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GOYA

BY W. ROTHENSTEIN

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G O Y A

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I

In the case of the greatest masters of painting, however considerable their influence over us, and however well acquainted we may be with their works, we are overwhelmed anew each time we find ourselves in the presence of one of them; and what was a more or less remembered pleasure becomes an emotion of such violence, that we are conscious of a feeling of something like shame for not having cried the names of Giotto, Van Eyck, Rembrandt, (as the case may be,) daily from the housetops.

On the other hand, it may happen that a remote and exquisite remembrance of a picture will be spoiled upon later acquaintance; and we are often somewhat timid of reapproaching certain of those idols which opened out before us, at an early period of our development, a new vista of art, and gave us an added sense of nature, or romance. And though it is perfectly true that we should only allow ourselves to be occupied with the very best art, we must beware of applying to such any standard of snobbishness.

For however many reasons men may give for their admiration of masterpieces, it is in reality the probity and intensity with which the master has carried out his work, by which they are dominated; and it is his method of overcoming difficulties, not of evading them, which gives style, breadth, and becoming mystery to his execution. And this quality of intensity, whether it be the result of curiosity for form, or of a profound imagination for nature, which lives, as it were, upon the surface of a drawing, or of a picture, is the best test we have for what we may consider as art.

A general tendency among English painters has been, I

think, with few notable exceptions, to seek inspiration from pictures rather than from Nature. The influence Hogarth might have exercised was quickly overridden by that of Sir Joshua Reynolds, whose erudition and passion for pictures, and genuine dislike of all he did not consider to be sufficiently sublime in life, whose high standard of excellence, and distinguished personality, earned for him a position no artist had hitherto held in England. The veriest hint from Nature sufficed him for his pictures, and if he was a little too familiar with beauty, it was at least this lack of humility which enabled him to hand down to posterity a host of beautiful women, and distinguished gentlemen, with glimpses of poetic scenery behind them.

Neither Holbein nor Van Eyck nor Dürer have indeed had any appreciable effect upon the English school of painting. That uprightness which Englishmen practise in their lives, they would seem rather to despise in their art, and Venice has, for the last hundred years, been their Mecca. The view that an artist, in the arrangement of his life, and the choice of his subjects, should feel himself to be above suspicion, is not always held in this country even by painters themselves. Rembrandt is still more admired as a painter of portraits than for that serene and serious outlook on life, that profound interpretation of nature and Christlike sympathy for men and women, which he shows in his compositions. The accusation of a lack of taste is one not uncommonly brought against him by otherwise distinguished men, and, were he now living among us, he would not perhaps have any less leisure on his hands than when he painted the wonderful portraits of himself and of Hendrickje.

It was into France that the influence of Goya's art, like Constable's, first entered. Proofs of the drawings he made upon stone at Bordeaux got into the studios in Paris; and the younger painters, Delacroix more, perhaps, than any of the others, began to realise the significance of the new elements of composition and style shown in these remarkable prints.

Goya was the connecting link between traditional art and the violently awakening spirit of the nineteenth century; and with the new emotions he found a new manner of expressing them. Much that was bizarre and tumultuous, the strangeness of charm, a certain curious and sombre side of beauty, the sense

of the strength of a personality, the reflection of extravagant gaiety, or excessive horror, Goya was able to render in a manner that had never been seen before. A world of his own imagining always haunted him, and he gave full play to his fantastic inventiveness. His men and women have all something of the overpowering genius that Balzac gave to his characters. That sharpness of reality, which only Van Eyck has been able to keep undivorced from the highest and most patient science and labour, was so alluring to Goya, that, though he was gifted with the power of creating works of traditional finish, his passion for this mysterious quality of life made him willing to sacrifice precisely those qualities which are looked for and admired in most painters, for a peculiar grip and vivacity of presentment. Hence to all he touched he gave immense vitality. And for this reason his work has a rare fascination, a fascination we are not perhaps so much aware of before his pictures, but one which grows slowly upon us, lending certain new qualities, if we allow our minds to dwell on them at all, to our view of men and women ever after.

His nature was frank and even brutal, disdainful but not ignorant of refinement. Perhaps, the more violent his subject, the more relish had he in attacking it. But it must be borne in mind that he did what so many artists pride themselves on doing, what so few do: he painted to please himself.

Though he lived among princes the greater part of his life, he never flinched from his principles; perhaps never before did an impetuous and anarchical nature, so impatient of injustice, live side by side with the worldly and selfish natures that go to make a Court.

To me it has never ceased to be a matter of surprise that, seeing the frankness of his attitude, both as regards his art and his life, all the aristocracy of Spain should have been so eager to sit before him, and become possessors of his pictures and his prints. He was enabled, through the fashion which, in spite of his attitude, he enjoyed for a prolonged period, and his quick sympathy with the sufferings as well as the amusements of the people, to press, as it were, the whole life of Spain on to his canvasses; and it is no small thing to say that, with the exception perhaps of Balzac, no single man has ever given us so complete a picture of a period which covers considerably more than half a century.

II

Francisco Jose de Goya y Lucientes was born at Fuendetodos, near Saragossa, in 1746. Having the advantage of being the son of poor but robust working people, he received no more education than a village schoolmaster in the last century could give; but a growing love for drawing brought him at the age of fifteen to Saragossa, to the studio of Lusan, an artist of some intelligence and reputation, who had studied in Italy, and held in particular esteem the works of Tiepolo. Under him he worked for some four or five years; but that indifference to injustice, which allows young painters to lead such calm and dignified lives in England, was absent from Goya's anarchical nature. His desire for freedom of thought and action soon earned him a dangerous reputation; and his father, afraid lest his son might fall into the clutches of the Inquisition, then still in the full force of its existence, managed to send him to Madrid. The jealous mistrust which exceptional intelligence seems not uncommonly to sow in the minds of foolish people, soon made Madrid equally dangerous for Goya; the many escapades of which he was accused were as likely as not the subject of considerable exaggeration. It seems, however, true that he was found lying in the street with a knife sticking into his back, one summer morning; and, being again annoyed with rumours of some action to be taken by the Inquisitors, he determined, with characteristic energy, to go to Rome. There is no trace to be found of any work of his executed during the first few years he spent in Madrid; but the effect of his personality was already so marked, that on his arrival in Rome he immediately found himself in the most interesting circles of the Eternal City. M. Yriarte, in his admirable biography of Goya, writes that he

worked his way south from Madrid as a bull-fighter. At Rome he was welcomed and materially assisted by his compatriots, and set about studying the works of such masters as appealed to his own temperament, copying scarcely at all; indeed, he would seem to have spent but little time before his easel; we know from the "Mercure de France" that he won a second prize at Parma for a "Hannibal, victorious, seeing Italy for the first time from the summit of the Alps," and that he painted a full-length portrait of the Pope (Benedict xiv.)—still preserved at the Vatican—in a few hours; but little else is certain of his movements in Italy.

The story goes that, in attempting to carry off a young girl from a convent, Goya fell into the hands of the monks, from whose hands he was with difficulty rescued through the intervention of the Spanish Ambassador at Rome.

It was in Rome that he became intimate with Bayeu, one of the painters to Charles iii., and saw much of David, with whom he corresponded later in life, and whose revolutionary ideas must have strengthened his own convictions. Bayeu was of no small service to him on his return to Madrid in 1775, and gave him his daughter Josefa in marriage; and he now began to show talent of so certain an order, that the other Spanish painters of importance, feeling it would be impossible to crush him, joined with the younger enthusiasts, who hailed Goya as their new leader.

In the Academy of San Fernando at Madrid hang five small canvasses by his hand, belonging to the period following his return from Italy. They must come as a complete surprise to those who are only acquainted with the few scattered works by Goya to be seen out of Spain. These pictures, all of them fantastic or violent in subject, are painted in a delicate and silvery key, with exquisite lightness of touch. The composition, remotely inspired, perhaps, by recollections of Guardi and Longhi, is in each case strikingly original. In the "Little Bull Fight" we see for the first time that trick of putting, as it were, a girdle of figures along the frame, round the central point of interest, the use of which fascinated Goya throughout his life, and which we see used in identically the same manner in one of the finest of his lithographs, drawn some fifty years later at Bordeaux.

These small pieces are perhaps more comparable with the early paintings of Hogarth, at the period when he too was influenced, through Ricci, then in England, by the late Venetians; such

painting as we see in the sketch of the Street Musicians at the Oxford Gallery, or in the small panels he executed before the engravings for Butler's *Hudibras*.

El entierro de la Sardina, reproduced in this volume (Plate I.), may perhaps show such relationship, and give some idea of the remarkable vivacity and spirit of the painting and of the composition. Indeed, Goya's powers in this latter direction were so apparent, that Mengs, the admired Pretender to the throne of Raphael, the Dictator of all the Arts during the reign of Charles III., actually commissioned him to execute a series of designs, which were to be woven into tapestries for the decoration of the Prado and the Escurial.

These cartoons, being intended for this purpose, are painted in so crude a key, and with so little regard for harmony of colouring, that their merit is apt to escape the attention of many students at the Prado, who would otherwise, perhaps, be naturally attracted to them.

Brutally painted, they nevertheless show to the full those qualities of the eighteenth century school, which consist in giving, instead of studied trees, hands, or folds of drapery, something remarkably like them. Already in these designs he shows promise of his own profound observation and versatility; and the facility he acquired in his youth for escaping difficulties was beginning to be of immense service to him in grappling with them. The divers elements of romping charm and somewhat sombre romanticism lend a curiously alluring character to the whole, and it is perhaps difficult to understand why these cartoons, so able and so original, should not have commanded more interest, outside Spain.

The brilliant *juego del cucharon*, the children blowing a bladder and gathering fruit in a tree,—curiously suggestive of the English school,—the Stilt Walkers, the laundresses by the Manzanares, and those robust wantons tossing the *pelele* in a blanket, are so ably painted, and so original in composition, that, even taking the colour and the somewhat disagreeable quality of the surface into consideration, it is impossible not to regard them as works of singular importance.

Many of these popular subjects Goya repeated later for the Countess of Benavente, at the Alameda, on a smaller scale, and with a more delicate palette.

The success of these tapestry designs, of his Christ Crucified, (now in the museum of the Prado,) and the St. Francis on the mountain, with which the old King, Charles III., expressed himself especially delighted,—though neither of them can be considered representative of Goya's genius,—obtained for him in 1780 a seat in the Academy of San Fernando.

Don Luis, the King's brother, was one of the first to offer Goya his patronage, and Charles himself, shrewd enough to know that without great subjects a King is but a small Prince, was beginning to be alive to the glory Goya might contribute to his reign. There was, indeed, no one to compete with him, and people had quickly discovered his gifts as a portrait painter. Though Maëlla and Bayeu were the official painters to the Court, Goya was sought after by persons of every quality, the tongue of gossip lending, maybe, an element of mystery to the studio.[1]

The most important work he undertook about this time, was for one of the cupolas in the Church of del Pilar at Saragossa, the decoration of which Bayeu had been commissioned to execute in part, and to superintend.

Goya's designs were, in the first place, not approved by the Dean and Chapter; and, suspicious of the part his father-in-law might have had in their judgment, he refused to alter them. The rigid principles of the artist to produce his own work in his own manner have, probably since the beginning of things, been the cause of bitterness and strife between him and the public. To be humble before nature, to work, unmindful of everything, uniquely for the standard of perfection he has set himself, is the true life of the artist; rightly or wrongly, the shock of misapprehension on the part of others, the result of an absence of sympathetic perception, or of an entirely different point of view, which never fails to fling the painter into despair at his dependence on a patron, brings into play a spirit of arrogant stubbornness on his part, which is usually incomprehensible to his friends, and causes him often to be left with his work on his hands.

[1] That Goya was faithful to his wife it would be idle to pretend; that he was deeply attached to her during her lifetime is undeniable. She bore him twenty children, of whom, at his death, but one son was alive. With the single exception of his devotion to the unfortunate Duchess of Alba, his intrigues seem to have been as much caprices on the part of his sitters, as his own.

In this instance the Cupola was, however, eventually decorated by Goya with slight, if any, alterations, as may be seen by comparing it with the designs still preserved in the archives of the Cathedral.

For Don Luis he painted a large number of portraits, both of himself and his family and their circle of friends. Brought up as he was among the mountains, come of peasant stock, Goya, for all the subtlety of his mind, never stooped to match his character with those of the aristocrats in whose company he now found himself. His quick intelligence took the place of breeding, while the readiness of his wit, and his curiously fascinating personality, made of him the most attractive person of Don Luis' circle.

Of enemies, nor is it to be wondered at, he had not a few; but he caused his pencil, which was as sharp as his sword, to be as much respected, and he had the townspeople of Madrid—who had for Goya, on account of his uncommon physical strength and skill in their games and amusements, a positive hero-worship—at his back.

He had indeed, and without exerting any voluntary influence, that magnetism which gives to certain people a peculiar power of enslaving all classes of men and women.

III

IN 1789, Charles IV. made Goya *Pintor de cámara del Rey*, thus giving him an official entry to the Palace. Under Charles III. the Court still kept up the old traditions, and an appearance at least, of rigid asceticism. But the new King troubled his head very little about matters of etiquette, and his Queen Maria Luisa, with her favourite Godoy, afterwards Prince de la Paix, quickly turned the Court into a nest of intrigue and gallantry. Goya was not of a character to be easily *effarouché*, but he showed his contempt for the looseness of Maria Luisa and her Court, in his letters and, more openly, in his etchings. He was, however, received with open arms by all the different parties, more especially by that of the Countess of Benavente, the head of the Ossuna family, and one of the richest and most powerful ladies of Maria Luisa's circle.

For her he painted, besides various decorations for the Alameda, her country house near Madrid, and a quantity of portraits, more than a score of compositions, chiefly illustrative of the popular life of Spain. Before this important collection came under the hammer, it was at the Alameda that Goya's genius could be seen to the fullest advantage. The Countess' sympathy with his temperament, by which she was, indeed, for a time, completely dominated, sharpened his imagination and allowed free play to his rare range of subject. The refined and somewhat exotic atmosphere of her luxurious country-house seems at times to have seduced Goya into gallant painting, and a somewhat Spanish gallantry, as may be observed from an example we have in the National Gallery, which came from the Ossuna Collection. A better and more characteristic canvas hanging near it, is the

priest pouring oil into the Devil's lamp, a piece of daring anti-clericalism which shows how fearless Goya was becoming, now that he had secured the Royal patronage.

Among the most alluring of the popular scenes were the *mât de cocagne*, a chaise stopped by brigands, the game of kiss in the ring (a subject he had already treated in his tapestry designs), and, with the *Romeria de san Isidro*, the most important of all, the construction of a church, the tower surrounded by scaffolding, with workmen bringing up immense blocks of stone. The fine design of this shows Goya under one of his best aspects. The *Romeria* is the only one, perhaps, over which his hand has obviously lingered. He seems, as a rule, to have hurried, as it were, to ease himself of the excitement his observation and exuberant imagination caused him; his mind was rarely sufficiently tranquil for prolonged work on any one picture, and his anxiety to preserve the freshness of nature on his canvasses prevented his carrying them to a more detailed though less spontaneous completeness.

The *Romeria de san Isidro* is a small canvas, representing the great yearly fête on the banks of the Manzanares, along which are pitched miniature booths, crowds of holiday makers circulating among them, with tiny coaches picking their way through, the palaces and steeple of Madrid rising up on the other side of the river, spread out beneath the feet of a sparkling bevy of rich idlers in brilliant dresses in the foreground of the picture.

The quantity of detail Goya has put into this small canvas is surprising, and he writes to his friend Zapater that he will not readily undertake such a labour again.

The picture of the manolas on the balcony (Plate VII.) is painted with the same apparent ease, which we find in those of the Alameda. The brilliance and gaiety of the women, and the *fatale* aspect of the sinister gallants standing behind them, are rendered in a peculiarly imaginative manner; the original of this, one of the most fascinating of Goya's canvasses, is in the possession of the Duc de Montpensier, and hangs at the Palace of San Telmo, at Seville. A repliqua, by Goya himself, was exhibited at the Palais des Beaux Arts in Paris, a few years ago. His occasional diabolical tendency is shown in the cartoon of Saturn devouring his children, once hanging in Goya's own house, and now in the Prado, a sinister and powerful composition, reminding one strangely of the designs of Auguste Rodin.

Many of his portraits he painted in a single day, a sitting not of a few hours merely, but one that lasted the whole of the day, during which time Goya, inexorable towards his model, worked in absolute silence with extraordinary concentration and vigour.

His palette was of the simplest, and he was in the habit of painting at some distance from his sitter, attacking the masses broadly in monochrome, and once his planes and proportions were thoroughly well established, he worked in colour where it was needed. It must not, however, be imagined that all his portraits were attacked in a breathless manner. The remarkable group of Charles IV. and his family in the Museum of the Prado at Madrid, the portrait of Guillemardet (the first French Republican Ambassador to the Court of Spain) in the long gallery of the Louvre, those of Godoy, of Bayeu, (Plate IX.,) of the Duchess of Alba, of the Duke of Fernan-Nunez, and others of the same order, are pushed to a state of great completeness, both of execution and of design.

But the restlessness of his temperament made him inclined to seize on a characteristic rendering of pose and feature. A Miss Linley Goya could not give us, but something very like the delicate wantonness of a Perdita we may discover in more than one of his canvasses. He delighted in the very particular beauty of Spanish women; in their proud manner of walking, of wearing a mantilla, a flower; in their elaborate fashion of dressing the hair. He never tired of painting the high-heeled Moorish-pointed shoes in vogue in his day among Spanish ladies. A favourite method was to paint them seated, holding themselves very erect from the hips, almost *cambré*.

His men he endowed with a quality of vitality which elicited the enthusiastic admiration of Courbet, but he was also capable of a subtle characterisation often absent from the portraits of the great Frenchman. From Velasquez he learned how to compose his equestrian portraits,—one of the finest of which, that of the Queen Maria Luisa, riding astride her great horse, in the uniform of a colonel of the guards, with the air of a woman who loved men better perhaps than she was loved by them, hangs in the Prado; but he was too interested in a simple and direct interpretation of nature, to care to make much use of traditional poses in any but his official portraits, for which, indeed, they were more aptly suited.

"In nature," he used to say, "colour exists no more than line,—there is only light and shade. Give me a piece of charcoal, and I will paint your portrait for you."

"All painting," he said again, "consists of sacrifices and *parti-pris*."

Of his nervousness when at work, and his irritability, the onslaught he made on the great Duke of Wellington, who wished to bring away from Spain his portrait by Goya, but exasperated him by comments upon the work while in progress, is a characteristic example; in a fit of passion Goya took a sword from the wall, and forced his noble sitter to beat a retreat from his studio. The Duke afterwards realised his presumption, and the portrait was resumed, and is now at Strathfieldsaye. There is in the present volume a reproduction of an extremely interesting drawing in sanguine by Goya of Wellington, which lends a quality of delicacy and sensitiveness to his features, not, I think, apparent in any other portrait of the Iron Duke. The original drawing is in the Print Room of the British Museum.

The gratitude which patrons expect from their protégés was not, perhaps, in Goya's case, sufficient to gratify the exigence of the Benavente, more especially as she saw that he was becoming entirely absorbed in her younger rival, the lovely Duchess of Alba, whose beauty had that quality of suggestiveness which appeals so strongly to a painter, and allows of his seeing her, according to his mood, or hers, as a Juno, or an Amaryllis. It was at the same time essentially Spanish, and in her Goya discovered those elements of character and charm which immediately responded to an ideal of his own, thus calling into existence a hitherto unexpressed type of woman.

The scandal of the painter's too intimate friendship with the Duchess of Alba began to be whispered at the Court; and Maria Luisa, whose own reputation was by no means unimpeachable, (probably at the instigation of the Countess of Benavente, who imagined, perhaps, that her rival once removed to a safe distance, Goya would be seen more frequently at the Alameda,) bade the Duchess retire to her residence at San Lucar.

Goya, without hesitation, applied to the King for a prolonged leave of absence, and prepared to accompany her into exile. This incident was the indirect cause of the distressing deafness from which he subsequently suffered, an infirmity which, with

advancing years, became so acute that no sound could reach his ear. M. Yriarte tells how, an accident happening to their travelling carriage on the road to San Lucar, far from any village where a blacksmith might have been found, Goya himself undertook to remedy the defect, and, lighting a fire to heat and straighten one of the iron bars belonging to the coach, through the heat and exertion caught a chill which brought on the first symptoms of this weakness. Indeed, the whole of this business was tragic enough; Goya's absence from Madrid was so greatly felt, that in the year following the Duchess was recalled, and died shortly after her return, before her beauty had begun to fade. M. Yriarte speaks of having seen a sketch book containing many piquant and touching sketches illustrative of their journey together.

Besides the many compositions and drawings for which the Duchess sat, Goya painted a full-length portrait of her, wearing her hair in the fantastic manner she affected, and her favourite pet dog at her side; an achievement of which he was particularly proud. It is she we see looking down from the ceiling of San Antonio de la Florida, from the pillows at the Academy of San Fernando, (Plate VI.,) and we find her subtle personality breathing all through the pages of the Caprichos.

IV

In 1795 Goya was unanimously elected Director of the Academy, and although Maëlla was still officially the first painter to the King, Goya's popularity was at its height. He would receive the whole Court at las Romerias, his house just outside Madrid, where he provided sumptuous and often bizarre entertainments.

Although he would seem to have been sufficiently frank and outspoken with regard to his agnostic opinions, his position was so unique that he was entrusted three years later with the decoration of the new and fashionable Church of San Antonio de la Florida.

I can remember nothing which gave me so clear an idea of Goya's cynicism. Imagine a coquettish little church with a white and gold interior, more like a boudoir than a shrine, but furnished with altar, and seats and confessionals. One's nostrils expect an odour of frangipani rather than incense, and it must be admitted that Goya's frescoes do not strike a discordant note in this indecorously holy place.

He painted various frescoes, besides a considerable number of religious pictures for many of the churches in Spain, at Seville, Valencia, Saragossa, and Toledo, but it was only when he treated Biblical subjects in a more or less dramatic spirit that these compositions assume any importance.

The frescoes at San Antonio de la Florida are painted with great science and breadth, in treatment recalling the manner of the elder Tiepolo; the principal subject is the legend of the miracle of Saint Anthony bringing a dead man to life. The spandrils and tympanuns are filled with angels perhaps a little daring in the insolence of their foreshortening.

The scene of Saint Anthony is depicted on the cupola as taking place behind a railing which surrounds the whole of the composition, and behind which a vast concourse of people is grouped. The design is, however, nowhere concentrated, and fails to be dramatic. Whether Goya indeed intended it to be so is doubtful, for he probably arranged it merely for the purpose of representing a crowd of popular figures taken from the streets and salons of Madrid.

The whole of these decorations, the cupola alone containing more than a hundred figures, considerably over life size, Goya executed in three consecutive months, without, it appears, missing a single day's work, and they are considered by his own countrymen to be his greatest achievement; but in spite of their brilliancy and power, it seems to me that it is rather in his more intense interpretation of life that his greatest force lies.

The most important ecclesiastical canvas executed by Goya is one hanging in a somewhat remote part of the Church of San Anton Abas at Madrid, an extremely dignified and impressive composition, representing the communion of Saint Joseph of Calasanz, from which M. Alphonse Legros might well have derived some of his inspiration.

V

The decoration of the Church of San Florida won for Goya the much coveted office of first painter to the King of Spain, just at the time, oddly enough, when he was in great measure laying aside his brushes to take up the needle.

He had up to this time done but a few desultory etchings of slender merit, besides a series of careful plates after the pictures of Velasquez. But a study of the prints of Rembrandt turned his attention to the wider possibilities of the copper, and he began to work upon a set of designs which were eventually published together under the title of *los Caprichos.* These caprices, certainly the most widely known of all his etchings, were produced one by one, and were passed from hand to hand among his friends; the extravagant reports of their daring allusions to personal and political intrigues of the Court soon created an immense amount of excitement in Madrid, and the whole matter was on the point of coming before the Inquisitors, when the King, by a cunning subterfuge, suggested maybe by Godoy, disarmed an inquiry which might have had awkward results for Goya, by ordering the etcher to send him the plates *he had commanded from him.*

The humanity displayed in those prints is so large, the observation so piercing, and the satire so just and reasonable, that to us it matters nothing whether Maria Luisa and the Benavente, Urquijo or Godoy, be the particular people over whose backs Goya flourished his lash. Whether don Carlos was entirely ignorant of their possible allusions to his Queen and himself, or whether he was clever enough to ignore them, must be a matter for conjecture.

As a matter of fact, Goya's hatred of the Church, which to his mind acted in direct contradiction to the Gospel of its founders, and condoned, if not encouraged, the cruelty and injustice of those

in power, suggested some of the bitterest pages of the Caprichos; but he made no attempt to suppress a natural indignation at the sight of the folly and vulgarity of men, which so many people are able to regard impassively.

Too much prominence has been given, perhaps, to the Caprichos among the reproductions of Goya's work here given, but the beauty and novelty of the compositions, their Gargantuan spirit, the quite astonishing knowledge of, for instance, animals and birds they display, and their satanic extravagance, combine to give them an interest which I have found irresistible.

But their real power lies—and this applies to all of Goya's etchings—in the introduction of subtle and distinguished qualities of draughtsmanship into generally fantastic compositions.

That Delacroix copied every plate of the Caprichos,[1] is no small thing to add in their praise; and indeed, for that power of uniting observation of life and form with his own imagination, Delacroix owed not a little to the Spaniard.

A quite particular sense of the wanton charm of women, and a half dandified, half savage character he gave to his men, make these etchings peculiarly haunting. Only Hokusai was capable of such monstrous gaiety, such stinging satire, and he alone could have lent probability to such monstrous phantasy; Hogarth was too sermonising, Rowlandson too rollicking; a certain diabolical side of his nature, which Goya allowed to be seen both in the Caprichos and the Desastres, has probably prevented his etchings gaining a footing in England. Whether this be the case or not, his prints are rarely to be met with in this country.

Although the subjects are not so engaging as those of the Caprices, it was in the series afterwards entitled *Los Desastres de la Guerra* that Goya reached his highest point of perfection as an etcher.

It was during the occupation of Spain by the French troops, that Goya commenced a set of drawings in sanguine for these violent but superb plates. It is not so much the patriotism of a Spaniard, but the outraged sense of a thinking man, that one feels underlying them; there is none of the stirring kettledrum note of a Kipling, but a stern desire to show the equally appalling savagery of conquest, or defeat.

[1] The Print Room of the British Museum possesses a drawing by Delacroix after one of these etchings, and I have seen another in the collection of M. Degas.

VI

The etchings of Goya mark an important epoch in the history of the art. Since Rembrandt, with the single exception of Tiepolo, no one had made use of the copper successfully, as a medium for personal expression. That there should have been so few masters of etching is surprising, when we consider how alluring is the actual impression on a clean sheet of paper, of a few lines, drawn at haphazard upon a plate. But frank and direct as are Goya's etchings, they were, unlike most of his paintings, only drawn upon the plate after the most careful and complete preliminary studies. He cared little, however, as may be imagined, for the more precious side of the art; his particular use of aquatint served him to give a yet more sombre note to his designs,—no one, except Turner, has used it with so much success. Unfortunately the aquatint, lying nearer the surface of the plate than the more deeply bitten line, wears off after a certain number of impressions have been taken, and only those prints contemporaneous with Goya give an adequate idea of the quality of his etchings. Among the Caprices especially are several plates, in which there is actually no line used, the effect being obtained entirely by the aquatinting, but the Disasters depend less on this process, and more upon the quality of the line, which is, in many cases, of quite surprising beauty.

Of the vigour and finish of the drawing, and the rare imagination for suffering displayed in this series, the two plates here reproduced, (Plates XVIII. and XIX.,) are good examples; as dramatic compositions they are perhaps the most important since the work of Rembrandt.

The violence and brutality consequent on the invasion of a peaceful country by a horde of soldiers, is expressed throughout

with exceptional frankness,—Goya was not of a nature to gild the corpses of his countrymen as they lay stark on the ground; but it must be borne in mind that the slaughtering of one's fellow-creatures is now conducted in a better ordered manner, and more respect is paid to prisoners and to their property, to women and children and to the dead, than was the case in the earlier part of the century. What Goya saw with his own eyes—what he heard and read of the French invasion—he made use of for these Disasters. It was long after his death that the whole of these plates saw the light, and they were afterwards retouched and rebitten, and published by the Academy of San Fernando at Madrid.[1]

Besides these, Goya etched a series of plates, known as the *Tauromachia*, equally remarkable, perhaps, for their spirit and knowledge of the bull-ring, as for their intrinsic merit as etchings; there is a wonderful fascination in their sinister vehemence, and many of the compositions are of great originality, (Plate XX.;) it is probably the consummate mastery of the later lithographs of similar subjects, which is inclined to make people underrate the etchings. *Los Proverbios*, among which is one of the finest plates etched by Goya, (Plate XXI.,) were probably done after the Tauromachia. The original impressions are so scarce, and the plates have subsequently been so ill handled, that it is difficult to judge them with any degree of fairness, for the aquatinting has evidently been tampered with to a considerable extent.

[1] Copies of this edition may be seen both in the Print Room of the British Museum and in the Art Library at South Kensington.

VII

The later years of Goya's life were spent under gloomy circumstances. The King and Queen, with Godoy, fallen from his brilliant heights, were in exile at Fontainebleau, and Joseph Bonaparte—*Pepe Botellas*—had been placed by his brother on the throne of Spain. Goya, grown bitter and self-absorbed, and caring little for what King he might be the painter, took the oath of allegiance along with most of Charles's Court, and painted the usurping King's portrait without any feelings of compunction.

In 1814, greatly to the people's joy, the Prince of the Asturias returned to Spain, and was crowned King as Ferdinand VII., and a number of Bonapartists were driven into exile. "Since our absence," he said to the old painter, "you too have deserved exile, nay the rope itself; but you are a great artist, and we will forget everything." He sat many times to Goya; an equestrian portrait of the King hangs at the Academy of San Fernando, and another is at the Prado, representing Ferdinand come in hot from a gallop, his horses being led away in the background, a splendidly frank piece of characterisation.

Goya was now totally deaf, and most of his old associates were dead. The greater part of his time he spent in his own house, in the society of old dilettanti and such few of his friends as remained. He made a number of drawings for a new series of Caprices, which he never, however, etched. There is a drawing at the Print Room of the British Museum, a scene from the Inquisition, which might well be one of them.

Worn out as he was, feeling he no longer belonged to the new Court, where he perhaps fancied himself to be looked on with more disfavour than was actually the case, it is small wonder

that he should wish to leave Madrid, where everything reminded him bitterly of his past triumphs; he cared nothing now for all the things which he had once fancied gave him so much pleasure; but his energy and love for his work remained. The last work he did before he went to France was the Saint Joseph of Calasanz for the Church of San Anton Abad, to which I have already referred as among his finest canvasses. There was some unpleasantness on the part of the canons, who objected to pay the price Goya asked for this picture; enraged at their haggling, he refused to continue it, and the Superior, so the story goes, went down on his knees before the old painter, whom he eventually appeased, and the picture now hangs in the Church.

Goya left Madrid in 1822, and proceeded to Paris, where he witnessed the beginning of the great romantic movement which he himself had indirectly helped to bring about. There is no evidence of his having come into personal contact with anyone but Vernet; for Gros, that triste martyr to false feelings of loyalty to a master, he had a profound admiration, and he was astonished and delighted with what he saw of the works of Géricault and Delacroix. But for the overwhelming life of Paris he felt himself too old; he preferred to be near his own people, and settled down among other exiles from Spain, at Bordeaux, with an old and valued friend, Mme. Weiss. His apathy increased with his years, but he was cheered occasionally by the devoted Mme. Weiss, whose bright enthusiasm for all he used to love, would bring back, now and again, some of his old gaiety.

Various paintings belonging to this late period having, in one way or another, come into the salerooms, are apt to give, perhaps, to many who are unacquainted with the great Spanish collections, a somewhat false impression of Goya's powers. Although some of the portraits of his friends which he painted at Bordeaux, notably of Moratin and of Pio de Galena, possess extremely fine qualities of form, and a great style, his rapidly failing eyesight caused his colour to be heavy and often somewhat crude. It was when he could use a loup, as, for instance, in the execution of those small paintings on ivory, (Plate XII.,) which are too little known even to collectors of his work, and above all, in the most remarkable compositions of his life, certainly the greatest and most significant lithographs in the history of the art, known as les Taureaux de

Bordeaux, that we find all his old powers unimpaired. Like so many great men who commence a new art, he seems to have almost exhausted the possibilities of the stone, in these four superb prints. Their effect upon the rising generation may be seen in the lithographs of Delacroix, and later in those of Honoré Daumier.

But the old painter was growing restive away from his own country, and felt a craving to return. He wished, having seen the work of his younger contemporaries in Paris, to measure with their work his own frescoes at the Church of San Antonio de la Florida. He was received in Madrid with every mark of distinction, and the King begged him to sit to Lopez, so that he might have the portrait of "the greatest painter Spain has seen since Velasquez." He was actually painted, but carried off the portrait after a couple of sittings, lest it be spoiled by Lopez' "niggling brush."

He returned, however, shortly afterwards to Bordeaux, and retired still more into solitude. He would sit for days together, dumb and indifferent; and again his old rage would come upon him, and he would draw furiously upon everything which came under his hand, or practise the *juego de Riquitillas* with the five points. He was the object of much admiration and curiosity in the town on the rare occasions when he wandered abroad, looking out from under his *Bolivar* hat with his wonderful heavy-lidded eyes.

A year after his return in 1828, he died, at the age of eighty-two, surrounded by a few old friends, exiles, like himself, from a country they had all loved with a like passion. He lies buried in the cemetery of Bordeaux.

VIII

With Goya died the whole art and life of the eighteenth century, and Spain lost its last great painter. His importance lies not so much in view of his extraordinary personality, but in the fact of his having invented an entirely new method of composition, the riches of which have not yet been exhausted, nor its range equalled. He was the first to aim a decisive blow at the army of picture makers, who manufactured trees, nymphs, and tiresome portraits after receipts known to them all. He brought back to painting the old architectural sense, and squareness of proportion and design, which the artists of the last century had allowed to dwindle into the vignette. He saw that nature composed with even a finer sense of balance than Raphael, and with the aid of planes of light and shade, delicately adjusted. It was precisely this rare sense of composition which enabled him to bring about that revolution in style, which was eventually to crush the most powerful classical movement since the days of Poussin.

He saw actuality with a highly romantic vision, and with that spirit of fatality lurking in the rear, which has become so characteristic of nineteenth century thought; the world to him seemed full of the weirdness of a sudden transition from darkness to light, and light to darkness, as though it were for a moment illumined by a sudden tongue of flame. There is that sense of nervous ferocity, unveiled as it were for a moment, which culminated in the fighting horses of Delacroix, in his lions devouring horses and men, and in the still more profound work of the sculptor Barye,—nature caught or missed at a leopard's spring. Goya was more interested in men and less in things, was more savagely

human and less sublimely poetic, than the great Frenchmen; he had more curiosity for emotion, and less constancy and patience. It has seemed remarkable to many of his biographers that he, who believed so obstinately in a close study of nature, should also have occupied himself with an occult and purely imagined side of life; that an atheistical, satanic philosopher should have cared to represent actually just those superstitions, a belief in which he so profoundly despised. And indeed it would seem to be a by no means usual thing, that Goya should have been able to represent the life about him so completely, and should yet be able to create a non-existent world of demoniacal beings. But it must be remembered, that the faculty for creating form and movement points at an imagination for reality, which can readily be brought to bear upon purely fantastic subjects.

Goya was in fact among the rare few who are able to make these seem possible, even natural. He does not carry us into a mythical world, but brings fancy into the realms of reality, disappears, as it were, into the darkness, to bring back with him the monsters he found there; Hokusai had this same quality of the imagination, the same cult for the grotesque. Goya shows us exactly how witches ride through the air, how they goad their weary brooms through the night, of what monstrous breed they are and of what foul form; yet with so little exaggeration, that they seemed to have lived as actually as his inquisitors, majas, and toreros, whereas the spirits calculated to terrify us in the drawings of Blake, for instance, leave one unmoved, for the reason that no representation of form is ever convincing in his work. "A picture, the effect of which is true, is finished," was a favourite dictum of his which has been applied since in a sense different, perhaps, to his meaning. For by this he meant not only truth of line, tone, or colour, but also truth of movement and emotion, of observation, in fact. As with Daumier and Millet, his sense of form was creative, as well as imitative, and like these he was able to produce an absolutely convincing effect, through his knowledge and intuition, where a more careful and conscientious artist would fail; and it is this imagination for reality, this power to render nature dramatically and impressively, that makes of him one of the most significant artists of the last two hundred years. The humanity grafted on to the tree of beauty by the gentle Rembrandt, was cultivated by Goya in a more

critical and aggressive spirit; for he was not only the greatest painter of his age in Spain, but also the most fearless and advanced thinker.

The mere mention of his name brings up before us a series of vivid pictures of an already remote period. But the men who can paint their own times with the insight of Goya, in a manner paint all times. Each age has the vanity to believe that those past masters whose reputations are unquestioned in its day, are among the immortals. So long, however, as any fashion exists for the painting of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Goya's position is secure.

A NOTE ON THE ETCHINCS AND LITHOGRAPHS OF GOYA

Los Caprichos

The Caprices were probably commenced about 1792–93, and the prints were first issued to subscribers in 1796. Up to the following year only seventy-two had been printed, so that only those prints which appeared before the editions of 1802, when the whole of the eighty plates which now form the Caprices were published, are in their finest state. Goya himself superintended the printing of the first pulls from his plates, which may be recognised by the slightly foxy colour of the ink, (black in the subsequent editions,) and the paper on which they were printed bore no watermark.

Two additional Caprices were etched by Goya for the Duchess of Alba, but are of extreme rarity, and were never circulated, even among his own friends.

There are many explanations and surmises with regard to the precise significance of many of the plates. The curious may find much interesting information on this point in M. Lefort's excellent and careful study of the etchings of Goya. Unfortunately, as is often the case with very painstaking scholars, he only weakens the immensely forcible impression made upon one by the etchings themselves, and scarcely explains the most obscure among them. To my own mind, Goya's own explanations, printed underneath the plates, are more satisfactory.

The Caprices have been re-issued several times of late years by the Academy of San Fernando, and have been wonderfully spoiled in the process.

Los Desastres de la Guerra.

This series was never published together during the lifetime of Goya, and contemporary prints are among the rarest treasures of the collector; these exist either before the number of the plate has been etched upon it, or after the number, which Goya placed upon the right side at the bottom of the plate. In the edition published by the Academy of San Fernando, although the original number is preserved, a fresh one has been added, at the top of the plate.[1] In the first copies of the collected edition, which bears the date of 1863, the prints were pulled with considerable care, and are of a reddish colour. A few of these were printed without the text written underneath, but must not be confused with the original proofs. These exist both before and after the aquatint has been added, and are printed with black ink, upon hand-made paper with a lined surface, and the watermark *serra* discernible upon it; whereas the subsequent edition was printed upon very white paper, with the edges cut, and bearing the mark J. G. D. The last edition (1892) is on similar paper, but shows no watermark.

In the completed editions published by the Academy of San Fernando, there are eighty prints in all, but of these the last fifteen are of a different character to the rest, and might more fairly have appeared under the name of Caprices.

In the unique collection which Goya offered to his friend Cean Bermudez, there are two more prints added, which are included in neither of the editions of the Academy. M. Lefort was fortunate enough to discover the original plates, which had, in some unaccountable manner, gone astray. These he had printed in Paris, and they proved to be of singular interest. The first represents a huge beast disgorging a crowd of human beings. The second is significant of the social revolution at hand,—a young woman representing Liberty, showing the sun, rising above the horizon, to a working man.

The Tauromachia

The first edition of this series was never, for some obscure reason, publicly circulated, although it would have been calculated

[1] In the prints these numbers appear of course on the left side.

to appeal more particularly to the Spanish people, until after the death of Goya and of his son. These impressions of the plates, which numbered thirty-three, are extremely brilliant, and may be recognised by this, and by the watermarks on the paper, which differ according to their progress, viz. *serra*, *morato*, or *nolo*. The title of the work, and the descriptions of the different plates, were printed on a separate sheet, and the title runs as follows:—*Treinta y tres estampas que representan diferentes suertaes y actitudes del arte de lidiar los toros, inventadas y grabadoas al agua fuerte en Madrid por Don Francisco de Goya y Lucientes.*

The second edition, which was printed and published by the Chalcographic Society of Madrid in 1855, is of very inferior impression, and is easily distinguishable from the first by the fact of its having the portrait of Goya on the outside of the cover, as in the case with the later editions of the Caprices, and the title and text on the back.

A third edition, produced more than thirty years afterwards by Loizelet, in Paris, contains seven plates which were not included in the earlier ones. Three of the plates of the *Tauromachia* are signed.

In the Print Room of the British Museum, there is a set of the impressions of the first edition, with which it is instructive to compare that of the reprinted one of 1855.

Los Proverbios

These obscure plates, the date of which is uncertain, were never published during Goya's lifetime. They first appeared in 1850, and were apparently printed with little care. A second edition was taken in hand by the Academy of San Fernando in 1864. M. Lefort has pointed out that these superb and impressive etchings have been not only ill handled, but absolutely ruined by the treatment they have received at the hands of their printers.

Eighteen of these were printed in the editions of 1850 and 1864, but three more, since reproduced in l'Art, may very well be placed among them.

I am inclined to consider them as among the last etchings by Goya's hand before his failing eyesight forced him to lay aside the needle, and this belief is supported by the larger size and broader execution of the plates themselves.

A further edition was printed by the Academy in 1891, the impressions of which are very inferior.

THE PRISONERS, THE OBRAS SUELTAS, ETC.

In addition to the four series already described, there are several equally important etchings, less frequently to be met with. Foremost among these must be placed "The Prisoners." Of these there are three plates; as in the case of several of Goya's finest plates, only one contemporaneous set of proofs, that which he himself gave to his friend Cean Bermudez, is known to exist. In these three etchings, Goya's powers as an etcher, and his sympathy for suffering, are demonstrated in a striking and singularly direct manner.

"*La seguridad de un reo no exige tormento,*"[1] he wrote in pencil on the proof of the first of them, a poor wretch with his hands bound behind his back, and his feet in irons, bent double with suffering, in a corner of his cell; the second plate shows another prisoner, bound hand and foot, with his neck in a heavy iron collar, attached by chains to the walls—"*Si el delinquente que muera presto,*"[2] he wrote on this one. The third shows a miserable pathetic creature, once obviously a fine and robust man, his feet in irons, and his hands, crossed in front of him, secured by heavy chains to the walls on either side of him; a masterpiece of etching, drawn with a massiveness suggestive of bronze. "*Tan barbara la seguridad como el delito*"—such monstrous barbarity of treatment vies with the crime committed—the imagination for injustice shown in these plates is not so rare, perhaps, among men who have themselves been somewhat maimed by life, as among people more correct, more dignified and more virtuous than Goya. No anarchist could formulate a more terrible indictment against a dictatorial government than this *pintor del rey*.

These three etchings, which, with the impressive fantastic landscapes, and a plate of a colossal figure seated on a hill overlooking an immense landscape, are the most impressive of Goya's etchings, outside the actual series. The third plate of The Prisoners, which came into the hands of M. Lefort, was printed in the Gazette des Beaux Arts. Of the first two, which were in

[1] The safe-keeping of a prisoner does not necessitate torture.
[2] If he be guilty, why not despatch him at once?

the possession of Mr. Lumley, an English collector, a few prints were printed in 1859, and may occasionally be met with.

The plates known as the *obras sueltas*, no prints of which contemporary to Goya are known to exist, and which were etched at Bordeaux, also belonged to Mr. Lumley, who printed proofs of them on very coarse, stout paper. These are, a man swinging, a woman on a swing with a cat watching her from a bough of a tree, an old bull-fighter with a bull lying down behind him, and two plates of *majas*. They are all somewhat crudely etched and bitten, and were probably the last plates executed by Goya. To complete the list, are the much earlier etchings after the pictures of Velasquez, which are scarcely more than very skilful maps, a large and mediocre plate of a popular scene, a rare print of which is in the Print Room of the British Museum, a blind guitar-player tossed by a bull, (early prints of which are extremely brilliant and very rare, but the plate has since been reprinted,) and three indifferent etchings, treating of religious subjects.

The Lithographs

The extreme rarity of Goya's lithographs has made it impossible for me to see anything approaching a complete collection. The Print Room of the British Museum, although unfortunately without the "Taureaux de Bordeaux,"[1] still owns several rare prints. Of these, the earliest known is a spirited brush drawing of an old woman spinning, signed and dated Febrero 1819. Goya, therefore, was already considerably advanced in years before he became attracted by this new medium. His first drawings upon the stone were made in Madrid, and of these the most important are "Les chiens," a bull attacked by dogs, and a diabolical scene, a man being dragged along by demons, in the Print Room of the British Museum, reproduced (Plate II.). This is not only of great beauty as a drawing, but also has the further interest of being the first important wash drawing made upon the stone. Mr. Whistler has since done several of exquisite beauty; the unique proof in the Print Room of the British Museum has been retouched in the less successful parts, with

[1] Three very fine prints of the "Taureaux de Bordeaux" were lent by Mr. Charles Norman to the recent Exhibition of Lithographs at South Kensington Museum.

the brush; it is therefore difficult to judge of it as a pure lithograph; Goya evidently never finished the stone, and no other proof is known to exist. M. Lefort catalogues nine drawings made upon the stone at Madrid, the woman spinning mentioned above, a duel between two people dressed in the costume of the period of Philip IV., the bull attacked by dogs, a young woman reading to two children with another person in the background, a monk, a drawing of a young girl sleeping on the knees of an old woman, with three others on the right, and an old hag seated in the background, a drunkard seated with a woman, a peasant trying to overcome a young girl, and the "scène de diablerie," the wash lithograph of the British Museum.

It was not until 1825 that Goya, with the help of a strong magnifying glass, threw the Taureaux de Bordeaux upon the stone. Three hundred prints of each of these were printed by Gaulon, and although they are of considerable rarity, are more often to be met with than other of Goya's lithographs.

These are *el famoso Americano Mariano Cebellos*, the Picador tossed by a bull, the divided arena, and the *dibersion de España*, otherwise known as the *Novillos*. These are executed in the most superb style, with a vigour of conception and execution which Goya himself never equalled in his previous work,—the whole science of modern composition is to be found in these four drawings,—and which has never been equalled since. An artist's early work may generally be said to be his most serious rival, but in the Taureaux de Bordeaux, Goya, at the age of eighty odd years, actually surpassed himself. Movement takes the place of form,—the tremulous excitement of the crowds of spectators watching the sweaty drama in the ring, the rush to and fro of the *toreros*, the stubborn strength of the short powerful goaded brute with the man impaled on his horns, the dust and glitter and riot of the scene is rendered in a most extraordinary manner. Three succeeding generations of artists have helped themselves with both hands from these prints, but left them not a farthing the poorer.

An indifferent lithograph, which I find it difficult to believe to be by Goya's hand, a proof of which is in the Print Room of the British Museum, a scene from a duel, and the portrait of Gaulon, Goya's printer at Bordeaux, (there is an excellent impression in the Print Room,) are the only other three lithographs mentioned

by M. Lefort as having been executed at Bordeaux. Another print, evidently a unique one, is in the Print Room of the British Museum,—a young man in hat and coat, surrounded by demons, suggestive of a poem by Baudelaire, not catalogued by M. Lefort.

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„ 3. TWO MAJAS. From a painting in the possession of the writer.

„ 4. A BULL FIGHT. From the painting in the Academy of San Fernando.

„ 5. THE STILT WALKERS—DESIGN FOR TAPESTRY. From the painting in the Sala de Goya, at the Prado.

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„ 7. THE MANOLAS ON THE BALCONY. From the painting at the Palace of San Telmo, Seville.

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,, 15. MALA NOCHE. From Los Caprichos, No. 36.
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,, 17. NO SE PUDE MIRAR. From Los Desastres de la Guerra.
,, 18. MADRE INFELIZ! From Los Desastres de la Guerra.
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,, 20. From LOS PROVERBIOS.

Plates 1 *and* 4–10 *are from photographs by Laurent of Madrid.*

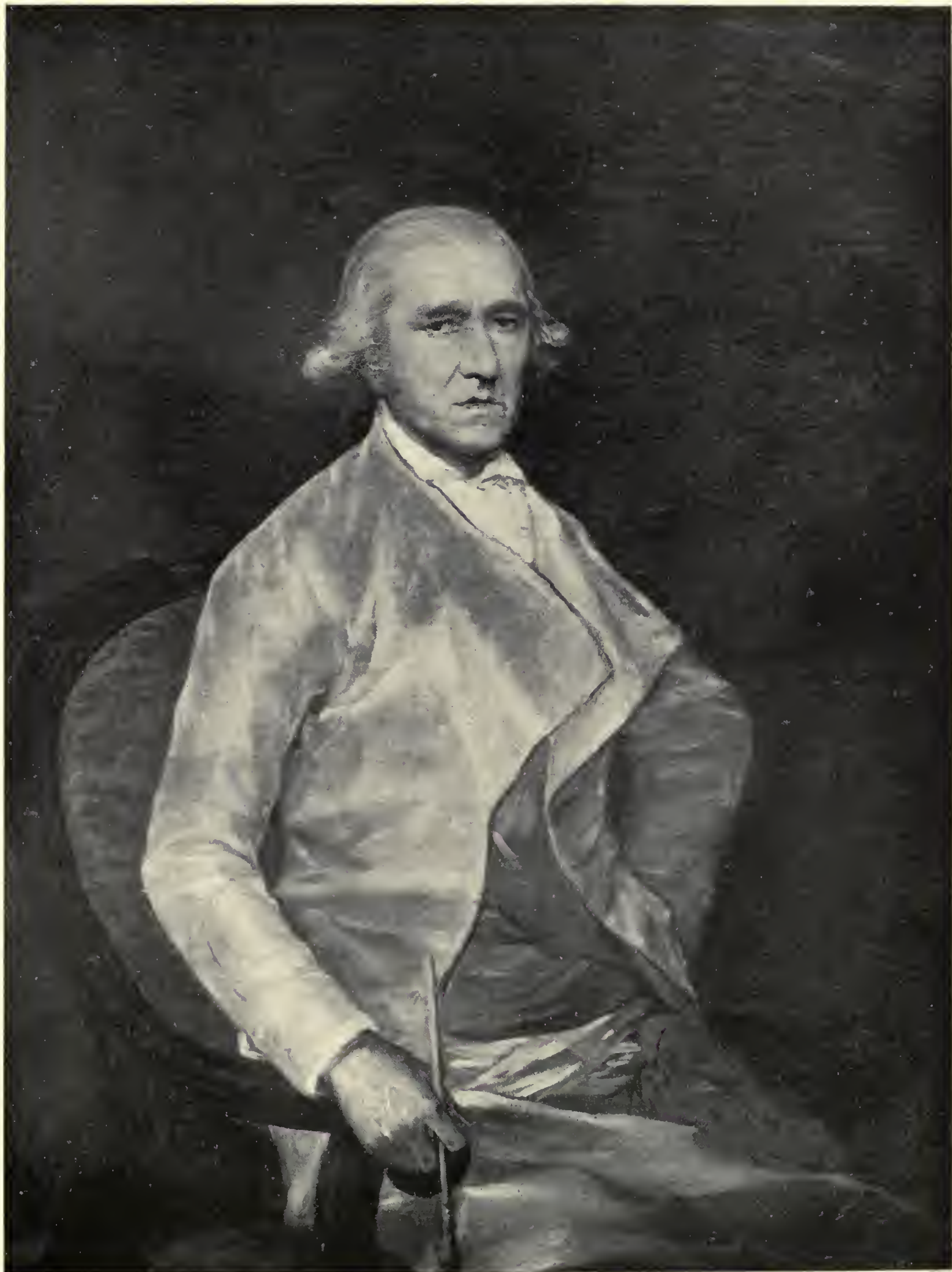
A Bull Fight: in the Academy of San Fernando.

The Stilt Walkers—Design for Tapestry: in the Prado.

The Nude Maja: in the Academy of San Fernando.

THE MANOLAS ON THE BALCONY: in the Palace of San Telmo, Seville

Portrait of Asensi: in the Palace of San Telmo, Seville.



Portrait of F. Bayeu: in the Prado.

Charles IV. of Spain and his Family: in the Prado.

Monk and Witch.

A Caza de dientes: Los Caprichos, No. 12.

YA TIENEN ASIENTO: Los Caprichos, No. 26.

Mala noche: Los Caprichos, No. 36.

Y AUN NO SE VAN: Los Caprichos, No. 59.

No se puede mirar: Los Desastres de la Guerra.

Madre infeliz! Los Desastres de la Guerra.

From the Tauromachia.

From Los Proverbios.

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