concerning their tonic and curative effect in many forms of illness. So that visitors may take full advantage of the waters Messrs. Peinador have constructed baths of every description, and of beautiful design and admirable workmanship. Lavishness of expenditure, indeed, is one of the characteristics of the Mondariz Hydro, and only by the adoption of such a bold policy could the present great results have been attained.

A handful of people a few years ago journeyed to the vale in which Mondariz nestles, to take the waters, and they found accommodation in little *châlets* on the green slopes which abound in the locality. The results were so remarkable that the *châlets* could no longer house the visitors, and finally the existing hotel was opened in 1897.



Six hundred people can be accommodated at the hydro, yet in the season the vast establishment is taxed to its utmost capacity to provide for the visitors. The grace and beauty of the building are noticeable as soon as the main hall is entered and the grand staircase is seen. This gives access to rooms some of which, especially the chief private suites, are regal in their appointments. Mondariz can give accommodation to a king as well as to an ordinary tourist. The principal dining-room is of enormous size, and there is a very large and handsomely decorated *salon* in which dances and theatrical performances and concerts take place. The kitchen arrangements are of the most perfect modern type, and possess the feature, somewhat unusual in hotels, of being open at all times to public inspection.

But it is not merely in the hotel as a building and establishment that interest centres at Mondariz; it is in the completeness of the undertaking. The industry of bottling the water is conducted in its entirety. The neighbouring woods supply the timber needed for the packing-cases, which are all made on the estate; and so great is the demand at home and abroad for the waters that in the course of twenty-four hours 10,000 bottles are prepared. The men and women who bottle and pack work day and night in alternate shifts.

The hotel has its own fancy shops in the season, for enterprising houses in Madrid send business representatives to supply the wants of visitors, delightful stalls and kiosks being arranged, bazaar-

like, in the grounds. Special vineyards, wine-making premises, farms, kitchen and fruit and flower gardens, as well as sheds and sties for cattle and pigs, and great pens for poultry, are amongst the other resources of Mondariz. The estate also possesses its own printing establishment, from which a newspaper is issued specially dealing with the doings of the institution and its guests. Fishing and shooting, driving, riding, walking, and rowing—all these may be enjoyed on the hotel estate, through which the trout-teeming Tea flows. The walks in the pine-clad hills and along the bridle-paths and little lanes of Mondariz are full of charm and delight. A perfect holiday may, indeed, be spent without leaving the estate, on which, to give an atmosphere of completion, there is a chapel.

From the verandah in front of the hotel, or the balcony on to which the window of your bedroom leads, or from your garden-chair under the palm-trees you may watch the women of Galicia ride past on mules or donkeys or walk to and fro with their burdens, so that the very life of the people seems to be brought to your notice without any exertion on your part. On the extensive estate long and enjoyable walks may be taken, and inspection made of numerous historical remains which Messrs. Peinador have brought together from various parts of Galicia. A museum is in course of formation in which many articles are already to be seen bearing on Gallegan life and costume. By means

of the hotel motors very delightful excursions may be undertaken to neighbouring towns and villages. A regular service is maintained between Mondariz and Vigo for the convenience of tourists by the Booth Line.

A pump-room is being built at Mondariz from designs prepared by the foremost of Spain's architects, and when it is finished the building, judging from the plans, will be amongst the finest in existence. It will be a beautiful ornament to the grounds and form the rendezvous for the water-drinkers, just as the old pump-rooms at Bath, Harrogate, Scarborough, and Buxton were the central meeting-places for visitors. The pump-room will be equipped with every modern appliance and luxury, and yet within a stone's-throw there are primitive cottages inhabited by something approximating primitive man. That is another of Galicia's sharp contrasts.

One of the chief features of the new building will be the fine granite columns. These are made entirely on the premises and are produced from the estate. The huge granite blocks are quarried in the neighbouring hills; bullocks draw them down to the hotel grounds, where hotel workmen rough them out, and turn them in the lathe and finish and polish them. Other employés will put them in position and complete the building, the estimated time for constructing which is two years.

There are larger and more imposing hotels in the world than the hydro at Mondariz; I have

seen them in London, Paris, New York, Chicago, and elsewhere; but not even in America have I visited an establishment which can lay claim to that completeness of resource which characterises the concern of Messrs. Peinador. Galicia from north to south and east to west is fascinating, but there is no place in the country which leaves more abidingly pleasant memories than Mondariz.

The balanced stone of Arcos is within an easy drive of Mondariz. This gigantic boulder is poised on the top of another enormous rock in such a way that it seems as if a touch or a strong wind would send the mass headlong into the rough road below. But the stone has been in that position for ages, and is one of Nature's mysteries. The journey to this wonderful logan affords a view of some of the wildest and grandest scenery in the neighbourhood of Mondariz. Much nearer the hydro, and making a very charming walk, is the little village of San Pedro, which forms one of the pleasantest sights that the pedestrian can witness. Here and there, on the banks of rushing streams, are stone-built mills, primitive and tiny, where native millers carry out their grinding operations with the water-wheel.

Galicia may be visited and something seen of the people and country without going beyond the confines of the hotel, for the estate is large and wonderfully comprehensive. It possesses its own hills and dales, where you may get good sport, even its own river, the Tea, on which you may boat and fish. You may see the process of wine-making,

from the growth of the grape to the bottling of the juice, and the evolution of the chicken from the egg to the *poulet rôti* or other form of table delicacy. Fruits and vegetables in more shapes and forms than I can either remember or understand are produced on the estate, and in due season take their places on the well-appointed tables. Nay, even Galician peasant life is represented, and without much trouble you may enter a cottage and see what the life of the people really is. True, the homes are better than the sordid hovels which are common to Galicia, but the lives of the people are practically the same. I went into one house, and from the dark, primitive kitchen walked into a sleeping-room with an embrasure-like window which framed one of the most perfect landscapes I ever saw—a picture the like of which few people in England below noble rank can command from their own possessions.

The ruined castle of Sobroso, which is within pleasant walking and driving distance of Mondariz, offers an exceptionally fine view of Galician landscape. The country is a wealth of fascinating colour. Hills rise up on every side—pine-clad and lonely; some, if the day is doubtful, suffused in sunshine, some a deep blue—so deep that the details of the hills are lost and the mountain ranges are smoky, mist-topped masses. The sun shines and the warm rain drops softly. Peaceful little farms nestle in the valleys, with the vineyards terracing the slopes; bullocks, resting from their

labours, are browsing ; goats are nibbling on the green slopes ; women are in the maize-fields, and men are digging, trimming, turning, to make the bounteous earth yield its supplies. It is a scene of perfect peace and beauty, and the only sounds that break the soothing silence are the laughing voices of the women who are working in the fields, and that strange creaking of the bullock-carts which is not heard in any other part of Spain.

A long mile from the wooded base of Sobroso I had watched a train of bullock-carts crawl up the white high road—a train of seven, timber-laden, making an extraordinary noise as they approached. Amongst the drivers was an old woman, bare-footed, who, as she trudged alongside her patient pair of oxen, wove wool with a distaff which she carried in her hands. Later, from Sobroso itself, I listened to the distant noises of the bullock-train—a musical creaking, groaning, and rasping—with a sudden silence when the cattle were brought up to rest. Sometimes the creaking would be like church bells, at other times the sound resembled the whistle of a locomotive. It was an uncanny medley, like, and yet unlike, both bells and whistle, and to be compared only with itself, for there is nothing else like the creaking of the bullock-cart of Galicia. They say that the noise is made deliberately, to give warning, in narrow, dangerous roads where there is no room to pass, that a bullock-cart is coming ; but they do not explain how a driver, dulled and deafened by the uproar of



A PEASANT'S FUNERAL IN THE HILLS



A PEASANT WOMAN, WITH HER DISTAFF,  
DRIVING A BULLOCK-CART





his own conveyance, hears the noises of a rival vehicle.

Down in the foreground is a white, peaceful church, near it a tall, slender pillar of stone, surmounted by an effigy of the crucified Redeemer on the one side, and on the other a figure of the Virgin and Child; on the tops of neighbouring walls are crosses, emblems of that faith which all Galicians have adopted, for here, as elsewhere in Spain, there is one religion only, and it is that of the Holy Mother Church. The whole scene is wonderful and impressive, and the country has the great merit of being almost untravelled by and unknown to ordinary tourists.

From Sobroso's solitude you walk back to the high road where your motor-car or Spanish cab awaits you and resume your journey, or, being untroubled by thoughts of time or vehicles, walk onward in the strangely fascinating twilight of Galicia. You pass the peasant women, and they smile and murmur "Adios," and instinctively you raise your hat in recognition of the salutation.

All roads near Mondariz lead to the hydro, and an hour or two after you have descended from the ruins of Sobroso you are in the great dining-hall of the hotel or in its brilliant *salon*, or are smoking in the verandah outside, in the pine-scented air, with semi-tropical vegetation around you. It is no exaggeration to speak of this great undertaking as Mondariz the marvellous.





GATHERING FIREWOOD IN THE PINE HILLS

CHAP. VIII  
GALICIA'S  
BURDEN-  
BEARERS







THE FISHING-TOWN OF MARIN.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GALICIA'S BURDEN-BEARERS

ON the road which runs from Vigo to Mondariz I saw a woman walking with some great burden on her head. She advanced quickly, with straight and supple gait, but not till she was very near did I notice what she carried. It was a full-sized coffin, but so perfectly poised that the bearer did not seem to feel its weight. She went past, silent, heavy-eyed, and looking straight ahead, her bare feet making no sound on the gravel of the pavement.

That was one of the first of Galicia's burden-bearers I saw, but the very first was when I landed at Vigo and observed a woman on the Alameda carrying an assortment of bedding on her head, a mass which almost smothered her. A man, apparently her husband, stalked in front, leading the way, like a Red Indian before his squaw, and bearing his share, according to Galician ethics, of the family possessions, for under his left arm was tucked a pillow and in his right hand he carried an umbrella.

From the day when they can support any burden at all the females of Galicia are taught that to them is given the conveyance of any article, however big and clumsy, which is not too big for a human being to grapple with. Nothing more astonishing can be seen in Galicia than the size and weight of some of the loads which the women carry on their heads, and frequently a woman hurries along under a burden which a Billingsgate or Covent Garden porter would refuse to have planted on his crown.

Galician women have a passion for consigning burdens to their heads. Size, shape, and weight are immaterial. The burden may be a bedstead, a coffin, a load of firewood or seaweed, an enormous trunk packed with baggage, a bucket of water, a huge basket of fish or vegetables, or some grotesque article which could be easily carried in the hand. Big or little, the method of conveyance is the same, a small protecting pad being put between the top of the head and the burden. A common, almost universal, way of preparing the pad is to take a handkerchief, usually a white one, from the pocket, roll it into a ring, and then put it on the crown of the head. The material prevents the hard basket, bucket, box, or other burden from being unduly felt, though many Galician women have bald spaces due to the wearing away of the hair by the circular pads. If the weight is not too heavy a woman will hoist it up herself, but the custom is to have the load lifted up and put in place.



There is a spirit of *camaraderie* in the burden-bearing, and frequently a woman who is hurrying along the street, flying light, will stop to hoist up a burden on to a fellow-creature's head. Small girls scurry along the pavement or roadway bearing weights that are out of all proportion to their strength and years, and to this early toil may be attributed the spoiling of Galician figures. The heavy weights and strain of carrying them cause the women to walk with a curious twisting movement of the hips, and to over-develop that part of the body; but as a rule the carriage of the Galician peasant woman is perfect, and many have remarkably fine figures. Some of the women appear to be enormously strong, and the great majority look healthy and happy. Even when near confinement they will continue their burden-bearing, and I was told that often a child will be born to a woman who has gone straight from her work, and that in an incredibly short time she will be at her task again. In this respect the Galician peasant seems to be fit sister to the Red Indian women, of whom it was said that they would fall out of the line of march, and having given birth to a son or daughter on the prairie, pick the infant up and overtake their companions.

Women in Galicia work in the houses, the fields, the quarries, on the road, on the water. You may see them driving bullock-carts, and pigs and cattle. I observed a tiny girl who could not be more than

three years old piloting an enormous and fractious sow, weeping copiously as she did so because the stubborn pig refused to answer steering signals, which were smart thuds on her fat sides; women were helping men to pull a boat-load of seaweed up Vigo Bay; three women and one man outside Pontevedra were road-making with pickaxes; not far away from them other women were filling ✓ corves with coal, plying their shovels like navvies, and women were unloading a stone-laden sloop, tripping up a springy gangway with their stone-filled baskets on their heads, and hurrying down another plank for further loads. I saw women stripping the husks from maize, quarrying granite in the hills, working on hats and dresses, teaching in little wayside schools, tending the sick in hospital, and doing a hundred and one odd things many of which are carried out by women in Great Britain, but most of which fall only to the lot of men.

On inquiring into the rate of wages paid to women I was told that a female labourer gets sevenpence daily for her work, which lasts from sunrise to sunset, and she is as a rule supplied with wine and maize-bread, although in some places the bread has to be bought. In cold weather the women are given a little brandy. The wages seem small enough, but the cost of living is in proportion to the income. A little cottage may be had for a shilling a week, and although the dwelling is far from being a desirable





A MAID OF CANGAS

human habitation from the English standpoint, still it is not worse in some respects than many of the appalling dens in which British labourers live. }

Women appeared on the railway side at every level crossing when a train was passing, and, armed with a staff as badge of office, held up the traffic, vehicular and pedestrian. As a rule there was neither, but the conscientious female went through the solemn ceremony of standing sentry over the gate or chain which separated the single track from the highway until the train had passed, and then lowering the sign of authority and opening the gate or releasing the chain to indicate that carts and human beings were at liberty to cross the metals. Often enough this motherly protection was witnessed only by a dilapidated Spanish infant, who had nothing better to do than stroll down to the railway and watch the train go past.

These remarkable children are everywhere, and some of them are very pretty, and as shy as they are attractive. At the old bridge of Ramallosa I wished to take a photograph of a little Spanish maid who was hurrying towards me over the arches, but her coyness was unconquerable, and in spite of all allurements she refused to be a party to the picture, and at last turned and fled precipitately. At Cangas, on the north side of Vigo Bay, I craftily secured a shot at a beautiful maid who was hugging a fat and placid infant on the shore. Being only a few feet away, I feigned deep interest ✓

in a neighbouring sardine-boat, then, unexpectedly confronting the little nurse, so that she should not have time to pose, I secured her for the film. It was not until I strolled away that the subtlety of the performance struck her; then, for some reason best known to herself, she burst into screams of laughter. One of the charms of snapshots in Galicia is that the subjects are quite unconscious. They do not pose, because they do not understand.

Some of the Galician peasant women have a strange way of dressing their hair. This consists of plaiting a length of material of exactly the same colour as the hair into the pig-tail or tails to give the finished article a more generous and impressive appearance. At first sight the custom strikes one as tending to vanity; yet it is as nothing, if men are to believe all they read, compared with one's own countrywomen's practice of enriching their own locks by adding to them, not a piece of stuff or ribbon, but other people's shorn tresses.

✓ Women do most things—nearly, it seems, all things—in this corner of Spain, but in no respect are they more in evidence than in connection with washing. Laundry work in England is synonymous with everything that is hard and sordid, but in Galicia it reaches something approaching a fine art. Washing seems to be the national recreation of Galicia. All day long and every day the womenfolk are on the banks of streams and rivers, standing, bending, or kneeling at their work, or

in public washhouses, such as Corunna possesses, just below the place where Sir John Moore is buried, or in some open ground in towns. At Ferrol there is a huge trough around which the women stand to their work. This is in the open air. Vigo has a covered building near the bay for laundry operations, but by far the greater part of the work is done in sunshine, near the running water by the side of glorious fields or at the edges of green woods, and though the task may be laborious the conditions of the toil are perfect.

There is incessant talk and laughter—one of the brightest and most hilarious groups of women that I saw in Galicia was at Ferrol, round the public wash-tub. There were a score or so of them, busy at work, but not too busy to turn and laugh at the stranger; merry, but not so merry that they could not find energy to break into joyful screams at some playful jest from a passer-by. The spectacle was one on which Samuel Pepys would have dwelt with rapture, and the joke would have been recorded with minute precision in his diary. There are many odd things in Galicia which savour of the England of the Restoration.

The washing is a simple task. The clothes are taken to the water's edge, mostly in flat baskets, such as those which are used for fish. The women kneel over the running water, thoroughly soaking and soaping the garments, which are then placed on stones to be rubbed. After the rubbing there is a careful rinsing and wringing. The articles

are then spread on the nearest hedges or grass or stones to dry. A mother may bring her baby with her, and leave the little creature sitting or sleeping in the basket near her; the young boys and girls will give a hand with the work; and if it is after dinner an old woman may come up with her tin and earthenware utensils and wash them in the running water, which carries all impurities towards the sea.

There is in most of us that faculty for enjoyment which comes from watching, at our ease, fellow-creatures toiling, and I will confess to the keen satisfaction I felt at the quaint bridge of Marin, a pleasant little run from Pontevedra, as I leaned over the parapet smoking and watching the washers in the stream below. The sun was shining hotly, the sky was a clear blue, the little white houses dotted the yellow sands, and the brown nets hung to dry from the fishing-boats and fences. The women sang at their labour, and the children sang as they frolicked or helped their elders. It seemed like a universal washing-day. Yet even washing in Galicia is a romantic and picturesque performance, completely free from the steamy, squalid smells of laundry days in British homes and institutions.

At Marin I leaned over the bridge and gazed long at the workers by the stream, then turned towards Pontevedra, walking up the road in the hot sunshine. Ahead the road was filled with people, moving slowly, and in their midst a banner and some trappings flashed in the strong bright light,

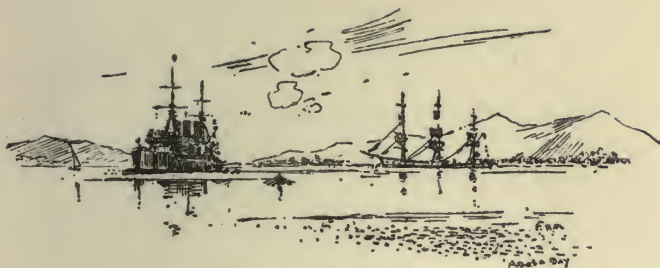




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and there came the strains of solemn music and the wails of grief, for this was a Galician funeral. The coffin was borne shoulder-high, with several priests near it, and with them a man, like a peasant in his Sunday clothes, playing a bassoon, on which he accompanied some of the responses to the priests' prayers. Women, mostly in black, of the poorest class, with shawls on their heads, followed the coffin closely. There were but few men present. A halt was made for a few moments to rest and change the bearers, and a peasant woman hurried from her cottage with a small table on which they could rest their burden. All the time there were the prayers and the responses, mingled with the strangely sweet and solemn music of the great reed instrument, until the procession reached a spot at which a branch of the road led to a little church on the shore, whose bell was tolling and in whose ground the burial was to take place. It was a simple ceremony, shorn of pomp and circumstance, and in perfect keeping with the wondrous peace and beauty of the sun-bathed hills and water.





AROSA BAY

CHAPTER IX  
AROSA BAY  
AND LA TOJA





THE ISLAND OF LA TOJA.



THE ISLAND OF LA TOJA.



## CHAPTER IX

### AROSA BAY AND LA TOJA

BRITISH warships have made Arosa Bay their head-quarters for many years, and have found the land-locked stretch of sea and the surrounding hills a glorious and delightful region for sport and pleasure. It is remarkable that the three great bays on the coast of Galicia—Arosa, Pontevedra, and Vigo—have their entrances protected by islands which break the force of the Atlantic waves.

The Isle of Salvora is in the very mouth of Arosa Bay, with small islands to the north of it as satellites. There is a fine stretch of bay between Salvora and Arosa Island, which is in the middle of the bay itself. The warships anchor between Arosa and the mainland, close to Villa Garcia, Carril, and Cortegada.

Villa Garcia is renowned for its bathing and fishing, and on its shore an excellently appointed and large bathing establishment has been built. The town is the headquarters of a British Vice-Consul, whose residence is one of the most striking features of the place. It is the old castle of the

{ Marquis of Villa Garcia, modernised, and abounding in historical and antiquarian associations.

Roman remains have been discovered in recent years on the estate by the present Vice-Consul, who has formed a very interesting private collection, and has contributed some valuable objects to the Archæological Museum at Santiago. On the other side of the road, only a few feet from the Consulate, is a convent, with a church adjoining in which the nuns worship. These religious prisoners go to and from the church by way of a private passage, and are never seen in public. The barred windows of their cells frown on the Consulate like the windows of a gaol.

Pilgrims in bygone years took this road to Santiago, coming from Portugal; but to-day British officers and sailors use it largely when they are ashore for recreation. Perhaps from behind some rusting bars sweet, pale-faced nuns may watch them as they drive or walk, and may wonder what sort of life it is that these men of the waters lead—the fighters to whom the world is free and open, while the silent watcher never gets beyond the convent's narrow boundary. The nun's bed consists of rough boards which, when she dies, are turned up and nailed together to form her coffin.

A pleasant walk from Villa Garcia is to Carril, only a mile away, with a population of 3000 and a very busy harbour. A short sail is to Cortegada, the beautiful island which the King

of Spain has chosen as his summer residence. Villa Garcia, indeed, is a centre from which many excursions may be made, either for sport in the hills or the bay and rivers. From the little town it is an easy train journey to Caldas de Reyes, where, for three months in the year, July to September, visitors take the warm mineral baths at the excellent Hôtel Acuña, delightfully situated at the end of the bridge which crosses the river Umia. The town is small, but very quaint. It has a public hot spring, where the family washing may be conducted or the family hot water obtained, but the laundry work is done mostly on the river-side by the bridge. You may lean over the bridge and see in the limpid water the fish disport themselves. The scenery in the locality is beautiful, especially from the summits of the surrounding hills. The waters of Caldas have neither taste nor colour, and have a wonderful effect upon the skin. At Cuntis, three miles from Caldas, in the hills, are warm baths which at the Grand Hôtel attract many thousands of visitors yearly; while the little town is picturesque and interesting, especially on Sundays, when the peasant women crowd the market-place, buying and selling and congregating outside the business places which serve as general stores.

Caldas is associated in my mind with the only drunken man I saw in Galicia; also with a peasant's funeral in the hills, and a charmingly situated workhouse on the banks of the river. I do not

suppose that in Galicia they have old age pensions, but as a last home few places could rival in situation this white-walled building on the grassy slopes of Umia.

The romantic and the practical are typified just outside Caldas, where, amid impressive rocky scenery, the Umia thunders in a fine cascade. It is fascinating to sit or stand on the rocks and watch the waterfall and listen to its roar; and for those who do not greatly appreciate the charms of nature there is at the side of the falls a modern structure with a thorough electrical equipment which is reminiscent of Niagara's power-houses, and supplies light for many miles around.

The country is beautiful and varied, and from Cuntis very fine views are obtainable, although in this respect the neighbourhood has not the same attractions as some of the hills near Vigo. From the hills at Cuntis a view of the Portuguese mountains is obtainable; but most of the tourists to Galicia will postpone their inspection of the Portuguese landmarks until they are nearer the frontier.

Easily reached from Villa Garcia is El Padron, a town of 10,000 inhabitants, at the head of the bay, and full of historical associations. El Padron (meaning "The Saint") is a very ancient little city—older, indeed, than Santiago, and also imperishably connected with St. James, for it was here that his body was landed on being brought from the Holy Land, and El Padron formerly shared some of

Santiago's glory as a city for pilgrims, but is no longer a pilgrim city, nor, as it used to be, a sanctuary for criminals flying from what passed for justice. Borrow visited El Padron, and found it a flourishing little town with an extensive commerce, sending small vessels not only across the Bay of Biscay, but also as far as London River. He dwelt with satisfaction on a story which he heard in Santiago concerning El Padron skippers and the Scriptures. The English had presented Bibles to the skippers, who happened to be in London, and on their return to Galicia it was observed that these enterprising mariners had become very dogmatic in argument concerning Holy Writ. Finally the cause of their wisdom was discovered, and the Testaments were taken from them and burnt, and the disputants were punished and reprimanded.

St. James preached at El Padron, and on a spot where he spoke a hermitage was built to which pilgrims went in the days when the town attracted them. According to the legend, when the Apostle's body reached the town the miraculous boat containing it found anchorage at the base of a Roman statue, an event which is commemorated in El Padron's coat of arms.

Though there is not much in El Padron to induce the visitor to stay there, yet the town's situation and romantic history make it an attractive excursion centre. Pontevedra, however, a few miles from Villa Garcia, offers many induce-

ments to the stranger to linger. The arcaded streets are full of charm and history and many of the old houses are admirably preserved. There are about 20,000 inhabitants in Pontevedra, and, like all other Galicians, they get into the open air whenever they can and disport themselves on the well-wooded Alameda, or, in the season, at the bull-ring, a building which is a conspicuous feature of the town. There is good hotel and *café* accommodation, and many quaint sights are to be witnessed. But the most pronounced memory of Pontevedra is the *sereño's* haunting night-chant, of which I have written elsewhere.

The vessel in which Columbus crossed the Atlantic and discovered America was built at Pontevedra. She was named the *Santa Maria*, and was decked. The *Pinta* and the *Niña*, her little consorts, were open, without decks amidships, but with high bows and sterns, where cabins were built for the accommodation of the crews. Some of the ships of the Armada were assembled at Pontevedra before the complete fleet sailed for England.

On the Carril road stand the ruins of the Convent of San Domingo. The building has been turned into an open-air archæological museum, but enough of the original structure remains to give a good idea of the convent in the days of its glory. It was here that, rather more than a century ago, a desperate battle took place between the French troops and the peasants. The convent was founded in the thirteenth century, and the ivy-clad remains,

on a typical sunny day, make a beautiful object to inspect.

Pontevedra has its modern institutions, like Vigo, but the arcaded streets and the ancient houses are the great charms. The Church of San Francisco is a prominent feature of the town, occupying a commanding position, and a very pleasant walk across the bridge to the other side of the water may be taken, a point being reached from which a striking view is obtained.

The country around Pontevedra is remarkably picturesque and fertile, and has long been famous for its grapes and oranges and citrons. In Borrow's day the town was surrounded by a wall of hewn stone, of which parts remain, although there is nothing left of the turrets which formerly stood for purposes of defence and observation. The river Lerez runs into Pontevedra Bay, and a few miles outside the town, forming an extensive enclosure, is an estate, with the Hôtel Mendez Nuñez, where the Lerez waters are bottled for home and foreign use. In the summer time marine excursions are run from Pontevedra to the estate, the river being a pleasant and enjoyable mode of travel. At that season the stream is low and placid, but in time of storm and heavy rains the Lerez swells rapidly and becomes a roaring torrent. The Lerez rises in the Candan Sierra, and in those wild and lonely hills the wolf still roams, although he is seldom seen.

In this region, as well as on other parts of the coast, the Benediction of the Sea is celebrated on

May Day. At that festival the parish priests bless the waters which give such a rich harvest of fish, and the fishermen and fishwives in large numbers share in the religious ceremony.

There is one attraction of outstanding interest to visitors to Arosa Bay, and that is the island of La Toja. This beautiful little place stands like a gem in the sheltered nook on the south side of the bay, and from the mainland, the Grove Peninsula, only two or three hundred yards distant, it presents a scene which is almost fairy-like in its enchantment. Most of the island is covered with pine-trees, and nearly in the centre is a walk, from shore to shore, through pine plantations, whilst a boulevard flanked by pines runs almost parallel with the walk. On every side there is the entrancing Galician landscape, and that placid stretch of clear blue water which is one of the British Fleet's most famous foreign anchorages.

If you go from Villa Garcia by the steam-yacht belonging to the hotel of La Toja there is an hour's run across the bay between the mainland and the Isle of Arosa, in sheltered waters—you may, if you choose, take your own Spanish fishing-boat, and your own time—or half an hour's ferry from the old-world village of Cambados, with its three-cornered castle. If you do not favour sail or steam there is the road from Villa Garcia to Cambados, through plane-lined avenues and fascinating scenery, across the strikingly impressive long Bridge of the Ferry over the Umia. Skirting the



shores of the cove in which La Toja nestles, you reach a point from which a boat can row in a few minutes to the island, and from which it will soon be possible to drive or walk by a fine bridge that is well advanced towards completion.

Between the pine-woods and the sea a great white building rises, looking in the distance something like a Moorish palace. This is the Grand Hôtel, built of stone, brick, and iron, and facing the sea and a delightful frontage which has been called the Grand Avenue. Already the structure is of imposing dimensions, but it is rapidly being enlarged, and when finished will contain no fewer than 750 bedrooms, ranging from the ordinary comfortable sleeping apartment to the luxurious room which forms one of a suite, with private bathing accommodation.

Galicia is advancing rapidly, and one of the most notable signs of the country's progress is the development of such an institution as the Grand Hôtel at La Toja. A famous Spanish architect designed the buildings, and one of the most renowned artists in Spain was commissioned to execute some mural decorations in the interior. Bizarre and unique paintings on the walls are amongst the first things that command the visitor's attention.

It is strange, in such a quiet and sequestered spot, to enter an hotel which in its domestic appliances, decorations, bathing and sanitary arrangements, and situation can hold its own with

any kindred institution in Europe—indeed, an eminent medical authority declared recently that the island and its hotel are unrivalled even on the Riviera. There are hot and cold springs at La Toja, the supply from which is so copious that a daily output of mineral waters is possible of nearly 700,000 gallons. From the mud emanating from the hot springs and the salts extracted *in vacuo* from the waters a very efficacious soap is made, and this is one of La Toja's best-known products.

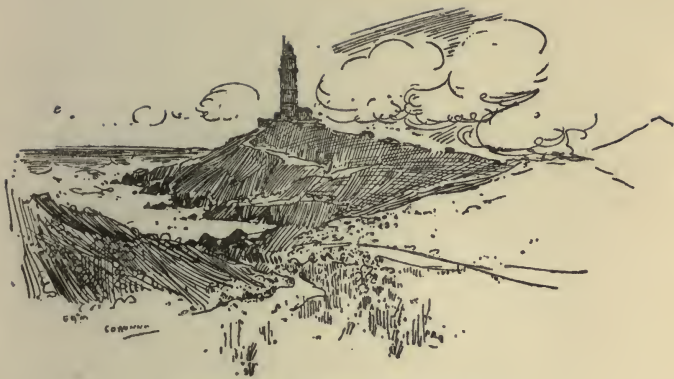
Tourists in growing numbers, especially from Spain and South America, visit La Toja yearly during the season, which is brilliant and wonderfully recuperative, for, in addition to the beauty and health-giving qualities of the island's situation, the natural mineral waters, muds, and salts have established themselves in the medical world as remarkable therapeutic agents. Sufferers from even the most acute forms of skin and kindred diseases have benefited so miraculously from visits to the island that La Toja might almost seem to be, in the estimation of some people, a second Lourdes. So thorough and complete are the arrangements that it is not necessary for the ordinary tourist to see anything of the curative methods which are adopted, and many visitors make prolonged stays without being aware of the existence of the purely medicinal aspect of La Toja.

Sportsmen at La Toja find in the wide sweep of hill and dale and sea and river every chance of

satisfying gun and rod. Plover, snipe, and wild duck are amongst the bags, and trout is good and plentiful. Wild boar is to be had in the neighbouring sierras, and it sometimes figures in the *menu* at La Toja. I crossed from Cambados to the island in a little Spanish fishing-boat, and a revolver shot, fired by a Galician in the craft, sent a swarm of wild birds skyward in a cloud.

Not the least of La Toja's glories are the gorgeous sunsets—pictures so wondrous that at least one traveller returns each year for the special purpose of enjoying them. There are fishing, shooting, and sailing expeditions in abundance, and while some members of a party of visitors may be enjoying these outings others are quietly undergoing a cure as a result of treatment by La Toja products. There are many other attractions and amusements on the island for visitors, amongst them being tennis, croquet, and other English games seldom found in Spanish resorts, and in addition excellent nine-hole golf-links have been laid out and are now available for players. These are the only links in Spain, where the game has been practically unknown.





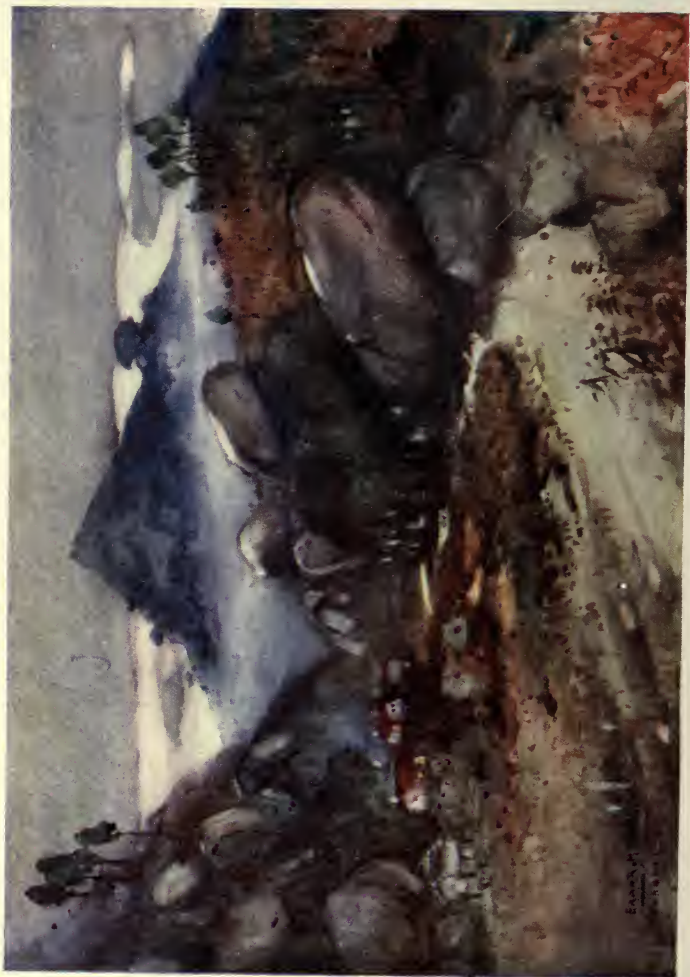
THE TORRE DE HÉRCULES, CORUNNA

CHAP. X  
CORUNNA  
AND ITS  
HERO





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A ROAD IN THE HILLS.

Edvard Munch  
1892



## CHAPTER X

### CORUNNA AND ITS HERO

A CENTURY has passed since Sir John Moore, mortally wounded on the heights of Corunna, was carried from the battlefield and buried on the ramparts. Corunna to-day is a busy, thriving seaport, and has much that will attract the visitor's attention. There are the quaint old twisted streets, typical of Galician towns, where you may imagine yourself back in the days of that immense Armada which sailed from the deep, wide harbour to vanquish England, and can picture Drake's swoop on the Galician coast ten years after the British navy had shattered the fleet which had been so proudly called Most Happy and Invincible. When the Armada left Lisbon it consisted of nearly 130 ships, with an aggregate tonnage of 58,000, carrying 2400 guns, about 20,000 soldiers, 8000 mariners, and over 2000 rowers—30,000 in all. Some of the ships proved leaky and were badly found, and owing to heavy weather the Armada was forced to put into Corunna for shelter. Enormous quantities of

provisions had been thrown overboard because they were bad, and there was not enough water to drink. Pestilence, too, had carried off many of the sailors and soldiers. The huge fleet finally ✓ left Corunna on July 12, 1588, and by that time death and sickness had reduced the strength of the fighters to 24,000.

Modern Corunna has its great tobacco factory, employing several thousands of women and girls, fine ornamental grounds, statues, and public buildings. These may command only passing notice, though greater attention will be given to the mule-drawn trams and the diligences which run regularly between Corunna and the surrounding towns and villages. Nothing can more clearly give an idea of what primitive travelling in Galicia means than to watch the diligence from Ferrol, Finisterre, or Santiago drive up with jingling bells and cracking of whips, to put down weary passengers, and, the horses having been unharnessed, to see the oxen draw the coach to its departure-place. There are to be seen, too, the miradores, glazed frontages for which Corunna is celebrated. These vast stretches of windows protect the houses from the strong winds in winter and form bright and warm interior verandahs. Most of the modern houses in Galicia have these glass-protected verandahs in the top story, where, in winter, the greater part of the inhabitants' spare time is spent. The glazed exterior allows the heat of the sun to be retained, and compensates for the absence of fires. Corunna differs

from other Galician towns in having not only many more modern buildings, but also in providing all the stories with the *miradores*. The streets are lively and busy, and some of the shops are very interesting. There are several good *cafés*.

There is the harbour, with its shipping, the magnificent scenery, the cemetery—worth a visit by those who wish to compare the Spanish mode of burial with the English—and the famous lighthouse which is called La Torre de Hércules. Corunna exports great quantities of onions and sardines, chiefly to America, and in the streets you may see enormous loads of the vegetable being taken to the quays for shipment. But to the ordinary visitor the ramparts and the heights of Elviña are the great attractions, for on the one Sir John Moore is buried, and on the other he made his last stand in that retreat which for sufferings and horror was not equalled by any of the Peninsular campaigns.

It was at Corunna that the Duke of Wellington, then Lieutenant-General Sir Arthur Wellesley, landed on July 20, 1808, when he entered the Peninsula to begin and see to a triumphant finish the war which lasted six years and gave to England an unparalleled series of victories. The French by that time were masters of Spain, and it was Wellesley's purpose to free the country from Napoleon's tyranny. The Spaniards had risen against their conquerors, and Wellesley found that "no one dared to show that he was a friend to the

French." The Gallegans, brave and patriotic, clamoured for arms, and Wellesley furnished the ✓ Junta of Galicia with £200,000 and promised the immediate despatch of military stores. He sailed from Corunna on the night of the 21st, and joined the fleet of transports and convoys next day. On the 24th he reached Oporto in the *Crocodile*. A few days later the troops landed, "each with one shirt and one pair of shoes besides those on them, combs, razor, and a brush, which are to be packed up in their greatcoats." The men landed with three days' bread and two days meat, cooked. Three weeks after leaving Corunna Wellesley won his first victory over the French, at Roleia, with a loss on his own side of nearly 500 killed and wounded and on the French of 1500. The opening shots of the war were fired by riflemen of the 60th, now the King's Royal Rifle Corps, and the 95th, now the Rifle Brigade. The Rifle Corps has no fewer than sixteen Peninsular battle honours, won by the famous 5th, or Jäger, Battalion—foreigners, mostly Germans, who were in British pay. Since its origin in 1800 the Rifle Brigade has been composed entirely of British troops. Throughout the war Wellington found these riflemen of the utmost service, and he frequently spoke of them in terms of praise.

Moore's retreat to Corunna was a tragedy from start to finish. Spain was in what appeared to be a hopeless state, and of all its provinces none was more severely harassed than Galicia. War

had impoverished an already poor and burdened country, and there were none of the resources available which are needed for the successful conduct of a great campaign. In 1807 the French army entered Spain, and early in the following year Madrid was captured by the conquering legions of the Emperor. For a few weeks only the visitors remained in peaceful possession; then there was a rising in the capital, which began the long and bloody fight to master Bonaparte. On May 2, 1808, the French troops and the Spanish populace came into conflict, and for nearly three hours there was incessant firing and slaughter, and many acts were done which have become famous amongst many famous deeds. A musket had been fired from one of the houses, and a mameluke dashed into the building. He was slain by a beautiful girl, and she, in turn, was instantly cut down by the assailant's comrades. A huntsman, who was celebrated as a marksman, fired twenty-eight cartridges against the French, bringing down a man with each. He maintained his deadly fire until his ammunition was finished; then, arming himself with a dagger, he hurled himself against his foes, and was killed as he struck at them.

That outrage in Madrid let loose the pent-up passions of the Spaniards. They had, in the lonely hills and valleys of their country, many chances of retaliation, and they showed no mercy to the Frenchmen who became their prisoners. Even the sick and the medical attendants were butchered,

and some were done to death with incredible barbarity. A French officer was returning from a peaceful mission into Portugal, unconscious of the fact that hostilities had broken out. He was unarmed and unattached to a military force; but he was a Frenchman, and that was looked upon by his captors as proof sufficient for his doom. The Spaniards seized and mutilated him; then, having secured him, still living, between two planks, they sawed him asunder.

✓ In the autumn of 1808 Moore had taken command of the army in Portugal, and had marched into Spain to drive out Napoleon, who had sworn that he himself would become the king of that country. Unexpectedly encountering overwhelming forces under Marshal Soult, Moore recognised that his only hope of salvation lay in retreat, and accordingly he resolved to fall back on Vigo and embark his army in the transports which had been ordered to assemble there to meet him. Circumstances compelled him to alter his plans, and finally to resolve to get on board ship at Corunna.

Moore had rapidly covered 400 miles on his way from Portugal to Spain, and found himself in Galicia. There he learned that his allies, the Spaniards, had been routed and dispersed. Anxious to avoid confusion and unnecessary calls on an impoverished country, he entreated the Spaniards not to fall back in the same direction as himself; but they did not accede to his wishes, and the result

was a hopeless overcrowding of the houses on the line of retreat, and a call on the resources of the land which could not be met.

Officers and men who fought in the Peninsula and shared in the sufferings of that appalling retreat to Corunna have put on record vivid pictures of the terrible state of Moore's army. When he reached Benavente he sent General Crauford with 3000 men by way of Orense, nearly a hundred and forty miles away, which offered a shorter but harder road to the coast.

Moore's purpose was to prevent the French from securing an advantage over him by employing a light column. He himself took the longer but better road which led through Astorga and Villa Franca. At Astorga he was joined by Baird's division, and Moore ordered the destruction of everything which could check his retreat.

The rainy season had been succeeded by heavy falls of snow, for Moore was high in the hills, and the cold was intense, while the roads and fields by which he had to march were almost impassable. By that time the condition of the army was pitiful. Typhus fever swept through the ranks, and the roads were dotted with dead and dying men and women and children. In those days women were allowed to accompany British soldiers to war, and Moore had even a larger proportion than usual with him. The privations of the women and children remain as the most terrible feature of a retreat which stands almost unparalleled for suffering and

loss. There was no ammunition for the guns, none for the muskets, and the soldiers were almost unshod and in rags. In this respect there was little difference between the pursuing French and the retreating English.

At the beginning of December Moore had 20,000 men under him, and he was relentlessly followed by an enemy in overwhelming force. Men and horses fell and died on the march, and day by day the flying army had had its strength reduced by death and desertion. Whole regiments forsook their colours and defied authority, in spite of the punishment of death which was imposed for disobedience and drinking. Whenever a wine-house was reached the soldiers raided it, and forgot their misery in debauchery.

The main body of the army kept a day's march ahead of the reserve and the rearguard. On New Year's morning 1809 the main body reached Bembibra, and immediately assailed the wine-shops. So hopelessly drunk were many of the troops when the rearguard came up that it was impossible to arouse them to a sense of their peril from the French cavalry who were harassing their rear, and they had to be left behind in great numbers. By that time the opposing armies had been marching within sight of each other for many miles, and the French horsemen swept on the drunken mob and butchered it. Soult's dragoons thundered in amongst the helpless crowd of British troops and shrieking women and children, and without



distinction of sex or age put them to the sword. A few soldiers, mangled and bleeding, escaped from the massacre, and Moore ordered that they should parade through the ranks and show their wounds—a stern warning to the army of the effect of drink and disobedience.

Believing that Astorga would be a resting-place, the retreating army had kept up something like order, and had been inspired by the hope of battle; but there was no rest. Again everything that was burdensome was abandoned, and the terrible withdrawal was continued.

“From that hour,” said Lord Londonderry, “we no longer resembled a British army. There was still the same bravery in our ranks, but it was only at moments, when the enemy was expected to come on, that our order and regularity returned, and except in that single point we resembled rather a crowd of insubordinate rebels in full flight before victorious soldiers than a corps of British troops moving in the presence of an enemy.” Moore himself, in the last despatch he ever wrote, said he could not have believed that such complete demoralisation could have overtaken a British army.

Marvellous distances were traversed, notwithstanding the difficult country and the bitter weather. Villa Franca was reached on January 2, after sixty miles had been covered in two days. One march alone represented forty miles, but that was continued by night as well as day, and was

marked by the abandonment of the dying and the dead. The troops dropped by whole sections on the road and died. "Not men only," wrote Lord Londonderry, "but women and children were subject to this miserable fate. Moore's army had carried along with it more than the too large proportion of women allotted by the rules of the service to armies in the field, and these poor wretches now heightened the horror of passing events by a display of suffering even more acute than that endured by their husbands. Some were taken in labour on the road, and in the open air, amid showers of sleet and snow, gave birth to infants which, with their mothers, perished as soon as they had seen the light. Others, carrying, some of them, two children on their backs, toiled on, and, when they came to look to the condition of their burdens, they would probably find one or both frozen to death."

Guns, waggons, and even treasure were abandoned on that fatal road. Dollars to the value of twenty-five thousand pounds, which were in two bullock-carts, could not be drawn any farther by the exhausted oxen, and the casks containing the coins were stove in, and the money thrown over a precipice. Some of the ragged, starving soldiers lagged behind to seize the money, and perished either by the French sabres or the winter's cold. Sick and wounded were abandoned in the waggons; and at last, on January 11, the worn and famishing survivors of the flying army reached the village of Elviña, on

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ELVIÑA, WHERE SIR JOHN MOORE WAS  
MORTALLY WOUNDED



THE HOUSE, MODERNISED, IN WHICH  
SIR JOHN MOORE DIED

the heights of Corunna, about two miles from the town.

Moore went into Corunna and took up lodgings in a little house facing the bay, and directed the embarkation of his fugitives in the transports, which arrived from Vigo on the 14th.

The French did not molest the embarkation for two days, but on the 16th they advanced, 20,000 strong, to assault the 14,000 who alone remained of Moore's worn-out troops. He had done his best to bring his sorry remnant to the coast, and he had triumphed. Now, at the end of his retreat, he showed the superior French force that as a fighter he was as dangerous as ever. He destroyed bridges and ammunition, and blew up 4000 barrels of gunpowder—an explosion which wrecked all the windows in Corunna—and used every artifice he knew to prevent either his men or his *matériel* from falling into the hands of his foe. It seemed as if even now, at the end of his tribulation, the British chief would get away from Spain; but Soult forced him at the very last to give battle, and on January 16, 1809, the worn and harassed leader, from a piece of rocky ground at Elviña, just beyond the village, directed the battle which, beginning at about two o'clock in the afternoon, continued furiously till darkness fell.

Time after time the Frenchmen charged the shattered remnant of the hero's force; but as often as they advanced they were driven back and broken by the men who, with all their faults of

drink and insubordination, knew how to fight and conquer.

All through the terrible retreat the British soldier's prayer had been for a battle, and now that his supplication was answered he proved himself a true son of his country. Not even Soult's genius and the valour of his overwhelming forces could master the stubborn, sullen troops who held the little church and streets of Elviña. Napoleon's veterans were driven back, and when the day gave place to night his famous marshal knew that the army which he had harassed and pursued for so many bitter days would escape.

Twice, with frantic valour, the French had taken the village, and twice they had been hurled out of it at the point of the bayonet by the Guards, Highlanders, and linesmen under Moore. He had covered his amazing retreat with a triumphant victory; but in the very moment of success he was struck down by a cannon-ball, which shattered his left shoulder.

Moore fell from his horse, his arm hanging only by a piece of skin, and his breast bared to the lungs. Some soldiers took him up and put him, conscious still, into a blanket, and bore him from the field of battle to his lodgings. He knew that the French were beaten, and, turning to an old friend, he said: "You know that I always wished to die this way." He lingered for a few hours at his lodgings, and just before he passed away he murmured: "I hope the people of England will be

satisfied. I hope my country will do me justice." It was almost a repetition of the glorious death of Nelson in Trafalgar Bay, 600 miles below Corunna, on the Atlantic Coast, only three years earlier.

The embarkation was still in progress and the French guns were booming as the valiant British rearguard filed in silence to the beach. The victorious general died while the transports were receiving the troops, and, wrapped only in his military cloak, he was borne by men of the 9th Foot, now the Norfolk Regiment, to the hastily dug grave on the ramparts, where he was buried, his farewell volleys coming from the distant artillery. The officers' silk sashes with which the body of the beloved commander was lowered into the grave, and the prayer-book used at the hasty funeral service, are preserved in the Royal United Service Institution Museum, Whitehall. When Moore was first laid to rest the ramparts were little more than a wilderness. Soon after the burial the body was exhumed and placed where it now is. The grave is made of Galician granite, the urn above is of white stone, and common stone was used in the construction of the enclosure.

The British victors sailed from Corunna, having spiked their guns and buried them in the sand, and when the French at last entered the town even the sick and wounded had been taken safely off to sea.

Corunna cost Moore nearly a thousand men.

The French suffered far more heavily. During the retreat the British casualties were 6000, including deserters and stragglers, of whom 800 escaped into Portugal. Three hundred men were drowned in the wrecks of two transports off the English coast, and many died of disease after landing.

Moore wished to be buried near the spot where he died, and his grave is only a short walk from his last quarters. The brave and noble Soult paid homage to the hero who had perished in the hour of triumph. A French gun is planted, muzzle downward, in each corner of the enclosure, and palm-trees rise gracefully from the soil. A few yards away you may look through the ruined embrasures and see the heights of Elviña and the Atlantic into which the survivors of the great retreat were sailing while their fallen leader was being lowered to his resting-place upon Corunna's ramparts.





SIR JOHN MOORE'S TOMB AT CORUNNA



CORUNNA BAY, FROM THE RAMPARTS



# MAP OF GALICIA.



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