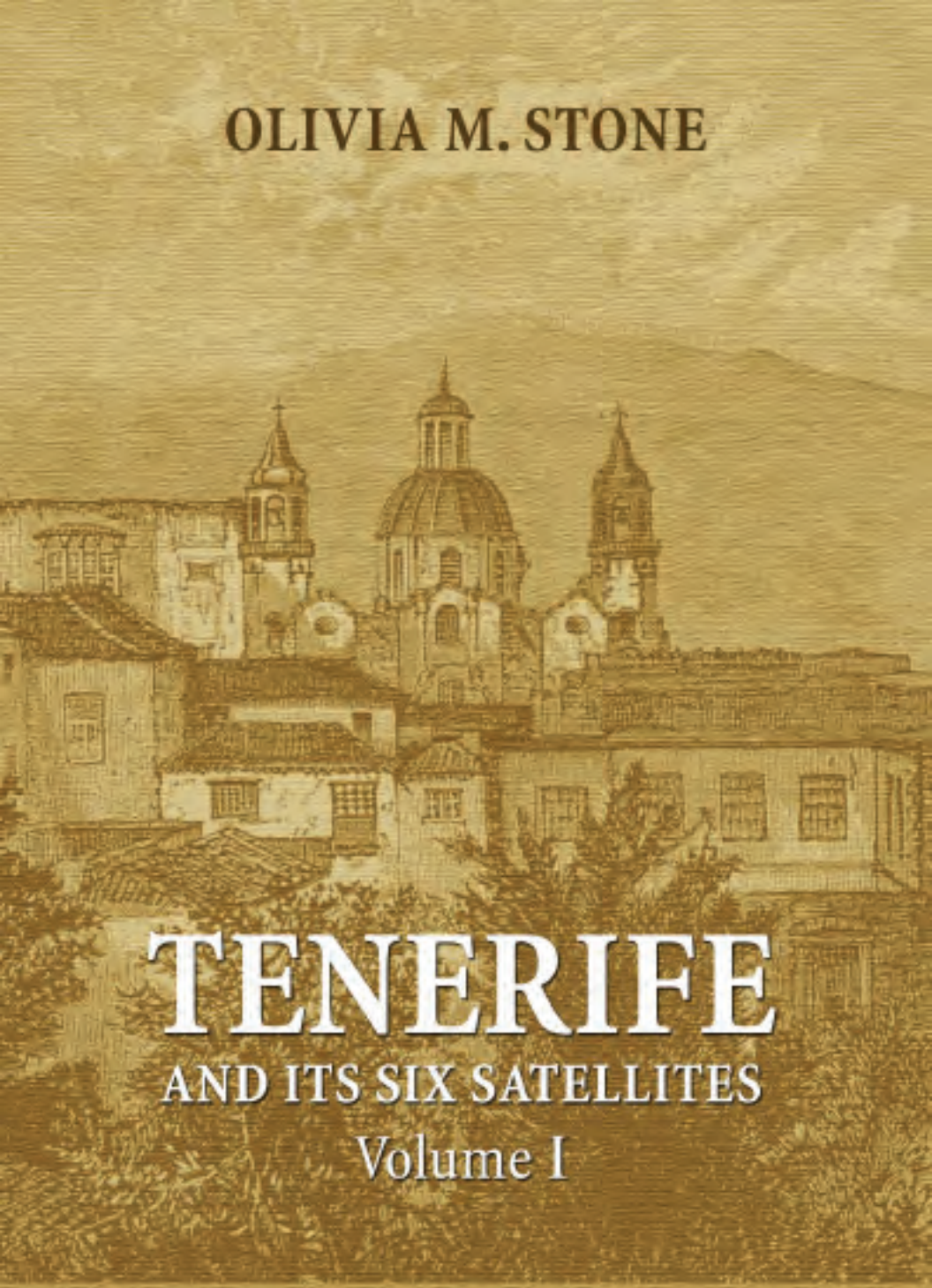
OLIVIA M. STONE



# TENERIFE

## AND ITS SIX SATELLITES

Volume I

Elibron Classics

OLIVIA M. STONE

# TENERIFE
# AND ITS SIX SATELLITES

OR

## The Canary Islands Past and Present

VOLUME I

Elibron Classics
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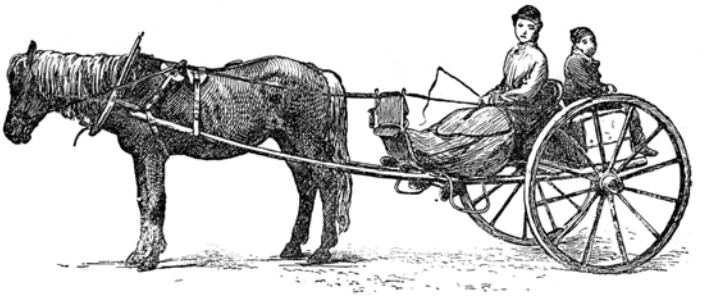
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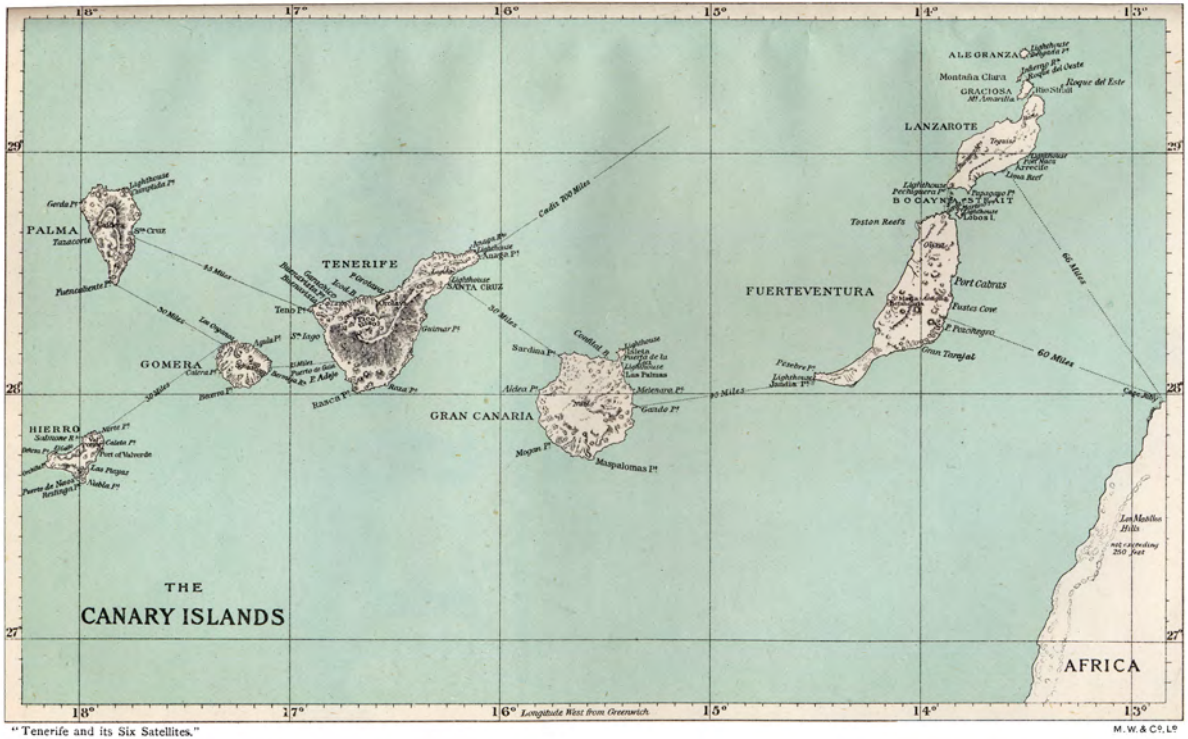
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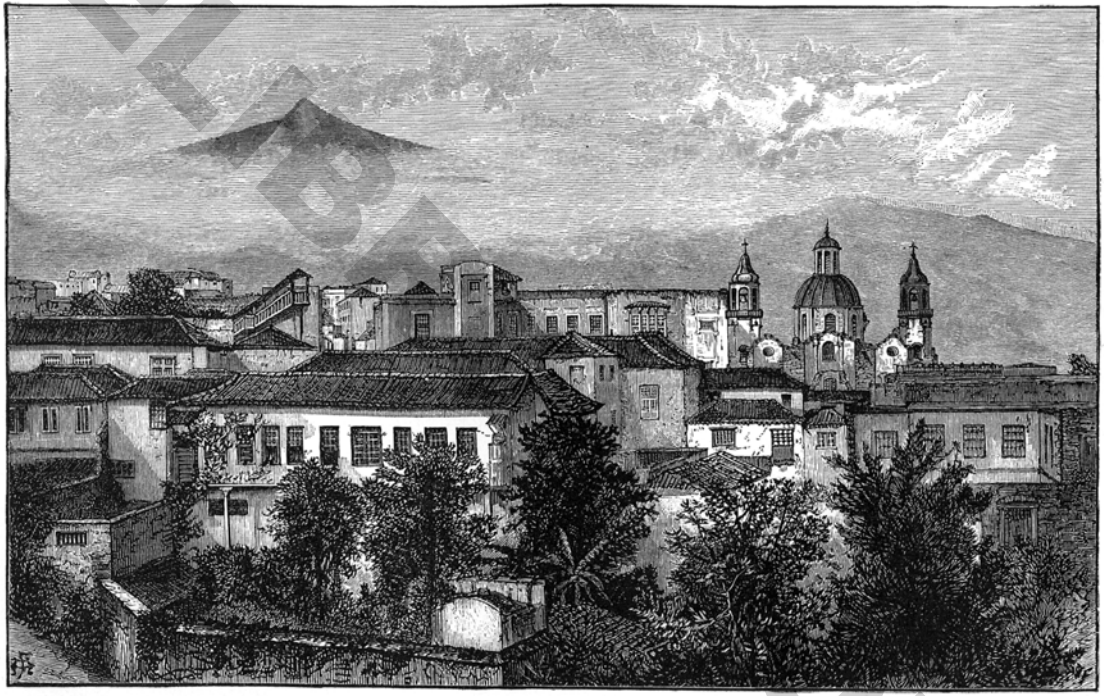
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*Frontispiece.*] THE PEAK OF TENERIFE FROM VILLA DE OROTAVA. [*Page.*370.

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# TENERIFE
# AND ITS SIX SATELLITES

OR

## The Canary Islands Past and Present

BY

OLIVIA M. STONE

AUTHOR OF "NORWAY IN JUNE"

*WITH MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN BY HARRIS STONE, M.A., F.L.S., F.C.S., BARRISTER-AT-LAW*



OUR CAMP BY THE SEA, GUIA, TENERIFE (*page* 183)

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

*TENERIFE—GOMERA—HIERRO—PALMA*

London:

MARCUS WARD & CO., LIMITED

ORIEL HOUSE, FARRINGDON STREET, E.C.

1887

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TO

HARTRICK, DUDLEY,

AND

ERIK

I DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

*September 11th*, 1887. O. M. S.

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# PREFACE.

No apology, I feel, is required for writing a book on the Canary Islands. The solitary fact that my husband and myself were the first English to visit the singularly isolated and beautiful island of Hierro would be excuse enough were such required. A modern work is, however, even much wanted upon the best-known islands of Tenerife and Gran Canaria, many parts of whose interiors, which we explored, being untrodden ground to English people, and but little known to those of any other nationality. The difficulty in obtaining any information in England as to the means of reaching the islands, and in the ports of the islands themselves in regard to their interiors, would scarcely be credited. It is surprising that a country so near England and Europe, so easily reached, and possessing such a health-giving climate should be so little known, that the most ordinary information necessary for travellers is not procurable.

I have endeavoured to represent the Canary Islands as they are, as we found them in our travels. I wrote almost all the accounts of scenery, habits, customs, and incidents of travel on the spot as they were seen or occurred. What therefore these volumes lack in literary finish will, I hope, be amply compensated for by the freshness of description and truthfulness of detail.

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The favour afforded to my former work on Norway, and particularly to its practical appendices, giving the exact cost of travelling, has induced me to write this work in somewhat of the same style. An epitome therefore of all necessary expenses connected with our journey thither and our stay in the archipelago, where we wandered throughout the seven inhabited islands, is faithfully given in the Appendix.

One point needs explanation. We left the islands in the spring of 1884. A considerable time has therefore elapsed since we were there. Owing to severe illness, which lasted eighteen months, brought on by overwork and anxiety to bring out these volumes as expeditiously and as exhaustively as possible, I am only now able to conclude my labours. But I can confidently say that the protracted interval has been for the benefit of the work. Friends living in the islands have kept me regularly informed of all changes that have been made in regard to hotels and communication between England and the islands, and among the islands themselves. I have also been the better enabled to mature the mass of information I have accumulated on the subject, whether that obtained from sources during our travels in the archipelago or from the books touching upon the islands which I have consulted. I have, I believe, consulted all the works treating, however remotely, on the subject which have appeared, whether in English, Spanish, French, or German.

The eight maps accompanying these volumes are made from our own observations and information, adopting the Admiralty coast lines. I must acknowledge the help afforded me by Don Marcial Velasquez in preparing the map of Fuerteventura. He kindly gave me a well-executed raised model of the interior, made by his own hands. The individual maps of the seven

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islands are not proportionate; their relative sizes can, however, be seen by consulting the map of the archipelago. The single lines running through the islands are tracks: the double and parallel lines, roads.

I desire to thank those friends in the islands, both English and Spanish, who have aided me in my endeavours to furnish a true and authentic account of the archipelago and its inhabitants. Specially would I thank Mr. Edwards, our vice-consul in Santa Cruz, Tenerife, the Messrs. John and Hugh Hamilton, Mr. Louis Renshaw de Orea, the Marqués de Candia, Mr. G. B. Nixon, Mr. John Swanston, Mr. James Miller, our vice-consul in Gran Canaria, and Mr. John T. Topham, our vice-consul in Lanzarote, for their courtesy in helping us to obtain reliable information. Mr. A. H. Béchervaise has at great pains furnished me with original meteorological tables, supplemental of the observations we ourselves made, compiled expressly for this work, a summary of which, given in the Appendix, will be found valuable. Our thanks and those of all interested in the islands are due to him for this careful piece of work. Herr Hjalmar Öhrval, of Upsala, has kindly sent me a copy of the temperatures he registered in one of the islands during the winter months of 1883-4. To Mr. Pelham Ogle I am deeply indebted for his careful and valuable analyses of the mineral waters of Firgas and Agaete which we brought home with us. For the kindness shown to us by Señor Don Gregorio Chil y Naranjo, a native historian of the Canary Islands, we cannot be too grateful. His unvarying courtesy and goodness have endeared him to us for all time. Lastly, I would thank Dr. Garnett, of the British Museum, for aiding me to unearth books containing incidental references to the subject.

To anticipate a charge of plagiarism which may be brought

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against me, let me at once say that my husband and myself have written articles touching directly or indirectly on the Canary Islands in many newspapers and journals, the substance of which, and in some instances perhaps the phraseology, will be found embodied in this work.

I would say to those friends in the islands who may read this book that in all I have written, whether it be of virtues or failings, I have been imbued throughout by a kindly feeling towards the inhabitants and of love towards their happy land, the beautiful Isles of the Blest.

O. M. S.

*September*, 1887.

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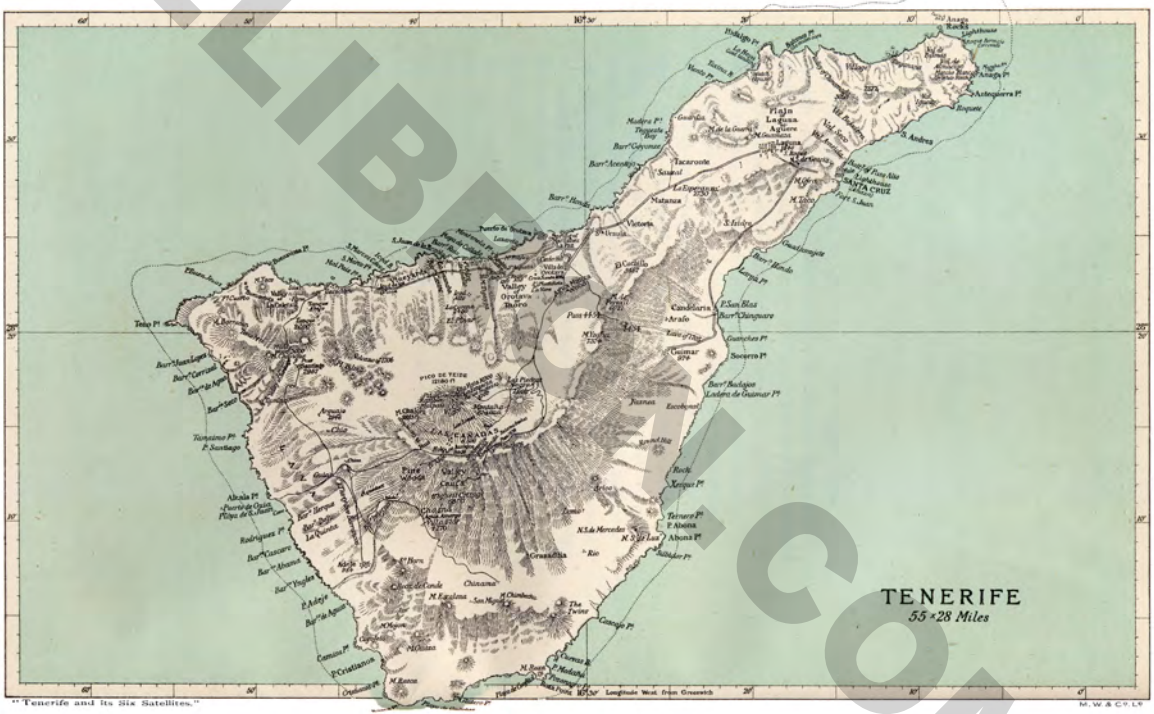
*The circling ocean waits us; then away, where nature smiles,*
*To those fair lands, those blissful lands, the rich and happy Isles!*
*Where Ceres, year by year, crowns all the untilled land with sheaves,*
*And the vine with purple clusters droops, unpruned of all her leaves;*
*Where the olive buds and burgeons, to its promise ne'er untrue,*
*And the russet fig adorns the tree, that graff-shoot never knew;*
*Where honey from the hollow oaks doth ooze, and crystal rills*
*Come dancing down with tinkling feet from the sky-dividing hills;*
*There to the pails the she-goats come, without a master's word,*
*And home with udders brimming broad returns the friendly herd;*
*There round the fold no surly bear its midnight prowl doth make,*
*Nor teems the rank and heaving soil with the adder and the snake;*
*There no contagion smites the flocks, nor blight of any star*
*With fury of remorseless heat the sweltering herds doth mar.*
*Nor this the only bliss that waits us there, where drenching rains,*
*By watery Eurus swept along, ne'er devastate the plains,*
*Nor are the swelling seeds burnt up within the thirsty clods,*
*So kindly blends the seasons there the King of all the Gods.*

* * * * *

*For Jupiter, when he with brass the Golden Age alloyed,*
*That blissful region set apart by the good to be enjoyed.*—HORACE.

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# TENERIFE

## AND ITS SIX SATELLITES.

## CHAPTER I.

*LONDON—SANTA CRUZ.*

Come to my sun-land! Come with me
To the land I love; where the sun and sea
Are wed for ever: where palm and pine
Are filled with singers; where tree and vine
Are voiced with prophets! O come, and you
Shall sing a song with the seas that swirl
And kiss their hands to the cold white girl,
To the maiden moon in her mantle of blue.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

THERE is a certain charm in this civilised nineteenth century in finding, within a moderate distance from England, a country so little known and so little written about as the archipelago of the Canary Islands. It is not because of their insignificance that ninety-nine out of every hundred among educated people know little or nothing of the islands either geographically or historically.

Formerly the Canary Islands were well known. In the time of Homer and Hesiod and Pindar they were the "Fortunate Isles." Strabo calls them the "Isles of the Blest," and since



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mythological times Statius Sebosus and Pliny have called them the "Garden of the Hesperides." They deserve at the present day in every respect the pleasant names thus showered upon them in the past, and the Happy Isles of the Greeks and Latins are in very truth the Happy Isles of to-day. We may well wonder how they have sunk so completely into oblivion, and fear we can only find an answer in the fact that they are a province of Spain. That once mighty kingdom which conquered half a continent, and advanced the geographical knowledge of the world by gigantic strides, has—shall I say for its crimes?—dwindled into a third-rate power. It is impossible not to believe in a practical kind of Nemesis, and who have so richly deserved it as the ruthless, pitiless conquerors of Mexico and Peru? Wherever Spain and her so-called Christianity have been hurled sword in hand at the peaceful aborigines, there cruelty and bloodshed have followed until the natives have been exterminated, and the conquerors taking possession of a land reeking with carnage, have blasphemously thanked Heaven for the progress of Christianity so marvellously advanced by their means.

With that peculiar clearness of perception for which the Spanish Government has always been remarkable, it put English ships in quarantine during the cholera scare of 1883. The reason assigned for such a peculiar proceeding was that England did not quarantine vessels coming from Egypt! As we could not go to the Canary Islands by the usual route from Liverpool without enduring the horrors of the *lazaretto*, we crossed to Havre, and from thence went, without the slightest difficulty or opposition, by steamer to Tenerife.

There are many ways of reaching the Canarian Archipelago. The best* and most expeditious route is by the Union or Donald Currie steamers from Plymouth or Dartmouth

* Since writing the above, the fine steamers of the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company, Limited, have arranged to call at Tenerife alternate weeks with Madeira on their way to New Zealand. This enables passengers to go direct from Plymouth to Tenerife.

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respectively. These, however, at present touch at Madeira only, which they reach in about four days, and pass the Canaries on their way to the Cape without stopping. It is therefore necessary to land at Madeira and wait for another steamer to go on to Tenerife. The British and African Steamship Company's and the African Steamship Company's steamers leave Liverpool every Saturday alternately, and touch at Madeira, Tenerife, and Gran Canaria on their way to the West Coast of Africa. It is in one of these vessels that the passage from Madeira to Tenerife may be made. The two companies possess between them a few good boats, but they are essentially traders, and not passenger vessels. Passenger accommodation is provided of a certain kind, but for ladies it is very indifferent. Few people have good accounts to give of these vessels except in the matter of food, which is on the whole good and well cooked. There is usually no proper place for passengers' luggage, and extra articles are deposited aft in the saloon. The steward in most cases combines his own functions with those of stewardess, which, when children are travelling, to say nothing of ladies, is without parallel in the shape of inconvenience. There may be stewardesses in a few boats, but unfortunately one is never told if there be or not, and the fare, with or without a stewardess, is the same. Another line is that of Forwood Brothers. These vessels go once a month from London to the Canaries. The boats are small but comfortable, but they are likewise guiltless of stewardesses, and the fare in proportion is excessive. They go or come by Morocco, and touch at four of the islands: Palma, Tenerife, Gran Canaria, and Lanzarote. As there is now a cable to the islands from Europe, there is little doubt that shortly the main lines of steamers bound for the Cape, Australia, the West Indies, and Brazil will coal at Tenerife and Gran Canaria in preference to Madeira, for the archipelago lies one day's sail farther out in the ocean, and the roadsteads are much more sheltered. Coaling is sometimes quite impossible at Madeira owing to the roughness of the sea.

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The roadsteads in the Canaries are good, and although landing has to be made in small boats, as in Madeira, a greater amount of shelter is obtainable. A comfortable landing can always be made at the Mole of Santa Cruz in Tenerife, whereas in Madeira, if the surf be high, landing cannot be effected at night. The hoisting by crane and chair, which is sometimes necessary at Funchal, is never required in these islands, nor is it there ever necessary to undergo the very disagreeable process of riding at anchor all night in the hope of being able to land at daylight. When the Puerto de la Luz, in Gran Canaria, is made into a harbour of refuge, the works of which are being rapidly pushed forward, an easy, certain, and pleasant landing will always be possible.

The ports of the Canary Islands being free, visitors are subjected to none of those tiresome custom duties and extortionate demands which so unpleasantly and deleteriously characterise Madeira.

We left Waterloo at 9 p.m. on Monday, August 27th, 1883, arriving in Havre next morning. Finding we had a day to spare, we determined to run up to Rouen. Our heavy baggage had passed direct from the customs to the fine steamship *Parana*, lying in Bassing dock, without being searched, which saved us much trouble. Taking a few light articles, we drove down to the *Parana*, secured our berths, and with half a minute to spare, just succeeded in catching the Paris express for Rouen. It is always pleasant to revive old associations, and we wandered through the churches and town, paying occasional visits to the fruit market, attracted by the delicious peaches. Next day we descended the Seine by boat,—a trip scarcely worth the trouble, save that it is more interesting than returning by train; and after dinner went on board the *Parana*, and slept in dock. This we were advised to do, as the ship was to start early in the morning.

*August 30th, Thursday.*—Coffee and bread-and-butter were served at 7.30, whilst we were all in the confusion of new

arrivals, and twenty minutes later we were slowly and cautiously guided by hawsers into the middle of the dock. The *Parana* is a fine screw steamer of 4,000 tons, bound for Buenos Aires. As she slowly moves out of dock, it seems as though such a monster could not get through the dock gates. Two days later her power, alas! seemed liliputian against a north-wester in the Bay of Biscay. The *Parana's* saloon was on deck, and above it was a large hurricane deck, on a line with the captain's bridge. Mounting upon this, we commanded an extensive view of almost the entire ship, and saw well the process of getting under weigh. Breakfast proper, or rather *déjeûner à la fourchette*, was at 10 a.m. It was the usual Continental breakfast, served and cooked well. All the food on the *Parana* proved good. At 1.30 we had *bouillon* and bread-and-butter, which kept the passengers from starving until dinner at 5 p.m. Tea, such as it was, and biscuits at 7.30 completed the day's dietary.

We saw the French coast all day on our port, a low, uninteresting stretch of land. A brig in full sail, with "every stitch of canvas set," homeward bound, and the gulls fishing astern were the only objects to distract our attention; so we turned to the little world aboard. There were very few passengers, only about thirty. We made up in variety of nationalities for lack of quantity. We were the only English, the rest being chiefly French and Spanish, although Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland, besides various South American States, were represented. The captain was a Swede, at which we were rather pleased, as, struggle against it as one may, there is always a feeling of distrust as to the maritime powers of Frenchmen. I have no doubt this is insular prejudice. The conversation at table was carried on in Spanish as well as French, many of the passengers being from Buenos Aires and Rio. We had a diamond merchant from the former place, a Frenchman, with a lovely South-American Spaniard for his wife. She and I made friends over her baby girl, a bright, pretty child. She was the only lady on board; fortunately the few other womenfolk in the saloon did not appear during the voyage. It sounds

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very selfish to say so, no doubt, but third and fourth-rate foreigners are not pleasant travelling companions. Insular prejudice again!

About 5 p.m. the bare, dark grey rock of Alderney loomed up clearly upon our port bow. We did not see land again for some days.

*August 31st, Friday.*—A wet morning on the ocean is not pleasant, especially when accompanied by a chopping sea. After struggling on deck, I therefore succumbed and turned in ignominiously. The weather became worse and worse, and towards evening the rolling and tossing were very bad indeed. One has a habit of thinking and saying that each vessel in which one makes a voyage is a dreadful "roller." I believe all vessels roll. They must. The long, narrow lathe that a steamer now is, propelled by main force through every sea, has no breadth to steady it. Still, I beg to affirm that the *Parana* was extra good at the rolling process. About 6 p.m. we turned Cape Finisterre, and got into The Bay. As each moment passed the increase of wind warned us that we were really going to "catch it." As the hours wore on the good ship rolled over, dipping to such an extent that we held our breath until we felt the quiver that betokened she was righting again. The hatches were battened down. It was impossible to sleep. As we lay, holding on tightly to the weather boards with which we were with difficulty kept in our berths, wave after wave struck us, swept our decks, oozed through the hatches, and occasionally breaking a port-hole, thundered into a cabin, soaking it and its occupants. We escaped with only a trickling of water, which damaged what lay in its way. The store of curiosities that later we dislodged from under our sofa, covered with a mixture of dirt, rust, and stickiness, was wonderful and appalling.

> "'Tis pleasant, by the cheerful hearth, to hear
> Of tempests and the dangers of the deep,
> And pause at times, and feel that we are safe,
> Then listen to the perilous tale again,

And with an eager and suspended soul
Woo terror to delight us. But to hear
The roaring of the raging elements,
To know all human skill, all human strength,
Avail not; to look round, and only see
The mountain wave incumbent with its weight
Of bursting waters o'er the reeling bark,—
O God, this is indeed a dreadful thing!
And he who hath endured the horror once
Of such an hour doth never hear the storm
Howl round his home but he remembers it,
And thinks upon the suffering mariner!" *

*September 1st, Saturday.*—When morning dawned we felt that at any rate we were getting across the Bay, an illusion instantly dispelled by the steward, who informed us that whatever we might have lost, the captain said we had not gained a knot in the night. The day rolled on wearily, as a day in a berth usually does, and until Sunday evening there was but little permanent abatement of the storm. During the night we got out of the Bay, and next morning, by an effort of will—for I had no physical strength—I stumbled up on deck, where I lay on the boards without moving or speaking until, much against my inclination, I took some *bouillon*. The effect was marvellous; I immediately began to feel the horrors of the past were past indeed, and that after all it was worth while living!

*September 4th, Tuesday.*—A moderate roll to-day made me feel quite brave, and I made a tour of inspection to see some of the injuries we had sustained. Two magnificent and valuable horses, that were in carefully padded boxes on deck, suffered so much from being knocked about, that one died and was thrown overboard. The other looked as though it had been engaged in a boxing match; one eye was completely closed up by a large swelling, and he was cut and bruised in various places. Our saloon was on deck, and quite astern.

* R. Southey.

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Close above the screw and part of the saloon was a large locker for flags. A door of quite unusually stout make, three inches in thickness, was shivered to atoms by one of the seas which struck the ship astern. The locker looked as if hit by a cannon-ball. There were many other casualties, but these two were our principal deck grievances.

Besides the diamond merchant and his luxurious wife, we had a Spaniard and his son, who, when they reached Buenos Aires, had twenty-three days' riding on mules before arriving at home. These individuals were so exceedingly dark that we could scarcely refrain from believing that a few generations more would suffice to reduce their descendants to the colour of the aborigines.

Another Spaniard had been visiting Europe and North America with regard to agricultural implements. He says English steam machinery is thought the best, but threshing-machines, reapers, and ploughs of American make are preferred; that now, since English manufacturers have copied American ideas, and employing as they do more lasting material, the newer kind of implements find a transatlantic market. A Swede delighted and entertained us with good classical music. There were no other passengers of any note, unless one includes a Parisian "ne'er-do-weel," despatched to the farthest points of the compass each time he returned home, and a horrible Spaniard who was perpetually clearing his throat—with results. Forward, the ship was crowded with emigrants and live stock—men and women all sleeping together. Every day the ducks were allowed to take a morning walk, and it was amusing to see them gravely and soberly waddling down the deck, unconscious of, or indifferent to, the gaze of numerous lookers-on.

*September 5th, Wednesday.*—We are perceptibly getting into a warmer climate. Last night we were obliged to dispense with extra bedclothes, and this morning we find the thermometer 75° F. (23·9° C.) in the shade at 8 a.m. The moment we reached deck we were surprised by the sight of some islands,

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and with beating hearts wondered if they were any of the Canarian group. Consulting the chart, however, we discovered that the two rocks on our starboard, barren, volcanic, and uninhabited, are the Salvages. Solitary islets in the ocean, they raise a feeling of curiosity as to their history, if they have any. The larger is to the north, the smaller to the south. The former in appearance reminds one of Serk, but rises higher. The Salvages have distinct craters, like most of the islands in the Atlantic. Being destitute of water, however, they are useless to man. There is orchilla upon them, which is, or rather was, gathered. The islands are supposed to be dependent upon Madeira, and consequently to belong to Portugal, but the Madeirese rarely visit them. A barque from Tenerife went thither in the eighteenth century in search of wrecks, and not finding any, loaded with half a ton of orchilla, which they brought home. The fact became known in Madeira, and complaint being made to the Governor-General in the Canaries, the unfortunate skipper was thrown into prison. This is a rather "dog-in-the-manger" story of the Portuguese. There is, however, a romantic tradition, said to be well founded, which asserts that a large treasure was hidden by pirates on one of these solitary islets. Certain it is that an expedition went in search of the treasure, the seekers taking with them water and provisions. They dug diligently, but at the end of a few weeks their water was exhausted, and there being none on the islets, the search had to be abandoned, and as far as is known has never since been prosecuted. A vessel in late years, however, which called at these islands for curiosity, found trenches dug across them, which would seem to confirm the tale of the search.

As we wend southward and still southward, ploughing our way onward to the steady, unrelenting thud of the screw—the only persistent thing on board—our minds are swept by a perfect flood of romance, against which even the prosaic training of the nineteenth century cannot stand. Columbus, Spanish vessels, adventurers, discoverers, gold, pirates, desolate

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islands, hidden treasure, wrecks, rescues—everything that has ever been heard or read of in fact or fiction, crowds into the mind and whirls across the brain, until one feels as if being wafted in a sedan chair through the wildest and most impossible Arabian Nights' Entertainment. The Salvages' romance has such a proper amount of truth, that we hail them as a bit of a past world and generation. They mark to us one distinct point—they are a hundred miles north of Tenerife.

The day is cloudy and breezy; no sun, only a glare as with our own and every one else's binoculars we each and all strain to catch a glimpse of "The Peak." To all wanderers of all climes in the Atlantic Ocean, El Pico del Teide is *par excellence* The Peak. At noon the doctor said, "There it is!" A chorus of "Oh where's?" in English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Swedish, announced the latent excitement of all on board, mother-tongue asserting its supremacy. I grieve to say—not that I impute aught to the doctor's veracity—that no one else could see that Peak for at least an hour longer. It was a trial to those of us who had prided ourselves upon our eyesight, but we were consoled by the thought that the doctor had seen it before, and if he could not see it, he could at least imagine it. The faint grey outline that now resolved itself into mountains and again into clouds really proved without doubt a little later to be Tenerife. Clouds above and around hide our El Dorado, which, like a spoiled beauty, coquettes with her numerous adorers from far and near.

Santa Cruz, the capital and principal port of the Canary Islands, is situated on the north-eastern side of the island of Tenerife. As we steered directly for this port, we skirted past the Punta de Anaga and part of the northern shore, the cliffs of which run down almost perpendicularly to the sea, and are brown and bare. The outline of the precipitous pile of mountains is serrated and jagged in the extreme. Here and there isolated clumps of grey-green *Euphorbia Canariensis* cling desperately to the loose, arid soil on the face of the mountains, giving it a curious patchy appearance unknown to temperate

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zones. This general aspect of Tenerife's scenery is not inviting to the passing traveller, although grand in the extreme. The bold, broken, denticulated outlines of the mountains of Anaga, surmounted by pinnacles showing clearly against the sky, and running directly to the sea, where there is scarcely foothold, suggest an inhospitable shore. One or two weird-looking, jagged splinters stick up in the sea to westward, and not far from land. The lighthouse, built on what appears an inaccessible spot, gives indication that people can live upon this rugged peninsula. Grey and basaltic in appearance, with a frightfully convulsed and contorted surface, it only requires the appearance of a cone in the distance to confirm the feeling of awe with which one approaches this monument of a force that commands the respect and excites the terror of the most careless of mankind.

Suddenly as we round a point, our feelings and the landscape are relieved by a tiny valley embedded between the precipices, and brilliant with that perfect green that one only gets where the contrast is severe. A few scattered houses nestling as near the sea as possible give life to the oasis. One naturally regards the ocean as the high-road of their inhabitants, not the impassable and insurmountable background, to see whose summit our heads strain upwards. Some fishing boats in the foreground, whose occupants are using deep-sea lines, add still further to the life interest of the picture. Notably absent are any signs of fresh water. No rills trickle through the little valley, no streaks of silver contrast with the grey mountain sides, no snowy waterfall splashes into the sea. It is only after studying the landscape for some time that we feel something is lacking, and discover it is the want of life and movement that running water always imparts to a scene.

The Canary Islands, although a province of Spain, yet belong geographically to Africa, from the west coast of which the nearest island is distant only sixty miles. They lie between north latitude 29° 25′ and 27° 40′, and west longitude 13° 25′ and 18° 16′. It may be well to mention that the usual pronunciation of Tenerife (which is spelled with one *f*, not two,

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as it is frequently and erroneously written) makes it a three-syllabled word, whereas it has four syllables, Te-ner-i-fe.

Meanwhile we are nearing our journey's end and the beginning of our real travelling. When the only information with regard to these islands may roughly be said to be obtainable from an ancient French manuscript, the narrative of an English sea captain in 1764, and the word of mouth of a few English people who have lived for the most part in the principal towns, it will readily be understood with what interest and curiosity we surveyed the scene of our future explorations. It would be impossible to convey to those who have never tried anything similar an idea of the difficulty in procuring any information, accurate or inaccurate, concerning this archipelago. It cost us six months of persistent questioning of every likely and unlikely individual we came across, of search among lists of books and among librarians, before we gathered even the meagre information we were at last able to obtain. The vast majority—I could count the minority on the fingers of my hands—did not even know the geographical position of the Garden of the Hesperides. Tenerife is known by name, but few know it as one of the Canarian group. Would it be believed that a clerk in one of the great steamship companies told me that their vessels did not touch at the Canaries, and yet on the very day he said so I saw an advertisement in the papers stating that their vessels called regularly at Tenerife! This, however, is no slur upon us English as a nation, for I discovered later, to my wonder and edification, that the Spaniards of the Peninsula are, as a nation, even more ignorant of the situation and characteristics of the islands.

A little after 5 p.m. we anchored in the roadstead of Santa Cruz. A moderate swell was on, which, although it affected the *Parana* but little, made the small boats which crowded around the companion rise and fall, jostle and tumble, in a manner exceedingly surprising to one unacquainted with the high seas usual in these latitudes. The health officers, in a smart boat, the men in uniform, came to the ship's side, where

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they dropped their oars, attached by a lanyard to the boat, into the water. Receiving a clean bill of health—although *we* having come from England, might have carried the cholera from Egypt, such is the value of quarantine!—we were soon boarded by handsome, bare-legged Canarios, selling cigars. Tenerife being less frequented than Madeira, these boarders are not so importunate or numerous as they are at Funchal.

Dinner was served as we cast anchor, so we remained for it, and went ashore at sundown. This postponement of our landing turned out to be expensive, for we had to pay double fares for boats and luggage in consequence.

The view from the bay is very pretty. The city faces the roadstead, climbing the hill which rises immediately from the water's edge. The houses, with their numerous balconies, are painted different colours, giving variety to a town conspicuous for its flat roofs. At the port of Santa Cruz the mole runs at right angles from the beach into the sea. A stone jetty projects from it half-way along its western side, forming whatever slight protection is possible in the shape of a harbour. Though useless as a shelter for ships, for landing in boats it is most serviceable. The towers of the two principal churches stand out conspicuously in the clear atmosphere from amidst the houses. The beauty of the scene lies, however, chiefly in the abrupt curve the bay takes towards the western side to the mountains of Anaga. The bright town, the smooth water of the roadstead, albeit with a swell, upon whose surface floats shipping of varied form and nationality, the air of activity prevailing on the mole and amid the smaller boats for landing, the wide sweeping curve of the bay distinctly marked by the white line of surf where it breaks on the dark beach, all form a peaceful and pleasant scene. The awe and grandeur, the distinctive feature which marks it out as worthy of note, giving it an individuality and majesty seldom equalled, are derived from the abrupt termination to the gentle curving bay by the stern precipices of the mountains to westward. Pile upon pile they stand, jagged and serried in outline, raising their wild

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crests against the blue sky in a way that is at once grand, beautiful, and awe-inspiring. The northern part of Tenerife from the Punta de Anaga to the capital is one mass of convulsed volcanic mountain. The valleys nestling in these solitudes, watered by mountain dews and warmed by a subtropical sun, must be sequestered nooks full of enjoyment, which we hope to penetrate.

Watching our opportunity to drop into the boat as it rose on a wave beneath us, we left the *Parana* with, I must say, little regret, and rowed ashore in the fast-growing darkness amid strange sights and sounds. The man at the helm was distractingly handsome, swarthy, but with colour, and fine-looking. It was no use, however, imagining him something to look at, for each of the four sailors, although thin and spare, as if oppressed by a surplus of energy and an insufficiency of food, was a picture in himself. A few minutes brought us to the mole. The town was all alight now. Nearly suffocated by the unusual heat, we walked up to Camacho's Hotel. Our luggage followed in a long, narrow cart like a double coffin on wheels, drawn by a mule.

We found we had been expected by the last boat from England. It was too late to look up those to whom we had been introduced by letter, so after a short stroll through the town we turned in, very glad to sleep again without rocking. Some of our companions on the *Parana* came ashore and made an unseemly uproar that was not conducive to sleep, only that Morpheus will not be gainsaid when a wholesome amount of physical exertion backs his endeavours.

*September 6th, Thursday.*—Got up at about 7 a.m., and found the thermometer 76° F. (24·5° C.) in the shade. One seems to have no desire to sleep late when all the world, and especially the sun, are so very wide awake. There is some excuse in our northern climate for lie-abed laziness when on drawing up our blinds we find grey skies, dirty streets, and the rain pouring in torrents. Here this happens so seldom that when

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the event does take place people rise to look at it. Rain is their variety, sunshine ours.

Mosquito curtains are round our beds, and the only covering supplied is a sheet, even that being scarcely necessary for warmth. The mosquitos are considered worse in this town than anywhere else in the Canaries. I am beginning therefore to feel quite happy about them, as there are only a few at night and scarcely any in the daytime. A bite now and then is nothing. I had visions of having to live perpetually enveloped in veils and gloves, while swarms of vicious mosquitos flew around. Norway is decidedly the worst place for these insects, except perhaps Iceland, that I have experienced.

As we were enjoying our first sleep last night, it and the stillness were broken by a loud and not unmusical cry in the street beneath: "Hadado la una, y sereno" ("It has gone one, and fine"). The old watchman, belonging to a past century in England, here survives, and brings us a flood of recollections, despite our sleepiness. The plague of London, tales, romances, powder, and patches, get mixed up, and we go off again into dreamland. The watchmen are called officially *serenos*, foreigners say because it is always *fine*. Formerly this cry was prefaced by "Hail, Mary!" This, however, was discontinued, and although subsequently used again, has once more been dropped.

Dressing occupied an unconscionable length of time this morning, owing to the, to us, new sights and sounds outside which constantly attracted us to the window. A man driving a yoke of oxen passes beneath. A rope is twisted round their horns, by which they are led, while an occasional prog with the goad urges on their steps. Ladies in complete black, with the graceful *mantilla* and fan, glide along on the shady side of the street on their way to matins, the daily and almost only exercise of the Spanish women. There is more an absence of than any distinctive dress among the common people. The men generally go about in trousers and white shirt, a black scarf, or indeed anything wisped round the waist. Oddly enough, one thinks,

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in this climate, the hats are of felt, round, black, and broad-leaved. The women's dress is only distinguished by a shawl (*sobretódo*) tied over the head and under the hair, falling down the back to protect the nape of the neck or top of the spine from the sun, while upon the crown of the head is worn a small round straw hat. The children are all barefooted, and wear only a little loose shirt.

We strolled out before breakfast along the mole, which is just opposite this hotel, and is the principal centre of attraction in Santa Cruz. It is a short breakwater, which affords shelter sufficient for small boats to land upon it, but cannot in any sense be said to form a harbour. A tramway runs down the centre, upon which the stones for completing the pier were carried. I need hardly say that it is not yet finished. Everything, as we found later in the island, is in the same condition,—begun, but not ended. Three camels—how incongruous they seem!—patiently kneel at the end of the mole to receive their load of stones, which is tied on; the juncture of stones and rope seems odd. Bells round their necks give warning of their approach to passers-by, as the noiseless tread of their padded feet would be unheard. The camels in the western islands of the archipelago are so few that they can be readily reckoned. Santa Cruz boasts only six, which are used entirely as beasts of burden, and for very heavy burdens. There is a small fish market at the town end of the mole, with marble slabs and tiled walls and floor. A priest was buying salt fish at the other end of the pier, the market being solely used for fresh. A woman, on another part of it, was selling rough earthenware pots and jars of different shapes.



EARTHENWARE BRAZIER.

Near the hotel, which overlooks the mole, lives the photo-

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grapher of the island, and, indeed, of the archipelago; for with the exception of one lazy and indifferent photographic artist in Las Palmas, the capital of Gran Canaria, he is the sole representative of the art. Does the supply increase the demand, or the demand produce the supply? If the former, then the islanders have only themselves to blame for their islands being unknown. Whatever part of the world one may travel in, it is nearly always possible, and less expensive, to get the photographs of that country in London. The exception proves the rule, and the name of the Canary Islands, much less their whereabouts, being almost unknown in England, the idea of procuring photographs was absurd.

It was with surprise we found that there was not even a view of the Peak of Tenerife in Santa Cruz, except from two villages on the coast. A few photographs of Santa Cruz and the principal towns on the island completed the collection. I must say that to us this is unmixed delight, for we shall be limning scenes untouched before by pencil or lens.

Breakfast was at nine, and the families of the English residents being at Laguna, the gentlemen, whom business compels to stay in the capital during the hot season, board at the hotel. We had therefore quite an English-speaking tableful. At 10.30 a.m., notwithstanding the thermometer being 80° F. (26·6° C.) in the shade, we sauntered forth, full of curiosity. Turning to the right as we left the hotel, we came upon the Plaza de la Constitucion, an open space surrounded by houses. At the lower end of it is a monument erected by the Spaniards to commemorate their conquest of the otherwise unconquerable inhabitants, through the treachery of four of the Guanche kings or chieftains. It consists of a pillar of Carrara marble, surmounted by the Virgin and Child, whilst at its base are four lifesize figures of the traitor kings looking upwards. Beneath the chiefs are four cherubs. The conquest is supposed to have been effected through the influence of Christianity. Hence this allegorical interpretation, which is intended as a tribute to the power of Roman Catholicism in conquering Tenerife. Those

who know the history look upon the monument in a different light, and stand awe-struck at the audacity which could erect such a shameless lie. Proud as the inhabitants are of it—



GUANCHE MONUMENT, SANTA CRUZ, TENERIFE.

and justly so as regards its execution—stonecrop grows plentifully between the marble slabs, and will ere long force them apart, if not removed.

Continuing our course across the square, we reached, in a low

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quarter of the town, near the barranco, the Church of the Conception. This church is more visited by English people than any other in the Canary Islands. The reason it obtains this amount of notice is, that here are kept Nelson's flags. The island of Tenerife and the town of Santa Cruz boast the honour of having defeated the then invincible Nelson, causing him the loss of his arm. It is true. Nelson himself, in a letter to the governor of the town, signed for the first time with his left hand, acknowledges their bravery and subsequent courtesy. The flags, however, the particularly sore point to us, and of delight to them, were not taken, but lost. Even Nelson, all-powerful as he was, could not withstand the natural rampart which surrounds these islands. The surf worked destruction upon his boats that he had ordered to land on the southern side of the mole and fort, wrecking them. Next day these flags were picked up on the beach. The surf thus foiling his plans, the three different landings which he had planned were not effected at the same time. The inhabitants, thus enabled to meet each attacking party singly, defeated them. Lieutenant Trowbridge, taking advantage of his force being supposed larger than it really was, procured an honourable retreat, which, with fruit and provisions, a present from the governor, Nelson duly acknowledges in his letter. During the first attack, while jumping on the mole, a gunshot disabled Nelson's arm. Let us return, however, to the flags. We find that they are carefully preserved in two long wooden boxes with glass doors. These are fastened on the walls of a side chapel in the Church of the Conception. So dark, however, is the position chosen that one can scarcely see the boxes, much less the flags inside them. We had endeavoured to gain permission to take the flags down, but the possessor of the key was not in Santa Cruz, so we had to repress our curiosity until our return to the capital, a couple of months later.

Besides the flags, the church contains another object of interest. Entering a doorway to the right of the altar, we find a little chapel entirely of carved wood. It is octagon in shape,

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and lighted by an octagon cupola. The carving is floral. Above the altar are a spread-eagle and cherubs, the former supporting a niche in which is a figure of St. Matthias. The chapel is only fourteen feet by fourteen. It was originally carved from top to bottom in elaborate floral designs, but part of the walls was burnt. The whole is the work of one man, who lies beneath the floor, a marble slab in the wall telling us the brief facts of his birth and death :—

DON MATHIAS RODRIGUEZ CARTA,
DIED MAY 29, 1743,
AGED 68 YEARS, 3 MONTHS, AND 4 DAYS.
Poor, yet rich, his labours remain.
Requiescat in pace. Amen.

A skull and cross-bones finish the record. The chapel is a well-executed piece of carving, and doubly wonderful as the work of an untaught genius. The pious captain's love for his church did not end here, for he gave it a handsome marble pulpit in 1736. Painted wooden stairs and a sounding-board do their best to detract from its appearance. Save for the pulpit, the main edifice is not by any means remarkable. The ceiling is whitewashed, the pillars painted grey. The flooring of the centre aisle is of tiles, and the sides brick. A plain wooden gallery at the west end, tawdry-painted altar, Virgin, and side-altars only take from the simplicity of the edifice itself. There are six holy water basins and two shell-shaped fonts, all of which have just missed being beautiful. Two old box-chairs and several long box-seats are the quaintest relics the church contains.

On leaving the church we crossed a bridge supported on massive pillars high above what is now a perfectly dry water-bed. The last time water came down this barranco the bridge was carried away, although to look at the height from the bed to the arch one could hardly believe it would ever be filled.

Immediately upon the other side of the river is the hospital.

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It is a good-sized building, and is still being added to, and the old part renovated. Part of the new wing is for lunatics. The hospital is supported in a meagre way by Government, and until lately was very inefficient. Some Sisters of Charity have, however, lately taken the place in hand and wrought a reformation. Besides being a hospital, the building is also an orphanage and charity house. A great part of the work of the Sisters is taking care of deserted children, of whom, in proportion to the population, there are an immense number. The children may be claimed at the end of three years, but if they be not, the State brings them up. There is a Junta de Caridad de Señoras (Ladies' Charitable Society), which raises money for these poor waifs. It was founded in 1859. There are one hundred and twenty-five lady subscribers of from two *reales* to ten per month (5*d.* to 2*s.*). Besides the subscriptions they have the offertories on Maundy Thursday and raffles. Out of their reserve fund this society has built a ward in the hospital for the foundlings and contributed £240 to instal the Sisters of Charity. There is a managing committee and the usual officers. The annual cost of the hospital is 120,128 *pesetas*, or about £4,805. In 1882, there were 628 patients admitted, of whom 438 were cured and 76 died. The Sister in charge took us over the wards, which looked clean and comfortable. The foundlings are all in the country at present. It is considered too warm for them in summer in Santa Cruz, so they are sent away. We saw their ward, however. Swinging wire cradles, covered with mosquito curtains, are for the babies. One alone was occupied; the baby was too ill to be removed, and the laboured breathing and pallid features of the poor little sufferer denoted that its stay in this world would not be lengthy. The hospital is built in the fashion usual here, with an inner court, or *patio*, the wards running round it on all sides.

We walked in the afternoon to the northern part of the town, taking on our way the Church of San Francisco, which is situated at a slight elevation in the centre of the town. It stands not by itself, but adjoining a large building in which are

the museum and a school for boys. The façade is without any special feature, as indeed is the whole church. A date above the entrance gives 1777 as the year of building. Upon entering we were at once struck with the lavish way in which the altars are gilded. There are eight of these besides the main one, and each is adorned in the usual manner with figures in niches and recesses, some four or five feet in height, clad in faded and quite tawdry-looking clothes. Unlike the figures in the Church of the Conception, they are not hidden behind curtains. The entire paving is of plain square red tiles, the majority of which are cracked or broken ; in fact, the floor needs renovating. The side aisles are not wide, and are divided from the nave upon either hand by four grey painted pillars of the commonest description, supporting wide and simple arches. The side and clerestory windows are of unpainted glass in small panes. There is a short tower, not attached to the church, but to a house in the rear, which used to be a convent. A few benches are placed between the pillars parallel with the side walls ; otherwise the area of the edifice is bare. A pulpit of painted wood, surrounded with some rude paintings, stands between the pillars on the left side near the high altar.

Leaving the church, we continued our walk down a long, narrow street parallel with the sea. All the streets throughout the town are paved with pebbles, and the pavements are in fair order. The roofs of the houses overhang two or three feet, and sometimes three rows of tiles form the eaves alone. Many houses have flat roofs, with outside staircases, usually painted green, leading to the *azoteas* and *miradores*. An azotea is a part of the roof, which is flat and either walled or railed in, where towards evening the household betake themselves. The miradores are square towers for the same purpose. They serve as look-outs, smoking-rooms, and, more important still, general gossiping places, people talking across from one to another. The outer walls of the houses are usually whitewashed, and attached to them are frequently large, plain wooden crosses, sometimes six feet high. One of the most characteristic points

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about the houses is the *postigos*. Every window has green outside shutters, and in the lower half of these are two movable pieces of wood like flaps hinged from the top. As one passes along what is apparently a silent and deserted street, suddenly one after another these flaps, or *postigos*, are gently



STREET, SANTA CRUZ, TENERIFE.

pushed out, and a curious face, possibly handsome, with dark eyes and hair, peers forth. A certain amount of excitement is evinced by the señora or señorita on seeing that we are strangers, not so much here, however, as elsewhere, as this port sees more strangers in a week than the rest of the island in a year. In the poorer houses the doors are open, and the whole family congregates on the lintel at our approach. Some,

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however, are partaking of their dinners, and are seated on the middle of the floor. There are no fireplaces, and the people cook in little braziers either of island earthenware or iron ones of foreign make. Very frequently the cooking is carried on in front of the door, in the street. The people seem to have very little to do, or else will not do anything. There is a delightful, happy-go-lucky way of taking what comes and troubling about nothing, that ought to be productive of smooth and wrinkleless faces.

Following this street, we found ourselves on the road leading to San Miguel Fort. Here we had a good view of the bay and the northern line of coast. The little mole lay on our right, whilst a number of ships and boats rocked at anchor. At our feet lay a beach of grey lava shingle, spread out upon which were some long seine nets.

The road ends at present about five or six hundred yards from the hotel, but is to be continued to the northern part of the island in due course.*

The Government have granted waterworks to Santa Cruz. The water is, I believe, to be brought into the town from this its northern side from the mountainous district at the extreme north of the island. The works, it is said, will cost $800,000 (£160,000), but no one has yet been found to take up the contract.

We noticed as we walked through some loose, light soil, almost sand, myriads of small red beetles about the size of a ladybird, with black marks on their backs. These congregated in masses, and when clumped together, looked like patches of some red flower or weed.

There was a concert in the evening in the Alameda, opposite the hotel, given by the Santa Cruz Philharmonic Society. The

* The *carretera*, or high-road, which, when we were in the island, only went as far as the Rambla de San Juan, beyond Orotava, in the north, and towards Guimar on the east, has been extended in both directions considerably further. These two roads will in due course meet in the south, thus forming a highway entirely round the island.

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performers, who played on string instruments, executed very well indeed some of Strauss's waltzes and "Cantos Canarios" by Power, a native composer, besides other music. Although these gardens are public and belong to the town, threepence was charged for admission, in return for which one received a lottery ticket. The sight was a novel one inside the grounds. A straight avenue, forming a promenade, was well lit up by oil lanterns hung on either side. Beneath the trees were seats, and at the end of the walk a roofed stand, brilliantly lighted and covered with articles ticketed and numbered. Here one brings the little twisted screw of paper received on entering; and putting it in water, it unrolls, when the number can be read. Almost invariably everyone finds a blank! If, however, a number should be inside, the prize gained may consist of a looking-glass, a bottle of beer, cheap vases, trumpery glass, or china ornaments.

The promenaders consisted of young men and girls, chiefly of the middle classes. The dresses were brilliant pinks, blues, and whites, modern and gaudy hats taking the place of the graceful *mantilla*, which a few, who were in black, wore. The night was warm, as, indeed, every night is, the temperature between day and night varying little. Our thermometer has remained steadily at 80° F. (26·68 C.), as if glued, since our arrival.

I am told that before the hot season commences, these promenade concerts are attended by a better class of people. But just at present the wealthier citizens are not staying in Santa Cruz, having gone to their country houses at Laguna and elsewhere.

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# CHAPTER II.

## *SANTA CRUZ—LAGUNA.*

If the customs and manners of men were everywhere the same, there would be no office so dull as that of a traveller, for the difference in hills, valleys, rivers, in short the various views of which we may see the face of the earth, would scarce afford him a pleasure worthy of his labour; and surely it would give him very little opportunity of communicating any kind of entertainment or improvement to others.—HENRY FIELDING.

*September 7th, Friday.*—We started this morning for Laguna at 10 a.m. The vehicle was an ordinary fly, very much the worse for wear, the hood closed against heat, not rain. Three horses abreast drew us, the middle one being little larger than a pony. It is a long, steady pull from Santa Cruz to Laguna, for which three horses are invariably employed. The ascent began at once in the town, which is built on the slope of the hill. Where Humboldt saw the "narrow and sandy beach" where "houses of dazzling whiteness are built close against a wall of black, perpendicular rock," I know not. He must have written a description applying to some other place, and imagined it was Santa Cruz de Tenerife. The whole of his account of the island is very inaccurate. When we remember that he was a very young and inexperienced traveller when he touched at Santa Cruz, that he only remained three days upon the island, and wrote the narrative of his adventures much later, allowance must be made for mistakes. I fear the islands have often been treated in this way. Out of three or four-score books which touch upon the archipelago or devote every page between their covers to the islands, one could count on the

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fingers of one hand those that give accurate and original information. Of these Glas's "History" and "The Conquest of the Canaries," published by the Hakluyt Society, are the only two to be thoroughly depended upon in every detail. The former is a translation of a Spanish MS written in 1632 by a Franciscan friar, one Juan de Abreu de Galineo, a native of Andalusia, and found in Palma, where it lay in a convent for many years. From Palma it was sent to the bishop of the islands, then living in Canaria. Glas, an English sea-captain who had sailed among the islands for many years, heard of this MS, and procured a copy, which in 1764 he translated, adding very valuable information about the inhabitants and descriptions of their islands as he then found them. So accurate is he that his work to this day is the best guide of all the books and sketches that have yet been written upon the Canary Islands, though occasionally his deductions are incorrect. About one island only he knows nothing, save from hearsay, and that is Hierro. The Hakluyt Society's book is also a translation of a MS, written by Pierre Bontier, a monk, and Jean le Verrier, a priest, who accompanied Bethencourt, the conqueror of the islands, in his expedition against them in 1402. It is thus earlier than Galineo's MS, and only extends over a period of twenty years. The MS was brought to light in 1630, and edited by Bergeron, in Paris. This edition has now been carefully collated with a MS copy in the possession of a descendant of Bethencourt's by M. d'Avezac for Mr. Major, who has edited the present translation and written a valuable introduction for the Hakluyt Society. There are a few works that have reference to special subjects, chiefly botanical, geological, and astronomical, such as Webb and Berthelot's exhaustive quartos, the volumes of Von Buch, Fritsch, and Piazzi Smith, that I do not include in the category of those not to be depended upon. Von Buch and Bory de St. Vincent give also *resumés* of the history, manners, and customs of the inhabitants, past and present. The former is much the more valuable, for a greater part of it is from personal observation, he having visited four of the islands. Bory de St. Vincent's

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large work is entirely a compilation from Viera, the Spanish historian of the islands, and the result of one night's stay at Santa Cruz! This latter historian, Viera y Clavigo, gives the fullest information concerning the islands of all the many who have written upon the subject, as he has gathered a number of minor MSS together and collated them. He, however, found, as I have, that the two MSS already mentioned are the best and most trustworthy records. It must be remembered, however, that he was not only a Spaniard, but an ardent Roman Catholic priest. His accounts of miracles and all that is marvellous must be taken for what they are worth. Otherwise the book is the most valuable historical record that we have. It is in Spanish, and was written between the years 1772 and 1783. Don José de Viera y Clavigo was a native of Tenerife, and devoted much of his energies to literature, in which he earned a not inconsiderable name as a writer and translator. Many writers mention the islands when passing on to other countries to which they have devoted more time. A few days' stay at Santa Cruz, a few hours at Canaria, and perhaps a passing glimpse of Lanzarote, and a book is written, or many chapters in a work on other countries are devoted to the islands. Necessarily the amount of information gathered on the spot is limited; the rest must be obtained from other sources.

The number of works in English is very small. The two MSS already mentioned have fortunately been translated, but there is no English work entirely devoted to the Canary Islands. A few books and several pamphlets there are upon Tenerife and its Peak.

Meanwhile we are toiling up a steep and straight street leading out of the town. A funeral met us. The coffin, covered with black cloth, was borne by four bearers, while some eight or ten little boys carrying lighted lamps followed in careless fashion. The custom of no near relatives being present at a funeral precludes any appearance of genuine grief, and gives a corresponding levity to the bearing and tone of those who accompany the corpse.

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Presently we encountered three camels, carrying their loads in leisurely, swinging fashion, their heads held high as though protesting against the degradation, and another kneeling to await its burden. Their owners shorten their hold of the halters as they pass, for those cynical eyes do not betoken always the sweetest of tempers, as they glance down contemptuously on the passers-by. Some countrymen passed us, sitting sideways upon their odd-looking saddles, or *albardas*. These are made with high points back and front, and are covered by sheepskin. Everything that can be carried on horseback is packed on the saddles; even the panniers that the donkeys carry are slung across the *albarda*. It takes some time to become accustomed to seeing men sitting sideways, but the packsaddles are too broad to make the ordinary way possible or at any rate comfortable.

Trees have been planted along each side of the road for a little distance beyond the town. They are young, and afford of course no shelter. One can imagine what a pleasant difference it would make to man and beast if the road were but a shady avenue. The barranco, or river-bed, runs down in almost a direct line towards the town and sea, so the road, which is winding, passes over it frequently. Near the first bridge we crossed we saw the famous cochineal cactus, with the insects upon it. It looked at first sight as if the cactus leaves, or rather, to be accurate, the flattened stems, had become mildewed.

There was not much vegetation of any sort, either wild or cultivated. Near the town there were a few date palms in the gardens, but as we ascended the country was a dusty, barren brown. Evidently water is scarce, and this is confirmed by the appearance of cisterns here and there. The land, which is a steep slope towards Santa Cruz, is divided up into irregular patches—one cannct call them fields—by low walls of grey lava stones. So steep is the slope in many places that terraces are necessary, some of them being only a yard or two wide. The general aspect of the country is brown, enlivened only by the pale dull green cactus and a few scattered trees. This time of

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year is of course the worst for scenery, as after the summer everything is parched and withered.

A cross erected on the wayside as a praying station was the only thing of note upon the road. Near it was another cross on a small pedestal, erected where a corpse, on being carried to the cemetery, was laid down to rest the bearers, a custom prevalent throughout the archipelago. We now passed the two-kilometre stone, 450 feet above the sea. It was 10.30 a.m., and 82° F. (27·8° C.) in the carriage. The evenly dull brown of the sloping hillside is varied when looked at as a whole by the light, regular patches, glaringly white in the sunshine, of the cisterns and bridges where the road crosses the barranco as it zigzags upwards in sharp and frequent curves. An accident at one of these turns occurred only last night, when a carriage on its way from Laguna fell over a low wall about eighteen inches high down a steep slope of some yards. The occupants, two Spaniards, had their arms broken, but the horses escaped injury in some marvellous manner. The road, although fairly broad and well made, is guarded only on the lower side by small pillar stones placed at intervals of about six yards. It is built up at many places where there are dips in the land, the bank thus caused being as unprotected as the rest of the road.

The town of Santa Cruz, as seen from this highway, is not pretty. The houses are low, and have generally flat roofs, the larger having *azoteas* and *miradores*, the whole giving the impression, as somebody has remarked, that one has been taken up by the scruff of the neck and let down in the middle of the Old Testament. A man carrying two bags of prickly pears, slung round his neck and hanging down front and back, presented a curious spectacle, as if poulticed. A rather warm treatment for both the man and the pears along this dusty and unshaded road. Another man with a goatskin bag on his back, in which he carried his food, as did his Guanche ancestors, we also met tramping along. Occasionally we passed cavities scooped out of hollows in the land on either side of the road, goats, pigs, and other animals being the troglodytes. Along-

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side of the new road, or rather crossing it—for it comes straight down the hill—is the old, just as in Norway one sometimes sees three generations of road side by side. The old road here is, however, entirely paved with stones, somewhat like those in Madeira at the present day.

Four kilometres from Santa Cruz we were 665 feet up, and the temperature was still 80° F. (26·6° C.). The journey was full of interest because new, but the scene could hardly be called beautiful, except when looking down towards the sea. As the road wound backwards and forwards, cool, refreshing breezes came to us off the ocean, a perfect blue, far beneath us, even through the heat that quivered above the brown earth. Away in the distance tower in faint outline the mountains of Gran Canaria. Leftwards and above us a conical hill of bright red, completely destitute of vegetation, gives light to a landscape otherwise rather colourless. Interest centred in the road—the peasants going into town; mules and donkeys, with their strange and varied loads, carrying anything from water to stones; splendid oxen patiently whisking off the flies as they sauntered along; grey lizards wriggling in and out of the stones, scarcely distinguishable from the lava dust and the brown, thirsty-looking earth; while the men, brown and handsome, and the women, brown and ugly, were a never-failing novelty. One bright-looking lad, carrying a canary in a cage, walked beside us as we toiled up the hill, and seemed as much concerned with us and our belongings as we were with him and his.

Presently we came to the cross-roads between Guimar, Laguna, and the capital. A much-frequented *venta* is at one corner, at which we stopped, and our driver got down. A motley assemblage of laden donkeys and mules stood in the shade of the house, whisking the flies off their hot sides with their tails, the owners either lounging about outside or in the little bar or shop buying wine. We followed our driver into the venta, partly out of curiosity and partly in order to get out of the hot sun. Entering a large passage, almost a yard—the *zaguan*—in which a horse was standing, we found opening out

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of it on the right and left two rooms. That on the left was a square, dirty-looking place, with some tables and chairs in it, and in one corner a dripstone. These dripstones, or *pilas*, are used almost universally throughout the islands. They are a sort of porous sandstone, formed of the remains of broken shells and grains of broken volcanic stone, solidified calcareous sandstone, and act as filters. The water supply in most of the islands is kept in cisterns, it being rainwater; and lying stagnant as it does from one winter to another, filtration is very necessary. The best stones come from Fuerteventura. The top of the stone is hollowed out; and in most houses ferns, generally maidenhair (*adiantum capillus veneris*), are placed in the hollow, and drooping over, form quite a pretty and refreshing-looking bit of green. Leaving the gloomy saia, we crossed to the shop or bar-room on the opposite side. We have nothing to correspond with the venta in England. It is a sort of public-house, where, however, beds cannot be procured. Other things besides food for immediate consumption may be bought, it being a very inferior kind of general shop. Its chief trade is, however, in wine, the light *vin ordinaire* of the island, which the peasants drink as beer is consumed in England. This particular venta, we could see, sold fruits, vegetables, and charcoal. Hard-boiled eggs were also ready for use. Our driver bought a couple; the first he broke was bad!

While awaiting our charioteer's pleasure, we stood outside and watched the quadrupeds. None of the donkeys and but few of the mules had shoes. Their hoofs could not have been in better order, nor a better shape. These animals are worked all the year round, not having rest in winter, like the Norsk horses. Roads are not of course to be found throughout the island, but the ground is everywhere very hard and often stony. The coach from Laguna passed while we waited; it is merely an old omnibus. There is communication between Santa Cruz and Puerto de Orotava twice a day by means of these omnibuses. Women passing to and fro were a marvel from the amount both in bulk and weight they carried upon their heads. On

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another occasion, later in our travels in the islands, we saw a woman upon a rather windy day, wearing a large hat, calmly put an immense stone upon the top of her head to keep the hat on, the unnecessary weight apparently giving her no trouble or inconvenience as she tramped smilingly along!

More houses began to appear as we got higher, some of them very pretty, with green verandahs, brightened up by a few red flowers.

Our driver was very much interested in my note-book, at which he smiled approvingly. He was most anxious to tell us about everything when he saw it was really noted, and when giving the information, always added, with a nod of his head, "Put it in the book."

Between the cross-roads and Laguna, seven kilometres from the capital and 1,400 feet above the sea, on the left-hand side, is a red house, interesting because it was there that Dr. Walcott (Peter Pindar) stayed with Mr. Mackerrick when he paid a short visit to Santa Cruz in 1768. He wrote while there an "Elegy to the Fleas of Tenerife." The poem is rather laboured, but a few of the verses may be of interest to others who, like ourselves, have, alas! experienced something similar.

"Ye hopping natives of a hard, hard bed,
Whose bones, *perchance*, may ache as well as ours,
Oh, let us rest in peace the weary head
*This night*—the first we ventured to your bowers.

"Thick as a flock of starlings on our skins,
Ye turn at once to brown the lily's white;
Ye stab us also, like so many pins—
SLEEP swears he can't come near us whilst ye bite.

"In vain we preach—in vain the candle's ray
Broad flashes on the imps: for blood they itch—
In vain we brush the busy hosts away;
Fearless, on *other parts* their thousands pitch."*

If Dr. Walcott had been through the whole of the islands, he would not have confined his ode to one. The fleas are not

* "The Works of Peter Pindar, Esq." (Dr. Walcott), vol. iii., 1794.

a product of dirt, though abounding of course where cleanliness is not observed, but of the climate. They are always liable to attack persons walking on the roads and streets, and it is only at a considerable elevation that they are absent. It is by no means unusual in English society in the islands to hear, "Pray excuse me for a moment; I really cannot sit quietly," the person in question disappearing for a hunt. Natives, whether of high or low degree, do not seem to notice them so much, or else they are not attacked so viciously. It must be understood, however, that in a private house or in an English or clean Spanish hotel they are not troublesome. After having been out for a walk or ride or drive, it is possible to find a few. We very seldom did when riding, because we had our own saddles. After entering a church, a peasant's house, a venta, or even some of the fondas, one may be happy to escape with half a dozen! At one place, after walking merely across the courtyard, I *picked twenty-one off my stockings*.

As we rise higher the land gradually becomes more cultivated and less stony and bare in appearance. The houses are better, and look more picturesque, being adorned by the perfect mauve of the plumbago, which grows in perfection here, and a gorgeously arrayed red flowering plant.

A charmingly picturesque chocolate-coloured house, like a box, and that of the French consul, M. Ardisson, we pass when near the eight-kilometre stone. We are 1,600 feet above Santa Cruz, and the thermometer marks 78° F. (25·5° C.), four degrees less than it was in the town, although it is now noon. The lessened temperature is noticeable in many ways, the cultivated land looks greener, and we pass a threshing-floor, showing that we have reached the region of cereals.

The road dust, being grey lava, mercifully does not reflect a glare such as would be unbearable in the perpetual sunshine were it white. The *transitu de consumos*, or *fielato*, the Spanish *octroi*, warns us that we are on the borders of Laguna. I have had many discussions on the merits and demerits of this system of taxation, which most people consider a bleeding

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operation, killing all progress among the lower orders of the people. The defenders of the system say it is an equal tax, falling alike on rich and poor. Such, however, is not really the case, for it is the products of the poor that are taxed, the food that is produced and sold in order to earn the actual living of the poor. The rich man's existence does not depend upon a daily income from the sale of perishable commodities, as does the peasant's. The tax falls on all that the poor man possesses as a means of livelihood in an agricultural country.

Our driver satisfactorily answering the inquiries of the *fielato's* officers, we pass on unmolested. Trees are here planted, as they are near Santa Cruz, on each side of the road. The highway runs through the centre of Laguna, but unfortunately where the houses commence the good macadamised road ceases, instead whereof, notwithstanding that our pace is a slow walk, we jolt and tumble and bump over the execrable stone pavement. A noiseless camel, with swinging tread and cynical physiognomy, is the only living thing we encounter as we drive noisily through the deserted streets. Laguna is by our aneroid 1,840 feet above the sea.

Before leaving Santa Cruz, Mr. Edwards, the British vice-consul, kindly gave us an introduction to his wife in Laguna, to whose house we accordingly turned our steps. She courteously escorted us to the best inn the town produces, but the best is very bad indeed. Our first experience proved trying, for, accustomed as we were to luncheon, we found we could not procure anything to eat for love or money until dinner, which would be ready at 5.30 p.m. Mrs. Edwards most kindly came to the rescue, and dispensed hospitality. She also gave us our first lesson in eating prickly pears, by no means an easy feat to the uninitiated. The prickly pear is the fruit of the cactus, the same cactus upon which the cochineal is placed. Special plants, however, are kept for fruit, as the insect prevents its perfect growth. In shape the pear is oval, about the size of a duck's egg. It is well named prickly, for the entire surface is covered by tiny thorns, so minute that when they enter the

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flesh it is almost impossible to extract them. It is an art to eat one of these pears without injuring the hands, especially when a fork is not available. As it is likely that the fruit may be largely introduced into England, an exact account of how to tackle it may not be out of place. The first and most important rule is never to touch the fruit with the fingers. Cut off about half an inch from each end, and then cut the pear lengthways for the depth of the skin only, which is about a quarter of an inch thick, pulling it apart on either side with knife and fork. Inside is a juicy ball, about the size of the yolk of a duck's egg, of clear, greeny-white jelly, and seeds like grapeshot; this extract and swallow. The flavour is that of sweet water. The eating of a prickly pear has been fitly described as "filling your mouth with shot and gulping it down with a draught of water." Various names are given to prickly pears in the islands, but the most usual is *higos pigos*. They are the great fruit of the peasants, but they are not "the chief, if not the sole, article of food," as a Blue-book asserts! There is another kind of prickly pear which is pink in colour; it is not so good as the yellow, however. The taste for this fruit will not be readily acquired by visitors at dessert. One must be travelling on horseback or on foot in a thirsty land without water, a cloudless sky overhead, a burning soil under foot, before the appearance of an *higo pigo*, bristling with invisible thorns, becomes in one's eyes the most delicious and luscious of fruits. After the first trial I never willingly touched *higos pigos* again until, with thankful alacrity, one day in the south of Tenerife, I swallowed the shot and water of five "straight away."

*Laguna* means a lake, or rather a marshy lake. When the Spaniards first came to the island, there was a lake here, which in the wet season increased very considerably. A monastery was built at one side of it, the village being at the other, and until within about the last hundred years, when the monks were banished, they used to ferry themselves across. The last boat used, one very similar to the curricle of Ireland, is now in

the possession of a blacksmith, who uses it as a receptacle for water to cool irons. Mr. Edwards, who has seen the boat, told us he offered a pipe for it, and the offer was accepted. Unfortunately, however, the transfer was forgotten to be made. We trust this really interesting relic may yet be rescued from the hands of the Goths. At the present day the lake has entirely disappeared, replaced only in the wet season by a marsh. This is attributed to the wholesale destruction of trees which has been going on since the Spaniards conquered the island in 1496. Instead of vast forests covering the mountains, there is now scarcely sufficient fuel for the inhabitants. The southern part of the island suffers so severely from this wanton destruction that water is scarce, and the land but little cultivated in consequence.

Laguna is the summer retreat of the better classes of Santa Cruz. It is only a couple of hours' drive from the capital, so that gentlemen can go and return frequently to their business. Being nearly 2,000 feet above the sea, the climate is much cooler than that of the commercial town of the island. Some of the inhabitants of Orotava also come here, so that in the summer months there is quite a pleasant gathering of English residents, besides many Spanish families. The population, however, is chiefly made up of the clerical element. The school and college for training the island clergy are situated here. The bishop, and consequently numbers of priests, reside in Laguna. This is the principal school of the western islands of the group; and here the youths of the middle and lower classes who can afford to give their children an education, such as it is, are sent. The better and wealthier will not send any boys into a den of such infamous immorality as is, I am told, this school. Although chiefly for the training of the priesthood, the boys do not all necessarily become priests. Later, from much and frequent intercourse with both students and priests, we found the education is entirely confined to learning Latin—the best authors not being read—and the acquiring of a minute knowledge of the saints and their lives. As there are three or four saints

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for every day in the year, this study occupies their time fully from the day they enter the college until they leave. A priesthood so trained must be narrow-minded. Sprung from the people, educated in their midst, it is impossible but that they carry to the college and retain there the prejudices in which they have been reared, leaving it no better, perhaps worse, than when they entered.



OLD DOORWAY, LAGUNA.

The general impression conveyed to a stranger passing through Laguna is that of dreary desertedness. Very few people are in the streets; the windows and doors are closed, the inhabitants hidden in their cool rooms and *patios*. Past glories appear at every turn in decorated doorways, carved lintels, magnificent balconies, with traces of Moorish influence everywhere, but all in a state bordering on decay, and scarcely showing even a semblance of careful preservation. It is only as one walks along the deserted streets and catches a glimpse through an open doorway or *pechura* (half-open door) down the dark and dismal *zaguan* (space between street door and *patio*) to the *patio* beyond, filled with brilliantly coloured flowers and shaded by wide-spreading bananas, betokening a certain amount of human care, that one realises that this city of the dead is in reality a living tomb.

Yet Laguna has that quiet, sedate, solemn air of respectability, so characteristic of many of our ancient cathedral cities, which is peculiarly grateful to certain temperaments, and which is always occasionally acceptable and restful to those wearied with the wear, tear, and bustle of active life.

Taking a glance through the Cathedral and Conception

Churches, we returned to the inn, whence we again set out to photograph some old houses and the convent and church of Santo Domingo. Dinner, at 5.30, turned out better than the exterior of the inn and its rooms warranted. We had soup which must be nameless, *puchero*, the national dish which used to be called in Spain *olla podrida*, consisting of potatoes, cabbage, pumpkin, melon, pears, maize boiled whole, a little boiled pork, and mutton. The vegetables are picked out and placed assorted on a huge dish; the mutton, pork, and maize are on another. Fowls came next, then a sort of beefsteak, cooked until all the goodness had left it. Pastry of a peculiar and indigestible sort was followed by a variety of fruits. Pears, prickly pears, figs (fresh), peaches, apricots, bananas, grapes, wine *ad libitum*, and coffee ended the repast. All was fairly good and clean. Our room faced the street, and was off the sala, or drawing-room. The floor was in bad condition, broken in several places, and had never been washed since it was first laid down. It had been swept tolerably clean, however.



SANTO DOMINGO BELFRY, LAGUNA.

The *serenos* were very tiresome during the night, always calling out near the fonda. Musical and quaint as the cry is, it becomes monotonous to hear it every half-hour. When the nerves are on the alert, one hears not only the watchman in the immediate vicinity, but several others in varied degrees,

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from the double forte at the door to the pianissimo dying away in the far distance like an echo. Besides the *serenos*, there were a few fleas about, to which being not yet acclimatised, my rest was considerably disturbed. There are no mosquitos in Laguna, so curtains are unnecessary.

The sanitary arrangements of the fonda were villainous. Every time we opened our door a whiff of such exceedingly foul odour entered that we resolved to leave the town as soon as we had seen the procession that was to be held to-morrow. The procession, however, took place too late in the evening to enable us to get to Orotava that night before dark, so we were delayed until Sunday morning, when, notwithstanding the day, we determined to leave this Cologne-like dwelling.

*September 8th, Saturday.*—We breakfasted at 8 a.m., and afterwards went to the cathedral with Mrs. Edwards. The thermometer was 69° F. (20·5° C.) at eight o'clock, and the sky clear blue. During the night we were glad of a blanket in addition to the sheet, it being much cooler here than in Santa Cruz.

It was San Cristobal's Day, the patron saint of Laguna, and high mass was performed. During the morning the streets, usually deserted, were crowded with country people. The cathedral was destitute of seats, except for a few small camp-stools brought by the señoras. The women knelt in closely packed rows on either side of a passage, which was railed off in front of the altar down the centre of the church for the brotherhood of the Gran Poder de Dios. Gorgeously clad were they in red costumes. When not kneeling, the people sank into sitting postures on the rush-strewn floor. A few of the women wore white mantillas of flannel, but the vast majority were clad in black. Some of the white were formed into hoods, lined with white satin; that is, part of the covering of the head was stiffened into hood shape with cardboard. Very few of these ancient head-dresses are left. The flannel used for the purpose is exceedingly fine, of a peculiar kind, and is made by hand-looms in Yorkshire. There has lately been much

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difficulty in obtaining it, owing to steam looms driving out hand-weaving, and the large manufacturers refusing to supply the flannel except in great lengths. So the fashion is dying out, and the black, gloomy mantilla is taking its place. The men wear wide trousers ending just above the knee, and slit up on the outsides; white drawers beneath the trousers reach to within four inches of the ankle, below which is a gaiter of leather, fitting over shoes made of brown leather.

The figure of the Virgin, which later in the day was to be carried through the town in procession, was on the left of the altar, standing on the *trona*, or throne, and covered by a canopy. It was dressed in silk, and lavishly covered with ornaments. Real rings of precious stones adorned the hands; and necklaces, brooches, pendants, and all kinds of splendid jewellery were scattered over the figure. One was glad to turn from this inanimate puppet to the pulpit, a really artistic work, made of marble, and supported on the wings and shoulders of a colossal angel. The position of the figure is singularly happy, the balance being well preserved and the proportion to the weight and size of the pulpit good. Perhaps the right arm is a trifle too short from elbow to wrist.

The pillars supporting the central arch are quite, even if not dangerously, out of the perpendicular. They slope outwards at the top. There is an attempt at Corinthian capitals upon these, but not upon the other pillars of the church. We spoke of the unsafe state of the arch to one gentleman, wondering that it was not made secure. He told us, however, that they were afraid to let anyone know of its condition, as, if such a thing were hinted at, the people would desert the church. Such a desertion had taken place from another church, which, being thus forsaken, had become impoverished.

The church is dedicated to San Cristobal de Laguna, of whom there is an image, dated 1767. Alonzo de Lugo named the town thus after St. Christopher, when he conquered the island and founded Laguna.

Meanwhile, high mass having been performed, the preacher

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entered the pulpit. He gave us only fifteen minutes of a sermon prepared with unusual and extra care, owing to the number of people gathered together. The subject was decidedly a mistaken one for the audience, composed chiefly of peasants. It was upon the Immaculate Conception, and was treated controversially. The priest spoke warmly on the subject, and became excited and impassioned; but he preached over the heads of the people. What did they care as to what Protestants believe? They scarcely, if at all, know what Protestants are. So the elaborate arguments were unappreciated, the people staring vacantly and apathetically, and an opportunity lost for ever of reaching their hearts and reason. Seldom do the peasants hear a word of counsel in their distant country huts, so it is sad to see an opportunity for giving practical advice wasted when they have trudged many a league into Laguna to hear high mass at the cathedral.

A marble slab has lately been inserted in the wall of the south side near the altar, a tardy tribute to the memory of a great man. The inscription runs thus :—

AL ADELANTADO
D. ALONSO FERNANDEZ
DE LUCO,
CONQUISTADOR
DE TENERIFE Y LA PALMA,
FUNDADOR DE LA LAGUNA.
MURIO EN 20 DE MAYO
DE 1525.
AÑO 1881.*

Doubtless there is a satisfaction in virtue being recognised even after three and a half centuries. After many and ineffectual attempts on the part of the Spaniards, Alonso de Lugo, as the name is sometimes spelled, succeeded in conquer-

* "To the Governor Don Alonso Fernandez de Luco, conqueror of Tenerife and Palma, founder of Laguna. Died May 20th, 1525. Year 1881."

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ing the island, more, however, by the internal dissensions and treachery of some of the chieftains, than by fair conquest. When asked by the Guanches why he thus troubled their country, he answered that it was in order to make them all Christians; so the inhabitants were baptised at the point of the sword, and San Cristobal de Laguna founded on July 25th, 1495, which was St. Christopher's Day.

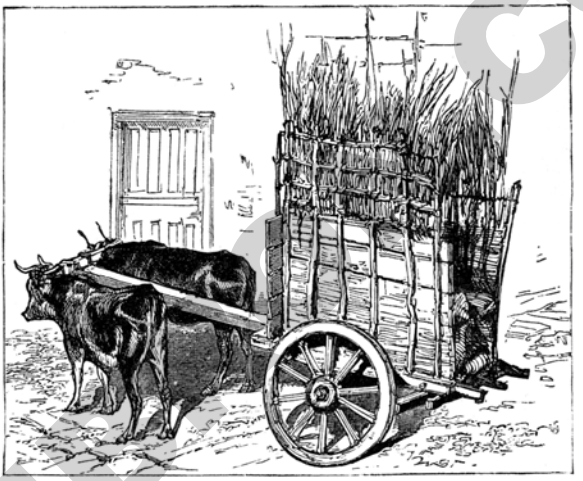
After luncheon, which Mrs. Edwards, taking pity on our English habits, kindly gave us, we took some photographs of the churches and old houses. One house in particular, that of Conde de Salazar, is a beautiful work of art, perfect as a specimen of Italian architecture so far as the outside is concerned. We did not penetrate into the interior. The house has a large frontage in a very narrow street, so narrow that we had the greatest trouble in seeing it, much less getting a photograph. When standing immediately opposite, it was with difficulty we could see to the top, although it was not by any means a remarkably high house. It is only two-storied, the windows being high. Fluted Corinthian columns are on each side of the entrance door and upper windows, finished by elaborately carved capitals, which support massive canopies. Two square turrets are on either end of the house, while in the middle, over the doorway and central window, is a handsome façade, in a niche of which is a statue. Balconies of light and graceful iron work surround each window. The house itself is of stone work. Incongruous is its *entourage*. Whitewashed houses, with closed wooden shutters, and Moresque doorways, on a level with light and graceful pillars, spoil the effect. It would, in fact, be possible to pass the house in the narrow street and never notice its existence.

As we examined the other churches more particularly on our return here in November, I will say nothing further now on the subject.

This being Saturday, we have the benefit of seeing the beggars, Saturday being the beggars' day in Laguna. During

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the morning the doors and *zaguanes* were crowded with filthy folk in rags. The beggars, or *vergonzantes*, as they are here called, satisfy the craving that religious enthusiasts have for doing good, and alms given to them propitiate Heaven for sins and shortcomings. There is of course a certain advantage in having an "at home" day for beggars: it saves the annoyance of being continually visited by them during the other days of the week. Such open and licensed begging is peculiar to English eyes.



OXEN AND CART.

To-day being a festival, the bells of the churches have been ringing with but little interruption. Full and musical the bells are not, however. The effect upon the ears is as if a tattoo were being beaten on a thin-sounding drum of the tin kettle description. The strokes are very rapid, the tone high and poor, and the continual and monotonous rat-tat-tat-tat, rat-te-te-tat-tat-tat, repeated endlessly, is excruciatingly distracting.

Opposite our inn is the custom-house, or *fielato*. It enlivens us while waiting for the procession to pass to watch the mules and donkeys, with their owners, standing at the door. A little

down the street stands a yoke of oxen in a cart of peculiar shape. It is long and narrow, with saplings like hop-poles stuck in an upright position round the outside edge, about a foot apart. About five o'clock, as it was becoming cool, we heard the band of the processionists. A flag or banner was borne in front. Acolytes, swinging censers filled with burning incense, preceded five boys dressed in white and gold, who carried a large cross and four candlesticks. The image of the Virgin standing on the *trona* was borne by four or more men, who carried it on poles upon their shoulders, and who were hidden beneath the drapery which reached from the poles to the ground. Behind the image came the priests in their vestments—I cannot say they walked with a gait devout—lined on either side by the brotherhood in red that we had seen at the church previously. Behind them after an interval came a brass band, followed by a crowd of women and a few children. Conspicuous by their absence were men. Unfortunately the light was in the wrong direction, so we could only take a photograph of the procession when past, from our window.

After dinner a Spaniard came for us, and kindly brought us to a Mr. Renshaw's house. As this gentleman had ascended the Peak several times, we were anxious to obtain information and advice from him as to our best course of proceeding. Mr. Renshaw is seized, like all who ascend El Pico, by a sort of infatuation, a kind of hero-worship. Teide is regarded affectionately from every point of view, and his ascenders may be said to have from henceforth Peak-mania. Even as I write, I feel a strong and irresistible longing to "do it again." There are few who do not experience this and where there is the opportunity give way to it, ascending several or, it may be, many times in the course of a life. The remainder of the evening we spent once more with the hospitable wife of our vice-consul.

I have suffered all day from Peter Pindar's plagues, the usual result of visiting the churches.

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# CHAPTER III.

*MATANZA—VICTORIA—HISTORY.*

In vain they met him, helm to helm
Upon the threshold of that realm
He came in bigot pomp to sway,
And with their corpses blocked his way.
In vain—for every lance they raised,
Thousands around the conqueror blazed;
For every arm that lined their shore,
Myriads of slaves were wafted o'er—
A bloody, bold, and countless crowd,
Before whose swarm as fast they bowed
As dates beneath the locust-cloud!

MOORE.

*September 9th, Sunday.*—Though desirous of starting earlier, we only succeeded in leaving Laguna at 8.25 a.m. in a carriage for Orotava. As we drove, or rather jolted, through the streets, the appearance of the town was considerably more lively than it was yesterday. Business of all kinds is now in full swing, and it is difficult to imagine that to-day is Sunday, while sleepy yesterday, with Church festivals and processions, was Saturday. Numbers of country people were in the town, the women in mantillas and the men generally with their blankets, or *mantos*. A cord is run through the doubled end of a blanket, or it is bound with leather and tied round the neck, whence it hangs to the heels. The blankets now used are of English make, but no doubt were formerly home-spun. Wrapped in these blankets, the men pass the night without undressing, either in the air, or

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stretched on the earthen floors of their huts, or at best on a sack full of straw, or *paja*, a by no means despicable bed. During the day the *mantos* defend their wearers from the showers which frequently fall in the higher parts of the island. Of the number of blankets imported into Tenerife, certainly not one twentieth part is used for bed-covering. Every man, almost without exception, uses these blankets at some time in this way, but the men of Tacoronte are seldom seen without them. Great fastidiousness is displayed in the selection of a blanket. It must be of a certain size, and guiltless of black hairs, or it is at once rejected. The stripes running near the edge must be only of one colour, and that blue. They must be three in number, the central one wider than that on each side of it. The nap upon one side of the blanket must run in a reverse direction to that upon the other, so that each side may, in turn, be used for the exterior of the cloak. So exacting are the natives in attending to these minute details that each blanket has to be carefully looked over in England before being exported, to see that it contains no black hairs and conforms in all other respects to the conservatism of the islanders. This custom of wearing thick blankets is not confined to the Canary Islands. It is frequent in mountainous districts, and may often be found elsewhere. The cothamore of the ancient Irish and the abba of the Arab are similar; while the idea is carried out in the burnoose, the Roman toga, and the flowing garment of the Druid. In the north-west provinces of India and Oudh there are many tribes who wear home-spun blankets of various natural shades of wool, from the grey-white of the Gurhwals to the dark brown of the Gurungs. Nature instinctively provides textures suitable to the climate. There is nothing so safe to wear where one is alternately on a mountain-top and in a valley as woollen material.

Remembering this well-known physiological fact, we clothed ourselves accordingly, substituting silk for wool in some instances as being nearly, if not quite, as good a material and less bulky. Cotton, which people are so fond of wearing in

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warm weather, is a dangerous material for a hot climate. I brought one dress of that material to the islands, and contracted when wearing it the only chill I sustained during the whole of my sojourn there.

Eucalyptus trees are planted along the roadside as we leave Laguna, and seem to be thriving. Growing the eucalyptus here is a new experiment, and, as the tree absorbs moisture from the ground, it will prove useful in the marshy soil of Laguna, where already it has effected an improvement. It is of rapid growth, so that one may expect in a few years to see the roads well shaded. The leaves are soothing and useful medicinally. Tea is made of them, and when taken hot throws a cold out in perspiration. They are also hung round the bed in cases of intermittent fever, besides being bound round the head of the patient. The tea is not disagreeable; and the leaves, as I know from experience, help to relieve a fever headache.

Crosses are erected by the wayside in such numbers that we look around for the cause, and find that on our left lies the cemetery. Nothing can be seen of its interior, however, from the road.

The air is scent-laden by the perfume of the geraniums and myrtles on either side of the road. That it is Sunday passes from our minds as we see the peasants working in their fields, gathering the Indian corn in heaps, nothing but the stubble being left above the brown earth. We are reminded of Biblical language seeing a house which has a vine trained overhead along its front, the owner sitting beneath it, enjoying the shade.

We are ascending slightly, and twelve kilometres from Santa Cruz we are 1,950 feet above the sea. The temperature is 72° F. (22·3° C.), and the sky cloudy, as though rain were imminent, which we know it cannot be in September. Behind us lies Laguna, in the centre of a basin, surrounded by forest-covered hills. The lie of the country, as well as history, bears evidence that there has been a lake, probably a shallow one, there formerly. The road is lively, as if market-day, with bare-footed women carrying fowls, laden horses and mules, some of

which are being ridden with a halter only, a flock of goats, and long-haired sheep. We pass several curious cracks or fissures in the earth, and presently we get a view of the sea on the north-western side of the island. When we started this morning, a belt of clouds jealously hid the Peak from our eyes; and the more anxious we became to see the still invisible Monarch of the Isles, the lower and more securely the clouds enveloped and folded around the summit, until it was completely covered. It was a cloudy day everywhere, and overhead the sky was dark and gloomy. As we neared a belt of hills it became sensibly colder, the thermometer falling to 66° F. (19° C.), which, by comparison with the heat half an hour ago, felt chilly.

The scenery is not pretty, and is only interesting from its novelty, until one begins to descend towards Orotava. Some men are winnowing corn, taking advantage of the strong breeze to blow the chaff away, whilst women sitting near sing to lighten the labour. One girl outside a thatched house was arranging her hair, preparing no doubt for a visit to Laguna. The women have quantities of hair. Unfortunately they are not very cleanly. Captain Glas's remarks are as true to-day as when he wrote, in forcible, if not reserved, English, "The poor are remarkably lousy, and are not ashamed of it, for the women may be seen sitting at the doors of their houses picking the lice out of one another's heads."

Acacias, wild fuchsias, and yuccas now form the hedges, the latter with flowers twenty feet high. A little further on we come to brambles, broom, blackberry briers, and poplars. They take one home to England. It is a curious botanical fact, and one the explanation of which would be worth knowing, that although brambles grow plentifully between Laguna and Orotava, there is not one to be found between Laguna and Santa Cruz. Above us a bird hovers with a quiver that at any distance betrays a hawk, while around flutter white butterflies. The wheat and Indian corn harvest is just over. The fact that wheat and brambles flourish is ample proof of the change of climate from the cactus-growing soil a few miles distant. We are on



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level ground, for the height still continues 1,950 feet above the sea. We pass the sixteenth kilometre stone at 9 a.m. Once more it is warm, 73° F. (22·8° C.). The feeling of the air, the clouds overhead, and the character of the vegetation are suggestive of England. Some conical crater-hills, one of them cultivated to the top, dispel, however, the illusion.

We now begin to descend on the western side of the island. Here the houses are thatched. Apple, pear, peach, fig, and Spanish chestnut trees show that we are still in the temperate zone as regards vegetation. At each kilometre stone we find ourselves fifty feet lower, however. The road crosses a deep, narrow barranco, and again leads through cuttings. It is a good broad highway, the first made in the island, and well kept. Stubble is being burned in some of the fields, while a couple of horses tread out the corn, being whipped over it. A boy, who is riding alongside of our carriage, has four barrels of wine or water strapped upon the *albarda*.

We near Tacoronte, a pretty village lying on a cultivated slope towards the sea. Vineyards, date palms, and cactus covered by cochineal are all around. The women and girls of this district favour yellow in their dress, and wear handkerchiefs of that colour on their heads. The scene has completely changed. From Santa Cruz to Laguna all is brown barrenness. From Laguna to about the twentieth kilometre from Santa Cruz is a plain, with its distinctive feature, dreariness. Here, 1,750 feet above the sea [72° F. (22·3° C.), 9.25 a.m.], luxuriant and cultivated slopes, substantial cottages, and thriving villages lie facing the north-west. The road, which up till now has been leading towards the sea, turns south-westward, passing along the side and through the midst of the rich and well-cultivated district lying between Tacoronte and Orotava. Below the slope and at its feet lies the Atlantic, blue and calm. Peacefulness is the pervading influence which one feels on entering this garden of Eden, where soft breezes blow, after the cold, windy plains of Laguna and the desert round Santa Cruz. We feel indeed that now we are beginning to realise something of the poetry of the

isles; some clouds on the horizon almost turn into a reality the most fabulous of all the romances connected with these islands. We can fancy that we see San Borondon, that mysterious and mythical island seen by a few, but touched by none. It was actually ceded, however, along with the rest of the archipelago, to Spain by Portugal in 1479.

There is a well-to-do air about the country. The roofs are tiled instead of thatched. As we near Sauzal, a little village lying close to the sea, a church rising from its midst, the dress of the women changes, coloured print jackets being now worn. The clouds began to lift a little off the mountains, so we anxiously watched for our first glimpse of the Peak. We were not rewarded just yet, however. As we reached the twenty-second kilometre and were 1,500 feet above the sea, we gained our first view of the Puerto de Orotava, though a dash of surf was all we could distinguish. Our curiosity to see the Valley of Orotava was not yet to be gratified. We had heard or read of this famous valley, and Humboldt's description of its beauty is sufficient alone to whet one's longing to fever point. Very little has been written upon the islands, but that little centres in Orotava. Nearly every traveller who remains a few days in Tenerife strives to ascend the Peak. Humboldt's principal object in landing on Tenerife was in order to climb this volcano. He had just time to do so, being four days in the island. He drove from Santa Cruz direct to Orotava. One can well imagine that after the barren road he had been traversing for miles, Orotava seemed indeed a vale of beauty by comparison. His florid description is and must be overdrawn, for each traveller who has read it and followed in his footsteps is overwhelmed with disappointment upon seeing the Valley of Orotava from this its northern side. Humboldt declares that the view from the road over the valley and littoral is the finest he has ever seen in his travels, whereas the valley as seen from Icod Alto is vastly more beautiful. Again, we must remember that his account of the island was written a long time after seeing it, and from the numerous mistakes he has made it

is evident his notes were neither extensive nor accurate as to the details of the scenery. How often, too, the scenes that one sees upon a first journey prove on subsequent visits to have been overrated. The mountains are not so high, the valleys not so broad, the verdure not so vivid. Humboldt, it must be remembered, was but twenty-one or two, and had yet to see half the world before writing of one of the first stopping-places in his voyage. I do not wish to underrate the varied and extensive beauty of the landscape between Matanza and Mount Tigayga, but I have seen as fine, if not finer, and certainly more picturesquely beautiful, views in the islands themselves. Those, however, who eulogise Orotava, following Humboldt's footsteps, have never been in the other islands, so cannot, of course, compare one with the other. There is this to be said for Orotava: that, everything taken into consideration, its position, climate, surroundings, habitations, society, conveniences, and, above all, proximity to the Peak, render it the most suitable spot in the archipelago as a residence for foreigners. It would not be doing Orotava justice to say that it will shortly be a second Funchal, for it can easily rival, and must certainly surpass, Madeira as a winter residence for invalids, besides having attractions that will induce the healthy to resort thither and prevent it from ever becoming the melancholy hospital that Funchal is.

Our horses are trotting downhill at a fair pace as we wind along the hillside, getting occasional glimpses of Puerto de Orotava, which gradually becomes more distinct. The slope of the ground towards the sea is steeper, and the land is consequently terraced both above and below the road. The sea lies perhaps about half a mile off, but distances are deceptive in this clear atmosphere. As we near Matanza the road descends into a large ravine, the bottom covered with bright green vines. This is the spot where the Spaniards, under Alonso de Lugo, were defeated by the Guanches, under Benchomo, King of Taoro (Orotava), and his brother Tinguaro, the last patriots left to defend their country. Hence the name

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*Matanza*, which means "slaughter." The Guanches are said to have numbered three hundred chosen warriors, while the Spaniards lost six hundred, so must have numbered more than double the Guanches. As the invaders were passing through the silent and apparently deserted defile, the Guanches suddenly sprang from their shelter in bush and crevice, and "fell on them with such fury that they put them entirely to the rout."* A few were taken prisoners and liberated the next day by Benchomo. At the present day peaceful occupations surround Matanza. Primitive furnaces for burning tiles are near the village. The tiles are used for roofing houses. They are deeply curved, and look like a drainage pipe split longitudinally.

About 10 a.m. we reached Matanza village. This is considered half-way to Orotava, where the coach, *alias* omnibus, changes horses. There is not much of the village upon the road. The latter has been made since the villages were built, and appears to have been laid out by map and rule, like the railroad between London and Bath, totally regardless of the towns and villages on the way. Where we stop there are two ventas, or shops. They correspond more perhaps to an English country public-house than anything else, save that food is here supplied to be consumed off as well as on the premises. The smaller one is on the left-hand side of the road going towards Orotava; it is nearer Laguna than the other venta, and is considered the cleaner of the two. The larger and more pretentious venta is further on upon the right, nearer Orotava. We stopped at the former, but did not enter. We were glad, however, to walk about for a few minutes whilst the driver baited himself—not the horses. The refreshment for the latter consisted in their being slashed with a piece of cloth by a boy to remove the flies.

As we stood on the roadside admiring the peaceful and pastoral scenes around, the broad Atlantic stretching away in the distance beneath us, we were much interested and amused

* "History of the Canary Islands," p. 158 (George Glas, 1764).

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by the passers-by. The men and boys wear loose white linen jackets and drawers tucked up to the knee, displaying legs of a rich brown colour. Here comes a donkey laden and extinguished by chairs. Everywhere the burdens are carried, not drawn, the only cart I have seen being the oxen-cart in Laguna, which was, I believe, for tobacco leaves. The people have not yet become accustomed to good roads, and retain the primitive means of locomotion necessary where footpaths are the highways.

This is the most frequented road in the archipelago. Little as these islands are known, what travellers there are traverse this road. Landing at Santa Cruz, if a visitor have a day to spare, he drives as far as Matanza to catch a glimpse of the Peak. If he have two days, he goes on to Orotava, sleeping there, and if four, he will probably, if energetic and the season favourable, ascend the Peak, the summit of which he may or may not reach. Whenever therefore one hears of travellers knowing the Canary Islands, or when one comes across a book purporting to be upon them, a strict investigation will probably result in finding that the above excursions were taken with perhaps a walk in the neighbourhood of Orotava, or that the book is a compilation of other works little known, a sketch of a three days' tour being thrown in to make it modern. At the most a day in Canaria and a few hours in either Palma or Lanzarote will finish the investigation of the archipelago. Bory de St. Vincent, whose quarto I have already mentioned, is perhaps, great man though he were, in this case the greatest humbug of all, for he copies Viera so faithfully that he perpetuates his mistakes. Dr. Wild's book on Madeira, Tenerife, etc., goes no further than the Peak, the cone, or *piton*, of which, he says, rises *sixty* feet! The Rev. E. Alison visited Orotava and the Peak only. Dr. Marcet went as far as the Peak. Lyell studied the craters of Tenerife and Palma. Madoz wrote of Tenerife and Canaria. Belcastel's pamphlet is entirely on Orotava. Burton and Cameron touched at Tenerife and Canaria, ascended the Peak on the former and the cathedral in

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the latter, and have devoted two hundred pages to the subject. Even Von Buch, in his valuable work, says he has only been in Tenerife, Canaria, Palma, and Lanzarote. Mr. S. G. W. Benjamin, in an article in *Harper*, gives a short and fairly correct account, considering he was only a few days on the island, which would pass without comment but for the title: "The Atlantic Islands as Resorts of Health and Pleasure." Considering that in the Canary group he touched only at Tenerife and went but as far as Icod and the Peak, the title is misleading. Lady Brassey went half-way up the Peak, and the principal facts in her account are excusably inaccurate, from so hurried a visit. I could give other examples of the scant courtesy afforded to these islands, but have said sufficient to prove my statement that the accounts generally known are insufficient and misleading.

The immediate result to us, however, of this being the most frequented road in the archipelago was that while waiting at Matanza, and indeed all along the route, we were perpetually asked by the children for *quartitos** (eight *quartos* make two-pence-halfpenny). One poor man who accosted us looked as though suffering from elephantiasis, which is a sort of first cousin to leprosy, and, like it, hereditary, not infectious.

The better kind of houses are well built of rough stones. The edges and lintels are of hewn *cantera*, a sort of sandstone found in the island. The upper halves of the windows are glazed, but the lower have only wooden shutters to exclude the light and flies. Owing to these shutters being closed during the daytime, it seemed to us as if we were always approaching deserted houses.

There is a great and remarkable absence of large trees, such as one sees in what are called the "old" countries. This gives a new and unsettled appearance to the scenery, such as one experiences in parts of the United States and Canada.

As we loiter in the sun, looking upon the scene of one of the most remarkable of the past struggles in the islands, we recall

* *Quartito* is only a diminutive of *quarto*.

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the history of the conquest. As some knowledge of the wonderful people who lived here, and of whom we know so little, will enable us better to understand and appreciate the present inhabitants, a short account of their history prior to and during the conquest may not be out of place. For a lengthy and really interesting chronicle I must refer those who wish to inquire further to the works of Glas and the Hakluyt Society in English and that of Viera in Spanish.

There is little doubt that before the existence of the "Fortunate Islands" was even suspected, there were islands of imagination described by the ancient poets, so like the Canary Islands, that when these were really discovered, the fanciful descriptions of the Elysian fields by Homer and the "Fortunate Isles" of Hesiod and Pindar were found to apply to them. The imagination of the poets was thus merged in the reality of veritable islands, whose natural conditions answered in such a marvellous manner to the poetical descriptions, that it was difficult to believe that Homer had never seen them except in his mind's eye. He places the abode of the happy departed spirits far beyond the entrance to the Mediterranean, on the banks of the river Oceanus or on islands in its midst. His description resembled so nearly these islands, that when found they were at once named the "Fortunate Islands." Homer says of the Elysian fields what still applies to these islands: "There the life of mortals is most easy; there is no snow, nor winter, nor much rain, but ocean is ever sending up the shrilly, breathing breezes of Zephyrus, to refresh man." The earliest mention of the islands as existing—not the Homeric "Fortunate Islands" nor those of Hesiod and Pindar—is in the treatise "De Mirabilis," about the year 250 B.C. This and the account by Diodorus are no doubt from the historian Timæus, his authority being the Greek navigator Pytheas and the tales of Punic and other sailors. The particular description given applies more to Madeira, however. Plutarch mentions some sailors who, newly returned from the Isles of the Blest, came across Sertorius, near Gades (Cadiz), and so enchanted him by their

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descriptions of the island or islands—it is doubtful whether Madeira and Porto Santo or Fuerteventura and Lanzarote were meant—that he wished to go and live there. The Romans first knew of these islands at the close of the wars between Marius and Sulla. Strabo says the Phœnicians were the earliest discoverers, some three thousand years ago. If so, they were possibly known to Homer. But we are getting into the regions of myth.

Statius Sebosus, however, is the first (about 40 B.C.) who gives names to five islands which can be identified from their description as the Canary Islands of to-day. King Juba II. sent out an expedition specially in search of the Insulæ Fortunatæ, and finding the Canaries, named them from their characteristics thus: Ombrios (Palma), Junonia (Gomera), Nivaria (Tenerife), Capraria (Hierro), Canaria (Canaria of to-day), while the Purpurariæ were Fuerteventura and Lanzarote. Thus all seven are named. From this period, however, for thirteen centuries, all knowledge of the islands is lost. Owing to the destruction of the Roman empire, the Garden of the Hesperides became once more a fable, known to the Moors of Spain and Arabs as Al Jazayr al Khâledât, but practically as really existing islands buried in oblivion.

The Portuguese were probably the rediscoverers. They, at any rate, claim to be so; and the islands were known in a poem by Boccaccio as the "Rediscovered." It is said they visited them for dragon's blood in 1345. Some say that a French vessel was driven ashore there in a storm about 1326, and that thus Don Luis de la Cerda, then admiral of France, heard of the islands. Being subsequently a plenipotentiary at Avignon, Don Luis availed himself of his interest with Pope Clement VI. to obtain the sovereignty of the islands, which was granted to him under the title of Prince of Fortune, and was dated November 15th, 1334. The Pope wrote to the other sovereigns of Europe telling of this Bull, upon which the King of Portugal in answer pointed out that he had priority of right to the islands, although he had not yet conquered them. M. d'Avezac has

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shown that Lanzarote was discovered and named by a Genoese, Lancelote Malocello, before the close of the thirteenth century. His discovery did not, however, bring the islands into European notice. It was left for a Frenchman to do this.

Nothing definite or of importance was undertaken until Jean de Bethencourt, a Norman nobleman, endowed with a strong spirit of adventure, and joined by one Gadifer de la Salle, a man of means and of like mind, got up an expedition to the islands. They were joined by many men of birth and adventure, and accompanied by two priests, Pierre Bontier and Jean le Verrier, who subsequently wrote the MS of the expedition, they started from Rochelle in May, 1402. They touched at Corunna and Cadiz, losing many of their party by desertion, and finally left the latter port in July, arriving at Graciosa and Lanzarote after eight days' sail. Here they succeeded in landing and building a castle at Rubicon. Fuerteventura was not reduced to Bethencourt's rule until three years later. In Palma and Hierro colonies were formed, and Gomera visited in 1405, after which Bethencourt left for Europe. He died in 1425, without again visiting the islands, of which he had made his nephew lieutenant-general. It is curious that it was from Spain Bethencourt received supplies of men and money, and that it was Henry III. of Castile to whom he did homage for the islands. France seems to have been backward in giving supplies, though repeatedly asked to do so.

Later Azurara gives an account of the islands as visited by Prince Henry the Navigator in 1443, when there were Christians settled in Lanzarote, Fuerteventura, and Hierro. The others had not been conquered. In 1455 Cadamosto, a Venetian in the service of Prince Henry, states that Gomera as well as the three already mentioned were inhabited by Christians, of whom he gives an account.

Maciot de Bethencourt proved a bad ruler, and Queen Catherine of Spain sent one Barba to control him. Maciot, after ceding the islands to Barba, went to Madeira, where he sold them over again to Prince Henry of Portugal. They were

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passed from one to another several times, Spain and Portugal alternately claiming them. It was not until 1479 that the dispute was settled, and the Canaries finally acknowledged as Spanish possessions.

One Peraza bought the islands eventually, and endeavoured to conquer Palma, but was killed in the attempt. His sister, Donna Ignes Peraza, married Diego de Herrera, who thus became lord of the islands in 1444. From this time onwards until the final subjection of the archipelago, some fifty years later, the history is a most painful one of meanness and treachery, cruelty and bloodshed, on the part of the Spaniards, against an innocent, amiable, honourable, and confiding people.

Herrera made several ineffectual attempts to subdue Canaria. Finding that he could not succeed by force, he endeavoured to do so by stratagem. Pretending to land for trading purposes, he succeeded, with much trouble, in persuading the Canarios to allow him to erect a building at Gando where those trading with the islanders might worship. The bishop assisted in this pious fraud, the unfortunate islanders actually helping to erect the supposed place of worship, which was in reality a fort. A treaty of peace had been signed, but a good garrison, well armed and provisioned, was left, with orders on the first opportunity to make themselves masters of the island, and in any case to sow dissensions among the natives. Finally, after much that was dishonourable on the part of the invaders, followed by bloodshed, the natives razed the castle, killing most of the Spaniards.

Herrera not being able to conquer the remaining islands, was obliged by the King and Queen of Spain to sell them. A special expedition was then sent out by Spain against Gran Canaria in charge of Don Juan Rejon, in May, 1477. Ceaselessly the natives were attacked by force and stratagem, and inch by inch they defended their country, taking refuge in their mountain fastnesses. At last, however, the island was subjugated, in April, 1483, by Pedro de Vera, seventy-seven years after the first attempt upon it by Bethencourt.

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Hernand Peraza, son of Herrera, was Governor of Gomera at this time, but treated the people so badly that they rose against him, until finally, owing to an intrigue with a beautiful Gomera girl, he was murdered. He had previously asked and obtained help from Pedro de Vera, who now, in answer to a summons from Hernand's wife, came to the island with troops, and in a savage and brutal as well as treacherous way killed numbers of the inhabitants. Owing to representations at Madrid of his savage conduct, he was withdrawn from the Canaries.

During De Vera's governorship, he gave some of the best land to one of his captains, Alonso Ferdinando de Lugo, who commanded the garrison at Agaete. This officer, not liking a peaceable life, sold his estate, and went to Spain, where he obtained leave to try and conquer Palma and Tenerife. He landed at Tasacorte, in Palma, September, 1490. The following year, in May, this island was finally subjugated, once more by treachery.

There was left now only Tenerife to be subdued. Although the last to be conquered, I give the account first, as we are now travelling in the island. A short *resumé* of the history of each island in turn as we journey through it may be interesting.

Upon May 3rd, 1493, De Lugo landed at the port of Añaza. The day being the festival of the Holy Cross, he called the place Santa Cruz. Tenerife had some years previously to this been under the rule of one chieftain, Tinerfe, or Chinerfe—from whose name some derive Tenerife—who reigned at Adeje, but upon his death the kingdom was divided among his nine sons. This division produced many internal wars and dissensions, and was in the end the cause of the conquest of the island. "United, we rule; divided, we fall." It was chiefly the grandsons of Tinerfe who sustained the wars of the conquest. Some of the kings were at war at this time with Benchomo, King of Taoro; and rather than join him against the common enemy betrayed their country. Benchomo met De Lugo, who suggested, in answer to the chieftain's inquiries as to the reason of the invasion, that he should become a Christian and vassal of

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Spain. Christianity Benchomo said he did not understand, but as to the latter, he was free-born, and intended to die free. Benchomo then returned to Taoro, and invited all the kings to join him against the invaders, but only three—Acaymo, King of Tacoronte, Tegueste II., who also reigned in this district, and Benhearo of Anaga—answered the summons, with, it is said, 11,000 men. The traitor kings eulogised by the Spaniards, and commemorated in the Plaza at Santa Cruz, were those of Abona, Daute, Icod, and, above all, the King of Guimar, who was the first to betray his country, and was consequently called by the invaders Añaterve el Bueno (the Good). The King of Adeje, being timid, abdicated in these troublous times rather than decide for or against the conquerors. Benhearo was the first who made the name of Guanche known and celebrated in Europe, and his daughter Guacina, as brave as her heroic father, is said to have ridden at the head of the troops.

It was immediately after this that the battle of Matanza, mentioned before, so fatal to the invaders, occurred. Gathering his troops together after some days' interval, De Lugo landed again, but was repulsed with loss. He then retired to Gran Canaria, where he levied troops, and, with help from Spain and Lanzarote, made another attempt upon Tenerife, sailing for Santa Cruz with a thousand men and seventy horses. It was on this occasion that the battle of Laguna took place, at which Tinguaro, one of the most notable of chieftains and warriors, was slain, and the Guanches, partially demoralised by his death, were defeated.

Their valour was heroic and undiminished, however, and they made yet another stand for liberty and home. They could not increase their numbers, unfortunately, while De Lugo could get endless reinforcements. A worse enemy was, however, in their midst. An epidemic, which lasted two months, reduced their numbers rapidly, a hundred a day, it is said, dying from its ravages. This disease has not been described, so what it was is not known. Viera ascribes its appearance to a pestilence, or *modorra*, which arose from the unburied dead that lay around

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in such numbers after the battles. This is possible, as the disease is said to have destroyed the inhabitants only of western Tenerife. This rapid depopulation of the island determined Benchomo to decide his fate by a final and decisive battle. Gathering all his men together, and marching to Acentejo, near Matanza, he defied the Spaniards to battle. Men were dropping in the ranks from disease; and nothing but desperate valour and patriotic fervour, with the knowledge that they were fighting in a good cause, could have induced this heroic and unfortunate race, a mysterious and fatal sickness in their midst, to make a stand against the fresh and overwhelming forces continually brought against them.

A bloody battle was fought. The islanders, reduced in strength as well as numbers by disease, gave way, and became at last an easy and non-resisting prey to the Spaniards. These latter did not practise the virtues of the so-called barbarians that they were conquering by sending the conquered away in peace. They actually continued murdering them—for it was little else, the Guanches being powerless to defend themselves—until, tired out, they ceased, resting at a place now called, from this battle, Victoria, a little further along the road we are travelling.

Benchomo and the other princes fled to Orotava, and shortly after entrenched themselves beyond the mountains of Tigayga. De Lugo following, encamped upon the other side of the barranco which divided the enemies. Owing to various causes, disease and treachery being the chief, the valiant chieftains found themselves deserted and obliged to capitulate. The present villages of Realejo Arriba and Realejo Abajo are built upon the sites of these camps, and derive their names from this circumstance, *real* meaning "camp." The Spaniards encamped at Realejo Arriba, and the Guanches at the lower village.

All the kings were baptised at Realejo, submitting because resistance was no longer possible. They were promised their lands and liberty, but De Lugo, fearing their influence, sent

them to Spain, where these noble, chivalrous, and truly heroic men, belonging to anything but a savage race, were looked upon by their much more barbarous conquerors as wild animals. The unfortunate Guanches left in the island were treated as slaves. Opprobrious epithets, accompanied by bad treatment, made them conceive an equal hatred for their persecutors and their intolerant religion. Retiring to the mountains, they made raids, forced by hunger, on the colonies beneath. The Spaniards, thus harassed, decided upon their complete annihilation, and deputies went to Spain in 1532 to ask for the Inquisition to exterminate the Guanches. There is a quiet irony as to the power whose aid was besought for the final destruction of this race. It is said at the present day that the ancient Tenerifians have been entirely destroyed. I doubt this myself from the character and customs of the present inhabitants. It must be remembered also that from the conquest in 1496 until the advent of the Inquisition was about forty years. It is difficult to believe that there was not some intermarrying during that period, notwithstanding the general feeling of hatred between the nations. The well-known immorality of the Spaniards is almost sufficient reason to suppose that there must be an admixture of Guanche blood to this day in the island. The character of the islanders is also much softer, simpler, and more generous than that of the Peninsula Spaniard.

It was after the baptism of the chiefs just recorded that Alonso de Lugo left Realejo and founded Laguna. He was appointed Governor of Tenerife and Palma; and marrying the beautiful and wicked widow of Peraza, Donna Beatriz Bobadilla, he thus became owner of Gomera and Hierro. After murdering a few people and committing other questionable acts, Donna Beatriz was sent for to Spain, where one morning she was found dead in her bed. She had a son by Peraza, who was heir to Gomera and Hierro; and after repeatedly asking his step-father to give up his inheritance, he at last took possession of the islands. He was styled Conde de la Gomera, and was the first who had the title of count in the Canary Islands.

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# CHAPTER IV.

## *OROTAVA.*

There was no heavy heat, no cold;
The dwellers there wax never old,
Nor wither with the waning time,
But each man keeps that age he had
When first he won the fairy clime.
The night falls never from on high,
Nor ever burns the heat of noon;
But such soft light eternally
Shines, as in silver dawns of June,
Before the sun hath climbed the sky.

ANDREW LANG.

TURNING reluctantly from the Guanches and the scenery, we re-enter our carriage.

The flies are very troublesome, although the thermometer only registers 73° F. (22·8° C.), and it is 10 a.m. Our road steadily descends as we skirt along the hillside. A woman walking at a brisk pace, evidently going to mass, was dressed in holiday attire. The loose jacket was of nondescript coloured print calico. The skirt, of bright orange, was toned down by a spotlessly white apron with lace insertion. A loose drab shawl of light texture, and much embroidered, hung down her back, while upon her head was a bordered white silk handkerchief. A hat on the top of this completed a costume of divers colours and materials.

We met many men and women riding. They sit on the right side of the *albardas*, or packsaddles, quite at right-angles to the animal, as if on an Irish car.

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It is wonderful what curious things the women carry upon their heads. We met one with an axe, which she held by the handle, balancing the blade on her head. Men and boys all without exception smoke cigarettes; one scarcely ever sees them without the little twist of paper between the lips. They use commonly the outside leaves of the maize for cigarette papers. Though on friendly terms with our driver, we were astonished at being offered by him cigarettes before lighting up himself. The offer was made politely and deferentially to John, and to me doubtfully, evidently not sure if I would accept.

We come to another barranco, which we cross by means of a bridge built half-way down. We gallop down one side, and toil up the other to Victoria, which is on the summit, that Victoria, already mentioned, where the last battle was fought. In the barranco were plenty of low grey-green trees, interspersed among the vivid green of the vines. Palms are the only high trees, and they seem, as it were, above the landscape. Clusters of golden dates hang among their rustling, frond-like leaves, giving promise of a goodly harvest. Not everywhere in these islands, however, do the dates ripen.

A pleasant breeze is blowing off the sea, giving that bracing feeling to the air which, no matter how hot it may be, one always gets in the Canaries. High mountains are on our left, on which there is a good deal of wood and forest, whilst on our right the slope to the sea is well cultivated. At the twenty-ninth kilometre stone we found ourselves at 1,050 feet of elevation, and the temperature increased to 75° F. (23·9° C.). The road became winding, and we presently descended by zig-zags into a deep and wide barranco, too wide to be spanned by a bridge. The road on the northern side of the ravine is cut out of yellow soil, something like English yellow clay. The ascent was a steep pull on the collar of our horses, small animals, not too well fed or treated. Everywhere the palm trees stand in solitary grandeur like sentinels. They are quite a feature in the landscape to eyes unaccustomed to them. Numbers of little wooden crosses are stuck upon the ditches

and walls along the roadsides. We met men and women carrying fruit in baskets made of straw like beehives, to keep it cool, chiefly grapes for the vintage.

At the top of the barranco we came to a small cluster of houses, called Santa Ursula, consisting of but little more than a church and the ever-present *transitu de consumos*.

A field of cochineal, with the "mothers" tied on with rags to the cactus leaves, would give a very ludicrous appearance to the landscape if it were not rather suggestive of bandages and battle-fields.

As we drive along the high-road, we have ever present to our minds that at any moment the Peak, the centre of attraction in the archipelago, may become visible. At last we are rewarded. At eleven o'clock we see it for the first time. The white clouds that all the morning have jealously hidden Teide from sight clear off, leaving only the belt which nearly always surrounds the mountain at a height of from 6,000 to 7,000 feet. Above the clouds El Pico rises grey and solitary. It is with difficulty we lower our eyes to notice the road along which we drive. We feel more than ever determined to try and gain the summit, and with this resolve turn towards sub-Pico scenery.

The slope from the summit to the sea is apparently one unbroken line. Far below us lies the little compact town of Puerto de Orotava, above which the plain called the Valley of Orotava rises gently to the background of mountain, whence the slope increases until it reaches upwards to the Peak. Three conical hills, destitute of vegetation and composed entirely of the blackest of black lava, strike the eye first as it wanders over the vast extent of plain. The "Valley" of Orotava is a misleading name, and yet it is difficult to choose a better. It requires to be used with an explanation. If none be given, the disappointment that meets one on first seeing the valley is great. I can speak not only for my husband and self, but for many others being filled with disappointment at the first view of Orotava. The valley is a square, sloping plain, bounded at the back by mountains, wooded and reaching to the

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Peak; on the south side, a high saddle-back called Tigayga stretches apparently from the sea to the Peak; at the northern side, where we enter, the mountains are reduced to hills, and the slope where the road traverses it may be better imagined when given in feet. It is 1,000 feet above the sea, and but a mile distant. The fourth side lies at the foot of the slope, and is the sea. The idea conveyed to the mind on first seeing Orotava is not that of a valley so much as a plain, a luxuriant and fertile plain, notwithstanding the three black hills and, on nearer inspection, a curious black line down its centre, looking like a river—so luxuriant that the whole appears a tangled mass of orange groves, banana trees, vineyards, olives, mangoes, guavas, and every conceivable fruit and vegetable that the heart of man can desire. A few fields of cacti remind us that we may be looking on a tropical scene, but much of the beauty belongs to the temperate zone, and we become hopelessly bewildered. Amid this luxuriance, and giving a certain feature to the landscape, are the picturesque abodes of the happy dwellers in the most fertile spot in the world. The usually ugly, flat-roofed houses are here covered, gracefully festooned, and hidden by lovely flowering creepers, straying in what appears a wild, uncared-for state, suggestive of a tropical wilderness rather than subtropical civilisation. One misses the stately trees, the growth of some scores of years, the soft green turf, soothing to the mind and welcome to the eye, the running rivulet, dancing in the sunbeams, the crash of the waterfall, or the glide of the deep, still river. There is a feeling of something lacking that prevents one looking at the scene with that perfect sense of satisfaction born of the knowledge that we are gazing at the most beautiful sight we have ever seen. The blood does not tingle and thrill through our frames with that exquisite sense of happiness which is next-of-kin to pain at sight of something wonderfully lovely. So we were disappointed with the Valley of Orotava. Later we came to like it, and from the further side, near Realejo, to admire it, but it never thrilled me with

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its beauty as many another scene both in the Canaries and elsewhere has done. There was one pleasure derived from knowledge, and therefore appealing to the reason, not the senses, that made one contemplate El Valle with satisfaction. It is considered by all authorities, English, French, German, Swedish, and Spanish, to be without exception the healthiest place on the face of the globe. The Canarian Archipelago rejoices in the most magnificent climate in the world, and Orotava is the most excellent of the excellent. Many places in the other islands we found later rival it. Many surpass it in beauty, some possibly in health, as Arrecife, in Lanzarote, but none combine health, beauty, and convenience in so favoured a degree as Orotava. No wonder Benchomo strove hard for his inheritance and fought for Orotava!

Meanwhile we are nearing this abode of bliss. We stop at another little venta, and see near it, for the first time, a dragon tree.*

There are several curious and interesting plants which are peculiar to this archipelago. One plant, the *retama*, is peculiar to a very circumscribed area on one island only. The dragon tree is perhaps the most remarkable, interesting, and best-known production which is peculiar to the islands. Weird and uncouth in form, it could readily be conjured into something animate when seen in the gloaming, guarding with its massive trunk and sword-like leaves the Golden Apples in the Garden of the Hesperides.

We can distinguish a few schooners rocking in the long Atlantic swell off the mole which does duty for a harbour at the Puerto de Orotava. We get a splendid view of the Peak for about five minutes, when the jealous clouds—Piazzi Smyth would call them *cumuloni*—once more hide it from view. The view of the Peak is fine even from here; and though it is the worst obtainable, yet it is that best known. Those who go to the Cape by steamers touching at Madeira have a much grander view as they pass between Tenerife

* *Dracæna draco.*

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and Gomera. There one realises that El Pico del Teide is a world's wonder. If it were possible to be disappointed in one's expectations of the Peak, it is from here one receives the disappointment. The reason is obvious. The saddleback of Tigayga fills the foreground, and cuts the bottom of the Peak off, leaving only a huge conical hill in the distance, looking as though rising from the centre of the island, and not from the sea. This of course takes from the height and grandeur. Seen from farther away, from the sea itself, all the intermediate slope is thrown into the height of the Peak, the foreground disappearing with the increased distance. Thus inequalities and lower mountains vanish and are lost in one grand whole. We were forewarned about this view of the Peak; consequently we were prepared not to be disappointed.

Fortunately we had no vehicles immediately in front of us, for the road was several inches thick in cinder-dust, the cinders of that huge furnace 12,000 feet above still smouldering treacherously. Below, as we turn into the valley, lie tobacco gardens, the long green leaves swaying in the breeze and gladdening us with a sense of fresh brightness. We now entered the valley proper, the road, sheltered by eucalyptus trees—the Australian gum tree—winding in and out of the *fincas.**

Among the first of these *fincas* was one with a very beautiful garden and pond, its gate surmounted, however, by a figure hideous enough as a representation of His Satanic Majesty, but scarcely so hideous as the idea which placed such a guardian angel over such a paradise. The name of the house published the fact unmistakably as El Casa de Diable. Once more we got a view of El Pico, perfectly clear this time save for a few white flakes of cloud. We pass a dry barranco, the well-trodden path across proclaiming some space of time since water washed its stony bed.

As we trot along the gentle descent towards the Puerto, the

* *Finca*, a country house with garden and cultivated land.

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road passes through what looks to us like orchards, but is really only cultivated ground surrounded by low walls, which either bank up the earth where the slope is steep, or divide the fields of tobacco, cochineal, vineyards, coffee, and fruit. Quantities of wild roses, pale mauve plumbago, and a deep orange-coloured honeysuckle ravish one with their beauty as they stray wildly between the gum trees. A watercourse of cemented stones filled with water gives a clue to all this verdure. The houses are pretty and rather large, scattered here and there, each amidst its own verdant surroundings.

The road skirts the foot of one of the black conical hills we saw in the distance. Round the base it was perfectly black, as if only recently charred with terrific burning. These hills seem a sort of perpetual reminder in the midst of all the luxuriant vegetation around of what may happen again any day. The roadsides are decked with quantities of hare's-foot ferns and a few others, but growing like bracken for quantity is the hare's-foot. Near the bare, charred hill we find we are thirty-eight kilometres from Santa Cruz, 800 feet above the sea, and the temperature 76° F. (24·5° C.). It is 11.30 a.m.

A field of splendid potatoes gives a homely look amid so much strange vegetation. Cisterns filled with water suggest dry seasons. Young trees planted by the roadside are sunk in very deep holes, where water being turned into them, it is confined to the roots of the tree, and is not lost on waste ground. In and out of the loose black cinder or lava walls, reflecting with scorching heat the sun, run the lizards. The delicately coloured plumbago climbs and twines everywhere. Winepresses of wood, huge, clumsy-looking monsters, are being prepared for the vintage. We met a few boys with long poles. Nearly all country people carry these, and are expert at jumping down the hillsides with them. They were used by the Guanches, and the custom is inherited from them.

The macadamised road ends at the entrance to the town, Puerto de Orotava, as it does to that of Laguna, and we jolt painfully through the badly paved streets. They are not quite

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so bad, however, as in the latter town. The plaza and houses are decorated for a festival to-day, a normal condition apparently. There is always a festival going on somewhere.

Not far from the mole, and a little beyond the plaza, is the boarding-house of Mr. Turnbull, where we arrived at noon. It is the only hotel kept by English people in the archipelago.* The house is quiet and unpretending, kept in boarding-house style, although all English travellers are taken in even for a night. The charge is eight shillings a day or less by the week. Mrs.



TURNBULL'S HOTEL, OROTAVA.

Turnbull is kind and attentive. The food is fair, but there is a lack of vegetables and fruit, and a scarcity of milk, which ought not to be in this garden of the Hesperides. It is said to be owing to the absence of a market and the difficulty of inducing the Spanish aristocracy who own gardens to sell their surplus produce. Cow's milk is rarely to be had, owing to the absence of grazing, but goat's milk can be obtained in quantities if proper

* Since writing the above a hotel kept by English people has been started in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, also a sanatorium in Orotava by a company called the "Orotava Grand Hotel Company."

arrangements be made. The milk of the goats here does not seem to have nearly so strong a taste as that at home; at any rate, one becomes accustomed to it. Goat's milk is better used fresh, for when kept it becomes strong in flavour. The absence of cows causes an absence of butter. A few private English families obtain butter from Laguna, where there is pasturage and cows, but at the hotels we are doomed to tinned Danish, a poor and bad substitute. All this sounds untempting, but it is unnecessary. A little enterprise and push could supply Orotava with not only all the necessaries, but the greatest luxuries, of life. If Tenerife cannot supply sufficient butter for its own consumption, the neighbouring islands, Canaria, Gomera, and Palma, can. Notably Gomera, where we have eaten it, and which, abundantly watered and covered by trees, presents pasturage sufficient for the supply of butter to the whole archipelago.

Dinner was at 2 p.m., and having explained to Mr. and Mrs. Turnbull and Mr. Reid, the courteous vice-consul, that we wished to start immediately for a tour round the island and up the Peak, they said, "We must send for Lorenzo." Now Lorenzo is an institution in Puerto de Orotava. He is the *practico*, or guide, to the Peak. Whenever anyone arrives at the Puerto with a view to the ascension, Lorenzo is sent for and consulted as to ways, means, and time. Lorenzo lives close by, and five minutes after being sent for he arrived. He came to the top of the inside stairs in the patio, and we all adjourned to the landing for the consultation. Lorenzo is a slight, medium-sized, active-looking man, with black hair and dark eyes, a black moustache, and well-tanned skin, very good-looking, and at first sight appearing a handsome youth of twenty-five. Later we learned he was thirty-five. He undertakes to procure three horses for a week's tour, beginning to-morrow, at the rate of five shillings a day per horse, exclusive of food for man or beast. It is considered a fair price, the usual charge being six shillings, but as we take the animals for a week, we get them for less. Lorenzo as *practico* gets four dollars extra for the ascent of the Peak. Matters thus arranged, we

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take a walk to the famous "Garden of Acclimatisation." The name of this garden is unfortunate, as the acclimatisation of plants is an absurdity. It was intended originally as a place wherein to inure tropical vegetation first to this sub-tropical climate and then to introduce it into Europe. This idea is of course now dispelled, but the garden continues, and fulfils many useful functions in introducing alien vegetation into the islands and in gathering together for the use of *savants* and visitors the varied and extensive fauna of this archipelago. The garden is situated above the Puerto, on the slopes of the valley. It is not large, but is sufficiently so for its present purpose of growing trees and plants brought from other and warmer climes. I would suggest that if slightly extended, and more walks laid out, it would be a valuable addition to the recreation-grounds for the visitors to the valley which the sanatorium now being projected will attract to Orotava. The garden is presided over by M. German Wildpret, a Swiss, who is enthusiastic on its behalf, and who courteously gave us every information we desired. M. Wildpret was the first to introduce the fast-growing eucalyptus tree, which he brought into this garden in 1862. The largest specimen in 1883 was thirty-eight metres, or about 120 feet, high. It is a straggling, undecided, and colourless-looking tree. The leaves at the top are different in shape from those at the bottom. The curative property of the leaves in cases of fever when they are made into tea, applied to the head, or hung round the bed, I have already mentioned. The *Oreodom regia*, introduced eighteen years ago from Cuba, where the leaves are used for wrapping round the tobacco in that island, is doing well. There are twenty-five varieties of the banana tree in these islands, which gives a faint idea of the wonderful vegetation. The *Pinus Canariensis*, peculiar to the isles, is a majestic and picturesque tree. It has three long, spiked leaves in each cluster, which add wonderfully to the naturally feathery and graceful appearance of the tree. Bunbury states that the Canary pine is the finest he has seen of its genus, and attributes its beauty of form to

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the "free and bold style of branching." The wood of this tree cut green is invaluable for preserving anything placed in or upon it. The Guanche mummies were laid upon pine planks in caves, and were thus preserved intact. Torches are also made of the wood, and burn brilliantly. The traveller's tree of Madagascar is to be found in this garden, the habit of growing always from east to west giving the tree its name.

Leaving the garden, we proceeded to the country house of the Marqués of Candia, La Paz, to deliver our letter of introduction. Part of the garden is on the edge of a precipice, from which while conversing with the Marqués and Marquesa we had a splendid view of the setting sun, the island of Palma, the Puerto, and at our feet the blue sea breaking on the rocks. We presented our next letter of introduction to Mr. Charles Smith, a wrangler of Cambridge, and a veteran resident at Orotava, where he is better known as Don Carlos. The sun was setting as we reached the Sitio del Pardo, and Mr. and Mrs. Smith hospitably made us enter and have some tea. Mr. Smith proved an invaluable help to us, as he has ascended the Peak three times, and has ridden round the southern part of the island to Chasna, where we wish to go. He lent us a map, tracing a good route thereon, with possible sleeping places.

Letters of introduction are almost a necessity to these islands if one desire to see other than hotel life. We were fortunate in procuring in England letters to numbers of residents, English and Spanish, in the principal islands and towns; these gave us letters to others; and so we were kindly and hospitably passed from one to another. The *entrée* into Spanish scciety is very difficult to obtain without introduction, as the Spaniards are very exclusive. They are extremely hospitable when once, however, that introduction has been made. One wonders much how an ordinary stranger and traveller can expect without introduction to be received with open arms into the houses of the gentry and nobility. Who is to certify that he may not be an adventurer if he have no credentials? The same remark applies to every country, some of course are more reserved than

others, and certainly Englishmen cannot afford to throw a stone in this matter.

We felt rather uncertain about our way back to the hotel in the darkness, but just when about to start, Mr. Branckar, a gentleman long acquainted with these islands, and now staying in Orotava, arrived, looking for us with a thoughtful kindness we could not sufficiently appreciate. We walked back, under his escort, through the plaza, which was lit with lamps in imitation of street lamps. The place was crowded with peasants, women sitting beside baskets filled with cakes and biscuits, mostly of native make, whilst the air was filled with the music of a few and the noise of many guitars played by the young men and lads. All night until very late the twanging of the everlasting "Malagueña" continued, a fine, wild air when well played, but irritating in the extreme when varied according to the player's ideas of time and tune.

A curious procession comes here from a village a few miles from Laguna, called La Esperanza. During the plague at the commencement of the eighteenth century, from which the inhabitants of La Esperanza suffered much, they bethought themselves of performing a pilgrimage to "El Gran Poder de Dios" ("The Great Power of God") at the church in Puerto de Orotava. The mortality ceasing, it is said, after this pilgrimage, the people made a vow to continue it yearly. A certain number therefore come every autumn on a fixed day, attend evensong at the church and high mass next morning, after which they return home. The night in the streets, however, is devoted to revelling, dancing, singing, and playing the guitar.

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# CHAPTER V.

## *OROTAVA—ICOD—GARACHICO.*

The berried grapes are green and fine
And full by noon; in day's decline
They're purple, with a bloom of grey;
And e'er the twilight plucked are they,
And crushed by nightfall into wine.
ANDREW LANG.

I'll drown you in the malmsey-butt within.
SHAKSPERE.

Who is my neighbour?
ST. LUKE x. 29.

*September 10th, Monday.*—We spent the morning in the laborious and unpleasant task of unpacking and repacking, rendered still more fatiguing by the temperature being 78° F. (25·6° C.) at 10.30 a.m. Everything that we might require for our journey round this island, Gomera, and Hierro, and the ascent of the Peak, had to be stowed into two portmanteaus and a small bag. As several dozen photographic plates had also to be packed among our clothes, besides tea, coffee, chocolate, sugar, Brand's beef-tea, and some medicines, notably quinine, vaseline, and a flask of brandy, it may be imagined that the task of selection was by no means easy. We could obtain no practical information from anyone as to what was necessary for such a journey, so that here, as elsewhere, the work was really pioneering. No one before us had ever made such a journey as we were projecting. To add to our difficulties, we found

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that the time it would take to accomplish the proposed journey was vague in the extreme. One thing only had we settled clearly and definitely: that the ascent of the Peak was to be made on the night of the 15th, or rather morning of the 16th, as the moon would be then full.

We of course expected it to be difficult in England to ascertain anything about the islands. But we little anticipated that in Tenerife itself we could obtain no reliable information about any thing or place save the ordinary, well-trodden ascent of the Peak. At Santa Cruz they could send us to Orotava—nowhere else! At Orotava, once we departed from the straight road to the summit of the Peak, they could direct us no further than to Icod de los Vinos. So to Icod we are bound at 2 p.m. to-day, and after that by some means to Chasna, and thence to the summit of El Pico de Teide (the Peak of Teide, or Teyde). Our endeavour is to find out the best way of going round the island in order to see the scenery. The maps we have are the British Admiralty charts, the only correct maps of the islands, and which have been adopted bodily by the Spanish Government. These, although excellent for coast line, are very imperfect, and, as we frequently found, very inaccurate for the little which they do give of the interiors. The macadamised are the only roads marked, so that as guides on land the maps are useless. Practically we found that we had to depend upon information gleaned from the peasants as we journeyed along. We had therefore to fill in the blank on incorrect charts from our own observations in each island, with the addition of three of Fritsch's useful though confusing maps.

Intercommunication among the islands is exceedingly indifferent. We found we could not go to Gomera from Orotava. Schooners run from Santa Cruz to that island and Hierro once a week, sailing round the east and south of Tenerife, so we had to arrange, very vaguely indeed, as proved by the sequel, to catch the schooner at Adeje or Guia, on the south coast. With much difficulty we ascertained the time of its departure from Santa Cruz; the rest had to be guesswork, weather and cargo

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making the arrival and departure from the ports very uncertain. After Gomera we purposed visiting Hierro, where not even the famous Captain Glas has been, while, so far as we could ascertain, only two Englishmen have visited Gomera. As to steam communication, there is none. Once a month a steamer leaving London touches at Palma, and goes thence to Tenerife. But it is impossible to go to Palma from Tenerife by steamer.* There was much to be thought of therefore to make the time fit in, so that we should not lose it anywhere uselessly.

About 1.30 p.m., while we were having luncheon, the quiet of the street was broken by the clatter of hoofs, which stopped opposite the hotel. Looking out, we see the pack-horse for our expedition, a small, wiry animal, light chestnut in colour. His master, a square-shouldered little man, also wiry and small, ties the halter to a ring in the kerbstone, and sitting down in the shadow of the house, does what all islanders excel in—waits.

Feeling a helplessness born of ignorance with regard to packing our luggage on a horse's back, we await patiently the advent of Lorenzo, our guide, major-domo, valet, horsekeeper, cook, butler, all in one. A few minutes later the stone-paved street re-echoes once more to the ring of iron hoofs, and looking out, we see a couple of saddleless horses and two men, one of them Lorenzo.

We had brought our own saddles from England, though much in doubt upon the matter. One gentleman advised us to do so; the others said it was not necessary. Most fortunately we determined to be on the safe side. Although in ignorance of the amount of riding to be done, we imagined there must be a great deal, as there were but few roads. We went to much trouble in searching through London for a reversible pad-saddle, large enough for a lady, not knowing what various-sized animals

* Since our return to England, island steamers were established by Elder, Dempster and Co., but were discontinued after a few months. It is hoped, however, that Lopez and Co. will start and run them more successfully.

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I should have to ride. When nearly giving up the quest in despair, we at last procured one which was strong and well made. The pommels unscrewed and reversed, and the whole could be taken off and turned into a gentleman's saddle. I had steel runners let in on each side in front, which proved invaluable for fastening the girth, or *tajara*, to, which goes round the horse's chest, for ascents. A Cape raw hide girth also turned out useful. Owing to the saddle being a pad one—that is, without a saddle-tree—there could not be a third crutch, as there was nothing to which it could be fastened. There were of course two stirrups.

At last we were ready to start. The horses were brought into the *zaguan*, where we mounted. A young Swiss gentleman, who was living in Orotava, kindly accompanied us part of the way on horseback, and, amid the good wishes of all in the hotel, we started—whither?

Noisily our little cavalcade clattered up the steep street, the horses newly and heavily shod for the journey, the *arrieros* (horsekeepers) running behind us. I must confess I did not feel comfortable, or at least at home, in the saddle. When accustomed to three crutches, the seat feels insecure with only two, added to which a pad-saddle rounds itself over the horse's back, so there is not the square, chair-like seat of the ordinary lady's saddle. The advantages of it, however, are great. No two horses were the same size, and often it was put upon a mule or even donkey, when, owing to its want of shape, it readily fitted. I could also ride at either side or *à caballero*, an advantage only to be appreciated by those who, like myself, were often day after day ten, twelve, or fourteen hours in the saddle.

We soon left the road, and took a path across a barranco, the descent into which was down what seemed to me a bad path. A month later I would have considered it a first-rate road. Near the bottom the *arrieros* hit the horses on their flanks, whereupon the animals bounded forward over the river-bed and scrambled up the other side. The suddenness of the movement on a two-crutch saddle nearly sent me flying. I have

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a happy knack of holding on, however, which has saved me many a toss, and in this instance an ignominious and unlucky start to our journey. We rode upon the new highway for a little, and then descended to the sea. While on the high-road we met many country people, carrying baskets and bundles of flowers and fruit, and they and our men chaffed each other as they passed. One woman asking who we were, Lorenzo replied that we were a *marqués* and *marquesa*, which was taken, as it was meant, in joke. A handsome, light-hearted people are these islanders.

The afternoon was very hot. As we trudged along in the blazing sun, the grapes hanging in the vineyards beneath made one long to creep under their leafy shade and drop the cooling fruit into our mouths. I suppose Lorenzo thought they looked tempting, too, for he shouted down to a man who was dressing the vines to give him a bunch for "the señorita." The man cut two, weighing several pounds, and, by Lorenzo's orders, plucked and laid them on some cool leaves. Doffing his hat, Lorenzo presented them to me with the bow of a courtier and the respect due to a princess! Grace is born in these southern climes; it certainly was innate in Lorenzo. In like manner, having with a smile purloined some flowers from a woman, he presented them to the "señorita."

I find by my notes we considered the road or path between Orotava and Icod de los Vinos a fearful one. It makes us laugh now, we have been through so many much worse. "Bad" is a comparative term. But as, until the *carretera* (high-road) is finished, it is the only road, it is as well that new-comers from home should expect to find it what we as novices found it —fearful. I could not give that full attention to the scenery that I could have desired, owing to what proved an unwarrantable want of confidence in my little horse's sure-footedness over the bad roads.

We had a splendid view of the Peak all the way, standing out clear and grand. High mountains at its foot run steeply down into the sea. Our path turns seaward, and we trot along

the pebbles on the beach part of the time. Sometimes we go down into a barranco in which maidenhair and hare's-foot ferns grow luxuriantly. At one place is a "Calvary," a little recess where are erected three plain wooden crosses, grey and weather-beaten. The *arrieros* raise their hats as we pass. Near the sea, we stop at San Juan * de la Rambla, where we dismount to rest the horses, entering the little dwelling, a mere cottage, consisting of a couple of rooms. San Juan is the usual stopping-place and half-way house to Icod.

These islands, but notably Tenerife, have been wine-producing countries for three hundred years. It was on the slopes round San Juan that the real Malmsey, or Canary Sack, of former times was produced. Shakspere has so immortalised this wine that, though lost as a reality to the present generation, it lives as a remembrance connected with the unfortunate Duke of Clarence and Falstaff. Our jolly forefathers had their tongues loosened and their hearts warmed by this generous preparation of Canary grapes, partaken of in many an ancestral hall. Malmsey wine came from a grape called malvasia, which since the oïdium appeared in these islands has been little cultivated. The bunches are moderate in size, and the grape, which is round in shape, is harsh to the taste and yet sweetish. It does not grow at a greater altitude than 1,200 or 1,300 feet. When fully ripe, the bunches are twisted on their stalks, where they are allowed to remain until nearly converted into raisins, and are then gathered and pressed. It therefore requires as many grapes as would yield five pipes † of the ordinary dry wine to make one of the rich Malmsey.

The wine of to-day is vidonia, a white, juicy grape, in bunches of about one and a half pounds in weight, the wine of which is sold for some ten pounds a pipe. The time when the export of wine from Puerto de Orotava reached its greatest prosperity

* *Juan* is pronounced somewhat like *whan* or *huan*, not murdered, as we are accustomed to do, in saying Don *Jew*-an.

† A Tenerife "pipe" is a hundred gallons, or eight gallons more than Madeira and fifteen less than port.



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was in 1812 to 1815, when 8,000 to 14,000 pipes were shipped each year to England and America. Now the export trade is chiefly in the hands of the English firm of Messrs. Hamilton and Co. at Santa Cruz. Mr. Henry Vizetelly, the well-known authority on wines, states that the wine of Tenerife is one "of some pretension, and well deserves a return of its lost popularity." That we drank at San Juan, though not Sack, was certainly the best wine we came across either in Tenerife or in any of the other islands. The Canary Sack of the "fine old English gentleman" is perhaps better described in one of Howell's "Familiar Letters" than elsewhere, and although he modestly calls his dissertation "a dry discourse upon a fluent subject," there are few who will agree with his estimate of his epistolary abilities.

He says that the first stocks of vines growing in Canary were brought from Bachrag, but that they improved and grew to such perfection in these islands "that the wines which they afford are accounted the richest, the most firm, the best-bodied, and lastingest wine, and the most desecated from all earthly grossness of any other whatsoever: it hath little or no sulphur at all in it, and leaves less dregs behind, though one drink it to excess. Of this wine, if of any other, may be verified that merry induction that good wine makes good blood, good blood causeth good humours, good humours cause good thoughts, good thoughts bring forth good works, good works carry a man to heaven; *ergo*, good wine carrieth a man to heaven. If this be true, surely more *English* go to heaven this way than any other; for I think there is more *Canary* brought into *England* than to all the world besides." He adds further, and significantly, "I think also there is a hundred times more drunk under the name of Canary wine than there is brought in; for Sherries and Malagas well might pass for Canaries in most taverns, more often than Canary itself. When *Sacks* and *Canaries* were brought in first among us, they were used to be drunk in aqua-vitæ measures; and it was held fit only for those to drink of them who were used to carry

their legs in their hands, their eyes upon their noses, and an almanack in their bones; but now they go down everyone's throat, both young and old, like milk." The date to this entertaining discourse is October 7th, 1634.

Rare old Howell, would there were more letter-writers like thee at the present day!

The time is not far distant, I hope, when this famous historical wine will be once more drunk in England. There is no reason why it should not be a staple industry of Tenerife, whose soil has shown itself so capable of growing a really good grape.

Behind the door opening into the yard of the venta we saw a cage of cane apparently. It proved on examination to be a stable, airy, cheap, easily made, and pretty withal. What more could a horse wish for?

Here we had to part with M. Emile, our kind escort thus far. My heart sank as we remounted and passed from the last friendly face forward into the unknown. We did not then expect to see any but islanders until we had been through Gomera, Hierro, and Palma.

Presently the country became more stony, and the land was divided by walls of loose stones, which impart a barren appearance to the landscape, reminding one of parts of Flanders. The mountains which enclose the Valley of Orotava fall back, and leave a wide slope of terraced ground, dotted occasionally by houses. We fell in with a woman going to Icod, who accompanied us there, keeping up with the men and horses as we trotted and cantered along. She was a dark, elderly woman, bright-faced, and was much interested in me. We met two or three gentlemen and one lady riding, the first, and save one other the last, lady equestrian we met in the whole of the islands. I suppose they do ride sometimes—they must if they move from home at all—but we did not see them. As we neared Icod we noticed the women carrying their children sitting straggle-legged on their hips, a leg in front and one behind, an Eastern custom. Some of them carried, besides a

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child, heavy jars of water under the other arm or barrels on their heads.

The heat was great, and although lightly clothed, we were quite wet. It is not the enervating heat of England, however, when we have it hot there. The air was dry, and save for the fact of feeling as though in a Turkish bath, we did not feel suffocated, nor were we exhausted or inconvenienced.

The little town of Icod de los Vinos (Icod of the Vines) lies on a pleasant, fertile slope, stretching to the sea. It is a clean-looking village. The streets are narrow, and seem to shoot from the irregularly shaped plaza like rays from the sun, or, to be more prosaic, are disposed somewhat like the thoroughfares converging to the central "fixed point" in the Seven Dials. Our *arrieros* had fallen behind, so we were obliged to ask the way to the fonda, or inn. A troop of little boys accompanied us through the streets, and conducted us in the fast-deepening gloom to the inn, where we were put up with some difficulty, obtaining the last room. Entering, we were conducted to the sala, or drawing-room. This is generally the largest room in a house, and faces the street. Cheap framed prints, usually of Roman Catholic saints and legends, hang upon the walls. The floor is bare, chairs are placed round the walls, and one or two tables, adorned with wax flowers under glass or something else equally trumpery—never a book—are placed either at the wall or in front of the sofa. The sofa is the *pièce de resistance* of the room. It is large, deep, stiff-backed, usually of horse-hair, and covered with crocheted antimacassars. In front of it is a piece of carpet or rug, the only one the room possesses. There is a great deal of character in this sofa rug. The better kinds are Moresque, which, in spite of all surroundings, look rich and artistic. A poor pile or a cheap Brussels are more usual, however. The shape is generally square, and varies in size from a small hearthrug to one of twelve or fourteen feet. On two sides of this square are placed chairs, the third is occupied by the sofa, and the fourth is either open to the room, or partially blocked by a table and the aforesaid waxworks.

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The aspect of the whole is stiff and dreary. The room into which we were ushered boasted three pictures: one, "Our Lady of Mount Carmel;" the second, "St. Eulalie, Virgin and Martyr;" the third was without a title, and I cannot supply one. The foot-wide boards of the floor were adzed, not planed. The sofa in this instance was cane-bottomed and covered in red cloth. We found the room filled with men, sitting smoking by the windows and on the sofa, which they immediately politely vacated upon my advent.

We would gladly have gone to our room, but the only one we could get had nothing in it in the way of furniture when we arrived, and the landlady was busy supplying it with beds and washstand in the interval of cooking the dinner. A basin was placed on a chair a long time before the basin stand appeared. The linen was clean, and we were thankful for anything decent. Dinner was ready soon after our arrival. The *comedor* was only an enlarged passage or landing, into which rooms and stairs all opened. The table was very long, for the guests were numerous. I was the only woman present. Sitting next me was a very respectable Spaniard, who spoke to me in French. I told him we had ridden from Orotava, and had felt the heat so great this afternoon that we were suffering from headaches. He said he was a doctor from Buenavista, and assured me that the heat would do us no harm, that sunstrokes are unknown, and that it was only our being unaccustomed to it that made us feel the sun, all of which turned out true, fortunately. He then told me that there was a sort of court being held in Icod, which accounted for the number of men gathered together. Stiff, sore, and tired from our rough ride, we gladly "turned in" early.

*September 11th, Tuesday.*—We were up betimes, and took some good photographs of the dragon tree—a fairly grown specimen—the town, and the Peak, which is here seen to much advantage, rising as it does more abruptly than at Orotava. The view from the *azotea* (flat housetop) is very fine and

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THE PEAK OF TENERIFE FROM ICOD DE LOS VINOS.

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picturesque. The great and overwhelming object of interest is Teide. At this side the wall of the *Cañadas* has broken down, and the intervening mountains are low, thus giving an abruptness to the rise of the volcano which one does not get at Orotava. Icod seems to lie at the foot of El Pico, under its shelter, and the head has to be raised to see the summit. White and picturesque, on a slope lies Icod, guarded on the east by a line of hills, running to the sea. Numerous palms wave their branches all down the little valley, which ends in an alluvial plain by the sea-shore. One magnificent palm, a king among his fellows, rising amid the houses, the lower part of its stem lost to view, urged by the gentle south-east breeze, spreads, waves, and rustles its leaves between us and the Peak, in the vain endeavour to hide the mountain monarch from our gaze.

In mid-town is the church, standing in a bare and brown yard, or plaza. The tower is an open belfry, with two bells. The red door, green shutters, and white walls of the adjoining priest's domicile, look cheerful and wide awake in the morning light, while from the church is wafted the odoriferous and soothing incense.

The dragon tree of Icod is now the finest specimen of that plant extant in the islands. It is in a garden in the town, about fifty yards below the fonda, on the right bank of the watercourse. All around are signs of careful cultivation. The hillsides on the east are almost bare rocks, but wherever it is possible, the ground has been laboriously terraced, and maize and other crops give evidence with what success. The floor of the azotea on which we stand is just now covered with maize, both loose grains and still on the stalks. In a splendid situation on the steep hill to the west above Icod stands a gentleman's house, the Casa de Villa Fuerte, an enviable position, and when the road runs to Icod, a charming country residence.

By the time we had seen all these objects of interest, we were ready for breakfast. It, however, was not ready for

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us, so Lorenzo proposed our seeing a Guanche cave near at hand.

From experience let me advise no one to start for the day without breakfasting first. It is difficult to procure where Spanish habits prevail, but by avoiding the word *almuerzo* (breakfast) and describing what one wants it may be obtained. Ask for coffee, eggs, and bread, and it will be ready at any hour of the morning; ask for breakfast, and at half-past nine, ten, or eleven o'clock it may not have arrived. Trusting to Lorenzo's saying the cave was near, we started about 8.30, and did not return until nearly 10.30—breakfastless.

Descending a steep lane out of the town, we walked towards the sea, until we came to broken ground, bare and uncultivated, covered with rocks and stones, a *malpais*, in fact, in the midst of which we found a hut, belonging to an old man. Two boys, who were assisting the man with his little farm, sat down with Lorenzo in front of the house and began splitting up pieces of pine-wood for torches. We also sat, and admired the view, worthy of a better house than this cabin. In front waved a palm tree; beyond lay the sea. Beside the hut were low piles of stones, on which were jars filled with water. The scene was novel and picturesque—the barelegged boys, in white shirts and trousers, the old man, uncouth and unclean, the resinous pine-wood being tied in bundles with green withes, the red water jars, a cat playing a lizard, behind Teide, in front the blue sea.

We experienced a little difficulty in finding the opening of the cave, which descends straight into the ground. A slab of stone, similar to many others around, covers the top. The entrance is about four feet wide by two and a half high. We crept inside the narrow opening, and, the pine torches lighted, we proceeded in the following order. A boy went first with a torch, then followed Lorenzo with another, which he held at our feet as we groped after him, the other boy and torch bringing up the rear. We walked along for a short distance, about fifteen yards, when the cave took a sudden

turn to the left and descended abruptly. The floor was now level for some distance, when it began again to descend steadily, the roof rising and opening into large vaulted chambers twenty feet high. Low passages intervened between these about two and a half feet high, along which we had to creep, taking care of our heads. There were a few stalactites and some bones, for this is a celebrated Guanche burial cave. Many things are said of this subterranean cemetery, the nearest to truth being that it is 11,000 feet long. Tradition asserts that the cave reaches to the Ice Cavern in the Peak, and also that an arm of it descends to the sea. When first discovered, some of the galleries were filled with mummies. Suddenly we saw daylight, and came upon a low opening over a precipice, the mouth draped with vegetation. A small, pretty bay and a boat on the blue sea framed in green made a charming picture. While we lay flat, owing to the low roof, and looked at it, we thought of how the Guanches must have lain here and watched strangers sailing round their island, entering the bay, and landing. How they must have trembled for their wives and little ones, and leaving them hidden in this cave to watch the conflict, have sallied forth and driven the marauders from their shores. The hole through which we are looking is about six feet wide by two or three high. No sound breaks the stillness save the rustle of the lizards as they glide in and out of the dry leaves and twigs.

Returning the way we came, by the lurid glare of the pine torches, we crept once more out of the cool cavern through the narrow entrance into the light and heat of the sun. An earthenware jar filled with water and an ancient tin vessel of nondescript shape at the door of the old man's hovel proved the most luxurious nectar and the daintiest of quaffing bowls. We arrived at the inn for breakfast about 10 a.m. This was our first experience of Spanish meal-hours, and never again did we willingly work for three hours after rising before eating a morsel of food.

At 11 a.m. we started for Garachico, feeling that now indeed

we were wanderers, a map with no roads marked our only guide. Although there was a welcome breeze, the road, shaded by few trees and close to the sea, was excessively hot. I felt rather tired after yesterday's ride and this morning's scramble fasting. The sun seemed to beat down unmercifully, and to glare up from the sea with equal ferocity. Sunstrokes are said to be unknown in the archipelago, or I should have felt exceedingly uncomfortable in my mind on the subject. The horses were fresh, and cantered merrily along. What a sight we must have presented, with pugarees flying behind us, coloured umbrellas in our right hands, the reins in our left, galloping under a scorching sun at midday!

As we near the town we come upon a neck of land jutting out into the sea, while some hundred yards off rises an exceedingly fine mass of what looks like columnar basalt, called El Roque (The Rock) de Garachico. Meeting two men carrying baskets of white grapes to the winepress, they give us some. The vintage is now beginning, and this is the most favoured part of the island for wine. Turning to the left, and so cutting off the point of land ending in The Rock, we pass a convent and a fine, large house with balconies, having inside the usual cool patio. It is curious wherever one goes to see the shutters closed, and the houses in the daytime apparently habitations of the dead, during the hot weather. These shutters in Garachico were for the most part much carved. Riding through silent towns, as we so often have done, the windows closed, and not an inhabitant to be seen, no sound breaking the stillness save the footfall of our horses, I have frequently been reminded of the Lady Godiva and her solitary ride through Coventry. Here resemblance ceases. The curiosity of the inhabitants not being forbidden, postigos move to right and left, and fair and dark señoritas gaze *sans peur et sans reproche* upon the disturbers of their midday siesta. We enter Garachico at the rendezvous for all strangers, the plaza, or public square, situated in mid-town. Burning with heat as we were, the appearance of a fountain at the further end of an avenue of

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sycamores was a welcome delight. We dismounted, and, according to Lorenzo's directions, as there was no other resting-place till night, prepared for an hour's delay during the heat. The Plaza de la Fuente is exceedingly picturesque. Sycamore trees, planted closely together, render the square impervious to the rays of the midday sun, and afford a pleasant shelter to anyone sitting beneath them on the quaint stone seats, shaped at either end into scrolls. Two or three crooked streets at odd corners and irregular intervals lead out of the square. The houses have curious balconies of plain or carved wood. The fountain, which, from the name of the plaza, would seem to be a natural spring, is simply a trough in the wall forming



STONE SEAT.

one side of the square, into and out of which a spout of water perpetually runs. The bay does not lie in front of the town, but at its western side. Not only from its present beauty, but from its past history, is Garachico interesting. From having once the best harbour in the island, whence was exported, chiefly to England, the malmsey wine of Icod, from building vessels of three hundred tons burden, and from being a flourishing little town, it has descended to a fishing cove and a sleepy village. In December, 1645, mountain torrents rushed downwards, carrying with them rocks and stones. The floods entering the harbour destroyed many vessels therein, and more than a hundred persons lost their lives. Sixty years later this unfortunate town again suffered an overwhelming calamity.

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On the 6th of May, 1705, it was destroyed by an eruption. Subterraneous grumblings were heard, and the sea began to retire. The Peak assumed a fiery appearance, the air was filled with sulphurous exhalations which suffocated the unfortunate animals, and the water was changed into vapour, like that of hot springs. Suddenly the earth trembled and opened. Torrents of lava rushed from the crater above, eleven miles north-west of the Peak, spreading over the plains beneath. The town of Garachico, covered by the lava, disappeared entirely. The sea returned to its bed, inundating the *débris*, and cinders occupied the site of Garachico. Remains of the houses are now found among fragments of lava or on the spot where ships once anchored. Nearly all the inhabitants were destroyed, buried alive in the lava, or suffocated by the poisonous exhalations, or, having escaped these horrors, killed by a shower of stones from the crater. The few who ultimately escaped were provided with land near Icod de los Vinos.

Meanwhile the heat of the sun had given me such a violent headache that I could scarcely raise my head from the stone seat against which I leaned. Suddenly I heard someone saying in Spanish, "Are you ill, Señorita?" Looking up, I saw a tall, respectable Spaniard, in a white linen suit, addressing me. I said, "No, but my head aches, and it is very hot," whereupon he urged me to come into his house and rest. After a little hesitation, fearing a probably lengthened delay, I gratefully accepted his offer. Leading the way, we followed. He brought us to his house at the corner of the plaza, and into his little patio, sweetly shadowed with trailing plants and drooping ferns, where, calling his wife, she soon appeared, and gave us a kindly welcome. They were bright, kind people, with good and pleasant children, and had a tidy little house and place. They took me in hand, made me lie down on a bed, gave me a delicious cooling acidulated drink, of which fresh citrons composed the chief ingredient, wetted a cloth in some cool aromatic fluid and put it over my forehead, and altogether acted with the truest charity and hospitality. Then, shutting out the light and

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quieting the children, they left me in the cool, darkened chamber to sleep. So effectual were Don ——'s remedies, that in an hour I was quite refreshed, and my headache gone. I asked him if he were a doctor, but he replied, only a *farmacien* (chemist). He very kindly urged us to stay all night, but we felt we should rather move on and sleep, as we originally intended, at Santiago. Exceedingly grateful, we left our good Samaritan, mounted, and pursued our way upwards. A very indifferent road winds up the steep hill, a spur of the destructive volcanic mountain of 1705, in short, sharp turns. At the time I considered and noted the road as very bad, but further experience, as I mentioned before, has modified my ideas, and I now look upon the path as simply moderately bad. Half-way up men and horses stopped to breathe at an angle in the road under the shadow of a great rock. The view beneath as we scrambled higher was exceedingly picturesque—on one side the bright houses and greenery of the town and its plaza and patios, on the other the charming little cove, with its breakwater of lava rocks, rendering it, when once inside, a sure refuge from gales from any quarter. None, however, but the fisher-folk of the tiny cove would venture between those breakers which seem everywhere to prevent ingress or egress. Our admiration, however, is not unmixed with a considerable amount of awe as shudderingly we look at the lava stream and think of the past molten deluge. We stopped again to rest above the hamlet of Tanque Abajo. Beneath us lies spread the fertile plain or valley of La Caleta, stretching across to Buenavista. Turning away, and leaving behind us the sea and coast, we got into a path between walled fields, and reached Tanque, 1,850 feet above the sea, at 4 p.m. As this was the only place where our men could obtain food, we stopped and had something to eat. Hard-boiled eggs and perhaps sardines, always wine and cheese, seldom milk, never meat, but dried fish and fruits, form the staple of the food obtainable at a venta. A venta is a small shop where food and drink for man and beast can be procured and eaten on the premises, but where night accom-

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modation is not provided. It generally consists of one counter or bar placed across a very small, low room; hanging all around and above are bunches of bananas, grapes, and salt fish, dried pepsicums and tomatos. Behind, piled anyhow and everyhow, without any regard to order, are wine-bottles, cheeses, dried herbs, and various other edibles. Everything from top to bottom is covered by a thick layer of flies. In fact, they attract the most attention upon entering. I forgot to mention bread, which is obtainable everywhere, and is most excellent. The farther one goes into the interior, the better is the bread. It is of wheat, and generally dark in colour, most of the grain being used, so it is very sustaining, giving strength and satisfying hunger in a way not possible with refined white bread. The taste is nearly always good, sweet, and full of flavour, quite possible to enjoy without butter, and with honey perfectly delicious. It is made in rolls about the size of a couple of oranges, but the crust is not of that bricky description so distracting in French rolls. The most vivid recollection that I entertain of this venta is connected with a kitten, which divided her attentions between the flies, which nearly drove her out of her senses with surplus amusement, and the food I was endeavouring to get into my mouth *minus* flies. Our thermometer registered in the shade 82° F. (27·9° C.). We did not delay long, as we were scarcely half-way, although over the worse half, between Icod de los Vinos and Santiago. At 2,600 feet we came upon furze. There is such an exceedingly homely look about this plant, that one always welcomes it with a warmth of feeling induced by being a stranger in a strange land. About 3,000 feet up we reached a sort of plateau of red earth. The stony ground through which we had been passing disappeared, and tracts of good soil almost uncultivated, and without a tree to be seen, took its place. The Peak, like a guiding planet, was always in sight, and looked beautiful against the clear sky, crowned with the glory of the setting sun. Some of the red earth we saw converted into tiles, but on the whole the country was more or less desolate. Doubtless once it was well watered and covered

with forests. Ah! how often since the destruction of those magnificent forests have the later generations cursed the folly of Spain and her rulers in allowing such wilful waste; and yet fruitless attempts are made to arrest the destruction that still goes on.

As the day wore on I was thankful for my reversible saddle, which I used *à caballero* with much advantage and lessening of fatigue. Riding over this soft ground, the ring of the iron-shod hoofs softened to a deep thud, was pleasant in the cool of the evening. About 6 p.m. we came to a muddy streamlet, the water red with clay and flocks which had come to water. Here we had to let the horses drink as much as they would, as the unfortunate animals could get no more water until we arrived at Guia next day. Surmounting a hillock, we suddenly came upon the edge of a steep descent. Stretched out beneath us lay a wide, brown-looking valley, already becoming dusky, as the sun was setting behind the mountain. We on the hill-tops had the daylight still. A rugged and unsafe path leads to the bottom, a drop of 540 feet from the spot where we stand.

It was with a feeling more or less of excitement that we prepared for our first encampment. All day at intervals, we have been informed—first at Icod, then at Garachico, and finally by Lorenzo, whose anxious face as to where I shall sleep is a perpetual reminder—that "there is no sleeping accommodation at Santiago," and that "the houses are poor and swarming with vermin." It was perfectly useless to reiterate that we had a tent, and that we only wanted bread, water, and milk. Either they could not or would not understand, but put it down to our imperfect Spanish that we were unable to comprehend the unsuitability of Santiago as a sleeping place.

8 p.m. Here we are in our first camp. Having satisfied the demands of hunger, I can sit peacefully and describe the intensely picturesque scene around. As we hurried along the bottom of the valley, night closing in rapidly, we looked anxiously for a camping ground. The church lying a short distance outside

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the village, surrounded by a piece of common, presented a suitable site, so we turned off the path and rode up to it. We have had considerable difficulty in effecting this camping out, even up to the last moment of our arrival. We just caught Lorenzo as he was starting off at a run before us into the village. I asked him where he was going, and he replied, "To look for a house where the señorita could sleep." The "caballero could sleep outside, but not the señorita." However, the señorita did not exactly see why she should have to put up with the fleas, etc., while the caballero slept in peace, and ordered Lorenzo to turn his most unwilling feet after them to the common. It was but the work of a few minutes to dismount and unload the pack-horse. While John undid the tent I turned out the contents of the canteen, and gave the tin pail in which everything is packed to Eloyhu, my horsekeeper, who went with it in search of water. José vanished to procure wood for a fire, while Lorenzo helped us to erect the tent. By this time a small crowd of women and children had collected round us, all curious as to our unaccountable proceedings. Unpacking the rugs out of the waterproof bag, and laying the two sheets of tarpaulin on the ground in the tent, I spread a rug upon them, and our beds were ready. The sticks having now arrived, the fire, with very little trouble—as the wood was tinder—soon burned merrily. The firewood chiefly consisted of the dried stems of *Centaurea Canariensis*, a beautiful composite plant. Determined not to have boiled tea, and our canteen possessing only a kettle and saucepan, I filled the latter with the water and made the kettle act as teapot. Lorenzo anxiously assisted us to prepare our supper, and I as anxiously watched the boiling myself, well aware of the predilection all foreigners have for water several degrees below boiling point. Some bread left from our dinner at Tanque, eggs, and good *gofio* made a capital supper. I got Lorenzo to give me a lesson in preparing gofio. The preparation is not difficult, but it is necessary, or at least advisable, to mix it one's self, as the process is performed by the hands! Generally, however, I mixed the gofio with a spoon, in a Chris-

tian and orthodox manner, but the hands make it lighter and more wholesome. Gofio is the national food. We often saw it prepared in the identical manner in which the ancient inhabitants prepared it, for gofio was the food of the Guanches. A curious food, unknown in other lands, and little likely to be adopted wholesale by a new and conquering nation, its universality in these islands is one out of many numerous proofs that the Guanches were not exterminated, although their language and identity have been lost from intermarriage. Gofio is made of either wheat, barley, rye, or maize, roasted in the grain and then ground to a fine flour. It may be eaten either dry or mixed with sufficient water to make it moist. The roasting is performed in the same manner as coffee, save that the one is ground hot and the other after cooling. It is an excellent and nutritious food, and particularly good with hot milk. There is, however, a great difference in the grain which is used. Wheat is considered the best, barley the next, then maize, and rye last. Wheat and maize also make a good mixture, and wheat, barley, and maize. Maize and rye are the least pleasant and wholesome. I may state here that we found different grains used on different islands. In Tenerife wheat predominates, in Canaria maize, and in Fuerteventura the unfortunate inhabitants frequently use the seeds of plants. The people of Canaria are so jealous of Tenerife that they will not allow the undeniable fact of wheat being more wholesome than maize. Practically we know it to be so. Gofio made of wheat has sustained us upon many a journey, we have eaten of it for breakfast and for supper, and have always found it digestible and satisfying. On the other hand, when in Canaria we have been frequently warned not to start riding after a maize gofio breakfast. Doctors also informed us that diseases of the stomach were very common in that island. English residents have tried and found that gofio makes excellent porridge, boiled in the usual manner.

Whilst eating our frugal repast three of the better-class Spaniards clattered past on their horses, going to the only venta the village possesses. They pulled up sharply on seeing



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our camp, and rode over to inquire who on earth we were. The explanation given we could not hear, but I have no doubt "Ingleses" made the beginning, middle, and end of it.

The picture we form is artistic. First there is our tent, its white canvas showing up in the firelight, the canvas forming the door tied back on either side to admit the air. The Union Jack of old England, attached to the end of the tent, just gives a central point of attractive interest to the habitation. We are pitched about half a dozen yards from a wall, and the tent-opening faces west, to avoid the morning sun. On the wall are



OUR CAMP IN THE VALLEY OF SANTIAGO, TENERIFE.

our saddles, and picketed near them the three horses, contentedly cropping the short, withered herbage. A few yards in front of the tent is the oval iron canteen grate, in which the dry wood crackles and flickers brightly—a fire is great company when camping out—and upon it is our pint saucepan, in which we boil all we require. Between the tent and the fire we are sitting on the ground; on our left is José, lying full length, Lorenzo standing beside him, his dark, handsome face looking brigand-like as the light flickers across it. Opposite them is Eloyhu, supplying the fire with sticks, while behind, clustered together like a flock of sheep, are the earnest, sober, wondering faces of about a score of women and children, their rich brown,

sunburnt skins lit by the ruddy glow of the firelight, which, dancing across the group, touches here a red handkerchief covering a head and there a pair of brown eyes, while a child's golden locks and blue een appear out of place amid this gipsy gathering in a southern land. A bright moon looks down upon the scene, its pale light lost in our immediate neighbourhood by the warmer glow of the fire.

The men were delighted with some coffee we gave them, pronouncing it "bueno." This was the end of the repast, after which José and Eloyhu went off on a search for eggs, and if possible a chicken, among the neighbouring farmsteads. Meanwhile we retired within our tent, where, as I wished to write, we invented a table and candlestick by propping the candle between matchboxes on the top of a camera-case. The scene without, thus framed by the canvas-curtained door, became yet more picturesque. Silence broods over all; the peasants have left us to ourselves; Lorenzo lies quietly outside, his head alone in sight, like a faithful watchdog; the last "Malagueña" (a national song) of the homeward-bound goatherd has died on the dark hillside; whilst the contented, steady, deep crunching of oats by the horses and the piping treble of the grasshoppers only break the profound stillness, upon which the moon and stars alone look down.

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# CHAPTER VI.

## *GUIA—BARRANCO INFIERNO—CHASNA—SOMBRERITA.*

There is a natural talent, or mother-wit, as it is called, about the Spaniards, which renders them intellectual and agreeable companions, whatever may be their condition in life, or however imperfect may have been their education: add to this, they are never vulgar; nature has endowed them with an inherent dignity of spirit.—WASHINGTON IRVING.

A rock-lipped cañon plunging south,
As if it were earth's opened mouth,
Yawns deep and darkling at my feet;
So deep, so distant, and so dim
Its waters wind, a yellow thread,
And call so faintly and so far,
I turn aside my swooning head.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

*September 12th, Wednesday.*—At 5.15 this morning the day was breaking gloriously over the mountain-tops, whilst the valley still lay bathed in silence and shadow. It was not easy to sleep last night, as we had not yet become accustomed to the tramping of our three horses, otherwise we were very snug. The most uncomfortable part of tent life, when baggage is reduced to the minimum amount, is having to dress without washing. Not only had we no basin, but in this instance we had no water, as it is very scarce at Santiago.

Just as we were dropping off to sleep last night we heard José and Eloyhu returning; and the result of their search was apparent this morning in eggs, but no fowl. I gave Lorenzo a

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lesson in poaching eggs. He could not understand the process, and was distressed at my apparently preparing to fry them when there was no oil for the purpose. Fortified by coffee and eggs, we proceeded to pack and continue our journey. The packing of the canteen usually fell to my lot, John rolling up the tent into its bolster-case. Of the latter process the men got some idea after a few days, but the canteen proved hopelessly puzzling. Often have they all stood round me watching how the oval can swallowed up a grate, frying-pan, gridiron, saucepan, kettle, two plates, two mugs, two spoons, two knives, two forks, besides a pepper castor, salt tin, clasp-knife, and a tin of tea, which we persuaded the can also to hold over and above its original quantity.

Sitting in the tent door, the scene, albeit comparatively barren, is interesting. Northward lies the pass by which we entered and descended last evening ; westward is a chain of rugged hills, facing us ; while in the foreground, and in our immediate proximity, is the little church. The valley is about half a mile wide, and bounded on the east by more hills, over which the sun is rising rapidly. The mountains of Teno, in the north-west of Tenerife, like those of Anaga, are of older geological formation than the rest of the island. A few peasants, before beginning the day's work, stop at the church. Some enter for a moment, whilst others merely kneel on the doorstep, cross themselves, and rising, pursue their way. Our men, according to their respective natures—Lorenzo devoutly, Eloyhu shyly, and José jauntily—approached and did the same before we finally left our camping ground.

All the water that we possessed had been used for breakfast there was not a drop to spare for ablutionary purposes. The ever-thoughtful Lorenzo perceived this, and as we passed through the village of Santiago, stopped at a door and begged from the woman who stood watching us "a little water for the señorita." She turned to get it, with the reluctance of surprise, and presently brought out an earthenware basin, like a small saucer for flower-pots, containing about a teacupful of water,

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a towel about the size and consistency of a pocket-handkerchief, and a scrap of soap of the kind which persistently refuses to remove dirt. Lorenzo held the saucer at my knee as I sat on the horse, and procured this damp smudge, and then did the same for John, after which the water, reduced to a tablespoonful, he attempted to coax to wash his own hands. Meanwhile, with serious faces, the entire population apparently gazed at us intently. Doors and windows were filled with womenfolk, and men and boys stood in the street to watch the operation. I have no doubt the thought uppermost was, "Where can these people come from, that they waste water so wickedly?" With substantial thanks for the precious fluid, we passed on our way.

Crossing the valley through *malpais*, destitute of everything but euphorbia bushes, we commenced the ascent of the hillside by a steep and narrow winding road. Short ravines dip into the cliff, and round these the path winds. In one a number of men were picking prickly pears off the cacti cultivated therein, and allowed us to eat as many as we wished. Lorenzo split the peel for me, and in the daintiest manner possible prepared the inside, so that I could eat it without touching the thorns. It was here I learned to thoroughly appreciate the "shot-and-water" of the cactus fruit. The heat was great, and since 5.30 we had tasted no fluid. As to the poor horses, they had not seen water since the evening before, and they eagerly ate the juicy peel of the pears. There is a wonderful compensating balance in nature. Where the cactus grows, the land is arid. So dry is it that water is unprocurable, yet that very plant produces an exceedingly juicy fruit, which satisfies, temporarily no doubt, both man and beast.

Below us, as we ascended, for the most part thankfully under the shadow of the hill, lay Tamino, a village further down the valley, and beyond the hazy blue sea rose Gomera. Suddenly we turned a corner of the pass out of the pleasant shadow. To the south-east lay stretched before us a vast panorama of sloping land, leading from the mountains to the sea. Between

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Santiago and Guia are horrible stretches of lava, their hideousness lessened only here and there by the ugly cacti. The remainder of our ride lay along stony ground, through lanes of stone walls; and although still early, the sun beat down upon us with sufficient strength to make us raise our umbrellas. A little above the main track lies the village of Chio, a melancholy witness to the ruthless destruction of forest in this part of the island. At the present moment Chio, although numbering several hundred inhabitants, does not possess a single well, or water of any description. Every drop of the precious fluid must be procured from the neighbouring town of Guia, several miles distant. The labour of this is immense, as it has to be carried on the backs of mules or the heads of women. Surely Chio sets a premium upon dirt.

Accompanying us all day, and urging us to further exertion by the mere fact of its high and mighty presence, was El Teide. Since leaving Orotava, we have been skirting its base, but to-morrow we look forward to really commencing the ascent. We reach Guia, the ancient Ysora, and find we are 2,600 feet above the sea, at much the same level as Santiago. Our first proceeding was to go to the well, situated in mid-town, and let the thirsty horses have a drink, our next to consider where to place ourselves. The ground is most unsuitable for camping, and it was in vain that we searched for any open space. All the land in the neighbourhood is enclosed within stone walls, and within the walls the cacti flourish, precluding any idea of a camp in their midst. The plaza proved our only refuge. Opposite the church was a large building enclosed by walls, but neither roofed nor shuttered. Outside the door lay some slender pine trunks. Separating these, we pitched between them, their weight being sufficient to stretch our stays and keep the canvas "taut." The ground was very hard, so we told Lorenzo to procure some *paja*, or chopped straw. A large sackful spread upon the ground formed quite a luxurious couch when covered with rugs, and we looked forward to a good night's rest.

We had arrived at Guia at 9.40 a.m., and since that time

had been so busy that we had not noticed the sun, which was creeping round upon our tent. We were much troubled by the boys, who are rough and uncouth, in this place. The *alcalde*, however, made his appearance, and scattering the urchins, suggested that during the heat we should avail ourselves of the shelter of the half-built house. He procured the key, and we gladly entered, as much for the sake of escaping the boys as the sun. The interior was in a very rough condition, no floors being yet laid, and mortar and stones strewn around. A couple of the rooms served as stables, and in another we ensconced ourselves. Lorenzo procured somewhere a table and a couple of chairs. We ordered dinner at 3 p.m., which a woman in the habit of cooking for passing travellers prepared for us. Altogether, save for one annoyance, we were very comfortable —the flies tormented us with a vigour worthy of a better cause, and with a persistency supposed to belong only to the African species. The day was the feast of Santo Domingo; and on the belfry of the church opposite, upon a little platform surrounding the bells, stood three men. All day, and most of the night too, as we found to our cost, these wretched bells, pulled by strings attached to the clappers, and a drum beaten by a man to what sounded like the "devil's tattoo," rattled in our ears a monotonous and exasperating ting-a-ting-a-ting-tong, ting, tong, ting, at a rapid pace, without pause or variation. The tone of the bells was high and thin. A knife knocked against a silver mug will give some idea of the sound of those bells.

The thermometer stood at 86° F. (30° C.) in the shade, and overcome by the heat and a good dinner, we endeavoured, notwithstanding the hard wooden chairs and the noise, to doze, with handkerchiefs over our faces. The flies somehow even then seemed to creep underneath the corners. The remainder of the day was spent in searching for a guide who knew the way to Chasna, in impressing on Lorenzo where we wished to go, in bargaining for the guide, and in arranging for our embarkation in the mail schooner for Gomera. Seated at the table, with two maps spread before us, and Mr. Smith's direc-

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tions as to the best route, we puzzled our brains, and practised Spanish for an hour or two. The difficulty lay in a nutshell. Why on earth should the caballero and the señorita go by the Barranco Infierno to Chasna, when there was a much more direct route? It was in vain we explained that we wished to see the said barranco, it being considered worthy of a visit; that we were travelling through the country, not with the object of going by the shortest road, but by the prettiest or the grandest It was useless. The *alcalde* came in, two guides, catering for the office, and Lorenzo. At last, finding all explanations unavailing, we said in determined tones to one of the guides, "We are going to-morrow to the Barranco Infierno, and from thence to Villa Flor. Can you guide us there, and how many hours will it take?" Twelve hours of continuous riding were allowed. We always had to inform the guides that the riding was *poco à poco* (gently). Not that we always rode slowly, but we had to allow time for photographing and meals, besides seeing leisurely the scenery. My notes never delayed us, as, owing to the sure-footedness of the animals, I could always write while riding up and down mountains or even scrambling up rocky paths. At first, when I commenced writing on horseback, Lorenzo used to stop the horse and hold its head, but the constant use of pencil and note-book prohibited such a luxurious mode of writing, and very little practice in horseback caligraphy was required to produce legible and full accounts of the scenes and customs by the way.

Lorenzo amused us much by telling the new guide that when we said we wished to start at 5 a.m. we meant it, and not to come about seven o'clock, expecting to find us only ready then!

We were heartily glad when night fell. But to people travelling with a camera night brings work, too. The difficulty was where to change the plates, for, alas! there was moonlight. The walls of our refuge were very high, and in a corner of one the darkness seemed absolute. Afraid to trust, however, to it, I covered John with my mackintosh as he crouched on the floor,

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holding out the cloak in order to give as much room as possible for the changing operations. It was with fear and trembling we removed the fourteen plates and put in fourteen new ones, at a risk of twenty-eight plates being damaged, or, technically, "fogged." However, it proved later to have been a light-tight operation. A horse in the same room was surprised and inquisitive over our proceedings, but I suppose, like Lorenzo, he was getting used to the eccentricities of *los Ingleses*.

*September 13th, Thursday.*—The peaceful night we hoped to pass proved mythical. Various causes combined to render sleep impossible. Although we lay down about 8.30 p.m., the town was much too wide awake to permit us to slumber, and unceasingly the good folk chattered in our immediate neighbourhood. We were as good as a show or a travelling circus would be to a remote Devonshire village. An hour or two later, just as I was dropping off composedly, notwithstanding the near neighbourhood of a huge brown beetle, another one, an inch and a half long, walked across John's pillow, so he had to be put outside. Then, about two o'clock, we were wakened by the fearful clanging of the bells of the church, within a stone's throw of our tent. At the same time a few rockets and crackers were let off, and a number of boys made a noise shouting. Peace at last settled over the village, but having an early start upon our minds, we of course wakened too soon, and from 3.40 lay awake. Rising at 4 a.m., we hoped to start in half an hour, but it takes a wonderful time to get so many under weigh, and we finally left Guia at 5.50 a.m. We were quite luxurious in the matter of washing, as Lorenzo the indefatigable triumphantly produced a basin, a real wash-hand basin, which the seclusion afforded by our roofless house rendered valuable indeed. I need scarcely say that we always travel provided with our own towels and soap. This is necessary in more civilised countries than the Canary Islands.

Leaving Guia, we commenced the day's journey by immediately descending into the first of the thirty-two barrancos lying

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between that town and Adeje. *Barranco* means literally a mountain torrent. But in the Canary Islands the dry bed of a mountain torrent would be nearer the proper definition. It is used in a double sense, as when speaking of crossing a river-bed they say "crossing the barranco," and in winter, upon the first rain in the mountains causing a sudden rising of water, which comes down like a flood, they say, "The barranco has come down." Generally a barranco means a gorge; that is to say, these rivers, or torrents, have cut for themselves deep paths, which in the majority of cases form gorges, the sides of which are usually steep. Where most accessible, rough paths, more natural than artificial, lead down across the stony bottom, and up the other side. Sometimes we were able to ride down and up these, but occasionally we were obliged to dismount. The suitability of riding or walking must be left to the guide, as to travellers unaccustomed to the country it would seem impossible to take a horse down at all, to say nothing of riding it down. The animals themselves refuse nothing; it only remains with the riders to stick on, not always easy when the horse has either its head or its heels turned skyward. Our day was almost entirely spent in riding or walking up and down barrancos.

We had only crossed two of these gorges, when we found the shoe on the fore-leg of John's horse had lost the nails at one side. These nails are not what we are accustomed to in horseshoes. There are three of them on each side of the shoe. The heads are large, about half a cubic inch in size, and help the horses very considerably to grip the ground when climbing up and down the barrancos and mountains. Lorenzo had a spare nail in his pocket, which, with some difficulty, was hammered in with a stone; but without the proper tools it could not be firmly fixed. With the hard wear to which the nails are subjected, they of course wear out rapidly. It was therefore with considerable apprehension we thought of the long day's ride still before us and that solitary nail. We could only hope it would hold until we arrived at Chasna. In any case it was

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unfortunate, as John had to ride very carefully, the horse making some stumbles.

A woman passed us with a shallow tray of cochineal on her head, the first we had seen gathered.

We had to dismount for the second barranco. A road must be very bad when walking is necessary. "Very bad" needs explanation; it generally means no road at all, only a path or perhaps indication of a track over rocks frequently smooth and slippery with the heat, and so steep that the horse cannot get a grip of the ground with a load upon his back, in which case one walks.

The barrancos here are at very short distances apart. The country, in fact, is so divided by them that upon reaching the top of one the descent into the next immediately begins. After crossing three so small that dismounting was unnecessary, we passed a little church, the priest standing at the door, waiting no doubt for the usual matins. The sixth barranco, although deep, we rode down. We now came to the first house since leaving Guia, whereupon we all gladly hailed Lorenzo's proposal to ask for water. Only those who travel in hot countries know the value of water, and this side of Tenerife might be a desert as regards the precious fluid. What we got, however, proved excellent. It was then 7.45 a.m., and felt as hot as at midday on the very warmest day in summer in England. Guia appeared as if but a mile away as the crow flies, although it had cost us a couple of hours' hard work to get so far. Gomera, lying across a placid channel, is hazy-looking, but always in sight.

Dismounting became necessary for the seventh gorge; and we continued on foot until past the eighth, called Barranco Herque, which is very precipitous. The banks of all contain more or less small caves, not deep, but appearing as though scooped out. In this one there is a slit in the solid rock forming the bottom of the river, a few feet wide and some yards deep and long. It reminded me very much of a curious slit somewhat similar, down which the water rushes, at Lorette, near Quebec. [Tem-

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perature in the sun at 8 a.m., 95° F. (35° C.).] We found a clear though short echo in Barranco Herque. There is also somewhere in it a large cave, in which a number of mummies were found.

We now left the main path to Adeje, and struck a little higher up towards the Barranco Infierno. It was necessary to walk some distance before remounting. As the most frequented roads are merely rough paths through rocky ground, it may be imagined what the unfrequented tracks are like. For some time we had been attracted by a curious line of white running in a perfectly straight direction down the mountain side to a village near the sea. In the distance it appeared like a wall, but nearer it fairly puzzled us. It proved to be an aqueduct, and closer examination showed us the construction. It is made of stones and lined with cement so as to form an even surface in the trough, which is eight inches square. In this part of Tenerife the water is scarce, so is carefully husbanded, and none allowed to sink into the ground on its way from the mountains. There is regular irrigation on cultivated land wherever the supply is sufficient. We ascended by the aqueduct, but owing to the incline being very abrupt, as the aqueduct is taken by the shortest route, it is almost impossible to drink out of the uncovered sluice down which the water shoots with great force and speed. The aqueducts, of which there are several, form a prominent and curious feature in the landscape. It is sad, however, to think that through the wilful destruction of the mountain forests they have become necessary. Glas wrote in 1764 that several streams fell down from the summit to the sea. It is no doubt these streams that have been confined in the aqueducts. Some distance up we came to a farm, by which the water ran. Troughs leading out of the main watercourse afforded facility for drinking, of which the poor horses gladly avæiled themselves. The heat was intense, and we were all thankful for the abundant means of quenching our thirst. I was also glad to renew the water in the handkerchief pad on my head.

As we turned to continue our journey, the owner of the farm

asked our destination. When he heard that it was Villa Flor, he was anxious that we should go another and shorter route, and was evidently puzzled to understand why we went so far out of our way to see only a barranco.

Leaving the farm, we crossed another barranco (? Deju), which was so steep, we had to go on foot. The view from the top was very fine. Looking down the gorge to the westward, we saw the blue ocean, with Gomera beyond. As the path wound beneath us, at each turn we could see a few fig trees, their spreading branches, of bright green foliage, affording a welcome relief to the eye. Near the bottom was the entrance to a large cave, in which we could discern goats, the tinkling of their bells as they sought its further recesses out of the strong sunlight ascending amid the profound stillness around. The fig trees were requisitioned for fruit, and picking a goodly quantity, we ascended to near the top, where we found the shadow of a rock, underneath which we sat down to rest and enjoy the scene and lunch. I feel utterly incompetent to say whether the figs were good, bad, or indifferent. They satisfied thirst, which was sufficient to render them delicious to the taste. A girl winding up the path down which we had come a few minutes previously sings as she passes upwards. The words float across the ravine to us perfectly distinctly, and the men, laughing at her improvisation, which includes us, shout across to her. Unheedingly she pursues her way, and their words mockingly return and re-echo from side to side. A couple of crows and a sparrow-hawk float idly above the gorge, the burning sun lights up every crevice, whilst the men, horses, and ourselves sit under the shadow of the rock. One yard from our feet the precipice drops into the ravine below. Starting once more, we passed from the shadow into the "weary land" of bright sunshine and burning heat. Whilst crossing the backbone between this barranco and the next we passed a cluster of houses, near which there was a tank, where some women knelt washing clothes. The ever-welcome water was again partaken of by all, and the kindly smiles of the women as well as men

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helped us on our way. Yet another barranco, La Quinta, which again obliged us to walk. We all eagerly assailed an almond tree we found on the edge of the ravine, and as many of us put the almonds into our mouths at the same time, we suffered together, for, alas! they were bitter. The ever-faithful Lorenzo disappeared a little way down the ravine, and brought back with him three bunches of delicious white and red grapes, weighing three or four pounds at least. We were delighted to get them, and soon devoured an unconscionable quantity. It was now 11 a.m., and as we had breakfasted at five, we were hungry as well as thirsty. Hunger, however, is easily satisfied by fruit when the thermometer is 86° F. (30° C.) in the shade.

Still ascending, we had splendid panoramic views, which culminated at a point overlooking Adeje, on the western side of the Barranco Infierno. This part of Tenerife, looked at from a distance, appears tolerably level near the sea. It is only in appearance, however, for the marks on the surface of the ground looking like cracks are all barrancos. Between the mountains and the littoral is a ridge-like plateau, which we have been traversing. Here, although the even contour of the ground has been apparently preserved, it is in reality cut up by the barrancos, which, beginning in the mountains, divide the land into innumerable and deep ravines.

One of these, the Barranco Infierno, from its great depth and narrowness, is considered an object worth visiting. Its entrance, formed of two huge rocks, like gates, opens on the flat, cultivated plain surrounding Adeje. Near the summit of the pillar of this "gate" we stopped to see the view stretched out beneath. A path, steep and winding, leads downwards from this point to the plain which in apparently unbroken regularity stretches thence to the sea. Small bays, edged with white foam, which is again surrounded by deep blue sea, form the coast line beyond Adeje, lying midway across the plain, and surrounded by green crops, like an oasis in the desert. Glas says that in his time the Count of Gomera had a thousand negroes as slaves to cultivate the sugar-cane in this plain of Adeje, so it must then have been very

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well watered, as it is now. Adeje belongs still to the Count of Gomera. It is a place of some importance now, as in the days of the Guanches, when it was a royal residence. Though only six miles from Guia, it has taken us hours to reach this point. Perhaps these islands are more broken up into mountains and chasms than any other portion of the globe. Hence to judge of their size from maps is misleading. Standing on the pinnacle above the barranco gates, we can see the rough and rugged hills which lie between the barrancos, stretching on and on to the south-west, while a mountain on our left is topped by a table plateau. The rocks on which we stand are so hot that as I write I am obliged to raise one foot at a time off their scorching surface. The Barranco Infierno runs in a north-easterly direction between Adeje and the chain of mountains surrounding the old crater of the Cañadas, where it takes its rise.

The walls of the barranco are precipitous and rocky, often in many places a thousand feet high, wild dragon trees grow between the spurs, and what in the rainy season must be large waterfalls, but now reduced to cascades, come down in leaps between the cliffs.

Leaving this splendid bird's-eye panorama, we crossed some rocks burning with the heat of the sun, and destitute of the most infinitesimal amount of shade. Presently our path went round a hillside, which led us into a valley in the hills, partially cultivated, and with a trickling stream meandering at its bottom, the water of which was guided in different directions for the purposes of irrigation. A few trees straggled over the hillside. One gigantic pine threw its welcome shade across our path, tempting us to rest. These old trees are few and far between, and stand in these upper valleys like sentinels, the monarchs of past forests.

We soon dismounted, and released the pack-horse from his load. The canteen was emptied, and one of the men ran down the hillside to the water, and brought up a canful. We all made a good luncheon, it being now 12.30. The men had gofio, and we

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had hard-boiled eggs and bread. They gave us some gofio, and we gave them eggs. The water, proving good and sparkling, completed our repast. The path on which we encamped was sloping. A little above us stood the horses, glad of the rest and shade. Between them and us the men sat on the ground at their breakfasts, all, from the horses to ourselves, in the shadow of the pine. Beyond, where the valley opened, we could see the blue Atlantic, and in the far distance the hazy, rotund form of Gomera. On the hillside opposite a couple of houses and a few green trees formed a pleasing foreground. Stretching ourselves along the path in various positions, with coats or rugs for pillows, we were glad to have a siesta. The men followed our example, and the horses' heads drooped as we all with one accord journeyed to the land of Nod. How long this might have lasted it would be difficult to say had not one of the horses in his dreams slipped his hind-leg down the bank, and in the endeavour to recover himself made a noise which wakened us all. It was time to start, so, repacking and mounting, we left our pleasant siesta-camp at 2.15 p.m.

This pine proved, however, to be only a foretaste of more to come. Turning a corner soon after leaving it, we entered what had once been a pine forest, but now consisted of isolated trees. They were sufficiently close, however, to form a partial shade, and gave much pleasure to the senses. Their perfume carried us back to the delightful pine forests of Norway. It is curious how a scent is a powerful recaller of scenes and places perhaps forgotten. Leaving the belt of pines, we reached the open, and coming upon a little house all by itself, rode into the courtyard. The woman invited us to enter out of the sunshine, so we dismounted. The house was miserably poor, a mere hovel; but the misery in a warm climate is never so acute or apparent as in a cold. The rags and tatters which partially covered the limbs of the little girl and her two brothers were unfelt as a matter of hardship; they only formed a question of decency. In an inner room the woman showed us a quantity of retama bushes, brought from the mountains, with which to feed the



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cows. The animals of Tenerife are very fond of retama leaves.

Leaving this kindly shelter, we ascended still upwards to the brow of a hill, and crossing near the head of three barrancos, entered again the scattered pine woods. We dismounted for a little, as riding when it is a perpetual ascent becomes tiring. Sometimes we sat down for a few minutes to enjoy the intense quiet and peacefulness that always seems to reign in a pine forest. Before starting I had often wished we could have travelled without so many attendants, but never were men less trouble. The people of these islands have learned the art of sitting quietly. The men always sat apart from us unless we joined them of our own accord. Their conversations, carried on in low tones and musical native language, never interrupted ours; and when perfect stillness seemed most desirable and in accordance with the peace around, Nature spoke to their senses in the same language in which she addressed ours, and they sat without moving or speaking, as motionless as their native pines.

We reached about 5.15 the head of the Barranco Infierno, which we crossed. It is even here a deep and magnificent gorge, covered to the bottom, like the neighbouring mountains, with scattered pines. All day as we ascended the sloping mountain sides the views have been glorious. Above us is the outer edge of the chain surrounding the Cañadas, while below the basaltic pillars forming the entrance to the Infierno stand out with marked and stately distinctness. The sea appears like a mass of clouds, and the line of demarcation between it and the heavens is lost.

Most of the descents into the barrancos were bad, and although I rode down, John had to dismount, the want of nails in his horse's shoe making the animal unsafe. I had the better horse of the two; that is to say, he was an old hand, and knew his work. The other was a young horse about four, and still learning, and he became tired sooner. But both animals proved good, safe, and affectionate.

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We hastened on our way, as it was getting late, and we had still some distance to go before reaching Villa Flor. The track continued through pine trees, the ground was tolerably level, and the path smooth, so we made rapid progress. Nevertheless night fell before we reached our destination. Fortunately there was moonlight, and the twilight does not fall so quickly at this height as in the valleys near the sea. The last half-hour of our journey the road descended. Finally, passing a cistern and watercourse, we reached a hillock overlooking the town, which the church and a magnificent pine tree divided between them. The situation seemed favourable, as we were within moderate reach of both town and water. Hastily therefore we unpacked. Lorenzo, John, and I arranged the camp, while Eloyhu and José went in search of bread, milk, and water. Before they returned we had a good fire of the dry sticks lying about on the ground. The one comfort that is thoroughly enjoyable when travelling is a cup of tea; this, provided the tea is one's own, is always obtainable in camp, where the boiling of the water is personally supervised. Without hesitation we can say that, notwithstanding the inconveniences attached thereto, we enjoyed better health living in camp and choosing our own meal-hours and food, than when obliged to live in the houses of the kindly inhabitants, who, hospitably intent as they were, could not understand—always excepting the well-educated classes—the needs of people travelling ten or twelve hours a day. Besides, the hours being different, we could never get a substantial meal early in the morning, and had frequently to start upon a cup of coffee or nothing at all. Against camp life of course is the fact that one does not see the people at home or get to know their customs or habits. A due admixture of both is best.

*September 14th, Friday.*—We did not get up this morning until quite late, about 6.30, a luxurious hour compared with the last few days. During the beginning of the night we were considerably disturbed by the wind. Although perfectly calm at sunset, it rises about nine o'clock, and blows strongly until it

again dies at sunrise. The slit in the doorway of the tent we had, as usual, tied loosely, and the wind entering raised the canvas wall at my side. This was a little too airy, so I had to shake myself wide awake, strike a match, and light the candle, in order to replace more firmly the stones which we had put round the edges. By the way, the luminous matchbox which we always carried with us proved invaluable on such occasions. The water-bottle in felt case which John carried slung across his back in the day-time we also always brought inside, and hung upon the "spider" on the post at our heads. The "spider" is a strap on which are fastened brass hooks. This is strapped firmly on the upright pole at the inner end of the tent, and is invaluable upon which to hang anything.

After breakfast we procured a basin from a woman living in a field near our camp, armed with which and other necessaries we went up through the fields to a cistern, where a spout afforded us the means of procuring water *ad libitum*. The rest of the morning was spent in admiring our situation, watching the natives gathered around us, consulting with Lorenzo about guides for the Peak and the day the schooner might be expected at Adeje or Guia, getting food for our journey, and paying for it. This latter I enter with intent as a separate item. The Canary Islands, above all other islands or mainlands, are blessed or otherwise with a superfluity of old and new coinage. The Spanish currency is supposed to be decimal. It is divided into *pesetas*, *reales*, and *centenios*. Instead, however, of counting simply by the first and last, which are decimals, the reckoning is usually made by *reales* only. The *peseta* is equivalent to about a franc, or tenpence, and the *real* to twopence-halfpenny, so that, in order to reduce an account of say thirty *reales* to *pesetas*, it must be divided by four instead of by ten, as it would of course be in decimals. If this were all, however, it would not matter, but the old coinage of *tostones* and *cuartos* is also used. A *toston* equals about a shilling. There are also half-tostones and quarter; the latter, however, are always called *fiscas*. Besides these there are others of equal value,

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but irregular in shape and size, which were thus stamped and issued from the Peruvian mint. They are commonly called cut coins, and are really irregular pieces of pure silver stamped without being shaped, not, as is generally supposed, perfect coins which have been mutilated.* They will soon be valuable, as the Spanish Government are calling them in. Owing to their being pure silver, they can be melted and re-issued mixed with alloy, as current coin, thus causing a saving to the Government. To these must be added the dollar, of which the *toston* forms a fourth part, and the *peseta* a fifth. The old copper coins called *cuartos* are puzzling beyond measure, and nothing will make them pair evenly with the new. Forty-two of them equal a *toston*, and thirty a *peseta*. Not content with coins in the flesh, there are several of the imagination as well. The *peso* is three shillings, but has no equivalent in money, and the *real de plata*, which is fourpence-halfpenny, is likewise only a shadow. When a countryman therefore tells you that what you have bought costs a *peso* and five *reales de plata*, and you bring out of your pocket *tostones*, *pesetas*, *reales de Avilion*, *fiscas*, *centenios*, and *cuartos*, besides dollars and half-dollars, the result is an utter collapse of the mind to grasp the amount. Fortunately Lorenzo proved as honest as polite, and when first starting he told me what to enter in my account-book for the different items. We were also supplied by a friend with a list of the coins. Practical demonstration proved best, however; and a few weeks' catering and paying of guides and



STAMPED PIECES OF SILVER USED AS CURRENT COIN.

* I took a number of these coins to the coin-room in the British Museum, and after a careful examination, the authorities there decided that they were stamped when in this shape, and were not whole coins cut after being stamped. They have none of these coins in the Museum.

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horses soon rendered us familiar—no, acquainted—with the coinage. Familiarity came in the course of a few months. Many foreigners who have lived in the islands for years, not having travelled therein, confess that they do not yet know the coinage.

Just as I had settled down under the shadow of our guardian pine to write, by some unfortuitous circumstance the ink spilled, a little going upon my dress. There were several women sitting and standing about, as usual, watching us and our tent with wonder. Whatever else they did not understand, here at any rate was a matter within their cognisance; and one comely, bright-faced dame said if I would go to her house, she would take out the stain with a lemon. Accordingly off we started down the steep hill leading into one end of the village. Near the bottom our escort turned off into a comfortable farmhouse, and triumphantly produced us as break-the-monotony-of-ordinary-life trophies. There were several women and one man in the house, besides a few children. Placing me on the window-seat, two of the women produced lemons, and commenced the process of extracting the ink, which succeeded fairly well. Meanwhile our persons, the objects of our journey, whether we were husband and wife or brother and sister, our nationality, and various other matters were freely discussed before us, under the supposition that we did not understand. The good woman on the hill, when asking me to come down here, placed herself in front of me, and with her hands on her knees, stooping forward, rapidly, volubly, and at the extreme pitch and power of a remarkably shrill voice, made known her wishes with regard to the lemon and my dress. The consequence was that, what with the really deafening shouting in my ear and the country accent, I could not and did not understand her until she had repeated herself several times, each time louder and faster than the last. Naturally she thought I did not understand Spanish. Here in her own house, however, and speaking to her relations, her voice and theirs being natural and subdued, we understood all they said. The delusion, however, was kept

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up, for every time they addressed us it was done with a shout, under the kind but mistaken impression that we were deaf. Whilst one woman rubbed at my dress, another employed herself in cracking almonds, insisting on our eating them. They also stuffed our pockets with apples. Another discussion as to whether we had any children arose upon my noticing the children gazing at us, their rosy cheeks, blue eyes, and fair hair betraying their partial descent at least from the heroic Guanches. I waited until they finally decided in the negative, and then upset their conclusions. I found wherever we stayed in the islands that the women all became intensely interested in anything relating to children, and the delight culminated and questions showered apace when I produced the photographs of mine. The "little folk" prove a bond of union throughout the world, even though languages differ. Our hosts were much distressed at the fruit season being over; they, however, took us down to the garden, or orchard—*huerto* in Spanish, but we have no real equivalent for it—below the house, to see if any fruit yet remained on the trees. The united efforts and searching of three or four maidens, as they ran laughing in and out among the trees, produced only a few small yellow plums, more the size of a berry than a plum, with a sweet, luscious taste. As we returned they wanted us to re-enter the house, and it was with much difficulty we succeeded in getting back to the camp, where we expected dinner, previously ordered, to be waiting. It was between one and two o'clock, and we found the walk up the hill excessively hot. Dinner had not, however, arrived, so we prepared to take a photograph of the camp and people gathered around.

Presently a woman, dressed in the usual cotton skirt and jacket, with a kerchief over her head, arrived, carrying two tin saucepans, like cans. They contained our dinner. I found a stone under the shadow of the pine, where I spread the cloth, metaphorically speaking. The tins contained excellent *sopa de arroz* (rice soup) and *puchero*, the national dish,* to which we

* See Appendix.

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did full justice, while the woman sat a yard off, watching each mouthful we ate, and half a dozen boys and some men hung about in the vicinity.

It was a pleasant situation for a camp. We were on a promontory, or hillock, whose three sides next the town were steep and carefully terraced. Towards the north, the side by which we had entered, the ground sloped gently until it ended abruptly in the bluff on which we had pitched. Two fine specimens of the Canary pine, one of them hollow, like gigantic sentinels, guard the footpath which runs between them, westward of our tent. Down at our feet lies the little village of Villa Flor, so immediately beneath us that we can see its streets. Our men save themselves journeys by standing on the brink of the rock overhanging the town and shouting their wants to any passing inhabitant in the streets below. Villa Flor is the name of the village, and Chasna is the district. The town is delightfully situated, enclosed on the north, east, and west by mountains, whilst southward the land slopes away until it meets the sea some miles off. The town itself is clean and peaceful-looking, the walls white, and the roofs of red tiles. The plaza and a church with an open belfry, in which hang two bells, are its principal features. As we look right into its streets the square, empty a moment before, is crossed by a boy who drives a yoke of oxen; next come a couple of nuns, then a woman in a black dress and a yellow handkerchief over her head and shoulders, driving a donkey in front of her, while she walks behind; and anon the square is left to its solitude and hot sunshine. The views around are of a bird's-eye nature; we do not seem to be 4,000 feet above the sea. Yet the atmosphere is decidedly cooler, and we could imagine no better resort during the summer for the inhabitants of the towns than this pretty village. Those who long for a wintry climate can get it in Chasna, where in winter the snow lies as it does in an old-fashioned English winter. A mineral spring, the only one in Tenerife, is here, pine woods and the Cañadas are within walk or ride, whilst the paths are not of that stony nature which

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renders the former unpleasant and the latter dangerous. The fruits of the temperate zone come to perfection in this district, and an Englishman might pluck apples in his orchard, regardless of the fact that the latitude is 28° 10′.

All day the people come and go about our camp. They take us *en route* from one part of the village to the other, which means going up a hill and down a hill, instead of walking fifty yards on level ground! Just now a woman, bearing a large wicker-covered bottle upon her head, walks through the men and speaks to Lorenzo; she then comes over to us, bringing a handkerchief full of sweet almonds. Our men immediately set to work on these and crack them, until we say, "Hold! Enough!" Everyone is kind and attentive, and our own men never seem as if they could do enough for us in the way of little unasked attentions.

Further discussions as to our guides followed. Two contended for the honour—or the money—and we could not decide which was the better. The best guide, a man called Ramon, was absent, unfortunately, and the man we chose turned out very indifferent indeed. The two came and sat or stood by our fire or hung round us all day, while we tried to get information about them and their capabilities, and failed utterly. The only clue we had was that one was known to the *alcalde*, so we chose him.

A pleasant ride and splendid view is to be got at the Sombrerita, a mountain in the chain surrounding the Cañadas. We had been recommended to ride there by Mr. Charles Smith, so John said he would go and get some views of the Peak, which has never been photographed from this side. I thought Lorenzo was going with him, and when I asked him if he were not, he said, "No." He must take care of the señorita. He evidently considered himself my bodyguard. José had taken his horse to San Miguel, to get the shoe put right, so John rode the pack-horse, and, with a guide, started for the summit. He has given me the following account of his ride:—

"Starting at about 2.30 p.m. with a boy, bright-eyed and sun-

burnt, our road lay through the sentinel pine trees and past the round reservoir by the side of which we had performed our ablutions. The track ran up the mountains, roughly speaking, parallel with the watercourse which feeds this reservoir, nearly to the spring-head. The watercourse was open to the air all the way, and after leaving the close vicinity of our camp, was not even made of cemented stones, but simply of scooped-out pine trunks, of a small size, laid end to end, the higher one slightly overlapping that below. When passing over dipping ground, heaps of uncemented stones serve as piles for its support. A slight touch would upset any one of these frail supports, but not one seemed to have ever been disturbed; so much is water esteemed here that such an act would be deemed a heinous crime. Now and again these half pipes of wood were simply laid upon the ground. The boy removed any pine leaves or stones that had fallen into the course whenever he noticed them, an act of consideration which I believe any native here would be equally punctilious about performing. Though speaking generally this watercourse marked our path up the mountain, every now and again we crossed it in our zigzag windings, necessary to enable the horse to ascend with the least difficulty. Steadily up we go, passing a few Canary pines, growing sturdily in the rocky and arid soil. Pausing to breathe the horse, we turn and look down towards Villa Flor. A white, foggy mist is creeping slowly, but quite perceptibly, up the land from the sea, and already the little volcanic hillock where our tent is pitched is nearly enveloped in its wreathy folds. The hillock has dwindled so much in size that, were it not for the two large pines, it would scarcely be separately distinguishable. Save for the gurgling of the little stream of water in the wooden pipe hard by and the languid buzzing of the flies, not a sound breaks the silence, oppressive almost in the intense heat. It is 3 p.m., and we must push on in order to be back at the camp before it is late. It will not be dark, for to-morrow is the full moon. The road now runs along the left side of a small barranco, and then across a more level plateau, followed by a

climb up some steep rocks, that tried the sinews of the horse, then across another level plain, covered with reddish earth, which, where the mountain again begins, suddenly changes to rocks and rocky mould, of a grey colour. So up, up, we go. We approach the top, those precipitous, yellow-looking rocks forming the hat-shaped summit which had been so prominent an object from our tent. The way leads in a gradual slope almost completely round to the east, we ascending by the northern side. We tie the horse to retama bushes, some of which it has been trying to eat for the last half-hour, for during that time we have been in the region of the codeso and retama. The small boy leads the way to the actual summit up a steep, rocky place, where we walk as upstairs, though not a difficult climb. The summit is round and flat, of about fifty yards diameter, which directly we have gained, a truly magnificent view of the Peak is suddenly seen. All the way up Teide is out of sight, and therefore coming upon the mountain suddenly in this manner, and not gradually, makes the view all the more magnificent. The scene which has burst into view is sublime. The Peak appears to rise directly from the far edge of the plain across which we approached the Sombrerita. The Cañadas are not visible, so that the portrait of the Peak from this mountain is a three-quarter one. It was about 4.45, and the setting sun was brightly illuminating the western edge of the crater, and throwing into golden profile against the sky that shoulder of the mountain from whose top the final cone arises. The deep furrows which seam Teide's mighty frame from top to bottom looked black and foreboding, relieved only by the dazzling whiteness of the curious triangular patch, with its two attendant tails, just below the cone a little to the eastward. The sky is pale blue, and is quite clear, save for a few light, fleecy bits of cloud scattered here and there over the great dome. At the same time a strong and fresh north-west wind is blowing, which makes it desirable to button up coats and put on plaids. Retracing our steps, and passing to the opposite (south) edge of the plateau, carefully walking to avoid stumbling over the many

loose stones lying in wild confusion around, and steering in and out of the scattered codeso and retama bushes, we reach our destination. The side here is a short precipice, and we at once obtain an extensive bird's-eye view, or panorama. This mountain, as it were, closes in the defile at the bottom of which is the district of Chasna. The view therefore towards the south takes in Villa Flor, besides extending far around that village. A thick bank of fleecy clouds, rising some hundreds of feet into the air, yet upon which we look down, completely veils all view of the sea. Villa Flor is seen below in the far distance to the south-west, its whitewashed houses dwindled in size to those for dolls. The setting sun illuminates the tops of the ridges of the barrancos, throwing into sombre grandeur their hazy depths. The air is very dry. Certainly the most remarkable feature of the view on this side of the mountain is the curious bank of clouds lying in the depths below. It seems firm and solid. Like some vast sea of white wool spread out over the earth, and extending into hazy vistas of distance, it looks as if we had only to descend the mountain a little way to step upon its surface and find a soft path to the distant horizon. Several little sharp-pointed cones, sticking up here and there in the landscape, testify to the volcanic nature of the scene. The pervading colours are dull red, with patches of white stones at places, and the dark green of the scattered pine trees. The little village of Villa Flor lies embedded in greenery, which makes it a smiling spot amid the stern ruggedness of the surrounding country. The temperature at the top was 56° F. (13·4° C.). I returned by the same route."

I had to retire quite within my tent in order to get any quiet to-day for writing. The whole village, I think, deserted the plaza for us this afternoon. One event deserves record. Lorenzo disappeared into the town for an hour, and returned looking ten years younger and fifty per cent. handsomer. He had shaved. About sunset we lit the fire for tea, but much later John arrived. Fortunately there was a moon to light

the road. The day and supper over, our visitors gone, we, comfortably at home in our slippers, felt at liberty to enjoy the peaceful and picturesque scene around. The bright moonlight made everything distinct, and threw strong shadows from the pines on the ground below. A couple of horses rested beneath their shade, whilst another, who sometimes objected to his companions, stood on the hill alone. Between the horse and the fire the men lay or sat, their faces warmly coloured by the ruddy glow of the firelight, or when turned towards the moon by the pale cold rays of the Queen of Night. No sound broke the stillness in our immediate vicinity save the crickets. Voices mellowed by distance and the occasional bark of a dog showed that the villagers were not yet asleep. On a little plateau by ourselves, our camp, guarded by the sentinel pine and the silvery moon, was soon wrapped in silence and slumber.

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# CHAPTER VII.

*SPRING OF GUAJARA—LAS CAÑADAS—ALTA VISTA.*

> . . . The hills were stone and sand,
> Not strewn with scented red or green,
> All empty as a dead man's hand.
> *  *  *  *
> No flocks were there; no shepherd's cry
> Awoke the echoes of the sky.
>
> ROBERT BUCHANAN.

*September 15th, Saturday.*—We started this morning at 6.45 a.m. Our breakfast, at 5.30, consisted of coffee, bread, honey, and eggs. We carried with us for the journey a fowl, roasted by the woman who cooked our dinner, a large, open basket filled with grapes, figs, apples, pears, prickly pears, almonds, and bread, besides the staple gofio. The latter was of wheat, by far the best. A woman brought it to our camp yesterday in a square piece of strong linen, with fringe at either end, like a towel. As we had nothing so suitable in which to put the gofio, we bought the cloth. The peasants here almost always carry gofio in this way, tying the corners firmly together. The food is particularly good for travelling long distances far from the haunts of men. It is portable and very sustaining, a little being sufficient for a meal. If necessary, it can be eaten dry, but is better mixed with water when procurable.

Our cavalcade was considerably augmented by the new guide, who brought a mule to carry the two barrels of water necessary for the ascent of the Peak. When giving him instructions last

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night, Lorenzo, as usual, impressed upon him that when we said early we meant early.

Regretfully we left our charming camping ground and the pretty village of Villa Flor. For the first time we walked down the steep path leading into the town, up and down which our men had run so often. Mounting at the bottom, we rode through the clean little village to its further side. Here we crossed the river-bed and climbed the side of the barranco, a hill corresponding to that on which our camp was pitched, and bounding the town on its eastern side. Much of the land is terraced, some of the walls, made of large, loose stones, supporting the earth being quite twenty or thirty feet high. The terraces were planted with a second crop of potatoes, about as far on as ours would be in April. Reaching the top of the barranco, we found ourselves on a ridge, along whose summit we rode northwards. The ground was, as usual, rough and stony. Some distance to the left of our path lies the spring of "bitter water," as the inhabitants say, really the mineral one I mentioned before. Many acres just here are covered with stones of a uniform size, about that of a man's fist. They seemed as if showered upon the ground from a volcanic eruption.

Since leaving Villa Flor we have in vain looked for the sea. The curious bank of clouds that always envelops this island at a certain height being now partially below us, or rather we being on a level with it, the ocean is completely hidden.

We arrived at the last human habitation, a little hut, 5,500 feet above the sea by our aneroid, at 8.15 a.m. The temperature was 92° F. (33·5° C.) in the sun; we could find no shade in which to put the thermometer.

Half an hour later I saw with eager curiosity the first specimen of the world-famed retama of the Peak of Tenerife; the height was 6,000 feet. We were just entering the Valley of Cauca, a gorge in the hills, down whose centre is a cemented watercourse. Here we dismounted for ten minutes, while our men had their breakfast of bread and eggs, and we all drank

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of the welcome water. The thermometer was 102° F. (39° C.) in the sun, a slight breeze tempering the heat. Our path followed the pleasant rippling water until we lost it. We thought we had left the last pine behind us when the retama began, but we were mistaken, for in the middle of the valley rose "the last of the Mohicans." The situation was sheltered, which probably accounted for its existence, although the height was 6,500 feet. Its solitariness pleaded with the destroyer for life. It stood—and, we hope, stands—in exactly the centre of the valley, precipices surrounding and dwarfing the height, but not the majesty. The ground here is covered with lava and scoriæ, whilst the rounded form and spiral leaves of a retama and an occasional grasshopper are the only signs of life.

Amid such scenes and fastnesses the unfortunate Guanches were driven by the persecutions of their conquerors to take refuge, and from this inhospitable soil were forced by hunger to make raids for the necessaries of life on the settlements below.

The path, which had been level along the bottom of the ravine, now began at its upper end, where the rocks closed in, to ascend. Turning sharply to the right, we came upon a bluff mountain, rising high and perpendicularly above us. This was Guajara, rendered interesting to us and all future travellers from having been the residence for some weeks of Mr. Piazzi Smyth, the astronomer, and his wife in 1856. He did not reach it by this side, but from Orotava, crossing the Cañadas, as we are about to do, but in the opposite direction. The pass by which we are to enter the Cañadas lies beneath Guajara, though above us. Winding up past a stream, trickling, or rather oozing, down the hillside, we reached the top of the Pass of Guajara at about 9.50 a.m., a height of 7,225 feet. Neither figures nor words can convey any idea of the magnificent scene, of surpassing grandeur, which broke upon us. The pass is a break in the crater wall between Guajara and Sombrerita. Its summit is a narrow ridge, one side of which, the southern, we have ascended. On our right rises the steep crest of

Guajara, on our left the high ridge leading to the Sombrerita, behind us the valley of Cauca, partially hidden by the ravine, at right angles to it, up which we have come. At our feet is a narrow, winding path, leading down into the bed of the old crater, the Cañadas. But before us lies one of those views that overpowers the soul with its majesty and overwhelms it with awful sublimity. Stretching right and left beneath lie the Cañadas, looking from this height like a smooth plain of sand. There is nothing to equal this crater elsewhere on our earth, for it is nearly eight miles in diameter. Our eyes encounter an obstacle on the further side, and raising them, we find the view and the Cañadas bounded by El Pico de Teide, crowning the scene in his awful majesty. The feeling which the sublime exercises over the mind is akin to terror. The side of the Peak facing us is very precipitous, and black with the blackness of lava. The point is well defined, and, although slightly broken at the edge, looks indeed a peak. No sound breaks the intense silence around, save the twitter of a bird come to drink of the water oozing down the ravine behind us. The quietness of ages now rests upon these vast solitudes, but the time was when, standing on this precipitous edge, one could have seen below in that desolate cauldron a seething boiling, restless molten mass, rising and falling with the intense heat of subterranean fires. The past of the Cañadas is the present of Mauna Loa, in the Sandwich Islands.

The road or path to the crater below is formed of loose, sharp stones, and one feels as though walking in a quarry. It is impossible to ride down, and there is every probability of a weak ankle being sprained. At every turn in the zigzag path we pause, the grandeur of the scene being more and more overpowering as by descending we add to the height of Teide and the crater wall. The Cañadas, before appearing as an absolutely flat surface, the yellôw pumice of which, like sand, has been left level and smooth by the retreating tide, we can now perceive, are much broken and intersected very irregularly by low hills and mounds of red lava. The



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actual surface of dark grey lava or yellow pumice where it lies between the mounds is level, as even as a tennis-court, but by no means as smooth. These hills, hillocks, or mounds are formed of very rough red rocks; in fact, they seem all edge and no surface. The lava is interspersed with the greenish grey of the rotund retama bushes, somewhat of the colour and form of lavender, but coarser.

We descend on foot at 10.10 a.m., and in twenty minutes reach the bottom, 6,500 feet above the sea, a level the same as that of the Valley of Cauca. The height of the pass above the Cañadas was therefore 775 feet.

Near the bottom we passed a few rough wooden goat-sheds, and a little further we saw water trickling down. Under the shadow of a rock we sit and eat some fruit, while the animals rest and have a feed and a drink at the "Spring of Guajara." This spring is the only water in the entire region of the Cañadas, and as such is invaluable to the wanderer in those solitudes. Its most frequent visitors, however, are the goats and birds. Our first visit to it was not to be our last. The spring or pool which forms the main reservoir is about a couple of feet square and a few inches deep; it is covered on three sides and the top by stones, placed there by both nature and art, and by this means is preserved for the use of man alone. Tricklings from the side of the mountain where the spring is situated saturate the ground on both sides, which is perforated by holes dug by the goatherds for their flocks, water more or less muddy being in them, where our horses slaked their thirst. A cool breeze unexpectedly is wafted across from Gomera, which, through a breach in the Cañadas' walls, we can see in the distance.

The view of the Peak from here, as from the Sombrerita, gives the break in the crater which all craters have on the side towards which the wind never blows, and which consequently does not get the fall of ashes and cinders. This side of the Peak is also marked with white patches of rock, which no doubt have been frequently mistaken for snow. The lava flows into the plain of the Cañadas beneath are distinctly marked. Where

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we sit we face El Teide. A few yards immediately beneath us lies a long strip of ground, formed of yellow pumice, like the bed of a river; beyond it, and raised above it some feet, is a rough brown rocky ridge of lava, scattered over with retama bushes. From the midst of these, lying to the westward, are "Los Roques de las Cañadas." They are doubtless similar to the "temporary chimneys" of Mauna Loa, save that this vast crater cooled one day, when these crags became permanent instead of temporary. It seems to us as if we were in a basin, one side of which is the Peak and the other Guajara. In reality, however, the Peak is a cone or sugar-loaf rising from the midst of a basin whose edge is formed by the old crater wall surrounding the Cañadas. At the further side, however, to the north and north-west, the hollow between the cone and the wall has been partially filled in, or the wall broken down, so that the slope from the summit of Teide to the sea is, roughly speaking, unbroken.

Some goats, coming to drink at the well and shelter beneath the rocks during the midday heat, were evidently much discomposed at seeing us in possession of both water and rock. After a short chase the men caught a couple of the pretty short-haired creatures, who ceased struggling when they found we desired their milk, not their lives. The canteen produced a saucepan, into which they were milked. Goat's milk is very delicious when fresh, not having then any of that strong flavour and odour which it acquires when kept. Fruit and milk to feed the body and the magnificent Peak and grand Cañadas to inspire the soul were nectar and ambrosia indeed.

Strengthened and refreshed, we mounted, and at 11.50 a.m. pursued our way. Crossing the stony ground, we reached the red lava, and winding in and out of lumps of lava and retama bushes, we soon reached an area of black cinders. These make a dreadful road. They are hard, rough, and gritty, so, however much trodden down, never become malleable. By the way, our horses, like all the animals in Tenerife, are excessively fond of the retama, at which they make "grabs" in passing. The stems or branches of the retama are strong and thick in com-

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parison with the needle-shaped leaves. Frequently my horse, regardless of me, and thinking only of the sweet greenish grey leaves, has buried me in the bushes and caught my stirrup on the branches. A blow from the arriero would send him on so suddenly that he had no time to back out of the bush or to consider whether I were still on his back or had left a foot behind. The men, thinking I might be hurt, spoke sharply to the animal, but it was impossible to refuse the good and patient little horse a mouthful of juicy food under a burning sun, with a scorching soil beneath.

After leaving the cinders we got upon a sort of yellow ochre shingle, a little better, as it was softer, but heavy walking, something like going through a ploughed field when the mould is light and dry. Nothing was to be seen around save the living, and the bleached skeletons of the dead retama bushes. The tinkling of the goat-bells was the only sign of life inhabiting these solitudes, but the varied colour and substance of the lava-strewn ground gave an interest to a scene that would otherwise have been desolate in the extreme.

Suddenly in this deserted region we came upon a tiny hut, built against a lava flow and formed of lava. The owner, a goatherd, stood in front of it, interested and curious as to the invaders of his happy hunting ground. He might have been a Guanche, so tall, straight, and fine-looking, yet scantily clothed, was he. One could imagine the last Guanche thus run to earth, and with all the dignity and despair of which that noble race was capable, here awaiting his persecutors. The goatherd standing thus alone in the desert, a skin bag slung across his shoulders and a staff in his hand, was also suggestive of John the Baptist.

Making some muttered excuse, our guide ran towards him, and after a few minutes' consultation returned, bringing the other with him. We were rather surprised to find our guide was depending upon the goatherd to lead us across the Cañadas, and it caused us some misgivings as to the worthy man's capabilities, which proved not to be without foundation.

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Our pace was a rapid walk, sufficient in this heavy ground for both men and horses. After a time we had to stop to rearrange the baggage, which, notwithstanding the splendid way the men packed it on the animals, had become loose with the rough travelling. All this time there was not the vestige of a path. We were picking our way over yellow ochre plains of sand and up and down and along the summits of small hills of red lava rock. Often we had to dismount while the horses climbed and scrambled up these mounds, jumping and picking their way over the rocks. By rocks I do not mean those firm, hard basaltic rocks, more or less smooth, to which one is accustomed, but masses of smelted earth, somewhat of the consistency and appearance of coke, but the size of rocks, and containing not a square inch of smooth surface on top or side. About 1.30 p.m. we dismounted to rest, while a discussion as to the track went on among the men. Our precious Chasna guide knew as much about the way as we did, so if the goatherd were at fault, we were in danger of being lost. When remounting, a curious incident happened. It took us a minute or two to mount; and when ready to start, not a vestige of the other three men and two horses could be seen. We followed, as we thought, in their footsteps, but presently lost the tracks. A little further on we saw a break in the line of rock, so made for it, but when we reached the opening, found it a *cul-de-sac*—a bay of sand surrounded by precipitous hills of red lava. There was nothing for it but to retrace our steps, but where to go next was the difficulty. We doubled back on our own tracks, carefully looking for those of our companions. On both sides of us were high ridges of lava, apparently inaccessible. Coming at last to where we had mounted, we stopped, whilst Lorenzo and Eloyhu whistled and shouted at the pitch of their voices. After what seemed an immense time, during which our minds were filled with nameless terrors of being lost in a desert, without food or drink, we got an answering shout from a crag above. Our path, it seems, lay straight up the red lava on our right. Of course we had to dismount, as the track indicated looked scarcely surmountable

by man, much less by a horse. We continued along the top of this lava-flow for some time, until it began to ascend towards the summit whence it came, when we followed it upwards for a little towards a defile through which we were to go, and so leave the Cañadas. Here, as our road was tolerably direct, the goatherd left us. I hope he got back safely to his flocks. We ordered out some eatables, and had a little luncheon of eggs and bread. The codeso was in bloom here; it was rather late for its blossoms, and only a few of the little white flowers remained. It was of this route across the Cañadas that Mr. Piazzi Smyth wrote thus: "The direct distance to be travelled was but four miles, and the general inclination nothing important, but the roughness was verily inconceivable. One of our reconnoitring parties a few days previously had tried a straight cut across this lava-covered plain, to save themselves the trouble of going round towards the east, to a smoother region; but after a while they became entangled amid such terrible stones, that they had to take all the baggage off their mules and carry everything on their own shoulders." We succeeded, however.

Climbing up the side of the mountain, we found on reaching the top we were on Montaña Blanca. We struck straight across it half-way down the face. This would have been an impossible feat for the horses, owing to the steep slope, but for the nature of the soil, which is a sort of loose gravel or pumice, of the same yellow ochre tinge as the plain below. As it was, they sank nearly up to their knees, and frequently slipped down the side of the mountain. The pumice is very light, a piece the size of a man's head being readily lifted. Lorenzo could not understand why I stopped my horse and asked for a large stone lying on the ground. He gave it to me, however, and I had the satisfaction of feeling its extreme lightness. No doubt he was relieved when he saw me drop the piece again without asking him to carry it. A dip in the mountain showed us Icod de los Vinos lying below, where we had stayed some days ago. It was becoming quite chilly [60° F. (15·5° C.)], although only 2.45 p.m., but we were 7,400 feet above the sea. At last

we reached Las Piedras Negras (the Black Rocks), at 3 p.m., 7,600 feet high. Lorenzo uttered a shout, and threw himself on the ground, with an exclamation of satisfaction. It seems we had struck the path from the Puerto to the Peak, which Lorenzo knew lay near Las Piedras Negras. Jumping up, he ran a few yards, where he found the footmarks of horses. Poor Lorenzo, it was a new experience to him being dragged round the country and over roads unknown; and it was with a feeling of exultation he reached his own hunting grounds and felt himself master of the situation. Indeed, we were glad, too, for we had not much faith in the Chasna guide. The recent tracks led us to hope we should meet Mr. B—— at the top, or at any rate some other travellers.

Las Piedras Negras are huge boulders scattered very sparingly on the Montaña Blanca. They look as though they had been rolled from the summit by a giant hand. Probably they were, by the one who lives in the depths of El Pico de Teide. This shoulder, over which we are now passing, well deserves its name of the White Mountain. It consists of whitish grey and yellow ochre pumice, which, contrasted with the black lava cone, seems perfectly white. Twenty minutes' more riding, and we reached the actual ascent of the Peak proper, that steep sugar-loaf which rises from the Cañadas. The height at the foot was 7,750 feet, where we dismounted to allow the horses a rest. The path here ascends abruptly, winding backwards and forwards up the mountain, bound on one side by a stream of black lava. As we sat a few yards above on the upward path, we could not but admire the scene around, barren though it be, owing to the wonderful blending of colour. Beneath us lies the yellowy red mountain, dotted over with a few inky black rocks, while on our right is a stream of thick, solid-looking black lava. The lava and pumice are so well defined that one can sit down resting a hand upon each. The pumice here is very light and porous, the holes like those in a sponge. A piece which I brought from here looks in the hand like a bit of pink sandstone. While we rest, the horses, a yard or two above us, crop the

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retama; the pack-horse wanders a long way up by himself. These horses are very independent, and yet civilised. The long journeys they take with their masters amid vast solitudes, when hunger and thirst have to be endured alike by man and beast, render both fond of each other. "A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind," and the beasts wise beyond the common.

Mounting, we started upwards. As we climbed higher the path became steeper and zigzagged in sharp, short curves. The ground was very loose and cindery. At the angles there was so little room for the horses to turn, that they had to gather their feet together and move round as if on a pivot. We nearly had a serious accident owing to this lack of space, for at one corner John's horse not gathering his hind-legs close enough to his fore, one foot slipped over the edge, and he nearly overbalanced himself down the mountain side. Being young and tired with the heavy day's work, he could not recover immediately, and John was thrown off on the outer side. Fortunately a retama bush chanced to be at this angle, which he clutched, and so saved himself from at the best a roll down the mountain. Besides being tired, the horse had cut his foot the day before, which no doubt made him tread more gingerly. I was a few yards behind, and could do nothing but sit on my horse and watch the *dénouement*. It was only a matter of seconds, but it seemed minutes at least, while the horse paused, quivering in the uncertainty as to whether his hind-feet would regain the path, or if we should see him and his rider roll to the bottom. The latter would no doubt have been the fate of both had not the rider thrown himself off, so enabling the animal, freed of his weight, to regain his balance.

Soon after we reached La Estancia de los Ingleses. This is a small plateau, 9,700 feet up.* Three enormous boulders occupy most of the space. One of them slopes in at the base, where the remains of fires and a little straw betoken that it

* The altitudes above 8,000 feet are taken from Mr. Piazzi Smyth's book, our aneroid not being scaled higher.

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has afforded shelter for both man and beast. This is the usual resting-place before ascending the Peak, as here only can shelter from sun or wind be procured. If, however, one has a tent, it is much better to halt 1,000 feet higher, at Alta Vista. Although I never heard of anyone getting a sunstroke in the islands, I have of a moonstroke. A lady who, with her husband, came thus far up the Peak, told me herself that they lay down to rest under the shadow of this boulder. The moon was full, and while asleep it crept round until it shone upon them. When wakened for the ascent, she could not stand, she was so giddy and sick, and for several days could scarcely ride her horse, as she perforce had to, owing to the distance they were from civilisation. Another still worse climb, or rather struggle, up a cinder-path, which gave no hold for the horses' hoofs, and we arrived at our destination for the night, Alta Vista (10,700 feet high). It was 4.30 p.m., and 46° F. (7·8° C.) in the shade.

This is another plateau like La Estancia, *minus* the boulders. On each side are lava streams, which, by some freak here diverging, rolled down the mountain on either side, leaving this level space. So high rises the lava, that we can see nothing behind or on either side. In front lie stretched the Cañadas and crater wall. We have no time just now, however, to admire and wonder on the situation. But little daylight is left us in which to erect our tent and settle ourselves, for night falls quickly here, carefully hidden as we are from west and north. Our first thought on reaching this spot was to look for the travellers we hoped to meet. Nothing was to be seen of them. An empty tin of preserved meat and several bottles betrayed, as we at first thought, their presence; but a closer examination showed these relics to be at least three or four days old. Later, when we reached Puerto, Lorenzo related to us with great gusto how these same unknown travellers had been unable to reach the summit, owing to a much too free use —consistent with the altitude—of the contents of the said bottles. Lady Brassey ascended the Peak as far as Alta Vista,

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but I cannot agree with her discouraging remark that from this spot the ascent is "almost an impossibility for a lady."

I said before that La Estancia is the usual halting-place. Alta Vista has been rendered famous, however, by Mr. Piazzi Smyth, the Astronomer Royal, who ascended and lived both on Guajara and here in 1856. In order to secure his tents and instruments from the wind, Mr. Smyth erected walls of pieces of lava, and many of these are still standing. Dr. Marcet in 1878 used the enclosures for twelve days, while he made



ALTA VISTA.

his observations on temperature. Inside one of these we now erected our tent and made a fire, whilst the horses inhabited the others. I was ravenously hungry, and about 5.30 sat down to the Chasna fowl, bread, and tea. A few seconds almost sufficed to boil the water at this altitude. It may be as well to mention what indeed occupied my thoughts as, seated on a stone with my back to the wall, the fire in the corner beside me and the tent in front, I ate and pondered. Many who are able from a muscular point of view to ascend the Peak fail because of inattention to the commonplace and apparently

trivial matters of eating and drinking. The rarefied air acts differently on people. Some feel capable of eating two or three meals put into one, whilst others cannot eat at all. The first ought to eat moderately, stopping before they are satisfied, while the latter ought to endeavour to eat a little. Wine of any sort ought not to be drunk, and the best fluid is coffee.

Before retiring to try and snatch a few hours' sleep, I turned to admire the scene beneath. Across the Cañadas and mountains lay a peaked shadow, perfectly gigantic in its immensity. The moonlight made every object in our vicinity distinct and clear, while it threw distant objects into a mysterious shroud, a dim religious light sufficiently clear to bring out with startling truthfulness the reflection of Teide. It was weird in the extreme to know the Peak was behind, and also the moon, to be unable to see either and yet, as in a mirror, to see the effect and reflection of both. Long did we stand enchanted and enthralled by that mountain spectre stretching over the rolling waste beneath.

The cold drove us into our tent, where, unpacking the second portmanteau, I drew thence all the warm clothing we had brought, and when enveloped in it and covered with rugs and shawls, we still felt as if sitting in the most airy garments possible. An accident occurred to our thermometer, most unfortunately. We had placed it on a rock near the tent to get the temperature, when, by some unfortuitous circumstance, it was knocked down and trampled upon in the dark. The last temperature registered was 46° F. (7·8° C.). Although of course the temperatures on the Peak have been frequently taken and are well known, it is always pleasant for one's own information to travel with a thermometer, heat and cold being comparative.

Fully aware of the necessity of husbanding my strength and recruiting after the fatigues of the day, I lay down with every intention, of sleeping; but, whether from the excitement consequent upon the knowledge of our situation or from the effects of the rarefied air, I only dozed uneasily. I thought if I wrote

a little, I might settle down better, but after fifteen minutes gave that up. Finally, notwithstanding all warnings, I felt I really *must* have something to eat. The men were all wrapped in their *mantos* outside, cowering round the fire, apparently sound asleep, but the instant I drew back the tent door Lorenzo jumped up. I believe that man always slept with one eye open. Gofio and hot milk seemed the best form of nourishment. A tin of Swiss milk and boiling water soon supplied a comfortable supper. The water boiled in a few seconds. Mr. Piazzi Smyth says it boiled at 193° F. (85·4° C.); we had no means of ascertaining the temperature, but the rapidity we noted. John, on the other hand, slept, but I felt a sort of nervous excitement which prevented me sleeping, but instead worried me by an incessant and unreasonable hunger.

The men had their meal about eight o'clock. They had brought a number of small fish, like sardines, which they put in the fire on the burning wood, and, after scorching, ate them along with gofio. The retama branches, which we found in sufficient quantities between the Estancia and Alta Vista, make excellent fires, bright and clear.

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# CHAPTER VIII.

## *THE PEAK—CAÑADAS.*

"Huge,
Fantastic pomp of structure without name
Into fleecy folds voluminous enwrapped."
W. WORDSWORTH.

The longest way round is the shortest way home.—*Proverb.*

Oh that a man might know
The end of this day's business ere it come!
But it sufficeth that the day will end,
And then the end is known.
SHAKSPERE.

*September 16th, Sunday.*—Not knowing the difficulties of the ascent before us, but hearing that it took men an hour and a half to reach the summit, I thought half an hour extra for a woman would be a fair allowance. We were anxious to reach the top before the very first streak of dawn, so arranged with Lorenzo to start at 2 a.m. It ended, however, in our becoming wide awake at 1.45 and starting then. Both guides, the Chasna one and Lorenzo, accompanied us. We tried to persuade Eloyhu and José to come too, but although they had never been up, they would not be tempted. Leaving them wrapped in their *mantos* beside a bright fire, with the horses standing asleep inside the various enclosures, we crossed the few yards of plateau behind our tent, and got immediately to the wall of trachytic lava, up which we scrambled. It was bitterly cold, and we each had a rug wrapped round us, besides coats and jackets. The moon, at its very brightest and fullest, shone down upon us, and half helped, half dazzled, by its light,

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we scrambled up and over the lava. There is not a square inch of smooth surface; it is one mass of tiny pinnacles; so boots and gloves are cut almost in pieces. The guides led, I came next, and John last. My riding costume proved very useful, as, tucking up my dress fish-wife fashion, I was able, with not only more freedom, but greater safety, to jump from crag to crag. It is really scarcely safe to move rapidly or indeed at all with dresses and petticoats as usually worn, for every tiny pinnacle acts as a hook, on which a loose garment invariably catches, when either the dress gives way or, worse, one falls. The lava is an uneven as well as a rough mass. It contains valleys and crevasses, besides being very irregular. The lumps of lava, from a few feet to several hundred cubic feet in thickness, are heaped and piled in any and every fashion, no two being alike in shape or size. Up and down these one must scramble and jump. Frequently we crossed masses of loose lava, which, looking firm and solid, we stepped upon confidently, only to feel the stone turning, when a jump to another and perhaps yet another had to be made before we reached the nearest firm rock. As this chamois-like exercise was by moonlight, not daylight, there was a certain amount of excitement and delightful uncertainty as to where one would land next. At first, after starting, we had to cry "Halt!" every few minutes to gain breath, due, I should think, more to the atmosphere than the exertion, which, although sufficiently lively, was not by any means a quite breathless performance. In the Rev. E. Alison's account of his ascent of the Peak he gives the following description of this malpais, which may give perhaps a better idea of the nature of the ground:—

"The part we arrived at was well named Mal Pais, as it was formed of immense masses of trachytic lava, thrown about in all imaginable shapes and directions, interspersed with large blocks of obsidian, some of which were like enormous bomb-shells; one or two small ones that I broke were hollow in the centre; the internal cavity was lined with thin filaments, similar to those found in flint nodules; the edges of some of the

masses of obsidian were often as sharp as those of broken wine-bottles. The blocks of lava were sometimes wide apart, and sometimes had mere slits between them, but always wide enough to swallow up a pencil if one were dropped in. Some of the lavas looked as if they had run down the Peak in a half-fluid state, and had broken into detached masses in cooling. . . . We again resumed our ascent, which, over these rough masses, was difficult and painful, as we were obliged to jump from block to block, aided by a long staff shod with steel, and occasionally to climb over some with the hands and feet."

My rug became too warm, so I handed it to Lorenzo. I suggested leaving it behind, thinking we were sure to come down the same way again. But he, wiser than I, knew we might search for it in vain, as we were following our own sweet wills in the matter of a path, there being no beaten track of any sort to the summit. Besides, I was glad indeed to have it later on, of which doubtless he was also aware I should be. We made such good speed over this portion of the way, that we left it and crossed the crater, or *Rambleta*, at the foot of the terminal cone at 2.45 a.m., just one hour after leaving Alta Vista. This plateau is not very broad, about 200 or 300 feet wide. The ascent is very gentle, so much so that it appears flat in comparison with the lava above and below, and from it rises abruptly the cone of the Peak itself. This *Piton* (the cone) is formed of pumice and ash, and is so steep that the foot refuses to grip the ground, and one sinks over the ankles in small, coarse cinders.

The slope may be best described as being an angle of 44°, though Mr. Piazzi Smyth puts it at 33°, and the Rev. E. Alison at 42°. As 44° is the greatest angle at which the body can ascend walking without falling backwards, an idea may be obtained of the steepness. The loose nature of the cone renders the climb tedious and tiresome. It is impossible to plod up it step by step, as for one step forwards one slips two backwards. It is useless to call the hands to aid the feet, there is nothing to seize hold of, and one slips back helplessly, with hands

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filled with cinders and feet and ankles enveloped in the same. We therefore took the ascent in rushes, that is to say plunged vigorously and wildly up the loose and uncertain soil for a few yards, and then sank panting on its side until ready for a fresh start. A few pieces of rocky, porphyritic lava cling to the sides in various places, and being half buried in the cinders, have a certain steadiness and solidity. It is scarcely safe to stand on them expecting support, but we utilised them as shelters from the wind, which was blowing hard and cuttingly. Finding we should reach the summit much too soon, we frequently rested for five or ten minutes behind some of these lava heaps. Here that sleep which I had courted vainly in the tent at Alta Vista overtook me, and I could willingly have slept long and soundly. A moment's delay was quite sufficient to send me nodding. I forgot to mention that for about half an hour, soon after leaving Alta Vista, I had a rather bad headache, which, however, disappeared as suddenly as it came. We were on the look-out for all sorts of extraordinary symptoms, such as travellers report overtake those who ascend the Peak; but nothing worse befell us than a too good appetite, a loss of it, and a temporary headache and drowsiness. The two latter may indeed have been caused by want of sleep in the early part of the night, and may not have been due to the altitude. I should calculate roughly that we wasted at least from half an hour to three quarters sheltering.* We reached the summit at 4 a.m., which would allow from thirty to forty-five minutes for the actual scramble up the Piton.

The highest point is a cluster of rocks on the edge of the crater. The entire wall of the crater is formed of broken and jagged porphyritic lava rocks, and is some hundred yards long by forty broad. It is elliptical, and the depth is not great: only seventy feet. The colour of the whole is white, the yellow, white, and pale green of sulphur, and soft to tread upon. The moment we reached the summit a whiff of hot, sulphur-laden air blew in our faces, nearly choking us, while the next instant it was blown away by the strong, cold wind we

* Mr. Alison says it took him forty minutes to ascend the *Piton*.

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had been encountering all night. We prepared to shelter ourselves behind the rocks and wait for the dawn. Wrapping the upper parts of our bodies in rugs, we leaned against the lava blocks; we were frequently obliged to move, however, owing to the great heat which ascended from the ground, and to the sulphurous vapours, which blinded us as they blew in our faces.

The topmost peak, beneath whose shelter we stood, is formed of a high, round, jagged rock, resting upon a group of others, like a Druid's altar, the whole about seven feet high. As I stood sheltering and endeavouring with frozen fingers to commit to paper the scene around, my compressed ink pencil could scarcely make clear marks, owing to the state of saturation the paper was in from the vapour. Our clothes and faces were all wet with the steam which issued from cracks in the ground. Some of these fissures were so hot, that we could not insert our fingers, and another inside the crater scorched while merely passing close by it. Their form was more that of pipes than cracks.

Turning eastwards, we became aware that the sky was altering slightly and almost imperceptibly from the cold, deep blue of moonlight in these latitudes. A tinge of red began to warm the horizon. This spread for an immense distance round, but was very faint. As it deepened a little, the sky above the red appeared of a brighter blue. The surrounding world now became visible, and we could better realise our position. If transported thither without the knowledge that we had ascended, we should deem ourselves on a mound in the midst of a snow-covered moor, beneath us the shadow of the Peak, thrown by the moon, lying like a dark, deep tarn. I could not see to write when we reached the top, but even the distant approach of the King of Day was sufficient to enable us to see clearly. The sulphurous vapours blew around, occasionally blotting out the landscape, and again disappearing and bringing into sight that faint pale red glow creeping mysteriously upwards, and that motionless mass of immovable snow. As the red increased, the snow, instead of disappearing into the prosaic land of clouds,



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assumed more and more the white, soft, impenetrable look of everlasting snows, solid, thick, and heavy. Seeing the near approach of her lord and master, the moon, her presence no longer needed to light softly and tenderly, with subdued radiance, the sleeping mountains and valleys, sinks westward into a dark bank of cloud, and by an optical delusion becomes elliptical as she gently disappears. Leaving the lesser for the greater glory, we turn to watch for the first appearance of the rim of the Golden King. Guajara alone, like a satellite of Teide, rears its crown above the clouds. Overhead the sky is clear, destitute of a single fleecy streak, and rapidly assuming that glorious, joyful blue whose very presence is a thing of beauty. Gradually and imperceptibly the clouds sink towards earth, and we hope that the vast ice-field will disappear, roll away, and let us view the world and all that therein is. Westward the sea becomes visible, and a line of coast. It is almost impossible, however, to discern where the sea begins and the smooth clouds of the middle distance end. Light is penetrating the valleys; and before we know, not hesitatingly or slowly, but, as it were, with a bound, the Royal Presence rises into space. Now, assuming the shape and colouring of those fruits that warm and redden beneath his rays, at one moment like a pomegranate and again dazzling us with all sorts of bewildering shapes and colours, he rises royally, with a majesty and dignity unsurpassed, shedding his light and beauty on the world, touching the mountains with glory, throwing his rays athwart the valleys, giving light and warmth and colour and life, bringing energy and help and pleasure with his presence, till, overpowered by his beauty, his majesty, and the glory of his person, men bow their heads, hide with outstretched hands his dazzling light, and look not on his face.

> "And see—the sun himself!—on wings
> Of glory up the east he springs.
> Angel of light! who, from the time
> Those heavens began their march sublime,
> Has first of all the starry choir
> Trod in his Maker's steps of fire!"

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The sun-worshippers were not far astray,

> ". . . who, morn and even,
> Hail their Creator's dwelling-place
> Among the living lights of heaven!"

It requires little effort to rise from the most glorious of creations to the Creator. Dazzled by the Presence, we perforce, with the rest of mankind, were fain to drop our eyelids and turn to earthly objects. El Teide himself, forgotten amid the delights which his own magnificent proportions afforded, was once more visible, as in a mirror. Westward his shadow, like a twin-brother, fell upon the clouds. Clear in outline, high and perfect in its cone-like form, the spectre Peak seemed in reality a second mountain. Palma lay beneath it, and formed its base. The sun turned the snow-clouds into a fleecy ocean, throwing the shadows of each one upon the other, and making a tossed and foaming sea.

The poverty of words becomes keenly felt when the heart is beating, the pulse throbbing, and the face flushing with emotions caused by the vain, utterly vain, endeavour to depicture in adequate language the glorious and overpowering majesty of nature. It seems as though it needs a grand, harmonious burst of all the choirs in heaven and earth, accompanied by instruments and voices unknown and unheard by man, to lend full course to the wild and passionate utterances to which the heart would fain give vent. One of Nature's sublimest efforts, where all her vast resources lend themselves to depict one great and crowning effect, is a sunrise from the Peak of Tenerife. If there be one whose spirit has not yet been moved to its profoundest depths, let him seek the enchantment on the summit of Teide. Nature speaks to each soul alone, and no mortal may interfere with the communion.

Like a discord after a harmony, we turn from heaven to earth.

The clouds still hung in mid-air, and partially hid the world beneath. Canaria, Gomera, and Palma were alone visible. Not yet therefore were we to see the six satellites which surround

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Tenerife, and from all of which their beloved planet Teide can always be looked upon. At first we thought nothing was to be seen save Tenerife. But we were looking too far away for the neighbouring islands, and suddenly discovered that the mountains which we supposed part of Tenerife were in reality other islands. Although the island of Tenerife by no means consists, as is often supposed, of the Peak alone, there being large tracts of littoral land besides several chains of mountains, the impression from the summit of Teide itself is, that it monopolises the entire island. The slope, which never entirely ceases from the top of the cone to the line of white foam encircling the island, becomes apparently, owing to the height, an almost precipitous descent, save to the north-west, where it lengthens into a promontory.

Turning reluctantly, we took a farewell glance at a scene we never expect to look upon again. It was 4.50 a.m. when the sun rose, and being now past six o'clock, we felt we must descend. First, however, we walked round the crater, and then went into it. The heat issuing from innumerable fissures was so great, and the smell of the sulphur so overpowering, that we gladly escaped from it by getting on the windward side. Many holes were too hot to bear the hand in, and overhanging rocks dropped moisture from the condensation of the vapours issuing from the fissures. Sulphur crystals abound. One's boots seem nearly burnt off, and one fears every moment that the descent will have to be made barefooted. Although of course comparatively easy, the descent is very unpleasant. Slipping and sliding down the cone, the cinders closing over and around one's feet, one has the impression that there are quite as many inside one's boots as without. Reaching once more the Rambleta where Mr. Piazzi Smyth breakfasted comfortably before he ascended the Piton, we crossed it, and began the descent of the lava. If I had seen the climb before me in daylight, I should have thought over it with more groans than I gave it last night, but nothing would have induced me to give up the last couple of thousand feet when I had already

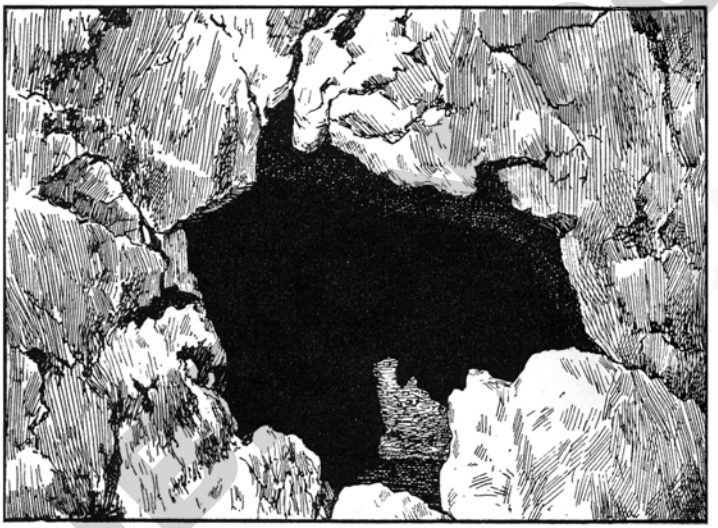
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come so far. Frequently reminding Lorenzo that we wished to see the Ice Cave, we jumped and scrambled down the lava stream, in and out of its immense blocks, and finally, after having first borne a little too much to the northward, arrived, by the gesticulations of Lorenzo, who had kept further south, at a few stones piled above a large hole. This cave is remarkable both in its situation, formation, and contents. Its altitude is 11,000 feet; it is situated in the midst of a lava-flow within 1,200 feet of the summit of a non-extinct volcano; a hundred yards above it there is a fissure from which issues hot water. The cave is formed of porous lava, and yet it is filled summer and winter with congealed snow and ice. Its formation will account for much. It was probably formed by a lava bubble, such as are to be seen in the Puerto Orotava, and, like them, its opening is at one side of the dome. This aperture faces north, so that the sun rarely enters, and never penetrates far into, the interior. It is some hundreds of feet below the snow level. The Peak is 12,200 feet high, and the line of perpetual snow is 12,500. Six months of the year the Peak is covered by snow, at which time the wind drives it into the cave. Here it remains until the return of summer, when, partly by melting and partly by men who come to procure the snow and carry it to the valleys below, the cave is almost entirely emptied. Lady Brassey must have been misinformed as to the nature of the Ice Cave, or she would not have written that in it "there is a stream of water constantly running"!

The lava near the entrance of the cave has formed a wall, where a small part of the rock is fairly level. We were anxious to enter, but as the entrance is fourteen feet from the bottom of the cave, it is impossible to do so without a rope. Lorenzo was unwilling we should attempt it, but when he saw we were determined to do so, said he would go for a rope. As he sped down the lava to Alta Vista, I shouted after him to bring some bread back with him, as by this time we were both starving. The other guide produced some from his pocket, and ate it, insisting on our having some too. We tried

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to get a photograph of the cave, and succeeded, but owing to the sun not penetrating, save upon a patch a couple of feet square on the floor, we could only get the edge of the opening, all within being dark. Lorenzo presently returned, bringing Eloyhu with him, and a barrel for water. He also brought bread and grapes, which we thoroughly enjoyed after the night's work. Passing the rope under his arms, John was lowered down the pit into the cave; and I, in like manner,



ENTRANCE TO THE ICE CAVE, PEAK OF TENERIFE.

followed. I felt like Joseph. The wall at the entrance slopes inwards, so that, once inside, it is impossible to get out without assistance. At the foot of the opening are the remains of Mr. Piazzi Smyth's ladder, which, however, is now perfectly useless, there being only two rungs of it left. The cave is not large. It has three arms, to north, south-west, and south-east, all filled with water, with a substratum of congealed snow. The arm behind the ladder is partially choked with lava stones, and the rocks under the entrance would suggest from their form

the mouth having fallen in. Some earth-covering boulders just immediately below the opening form a dry footing, a yard or two square, on which we stood. Even here, notwithstanding its being the 16th of September, there was a little snow left. The temperature was decidedly cool. Unfortunately we were unable to take it. The opening of the cave measured about thirteen and a half feet by seven and a half.* It is said that on one occasion, many years ago, the bones of some unfortunate man were found on the floor of the cave, he having doubtless entered, but, owing to the retreating base of the walls, been unable to leave. Fancy conjures up the situation of the unhappy wretch, with no lack of water, but destitute of food, looking up despairingly to the blue vault above, out of all reach of human aid. Dr. Marcet, who stayed on the Peak in July, 1878, states that his servant, a powerful Chamounix guide, both entered and left the cave without assistance, to the astonishment of the *isleños* (islanders). He accomplished this, however, by his individual muscular power, which must have been extraordinary, drawing his body up by the sheer strength of his fingers, which clutched the rock above the opening, until his knee rested on the edge. I was quite satisfied to be hauled up, dangling in mid-air, by Eloyhu and Lorenzo, in momentary expectation of having my fingers taken off me as they passed the rocks where the rope was drawn over the edge. I did scratch them a little, not being accustomed to be let up and down by ropes, but I shall know better the next time.

The barrel filled with water, we went back to Alta Vista. There is a sort of track between the Cueva del Hielo and that place, as the cave is frequently visited for snow in summer during the night. We were told in Puerto that for half a dollar a man will bring a mule-load of ice from the cave.

We could now see our last night's camping ground. Alta

* Mr. Alison gives it as forty inches, so that either he must have measured inaccurately, or the opening must have been concealed by snow, or it must have altered considerably since his visit.

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Vista is a fairly large ledge, surrounded on three sides by black lava streams. In front the ground falls away so rapidly as to give the idea of a precipice. It is not, however, so steep but that a horse, by means of a zigzag path, may scramble up its face. Around us the ground is composed of pumice and scoriæ in the lighter colours. The darker stones, of which the walls of Mr. Smyth's camp are made, are jagged, like the malpais, and catch our clothes if blown against them by the wind. We have a splendid view over the Cañadas and across to Gran Canaria from our plateau, which looks south-east. At 11 a.m. slight fleecy clouds wander over the sky towards the horizon; elsewhere some "mare's tails" are scattered. The sky itself is a sort of dull blue, and the heat is great. Lazily flying are some bees and a Painted Lady butterfly, whilst an occasional chirrup denotes the presence of grasshoppers. Once more the horses were packed, and we prepared to leave El Teide at 11.30 a.m. It is necessary to walk down to the Estancia, as progress on horseback would be slow and unsafe. Physically—not morally—it is easier to ascend than to descend. The path is composed of loose cinders, so on arriving at La Estancia de los Ingleses, we took off our boots, and got rid of the superfluous contents. We waited under the shadows of the rocks until the horses arrived, but even then we thought it better to walk to the bottom before remounting. It was proposed that we should return by a different track from that of yesterday by crossing the Cañadas to the crater wall, where we should find a path skirting the foot which would lead us past the Spring of Guajara to Los Roques and the pass to Guia. This route was said to be longer, but not so severe on the horses. We assented, therefore, as we no more than the arrieros wished to return by that diabolical path of yesterday.

We reached the boulders on Montaña Blanca, and passed our own former track across that sloping desert, at 12.20. Pursuing the path a little further, our guide then led us downwards to the south-east, and made across the bottom of the Cañadas for the crater wall. We walked on rapidly, with all

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due certainty and determination, for a little, when we found ourselves in a *cul-de-sac*, formed by one of those heaps of red lava which have flowed from time to time from the Peak down upon and over the surface of the old crater. We knew for certain now what we suspected before, that our guide had lost himself and us. Riding to the brow of one of these lava mounds, whose unevennesses are sometimes filled in by lighter particles blown against them by the wind, and thus forming a sloping bank, the hopelessness of our case presented itself. The entire surface appeared a mass of lava hills and mounds, intersected by flat spaces of yellow scoriæ and dotted here and there by the grey-green retama.

Mr. Piazzi Smyth was apparently lost in the same way. He speaks of the guides running "here and there to look for a path; then led the horses through hollows, where rough, rasping points of stone peered everywhere above the thin, sandy covering; and then they climbed up to the highest barrier in the neighbourhood, and hallooed with all their might, but without avail, to those who had gone on before." Of the scene he says, "Stream on stream of lava, rolling its ridges of stones over its fellows; here and there a small eruption crater of dark brown; and then another larger one of the red period, of firmer rock, but still so rent and cleft, that the cauldron's circle looked like some mighty Druids' temple. Here, all around, excepting an occasional shrivelled-looking retama—a plant that grows naturally without apparent leaves, and with merely a bristling collection of glaucous twigs—there was to be seen nought but hot red rock and thirsty yellow pumice; while the scorching sun overhead and the blue, unvaried sky, with its uniform saddening tint of arid light, seemed to condemn everything, far and near, to barrenness and desolation for ever."

A perfect labyrinth was the whole, amid the mazes of which we wandered and wandered. Two landmarks fortunately, however, are always visible—if one could only get near either—the Peak and the crater wall. For some hours, however,

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we remained at about the same distance from both. Frequently we halted and held a discussion as to the probable direction; then we would scatter and try several openings, only to find an impenetrable wall of lava at the end of each. Sometimes an evidently trodden path would raise a shout of joy from one of the party, and after us all pursuing it diligently for fifty or sixty yards, it would disappear entirely or end in a cave in the lava, inhabited by goats. Hearing occasionally the tinkle of the goat-bells, we followed, hoping to see a goatherd, but, alas! the little animals were herding themselves. Frequently we became so entangled in the lava-flows, that we had to dismount and, each leading his own horse, scramble as best we could through the bushes and up and down the rough, high banks of lava. Leading the horses is a rather misleading term, as they follow better than they are led. They will watch where one places a footstep and put their hoofs on exactly the same bit of rock. My little horse and I became very friendly, being both in adverse circumstances, and we followed or led each other indiscriminately. The glare of the yellow pumice made us very glad of our blue goggles, which up to the present we had not used. Now, however, we donned them, as the reflection from the white ground of the burning rays of the sun in a cloudless sky seemed as though drawing our eyeballs out of their sockets. The poor horses, with drooping heads and parched tongues, wandered spiritlessly over this desert, even the retama failing to tempt them with its fragrance, a sure sign of thirst. José and Eloyhu, having already in the last two days used each four pairs of shoes, now finished a couple more, and José finally limped along with "one shoe off and one shoe on." The shoes were made of some kind of grass, with slight leather soles, more a slipper than a shoe. Lorenzo's brow became darker and darker. A storm was brooding there, ready to break on the devoted head of the guide. That wretched individual, astride his mule and empty water-barrels, doubled up, and did not dare to look near any of us, but made hasty and desperate forays in different directions in the vain endeavour to

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reach the path or to find some exit from this horrible labyrinth. Lorenzo kept saying, "Los *pobres* bestes" ("The poor animals"), "they have had no water." Once he said to me that he had told the guide that "the señorita was very angry with him." Said guide looked like a whipped hound, and well he might, pretending to be a leader of men and letting us all wander over this veritable desert for hours. The great and necessary want was water, which we knew was nowhere obtainable save at the Spring of Guajara. Notwithstanding our predicament and consequent exertions, we could not fail to be interested in the scenery, and were much struck by the appearance of the Cañadas, which have a beauty of their own. Perfectly fascinating do they become, these interminable islands of lava, surrounded by a sea of yellow shingle. Occasionally they seemed gigantic rockeries, with nooks and crannies sufficient for all the ferns of the universe, but destitute of the commonest weed. At last, passing beyond these high rocks, which so bounded our vision, we emerged among low rocklets and shrubs, and were able to see and make direct for the boundary mountains, where, with many benedictions from the men, we struck the path.

The crossing of the actual "desert, or Cañadas, is considered by some an impossible feat. It is not, as we have just proved, an easy one, but, as we have accomplished the journey twice, what we have done others can do. Messrs. Burton and Cameron must write without practical experience of these Cañadas when they say, "The central bed allows no short cut across; it is a series of rubbish-heaps, parasitic cones, walls, and lumps of red-black lavas, trachytes, and phonolites reposing upon a deluge of frozen volcanic froth, ejected by early eruptions." Their opinion is the common one, but that it is not correct we have proved.

It was nearly four o'clock, and we had a long way to go, so we walked at a rapid pace, sometimes breaking into a trot. The path lay a few yards from the foot of the cliffs, whose passes just here sloped for a hundred feet before becoming

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perpendicular. A little scant vegetation clung to the sides, while on our right lay the level part of the Cañadas, sprinkled with retama bushes. We thought our troubles ended, and stepped merrily forwards, little recking of what was in front. Presently the path, which had been perfectly level and smooth, like a well-beaten footpath, became interrupted by a lava-flow, which had reached from the Peak to this crater wall. There was nothing to do but to climb it. So we mounted and walked along the top carefully until able to descend again. From this onward, however, the track became rough, very rough. The crater wall, or chain of mountains, here curves back, forming bays or coves, and as bays are bounded at either end by promontories, so are these curves bounded by perpendicular cliffs. They reminded us of the numerous coves round the island of Serk, save that here lava takes the place of the sea. Where these points or headlands protrude, meeting the wall of lava, which runs from twenty to thirty feet high, there is barely room to pass. Sometimes sufficient space between huge blocks of rock and the lava is only obtainable by raising the path ten or twenty feet. This path is formed, partly by nature and partly by art, of rocks and stones, piled in any way. Frequently the passage, thus running between two walls, was so narrow, that we could not ride, nor could the laden mules pass through. We had therefore to unload them, carry the luggage across, and reload at the other side. As these passages were often only a couple of hundred yards apart, the work of unpacking and packing became frequent and laborious, delaying us much.

Fortunately there was moonlight, daylight having fled long before our journey was over. Several times the path up and down these promontories was so badly made, that we had to place stones for the horses to tread upon, which they did with all due caution. Once the steps down were so steep, that we had to sling packing ropes round the animals' necks, and while one man led the horse and another dragged him back by his tail, a third helped to prevent him falling by leaning on and pulling him

back by the rope round his chest. So the poor brutes were let down. What good little horses they were to submit patiently to all this rough and unusual treatment! The men, I must say, were invariably kind to them; and the only cross words I ever heard addressed to a horse were when one tripped, a rare event. Then the owner would apostrophise the animal, asking him "what he meant. Had he not feet, and could he not see where he was going, and what did he mean by being so stupid?" and so on.

The effect of the moonlight shining down upon these fantastic precipices, land-bound bays, and black lava was gruesome as well as beautiful. The dark shadows thrown by the precipices were marvellously defined upon the brightly lit strand beneath, while the lava, like a motionless sea, arrested in its course, reared itself as a wall across the bay. Our cavalcade, half in shadow, half in moonlight, as it struggled across the bays, each individual walking behind his horse or standing anxiously awaiting the safe conduct of the animals down the passes, added to the weird and picturesque effect of the scene. Far from all human habitations, amid perfect silence and solitude, in a foreign land, and accompanied by handsome and outwardly bandit-like men, but inwardly honest, kind fellows, were two English folk. The immediate vicinity of one of the world's wonders, the unusual mode of travelling, the extraordinary character of the scenery, the unwonted path, and, above all, the knowledge that we tread upon a crater, awaken sensations unknown before. The place, memory, and scenery combine to flood the mind with a wealth of mixed romance and reality. Folk-lore and brigands, moonshine and goblins, come rushing over one another through the brain, and, by the aid of recollection and imagination, almost "realising the ideal."

At last, at eight o'clock, we rounded a promontory, and joyfully recognised our resting-place at Guajara. Dismounting, we left the horses to the care of the men, and ran down the sloping bank to the flat bed of yellow pumice beneath. Here, choosing an even surface, we commenced picking out the

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large stones and throwing them right and left. The pack-horse was brought down, unloaded, and we soon had our tent erected. Plenty of dry retama branches and sticks lay around, and we had a blazing fire in a short time. The guide came down, and began gathering fuel, but we would none of his society, and he was banished by universal consent. He betook himself to the level of the spring a little above, where, under the shelter of a rock, he lit a fire, and cowered over it in solitude like an unhappy spirit. We managed to get a "square meal," as our transatlantic cousins graphically put it, out of bread so hard that we had to divide it, chisel and hammer fashion, with a knife and stone, tinned milk—there were no goats this time—tea, and gofio. It was of course impossible to eat the bread, but boiling it in milk, we found it excellent.

It was now blowing freshly, so we had to pile large stones all round upon the flap at the bottom of the tent. We were quite ready by nine o'clock to turn in, although we could not help sitting for a few minutes under the lee of the tent, with the bright fire in front, protected from the wind by little walls of stones, to enjoy the scene. Here we are bivouacking on the bed of a crater, the only human beings in these vast solitudes. Above us shines the moon, not pale and cold, as in our northern latitudes, but with a real reflection of the warmer-hued sun. On our left are Guajara and the chain of which it forms the highest point, on our right Teide, no more a wonder and a marvel from unsatisfied curiosity, but a still greater marvel and wonder from knowledge of his person. Familiarity breeds contempt among mortals, but no one ever breathed a word of contempt regarding El Pico, either before his ascent or after.

Frequently had I asked if it were difficult to ascend the Peak, what was suitable in the way of clothing, and various questions, such as the unusual journey might suggest. In every case I failed in getting a satisfactory reply, and until I went to the summit myself knew absolutely nothing about the matter. Humboldt said it was one of the most difficult ascents

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he had ever made, only to be exceeded by the Jorullo, in Mexico. Mr. Piazzi Smyth says "the ascent ought not to be spoken of as difficult." I should be inclined to say both are wrong. It is in reality a case of circumstances altering facts which, with regard to ladies, may be looked upon in this way. If a woman has been accustomed from her youth to outdoor exercise, comprising scrambles over rocks, rowing, bathing, riding, and running, in fact what goes to make up exercise, and if she be in fair health, with a certain amount of nerve, there is nothing to prevent her ascending the Peak of Tenerife. But if she has all her life seldom gone beyond a walking pace, is quite unaccustomed to the gymnastic exercise that jumping over rocks necessitates, has confined herself and her limbs within the limits that fashion prescribes in Bond Street, she will never be able to see Teide's culminating crater. The question if the ascent be a difficult one or not cannot be answered by "Yes" or "No." That it is a physical exertion is certain. That it is possible for a woman depends entirely on her manner of life, and it remains with herself to settle the question of her individual ability. Several ladies have ascended, the first of whom we have any record being Mrs. Hammond, a Scotch lady, whom Von Buch met upon the Peak. The only other lady whose name I know is Mrs. Piazzi Smyth, but I have heard of one or two besides. It seems to me a pity that a record is not kept of those who ascend. If one asks in Tenerife if people often go up, one is told, "Oh, yes! A great many make the ascent." On inquiry, however, the number reduces itself to about a dozen a year!

The early part of the ascent cannot be considered really difficult, for up to within 1,500 feet of the summit it can be accomplished on horseback. From Alta Vista upwards the climb is laborious, having to be done on foot, and practically without help.

*September 17th, Monday.*—John had toothache last night, and feared he could not sleep without some chlorodyne. We had

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no water in the tent; and as Lorenzo was feeding the horses up near the well, we had to wait until he returned. We usually put our candle on the camera-box in mid-tent, which always served as candlestick and inkstand, but to-night it was stuck in the ground amid the pumice in the middle of the tent, between the tarpaulins. The chlorodyne, after all, was not needed, for we both fell fast asleep, and I wakened, with the guilty feeling of something forgotten, at 2 a.m., to find the candle nearly burnt out. It was a mercy we did not knock it over when asleep.

We were rather late getting up, as all were tired out with our hard travelling and want of sleep. Even the men were still lying down after we had arisen. The fire burnt brightly, having been kept in all night, so we soon had breakfast. This is an excellent camping ground, plenty of room, without boys or curious peasants or the everlasting twang-twang of cracked church bells. A good spring of water, with pools for washing and for animals, forms a perfect paradise. Add to these the past wonders of the place! That we should be calmly sleeping in a crater is almost sufficient in itself to fill one with awe. What pigmies we seemed, what dots, in that vast solitude! On one side was the Peak, 6,000 feet above; close on the other towered in rugged grandeur Guajara, some 3,000 feet of sheer precipice.

Our breakfast of chocolate and Swiss milk, bread, gofio, grapes, figs, apples, pears, and almonds being over, we struck tent and started at 9 a.m.

Instead of mounting the Guajara pass, by which we had come, we kept straight along the Cañadas at the foot of the cliffs, continuing our course of the previous evening. Keeping to the south, we passed close underneath the mountains which continue to bound this ancient crater. We soon passed beneath the Sombrerita Chiquita, a smaller mountain than that from which John took the photograph of the Peak when we were staying at Villa Flor, but of the same shape.

At 10.30 a.m. we reached a point in the Cañadas known as Los Roques. "The Rocks" are some high, sharp, pointed masses of

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lava thrown up in past ages when the crater was cooling, which did not again sink, but remained as a sort of memorial of what had been. In the distance they look like the ruins of a castle, and so they are—the ruins of a lava castle. They correspond to the "temporary chimneys" described by Miss Bird as rising out of the boiling lava in Hawaii.

The nearest point of our path to these rocks was where the roads to Adeje and Guia diverge, the latter to the right. There is no mistaking the spot, for a large, circular hole, some twenty feet in diameter, has been dug here. A ladder, rather rotten-looking, leads to the bottom, which was perfectly



LOS ROQUES, LAS CAÑADAS.

dry, and, from its appearance, had never, I should say, contained water. Our excellent Chasna guide had told us we should find water here. On the whole, we found it safer always to believe exactly the opposite of what he asserted.

Dismounting, we sat under the shadow of some retama bushes, and finished our fruit. The situation is very fine. The crater walls seem to close in, and it is as though we were in a triangle surrounded by hills, the centre being a mass of black lava. The shape of the rocks is rugged and jagged in the extreme, and sharp pinnacles stand erect both at the top of the crater wall and down its sides.

We were once more in the saddle at 11.15 a.m., and shortly

after the track, which had been leading over broken ground and loose stones, immediately at the foot of the Guajara mountains or crater wall, passed on to the black lava. This lava has been on the right of our path all the way from Guajara. It varies in height from ten to forty feet. Getting closer and closer to the crater wall, it at last left no room for us to pass, as it closed up to the cliffs entirely. We had therefore to climb on the top of it, our clever little horses picking their way over and through the cinder rocks. But little road-making has been attempted. Occasionally it seemed as if someone had in passing taken the trouble of lifting aside the largest pieces of cinder lava, but often the horses had to step up and down the cinder-like rocks. I find the writing in my note-book at this point particularly jerky, a pretty sure indication of the condition of the track! This path only lasted about a quarter of a mile, when we once more descended to beneath the crater wall, and rode over the loose stones fallen from the hillside. Sometimes the path led very closely past retama bushes. The track was always a single one, about a foot wide. It was so impossible to persuade the horses either to walk abreast or move an inch off the path, that we resigned ourselves, as a rule, to single file and silence. This persistent clinging to the exact footmarks was in this case inconvenient, for the stiff branches of the retamas occasionally almost brushed us off the horses' backs.

The road—by courtesy—which we were following would finally have led us to Garachico, so we had to diverge to the left in order to cross the Pass of Guia. A break in the mountains gives an easy and short ascent, which soon brought us in sight of the sea on the south-west coast. Immediately on leaving the barren crater, vegetation begins, though sparsely. The path followed the curving of the hills, gradually descending, but passing up and down dips and barrancos. Sometimes the track was only a foot wide, and once, as this foot was a smooth rock, with anything but good foothold, and precipice below and above, we deemed it advisable to dismount and walk across. The retama was now replaced by codeso bushes. The

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gentle descent, varied by the turns and twists of the path, the bright, clear atmosphere, with Palma's double mountains, like hogs' backs, and Gomera's high, compact, bowl-shaped form, lying in front, were very beautiful and soothing. The sea was scarcely visible, owing to a bank of low-lying clouds; and beneath us Palma and Gomera looked as if floating high in the air. In the foreground lay a chain of lower mountains, over which we had passed when going from Santiago to Guia, soon after leaving the former.

The heat was very great as we plodded silently along, and at last became so insupportable, that we hailed gladly a rock which threw a shadow, tempting us to rest. The rock proved hollowed out below, and was in the possession of some two or three score of goats, which fled precipitately on our approach. We caught a couple, however, and had some refreshing milk. The only vessel we could milk into without unpacking the horses was the tin cover of the army charcoal filter which I always carried slung over my shoulder. Necessity is the mother of invention, truly. It would be easy to make one side of this filter-case into a shutting-up cup, or rather small basin; and it would then be possible to filter water for others' use as well as one's own, to say nothing of the utility of having a cup always at hand.

Whilst halting I endeavoured to improve my Castilian and gain information by talking to the men. It is difficult, almost an impossibility, to learn anything of Gomera; only one fact did I elicit—that there the goats are good!

The descent now became steep, and the ground so rough and irregular, that it necessitated walking. The skin was off my feet in a few places after the Peak scramble, so I was thankful when we could again mount. Our precious guide, Frederico, once more lost himself, and brought us a roundabout way through two little villages. Owing to the absence of forests or dense foliage on this side of the island, it is easy to see the point for which one is making hours before it is reached. The steep descent from the crater walls to the sea is unbroken by

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hills, though completely cut up by the barrancos lying below the surface.

The poor horses got some water, however, at the village of Chica, in order to make up for the extra journey. The inhabitants of course turned out to stare at us, not only because we were *Ingleses*, but for having ascended the Peak. Some gourds were growing on terraces here, evidently a crop just put in.

I was glad when we arrived at Guia, for we were footsore, weary, and hungry. Lorenzo said we had better go to the alcalde's house until we had something to eat. This we thankfully did, for, being still early in the afternoon, the heat and flies were unendurable. We intended later in the day proceeding to the Port of Guia, a little bay about a mile off, and there pitching our tent, to await the arrival of the schooner for Gomera. Two disappointments were in store for us. First, there is no water at the Puerto, and secondly, the boat for Gomera had come—and gone. This was really vexing, for we thus lost a whole week, which might have been spent leisurely at Villa Flor, Adeje, and on the Peak. We asked were there no boats which would take us to Gomera. This, we were assured, was an impossible feat, various excuses being made, such as that it was dangerous and too far. Considering that Gomera was within easy sight, and that four hours would have taken us over, it seemed difficult to believe that these fears were anything but imaginary. The Guanches were not a naval people, and certainly the present inhabitants of these islands are indifferent sailors and inferior fishermen. They do not seem to have inherited from their Spanish forefathers that love of adventure which at one time made Spain the head of the nations. Whether the present generation of *isleños* inherit their land-loving spirit from the Peninsula or from tradition is difficult to say, perhaps from both. I am inclined to believe it is a Guanche legacy.

Meanwhile we determined to rest. The alcalde brought us into his sitting-room, and, with kindness unsurpassed, insisted on putting a room at our disposal in his house for as long as ever we wished to stay.

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We did not intend trying the plaza again, as the publicity and heat there were much too great. We were very grateful indeed therefore to the alcalde, Señor Don Francesco Bania.

Lorenzo, by our instructions, had ordered dinner from the same woman who had cooked for us before when we were in the plaza. I suppose the old hen was wary, and would not be caught, for it was 7.30 p.m. before we got it, by which hour we were nearly starved.

Everyone of course knew that we were going to Gomera, and presently we were told there was a man in the town who was also going there, and knew the island. We invited him into our room, which opened direct upon the street, and showed him our map of Gomera. It may be well to epitomise here the information that we had already extracted from English and Spanish inhabitants at Santa Cruz, Orotova, and throughout the country about this island, a stone's throw—fifteen miles—from their own.

It exists. It is pretty. It has good goats. There is one well-to-do man, to whom we were given a letter of recommendation. A schooner goes once a week from Santa Cruz, but where it stops, and when, is unknown. *Voila tout!*

We were naturally anxious to obtain a little more knowledge; and in order that it should be as accurate as possible, we produced our map and questioned the man. Innocently did we bring forth the English Admiralty chart, the only accurate map there is of Gomera. We found, however, that maps were unknown; and the excitement and curiosity of the neighbourhood became great at the idea of seeing Gomera, which they all looked at day after day *in personâ*, portrayed on paper. So as, with one finger on San Sebastian and another on the Valle Hermoso, we endeavoured to show the Gomero their relative positions and find out distances from him, the good people of Guia crowded round us closer and closer, until we had room neither to see nor move. We laid the map on a table, and,

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by the light of a candle, went over it. Heavy drops of perspiration stood on our informant's face with the manful effort he made in endeavouring to understand the intricacies of the map. We elicited, after much trouble, that the part of the island lying between San Sebastian, Hermigua, and Valle Hermoso was the prettiest; that the other side, to the south-west, was barren, destitute of vegetation, and lava-covered; that we could go to El Valle Hermoso by Hermigua, and return thence by the *cumbres*, or mountains, in mid-island. Nothing more could we extract from him about his own home.

By this time there were some fifty or sixty people in the room. Outside they lined the doorway and window by the hundred, all eager to stare at us and hear what we were saying. It was a very warm evening, and the warmth was not lessened by our low-ceilinged room being filled with so many not overclean peasants. At last, when I had elicited all the information I could get, I became conscious of the stifling warmth, and said to Lorenzo, with a sigh, "It is very hot here." The people, with great courtesy, such as I fear English peasants would not think of, immediately began to melt away out of the room. Not long after this our dinner arrived, and very welcome it was. It consisted of vermicelli soup, but the vermicelli was quite thick in it, and very substantial. *Puchero*, with a chicken cut in two, followed, after which coffee. It all seemed uncommonly delicious, but perhaps we were—indeed, we were—extraordinarily hungry.

We paid our guide for two days, according to the alcalde's instructions, as his losing his way so frequently had involved us in another day's delay.

Just before dinner the whole place was suddenly put into a ferment by a young girl, the niece of the alcalde, getting ill. We went up to see if we could do anything, and found about thirty people in a small room, the unfortunate girl lying on a bed, gasping for air. The first thing to be done was to turn out as many as would go and open the window, which gave her relief at once. The illness turned out to be nothing very

serious, a little overcome by having done too much in the heat of the day, combined doubtless with the excitement of our arrival.

That evening José and Eloyhu, with the horses, came sorrowfully to bid us good-bye, as they were to leave early the next morning for Orotava. They were very good fellows, and we shall quite miss José's jolly, beaming face.

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# CHAPTER IX.

## *GUIA—OUR CAMP BY THE SEA.*

No game was ever yet worth a rap
  For a rational man to play
Into which no accident, no mishap,
  Could possibly find its way.
*  *  *  *
For what's worth having must aye be bought,
And sport's like life, and life's like sport:
  "It ain't all skittles and beer."

ADAM LINDSAY GORDON.

. . . In front,
Great ocean, with its everlasting voice,
As in perpetual jubilee, proclaimed
The wonders of the Almighty.

SOUTHEY.

*September 18th, Tuesday.*—We are beginning now to feel the fatigue of the past few days, and are rather glad than otherwise that our stay here is enforced. We hoped to be lazy and sleep late this morning, but, alas! when the flies awoke, soon after five, there was no more rest for us. They were in the room by thousands, indeed by millions. As I endeavour to write they buzz into my eyes and face, and tickle my hands. So I cover my head with a handkerchief, letting the corner drop over in front, on which they settle instead of my face, and a couple more I wrap round my hands. John tries to take a nap, but gives up the attempt as hopeless.

Our room is square, with a low ceiling, whitewashed all over. Small beams cross the ceiling, a foot apart. They seem un-

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necessarily strong, but are not really so, when one remembers the weight of the azoteas. The floor is of adzed planks, which have not been washed since they were laid, judging by appearances. A deep cupboard let into the wall, painted bright blue, of a particularly ugly shade, is at one end. Opposite it is the window, also blue, with the usual corner seats and shutters, or postigos, from which one peeps out at the passers-by. Two small painted brackets and half a dozen cheap sacred prints are the ornaments. Six chairs and two half-tables, a small iron washstand, and two wooden trestle beds form the furniture. There are also three large boxes or chests, in which the good woman of the house stows away her linen, best clothes, and jewellery. A strip of carpet is beside the beds. These latter are quite clean, and free from inhabitants. Numerous paper "fly-catchers" adorn the walls. The staircase and verandah above our window keep the room cool. The view from the window is decidedly limited: a little pebbled yard, and beyond the red tiles of houses and the walls of others, between which the cactus grows luxuriantly.

Our room is on a level with the small yard or open space, and is at the front of the house. Behind are the rooms used by the family, this apparently being a spare one. Above our window winds the outside staircase to the azotea, where some figs are drying. The figs here are particularly good, and vastly superior when dried to those we are accustomed to at home. Only a few are sent to England, and those to friends for private consumption. Doña Francesca, the sister of the alcalde, brought us some delicious honey and figs to-day. The former is a great treat, for not only is it excellent, with a full, rich flavour, but, owing to butter being unattainable, is a great improvement upon dry bread. We found our canteen very useful, many of its articles being necessaries not known here. The knives Doña Francesca supplied us with were marked "Sheffield." That they were really English I much doubt, they were of such inferior quality. Our dinner to-day consisted of rice soup and *puchero blanco.* When ordering the

dinner, I said we would not have any fowl, it took so long to catch one. Meat was not procurable, so Lorenzo said, "You cannot have soup without fowl or something to make it of." I suddenly thought of the bones of the fowl we had eaten on the Peak, and which at the time it seemed a pity to throw away, knowing the scarcity of food sometimes. It was a marvel that they were still sweet and good, but the dryness and purity of the atmosphere on the Peak must have kept them so. They came in usefully now, and we had excellent soup, or rather broth. Lorenzo called it *puchero blanco*, which means a vegetable soup when there is no meat. This dish is very good, made of all sorts of vegetables, potatoes, onions, calabash, pears, tomatos, *pimientos*, and garlic being put in together. When stewed with a fowl or any meat, it is *puchero*, and a little like Irish stew, only it has the advantage of there being many kinds of vegetables. The food here is very good, and excellently suited to the climate. It is a great mistake for English people to attempt English food wherever they go; what the natives of a place eat is more or less the most suitable food for the climate. Meat in the quantities eaten in England is entirely unnecessary and indeed unadvisable here. Eggs are nearly always procurable, a fowl generally, and vegetables and fruit always. The bread cannot be too much praised; it is the best I have ever eaten. In Santa Cruz, where foreign flour is used, it is indifferent, but throughout the rest of the island it is delicious. It is made of the entire wheat, ground very fine, and is well baked, in short rolls about ten inches long. The crust is crisp, without the hardness of the French rolls, and when stale, even hard, the bread is still sweet and palatable. In colour it is a little brown, not quite white. We had it this morning fresh from the oven, and so hot, that we could scarcely handle it, and yet it was anything but indigestible. What would be poison to many in English bread is wholesome here. It is also good alone, without butter, the taste being sweet and full of flavour, which is fortunate, as butter is not to be had at any price.

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Gofio in this part, as elsewhere, is the staple food of the islanders. It is wheat, barley, Indian corn, or rye ground very fine. The process of preparation is very simple. After the wheat is threshed, what is wanted for immediate use is put in a large, flat, round earthenware pan, about two and a half feet in diameter and three or four inches deep. This is placed on the fire, the wheat being constantly moved about with a stick, padded at one end like a drumstick. When the grains are slightly browned, they are taken off and ground. The mill consists of two round stones of granite, that belonging to this household being about two feet in diameter. In the top one is a hole three or four inches across, into which the wheat is put. Attached to the side of the hole and of the upper stone is a lever, standing out horizontally about a foot from it; and to this is fastened a pole, about four or five feet long, the upper end of which is held by a swivel in a rafter. A little coarse salt is put into the mill along with the wheat, and all comes out ground very fine. It was curious to note that the same results are here attained thus simply that can only be secured in England, and that not nearly so well by steel mills and a great deal of fuss about granulated wheat. Wheat gofio, as I have said before, is considered the best, barley the next, then Indian corn, and rye the worst. Wheat and Indian corn are excellent mixed; and wheat, Indian corn, and barley make extremely good gofio. After the wheat is ground the gofio is ready for use. It is seldom eaten dry. It is made in this way. A handful is put on a plate or in a bowl, and cold water is poured on it until there is enough to make the gofio into a stiff mass about the consistency of dough. The natives mix it with their hands until quite smooth, but the process can be performed equally well with a spoon. Instead of water, hot milk is sometimes used. This is considered a very agreeable dish. There is nothing to prevent anyone eating gofio, and those who like porridge and are accustomed to use wheaten or whole meal would like it very much. That it is wholesome and strengthening there can be no doubt, when one

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sees the amount of work and hard walking the arrieros can do upon it alone, without even the milk. There have been many proofs lately of the sustaining power of the whole wheat grain, and this is yet another. The pleasant flavour of the gofio comes from the slight roasting the grains get. There is no grit whatever in it, and the outer shell, or husk, of the wheat is completely ground to powder.

In the evening, after four o'clock dinner, we walked round the town, or rather village. Service was being held, as it was the anniversary of the patron saint of the church, Notra Señora de Guia, from whom the district takes its name, in place of the ancient Ysora. We looked into the church, which was well lit up. The music was fair, better than we should have in most country churches at home. There was a conspicuous absence of men. We could not see one save those officiating, all the worshippers being women and young girls. Leaving the church, we wandered in the darkness through the streets. The moon had not yet risen; and as there are no lights of any sort except the gleam of a dim candle shining out of a shop, and as the streets are very roughly paved, though better than many in the island, it is with no little difficulty one walks erect. The shops simply contain the bare necessaries of life, a certain sign that there is no money to spare. Their contents are very general. We bought in one linen, tin plates, candles, muslin, coffee, bread, and vegetables. At one window we passed a shoemaker reading a bulky volume, the first I have seen. How is it shoemakers are literary in every clime? There is a noticeable dearth of books everywhere, and on inquiry we find there is no school within a considerable distance. So the children of this fair-sized village are entirely without instruction. There are very few men or women who can read, much less write. The alcalde himself cannot, so has a secretary. We went to bed after administering to our faces and hands a good dose of vaseline, as we are frightfully burnt and skinned. The disagreeable part of the burning is the blisters it raises on the backs of one's hands; these become

itchy, and if scratched, are apt to make a sore. This sounds a minor trouble, but it becomes very real when, just as one is dropping off to sleep, wearied and exhausted, the intense irritation from the spots banishes repose.

*September 19th, Wednesday.*—We were astonished to find that Lorenzo by preference sleeps outside our door rather than enter a house. I must say we prefer it ourselves. After having been accustomed to the open air, a house feels stifling.

A girl came round this morning with some sweets made in curious shapes. Some were high, and these were called *piñas;* others were flat, and called *cellas*. The little maiden carried them in a basket, carefully covered with a white cloth. The sweets were white, like the sugar on a cake, with pink ornamentations. Sweets are very scarce and dear, owing to the high price of sugar.

As we seriously contemplate pitching our tent at the Puerto, we deemed it advisable to go down and inspect the neighbourhood. So, hiring a mule, for which we paid two *pesetas* (one shilling and eightpence), John, Lorenzo, the camera, and myself started. The road was rough, by the side of a barranco, and steep, the descent being 1,725 feet in about a mile and a half. We went by the back of the village, past some houses, where, seeing a woman at the far end of a garden, or *huerta*, we asked her if she could let us have some peaches. She said we were to take as many as we liked; we picked a few, but they were not very ripe. A *huerta* is something between a garden and an orchard, only, instead of apple trees, there are orange, peach, and fig trees, or whatever the climate produces. I cannot say that the walk was interesting. The country is totally devoid of vegetation. Near the bottom we entered the bed of the barranco. Seated at one side of it was a girl with fish, which she was taking to the village to sell. We should have bought it gladly if we had been staying down here. The price she asked seemed absurd for the size: about a penny each fish. The kind was unknown to me, but was like our

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lithe or ling. The Port of Guia is simply a beach, where it is possible to land from boats. A few fishermen's huts lie to the right as we descend, towards which we turn our steps. Some half-naked children are playing about, and give warning of our approach. A woman and her husband invite us in out of the heat, under the shelter of the vine. We accept, and they are much interested in us and our doings. One old man is a cripple, and is lying on a chair. It is quite a godsend to him to see a strange face. The houses are one-storied and of lava stones and mud. They are built against a lava stream, which here enters the sea; the lava, in fact, forms their back wall. In front some branches are laid on sticks, forming a sort of porch, and over this is trained a vine. There are about half a dozen huts, and all have these original verandahs. Very pleasant shelters they make, and are intensely picturesque. The rough black lava background, the green vines, the half-naked children and but scantily clothed men and women, the boats lying by the shore, the bright sunshine, and the roar of the surf on the beach together formed a pleasing and unusual picture.

John prepared to take some photographs of their houses, and the people straggled out and formed a group in front of them, wild and uncouth. Another hut as we passed had its inhabitants at their meal, sitting at a rude table under a vine. Shakspere's words recurred to our mind, "Every man shall eat in safety under his own vine," but unfortunately little planting is possible here. The food consisted of potatoes and salt fish. With courteous hospitality, only to be surpassed perhaps in Ireland, they invited us to enter and eat. We learned from the fishermen that not only are the day and hour of the calling of the schooner for Gomera uncertain, but that it should call at all is doubtful, and that a stick with a white rag is generally put up when the vessel is required to enter the bay. Considering all these circumstances and the probability that if we stayed in Guia, we should never get to Gomera at all, we thought it would be better to encamp at the Puerto, if possible. The photographs taken, we determined to reconnoitre. Crossing the barranco to

the side farthest from the fishing huts, we found another little hut, or rather cave, under a small, jutting-out headland. A few lean fowls were running about, so we bespoke one for Friday, when we intended coming down. Rounding this cliff, we came upon a large cave, where we saw that we could pitch our tent sheltered from the sun, and so be cool, with plenty of space left for dining-room, drawing-room, and kitchen! The great drawback to encamping here is the entire absence of water, which we should have to bring with us. It puts quite a premium on dirt. The fisherfolk look as if water were unknown in their houses and on their persons. One man who came to us pointed to a sore he had on the bridge of his nose, which really wanted washing and something to keep the flies off. We promised to bring some vaseline next day when we came. A boy had a sore throat, caught by a chill evidently, and we recommended a cold water bandage, but found the difficulties in applying it almost insuperable. However, the woman procured a pocket-handkerchief by taking her own off her head!

Going up to Guia was a more tedious business than coming down, and we were glad to get out of the glare and heat. The alcalde thought we should be cured of our desire to stay down at the Puerto. He did not understand our preferring quiet and the absence of flies to human habitations and their inhabitants.

*September 20th, Thursday.*—We proposed to the alcalde last night to take his photograph, at which he was much pleased. We told him, however, that he must be ready very early, as when the sun was up high the lights and shadows would be too strongly contrasted. He promised to be ready at six o'clock next morning, with his daughter, whose portrait he was very anxious to have to send to her brother in Cuba. When the morning arrived, however, we found that "his sisters, and his cousins, and his aunts" all wanted to be photographed. Unfortunately these good people thought it such an event in their lives, that their best toggery must be put on, and so we had to wait, with what patience we could, until the sun was

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high, it being past seven o'clock when we secured photographs, and those inartistic. We did all we could to persuade them to come as they were, but without effect, and the result was not conducive to the picturesqueness of our picture. By dint of much persuasion, we succeeded in getting the alcalde's servant to pose with a water-barrel on her head; she thought we were laughing at her, while we considered her the redeeming point in the group. Lorenzo, who would cheerfully stand on his head for us, I believe, acceded at once to our request that he should don his manto and stand near the girl with the water-barrel. What his feelings were, with the sun scorching down on his face and a double blanket enveloping his body, I know not!



PEASANTS OF TENERIFE, WITH WATER-BARREL AND 'MANTO,' OR BLANKET CLOAK.

I showed the assembled women the photographs of my boys, which always appeal to their warm motherly hearts, bless them, though I believe they think me heartless for leaving them so far away. Later on, during the morning heat, which time I was profitably employing with my pen, a young girl came in, asking leave to see the children's photographs, as she had not seen them before. She wanted to know their names, so I spelled them out in my note-book for her. She was very intelligent, and had received some education, so was able to give us information about little things.

Lorenzo brought in a fowl alive at one o'clock. We had dinner at 4 p.m., and enjoyed that fowl. Later we wandered about the kitchen and offices, and saw Lorenzo cooking our coffee-berries. An earthen pan is put on the fire, the berries

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put into it and stirred about with a pot-stick. We requested Lorenzo not to brown ours much. The natives like their coffee almost black, which gives it a burnt taste, not pleasant to English palates. The cookhouse is outside the ordinary house. It contains a fireplace of bricks and a brick oven, in which delicious bread is made.

Old cactus leaves are used for litter for cows and horses. They seem rather a hard bed, but are better than nothing. Hay and straw are not available for litter, chopped straw, or paja, being considered a bed fit for human beings.

After dinner we went, in the cool of the evening, upon the azotea. Here on the walls lay quantities of figs drying. Even this dull and uninteresting place looks picturesque in the glow and peacefulness of sunset. Above us, in the distance, lies the Montaña de Benjar, a sort of steeper slope rising from the lesser slope to the sea. Below, the fishing boats are beginning to put out, and as darkness sets in the pine torches are lit. Lights now spring up here and there where before we had not perceived any boats, a sure sign that the toilers of the deep are at their work. Although excessively poor, the fishermen look upon themselves as descendants of St. Peter, and hold their heads high in consequence.

Turning landwards, before night falls we see all the animals the town contains wending their way to the water troughs. It is a curious, patient procession as the lean and spiritless-looking cows, the small, lanky horses, and obstinate mules succeed each other at the fountain troughs. Its Eastern aspect is striking—"the going to water."

Low, thick walls abound everywhere, and on these, outside the cottages and houses, lie the household delf and crockery drying. The women are very straight, due no doubt to the habit of carrying little water-barrels on their heads when going to and fro for water. They seem gentle to their children, and very affectionate with them. I have never seen any cuffing or brawling. Pine torches gleam occasionally in the town, as people move in and out of their houses and yards, the effect

being weird, and giving this town, which is commonplace in the day-time, a romantic and Eastern aspect at nightfall. It is 6.30 p.m. and night. The boats are all ablaze on the sea, and the few azoteas the village possesses are peopled by their owners. As we have some more shopping to do, we leave the azotea and our host, and proceed into the village. Before leaving, the alcalde impressed upon us that we were quite welcome to stay as long as we pleased, that he was glad to have us, and that he thought we had much better be with him than at the Puerto. We feared, however, missing our boat, as the communication between the village and the Puerto was so very bad and uncertain.

With the knowledge gained by experience, we now know that a better stopping-place would have been Adeje. The ride from Santiago to Guia only occupied the morning; and even if one failed to reach Adeje by evening, there are several places between the two towns where water is procurable. Food might be bought at Guia *en route*, and a vastly pleasanter encampment than Guia be found in one of the numerous barrancos, or on the plains of Adeje, or, better still, at the mouth of the Barranco Infierno. Pioneers always suffer most from want of information. Those who follow will benefit by our experiences.

The people of Guia all count on their fingers, every figure from one. It becomes rather ludicrous at last, this perpetual "fingering," especially if two or three in a shop be all trying to make a correct total out of their individual ten fingers. The only candles procurable are Dutch; and the only foreigners ever seen on this side of the Peak are French bagmen, with traps on their backs, selling cheap jewellery. Butchers' shops are conspicuous by their absence, as meat is a luxury rarely procurable. Sieves are kept in the shops for sifting the cochineal, which the shopkeepers buy from the small growers until they have sufficient to send to Santa Cruz. All the carpenters' tools are said to be English. Tin utensils are used almost entirely for cooking. They are suitable to

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the climate, as, owing to the dry atmosphere, they do not rust.

John thought he would like a pair of country-made shoes, of white leather, for rough walking. So Lorenzo brought the shoemaker to our room to take his measure. He only took *two* measurements, the length of the foot and width across the instep, so it is to be hoped they will fit.

*September 21st, Friday.*—I told Lorenzo last night we should start early for the Puerto, so as to avoid the heat. "Early," however, resolved itself into 11 a.m. We were up at 5.30 a.m., but there were so many things to buy in preparation for our stay down at the sea and our journey to Gomera and Hierro, that it was 9.30 before the things were bought and packed. Then it took an hour and a half for these slow islanders to get us the mules and water and have the animals packed. They are nearly as slow as the Norwegians, not quite. The alcalde took us to see a gofio mill worked by two mules, quite a large affair in comparison with the little ones used in each house. It was on exactly the same plan, however, save that the mules walked round with a shaft, which turned the stones.

Whilst waiting for the mules, the alcalde and his secretary came to see us in our only room. We invited them to come down and pay us a visit in our tent at the Port, at which they seemed a little amused, why I could not understand. But when I said, "It is only a little walk; we are going to walk down now," the secretary said, "*You* are going to walk!" "Yes," I said. He lifted his hands and eyebrows, and turning to the alcalde, said, in a voice hushed with surprise, "*Ave Maria*, she's going to walk," and then to me, "You must be very strong!" "Not particularly," I said; "but that is nothing of a walk." The road under discussion is certainly not very good, but it is all downhill, and the distance is only a mile or two. We have had much longer distances and much worse walking since we came to Tenerife.

At last we got under weigh. A crowd of people saw us off,

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and many "Adios" sent us on our journey. One would have thought we were going to Timbuctoo, instead of only a couple of miles away. We went down by the worst road, but the shortest, and again passed the house where we got some peaches a couple of days ago. The woman was in sight, so Lorenzo hailed her, and asked her if she had any fruit to sell. She said she had none, and then he asked for a little as a favour for the señorita, so she came down and gave us all the peaches and figs that were at all ripe, and did not want to take anything for them. When we were about one third of the way down, Lorenzo suddenly remembered he had forgotten his manto, and then we discovered we had entirely forgotten all about our saddles, which generally require no looking after, as they are on the horses' backs. As we had also left without some shoes that were being mended, we thought it better he should go back at once for everything, while we went on and erected the tent. John's new shoes fitted him well. When we got to the bottom, we turned to the left across the barranco, and rounding a little point, came upon the large cave we had settled upon for our camp. We at once set to work to put the tent up, clearing away the stones and driving in the pegs ourselves. The muleteer was stupid, and did not know how to do anything, although he is first cousin to the alcalde. When we came to look for the paja (maize straw) for our beds, we found the men had calmly given it to the mules to eat. A layer of this chopped straw under the tarpaulin and our rugs on the top make a tolerably soft bed, at any rate quite soft enough when one is tired. Lorenzo arrived about an hour after we did, but we had lit the fire and made ourselves some chocolate, as we thought it likely we should not get dinner until late. We had brought two little barrels of water from Guia, with about four gallons in each, but we had nowhere to put it, so had to borrow a couple of *tinas* from two of the fishermen, which with our can held all the water. A *tina* is a red earthenware pot or jar, like a bulb with a hole on the top, about four to six inches

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in diameter. When this is covered with an earthenware saucer, the water within is kept perfectly cool. We had scarcely completed our arrangements, when the daughter of the man with the sore nose came over for the "medicine," but we did not choose to entrust the people with the whole bottle of vaseline, so said we would bring it over in the evening, when we went out fishing with them. However, the man came to us, and John doctored him. We arranged to go out fishing with him later on, in order to see the fire-fishing, and intended eating before we left; but just as we were preparing to do so, a boy came to say they were starting immediately, so we left at once. About five minutes' walking over the large, smooth stones of which the beach is formed brought us to the small cluster of fishermen's houses and the tiny beach, of black lava sand, bounded by rocks, which forms their only harbour. I then found that they don't run the boats off the beach, on account of the surf, but come in as close as the boat will float. The fisherman carried John on his shoulder, and came back for me. The boat was very small, we two, the man, and his boy being quite enough for it. They first fished with a deep-sea line, and had a curious way of raising the line with a sweep of the arm and a jerk. No results followed, for no fish were caught. By this time the sun was nearly set over Gomera, tinging the clouds with all shades, from rosy red to pale pink—a beautiful sunset. Darkness soon follows sunset here, and from the lights in the sky we turned to those of the sea. As the oars dipped the phosphorus danced and played through the waves. The people of this island are certainly not a sailor-like population. The boat did not seem "ship-shape," nor were the fishermen. The rowing was execrable, and the oars curiously shaped. Except a small handle of about eight inches, the oar was square up to the blade, which was very broad, double the usual width in England, and straight. Outside the bulwarks hung four pieces of wood, two at either side, each about a foot and a half long. These at first were mysterious, but turned out to be safeguards against the wear and tear of the fishing-lines run-

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ning in and out of the boat. When it was quite dark, the boy lit some pieces of split pine-wood, placing them upon a round, flat stone, about nine or ten inches in diameter, in the stern of the boat. The boats are sharp at both ends, and have little lockers forward and aft. Upon the deck of the aft locker the fire was placed, the boy sitting in a hole in the locker with a line and a rod in his hand, and throwing out from time to time fish and bait cut up very finely. The light on the water and the bait are supposed to induce the fish to be caught. There is little caught, however, yet good authorities say the seas are swarming with fish. If we got no fish, we got a good tossing, and saw a picturesque sight. There were several other boats out besides ours, but the combined result could not have been great, for we could only get one fish next day for breakfast. The owner of our boat kindly brought us ashore when we were tired; and after a supper of gofio and milk, we went to sleep in our tent, though only about 7.30, and slept until 5 a.m., Lorenzo, in the usual blanket, lying outside, and the roar of the breakers in our ears.

*September 22nd, Saturday.*—It was a relief this morning not to be awakened by thousands of flies, although there were one or two and a black beetle on the canvas. I don't mind anything very much except mosquitos and earwigs. Of the former we have had very few, and those only in Santa Cruz and Laguna; there are none in Orotava. The ordinary house-fly is really the greatest plague, but they only become a nuisance within stone walls; they enter a tent in moderate numbers. Whilst I was dressing, John ran down to the sea and had a bathe. When dressed, I sent Lorenzo to see if he could procure any fish, while I tied up the coffee in a muslin bag and got the table laid. We really have a "table" here, consisting of a flat stone six inches high and two feet long by one and a half broad; two more big stones and our rugs make excellent seats. The tent is at the left as I look to the sea, and the kitchen at the right, and between them the table. Under the lee of the tent is

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the larder, its contents laid out upon the tent sack. At present it consists of three bottles of wine, honey, and oil respectively —there was a fourth, but it has gone for milk—a tin of coffee, another of tea, a roll and a quarter of bread, three little tins of mustard, pepper, and salt, a paper of sugar and extra coffee, chocolate in sticks for eating or drinking, as is Brand's beef-tea in skins, and a couple of dozen peaches. In a round basket made of split canes are potatoes, a piece of calabash, and a towel half full of gofio. At the far side of the cave, beyond the fire, are the two tinas of water. One of them is at present on a high stone, our canteen pail below it, and the little charcoal filter slowly syphoning the water through. Exactly at the opposite and left side, near the tent, are the saddles. The cave is wide and high, and at the right, where it is a little lower, a wall, in which there is a door and two windows, has been built across. This recess was used by the former owner as a stable for his horses or mules. The front of the cave is shut in by a low wall, some twelve feet thick. The space thus enclosed measures about a hundred feet deep by fifty across. The roof varies from being at the entrance about a hundred feet high to some twelve or fourteen feet above our tent, which we placed far enough in to be out of the sun. The floor is composed entirely of stones, some of which appear to have dropped from time to time from the roof above. At the first glance one would have thought that there was not a single plant amid the dry and barren stones, but on looking carefully we found one or two individuals. There was one fine specimen of the bitter cucumber (*Citrullus colocynthis*), throwing out its stiff branches, radiating from the centre, closely pressed on the ground, and bearing a great many small gourds, about the size of marbles. From these the valuable cathartic drug colocynth is produced. A few individuals of the Palma Christi (*Ricinus communis*) we also found. Its seeds yield castor oil, but it is more popularly known for the tradition asserting that it was the plant of which Christ's crown of thorns was made. There were also a few individuals of the *Reseda scoparia*, a native

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mignonette of this island, and of the Common Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*), which is a valuable anti-scorbutic herb. On the left, near the entrance, the cave is broken away; and a wall has been built, with steps, leading up to a little higher level, where are a piece of half-cultivated land and the remains of a house. A couple of fig trees and some cacti are all that are now to be seen. The man and his wife who lived here were swept away by a barranco.

The islanders are very foolish about these barrancos. Because there may have been no water in one for a year or two, they take for granted there will never be any, and sometimes build in the very bed of the river. Then there may come a time when there is heavy rain in the mountains, and the water gathers, and before they have time to think, the roar of the coming water is heard, sweeping everything in its course, stones, trees, and human beings, out into the sea.

When Lorenzo returned from his foraging this morning, he brought a boy with him, carrying a fish which looked like a lithe, about fifteen inches long, and for which we paid a *real*, or twopence-halfpenny. No doubt we paid too much, as English people are charged more than anyone else. Lorenzo cut it into four pieces, and it was soon frying in a pan of oil. Butter is not to be had, of course. Coffee, bread, and honey completed the repast. Before we had finished, our boatman of the previous evening came to have his nose settled again; his wife came with him, and they sat down. We gave them some bread, by way of a treat, but they kept it, and a little later, when the children came, divided it amongst them. The people of this island as a mass are poor, but the fishing population are miserably so. They never have anything to eat almost but salt fish and gofio. The clothing of this man consisted of a blue cotton shirt, like the smock-frocks of the French peasants, and a pair of linen trousers; over these he had a jacket and another pair of trousers, both so patched, that, with the most careful scrutiny, it was almost impossible to tell what the original material had been. These outer garments

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were for warmth, the blue shirt and white—originally—trousers being the ordinary garments. Still they are not any poorer than may be found in many a fishing village in Ireland and Scotland; and the Canarian peasant has the advantage of an equable climate, none of those piercing east winds or days and days of wetting rain.

After breakfast we sent Lorenzo up to the town for some bread and to make other purchases. While he is away I have been writing, uninterrupted for a long time by visitors, but at last ten came together, and sitting down close round me, watched me writing. John was lying in the tent, so he was safe. After gazing for ten or twenty minutes, they at last broke the silence, and informed me that they had come to be cured of various illnesses, fancying that John was a doctor, as he had successfully prescribed for the boy and man. One woman begged of us to come and see her husband, which we did, but the unfortunate man had paralysis, so was beyond help. Poor people! They never saw a doctor, and could not have fee'd him if there had been one in the neighbourhood. Their various ills arose chiefly from poverty and dirt, both unalleviable.

The view from the top of the wall in front, which is about four feet high, is very pleasant. At a distance of some dozen yards lies the blue sea, and a little to the right Gomera. On the left a small headland of dusky brown stone runs into the sea, while all along for about a quarter of a mile is a beach of large, rounded stones. Jutting out on the right, and partly forming the cave, is a pile of rocks, cutting us off from the bay and making our camp more private. The cave itself, however, does not give one a sense of great security, for the formation is a sort of conglomerate, dry mud and stones mixed, from which pebbles fall occasionally, and there are signs of larger masses having fallen, though not lately. Lorenzo at last turned up, about 2 p.m., with his purchases in Guia: a bottle of best Tenerife wine (one shilling and eightpence-halfpenny), six eggs (twopence-three-farthings), a pint of milk (a penny), a roll of bread, weighing about one pound (three farthings), and some

figs (for nothing). Figs and prickly pears are never charged for here. He also brought a fowl, or rather chicken, for tenpence. We ought to have got it for sevenpence, he told us, but it was a case of overcharging English. We soon had the dinner in course of preparation in island fashion. First a large saucepan half full of cold water was put on; then into it three or four large onions were thrown; then the fowl was put in, and this boiled away merrily. Another vessel was put on another fire which we had to make for it, and the rice put on in cold water for a little. Then added to the fowl and onion were about a dessert-spoonful of ground sweet capsicums (*pimiénto dúlce*), a little whole pepper, and a little garlic. There should have been tomatos, but they were not to be got for love or money. Then the most of the liquor from this was poured on the rice, and it was put on, to burst fully. More water was then added to the fowl and potatoes, and large pieces of calabash put in. When turned out, the rice is quite thick, and this is called *sopa*. The other dish of vegetables, with the fowl, is *puchero*. If there be no meat or fish to flavour the vegetables, the *puchero* is made of the latter alone, and is called *puchero blanco*. Any and every vegetable can be put into it, and the more the better. We have had cabbage in it too, and pears. It is, in fact, a Spanish hodge-podge. There is no doubt, however, that in the majority of English houses vegetables are not used half as much as they ought to be. They are a cheap and healthy article of diet. But the form of cooking requires to be varied, and we may learn a good deal from the cooking of other nations. It is easy to adopt a dish from the *menu* of another country, and advisable, for it adds one more to the meagre list of wholesome and economical dishes of our own.

In the evening we left the cave, and sitting outside, watched a glorious sunset over Gomera. The upper part of the island is almost entirely concealed by a bank of thick, soft clouds, hiding its outline. On our right lies the black promontory which shelters us from the fishing huts. It also shuts out the horizon,

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and its jagged outline, forming all kinds of fantastic shapes, is clearly defined against the pale green sky, streaked with delicate pink, fleecy clouds. A little above Gomera is a mass of dark grey cloud, between which and the mountain clouds the sky is flushed a glorious red, such a colour as to defy painter's brush. When we first saw it, this was a pale pink, but it rapidly deepened. Now again it changes to a deeper hue of crimson, whilst the purple of Gomera is lightened by a sea of silvery green, streaked with red from the clouds beyond. The only signs of life are the four fishing boats gliding out to sea for the nightly expedition. To the southward the clouds are grey, pale, delicate tints tinged with red. The sun sinking still lower, the crimson above disappears, to reappear to the north of the island, between its promontory and a bank of dark grey cloud. Over Gomera the clouds are now a French grey, with a touch of pink. The green over the black rocks is again changed to pale yellow; then, when the last streak of red is gone, the yellow ripens into a rich orange. The sun gone, the night comes; and a few minutes see us wrapped in darkness, save for the glimmer of the candle in the recesses of the tent. After a supper of excellent bread and milk we turn in, hoping to see the schooner betimes in the morning.

*September 23rd, Sunday.*—One wakens terribly early here. We scarcely ever sleep after 5 o'clock, and as the few flies that get into the tent insist on buzzing round one's nose, it is pleasanter to get up. After dressing comes breakfast, for, in true English fashion, we like to eat soon after rising. It makes me perfectly faint to get up about 5 or even 6, and get nothing to eat until 9.30 or 10. Such is the custom here, but when in camp, we revert to English ways, so far at any rate. Lorenzo preferred the remains of the puchero to our coffee and eggs.

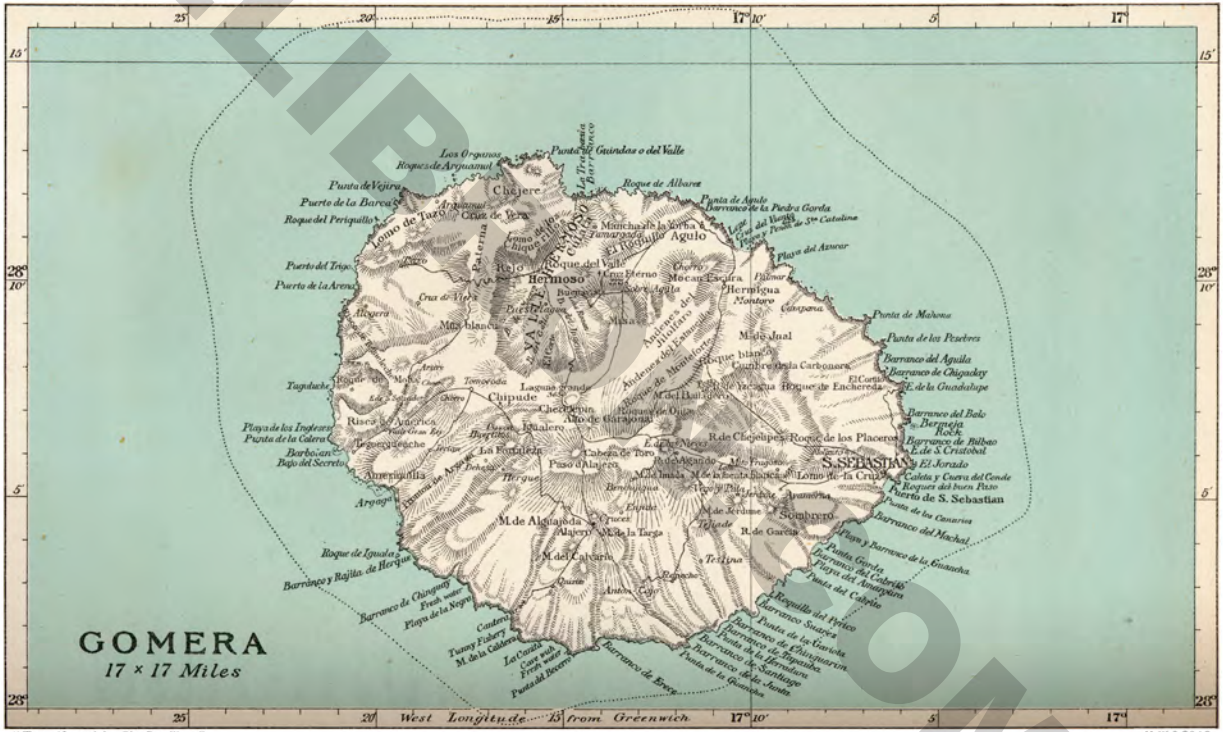
All morning we kept looking in vain for the *correo* (post), as the mail barque is called. At last, about midday, we saw a sail in the distance, but after waiting some time, noticed that the vessel was evidently making direct for Gomera. We sent Lorenzo to

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ask the fishermen the meaning of this; and they then told us, for the first time, that the correo does not always come in here, that it has to be signalled. We thought this was a little ruse to endeavour to keep us longer in the neighbourhood. With some difficulty, we made them hoist their flag—by courtesy—a white handkerchief tied to a fishing-rod and stuck in a rock above the huts. We also hoisted a towel on another fishing-rod at our camp. After a little we had the satisfaction of seeing the schooner turn towards us, and about four o'clock they sent a boat ashore.

Taking our traps over to the fishing bay, we sat down on them while we discussed the passage money with the *patrón*. This individual is a sort of half skipper, half purser, but not a captain in our meaning of having command over sailors and vessel, for the sailors seemed to change the tack just when they thought best. This man, Señor Miguel by name, asked us promptly eight dollars to go across to Gomera. We complained of such an extortionate price, when he said seven and a half. We then asked was there no fixed price, and found there was none! It is scarcely conceivable that the Government charter a vessel to carry the mails and allow the owner to extort as much money as ever he can from passengers. It is extortion, for there is no other means of conveyance from island to island. We still proclaimed against seven and a half, and he came down to seven. Finally we agreed for six dollars, and felt ourselves considerably "done" even at that price. The tender to the correo is a large, lumbering boat that could scarcely be upset. Seven men came ashore in her, and two or three of them tucked their trousers up and carried us and our baggage on board through the surf. Though there was very little wind, they tried to sail out to the schooner. After some time the men condescended to row. If they had done it a little sooner, we should have been out in half the time. When we got on board the vessel, we found the little cabin aft so stuffy that we preferred remaining on deck all night, in spite of a heavy dew.

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"Tenerife and its Six Satellites."

M. W. & Cº. Lº

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# CHAPTER X.

## *GOMERA—SAN SEBASTIAN.*

'Tis morn. Behold, the kingly Day now leaps
The eastern wall of earth, with sword in hand.
Clad in a flowing robe of mellow light,
Like to a king that has regained his throne,
He warms his drooping subjects into joy,
That rise rejoiced to do him fealty,
And rules with pomp the universal world.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

*September 24th, Monday.*—Our first experience of island schooners we thought terrible. Later we looked back upon this particular boat as the best in the islands. We did not enter the cabin during the night, but, wrapped in our rugs, lay and sat on the little deck at the stern. As the rudder was in the middle of this, and the boom lay over it, our position was not one to be envied. Whenever the boom "went over," we had to move, whether sleeping or waking. The dew fell heavily, wetting our faces and hair, besides the rugs; and we were stiff with lying on the hard boards. It is worth noting that this was the first dew we had seen; it does not fall upon the land. As those on board began to awaken, we were shown some attention. Hot coffee was brought to us, and a little hand-basin, with water and a towel. We were very grateful, but not half as much so as we ought to have been, if we had only known what sort of schooners we should be in later. The patrón came to us before reaching Gomera, and said, "I hear you are going to Hierro. I will take you there

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if you like, waiting for you at Gomera three days, and at Hierro four, and then bring you back to Orotava. Will you go, however, to Hierro first, and return to Gomera?" We asked him if he would wait four days in Gomera and three at Hierro, to which he agreed. On inquiring for how much, the mild sum of sixty dollars was asked! So we said, "No, thank you; it is too much." This conversation began about six o'clock in the morning, and at intervals of about half an hour he used to come to us, lowering his price each time. At last, after we cast anchor at San Sebastian, at 8.30 a.m., he offered to do it for forty dollars, so we turned to Lorenzo, and said, "Take all the luggage ashore. We think thirty dollars is ample, too much in fact." "Very well," he said; "I will do it for thirty dollars." And no doubt he thought himself well paid, as indeed he was, from what we learned afterwards.

At 4.30 this morning the sun began to rise behind Tenerife, and gave us a fine profile view of the mountains, culminating in the majestic presence which overrules these ocean isles—the Peak. Looking towards Gomera, the mountains upon it were enveloped in a layer of grey, fleecy clouds. At 5.30 the distinctiveness of the outline of Tenerife had gone, under the influence of the rising sun, a haze having gathered on the mountains. The rocks of Gomera grew more and more distinct, but the summit was still enveloped in a bank of clouds, the sky above them pale blue and clear.

As we approach, Gomera seems formed of quite precipitous, bare brown rocks. They belie, as we soon find out, the internal beauties of the island, just as Santa Cruz prevents all travellers from imagining the existence of an Orotava. It is this outward sterility which has saved the archipelago from being overrun by the everlasting and ubiquitous tourist of the nineteenth century. From the earliest times passing travellers have brought home accounts of the barren nature of the islands. Captain Cook on his third voyage says that the islands are deserts. "Hence, very recently, we have seen these islands celebrated for their fertility, in a manner repugnant at once

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to truth and reason." Cook, like other sailors and a few civilians, judges of countries by their coasts and ports, a one-sided aspect, not to be depended upon. Even Froude, in "Oceana," perpetuates the bad impression of Tenerife, which he says was "green, but bare." With great candour, however, he adds that a "close inspection might have improved our impression."

Gomera, which is round in form and seventeen miles in diameter, is highest in the middle, but slopes more on the southern than the northern side. The surface is much broken up with barrancos. Red and white horizontal strata, sometimes dipping, and twisted at various angles, vary the brown monotony of the rocks. Several protruding seams, apparently of harder rock, a few feet wide, run down the cliffs perpendicularly to the sea. Soon we are opposite a flatter space, at the base of the cliffs, where there are two or three houses and some greenery. About 6 a.m. a breeze sprang up, or rather we drifted into the wind, which blows steadily in certain directions. We had been under the lee of Tenerife all night, so had not made much progress.

The point of San Cristobal at present hides San Sebastian, and save for the houses at Montañon, there are no signs of life on this side of the island. As we near the coast we can discern numerous little bays, with precipitous cliffs in the background, recalling, only on a much larger scale as far as the cliffs are concerned, Serk. Punta San Cristobal terminates in a curious knob, like the tower of a castle. As we sail onwards we pass a little green valley. The first sign of San Sebastian is a small white fort, perched on a black rock, jutting some distance out into the sea, and hiding the town until we round the point. Immediately we send up two tattered rags, which go by the name of flags—one the broad red and yellow stripes of Spain, the other a pendant, to show we are the mail. We glide into smooth water, the good vessel rights herself, and swinging round, we drop anchor in twenty fathoms of water, where Columbus weighed anchor on September 7th, 1492, and took

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leave of land, only to see it again thirty-four days later, when he found the New World.

This is the prettiest landing-place, port or bay, in the archipelago. One comes on it suddenly, round a corner as it were. The bay is horseshoe in shape. The town or village of San Sebastian is built on a flat piece of land about half a mile broad, entirely surrounded by mountains, except at the back, where it contracts into a barranco, twisting and narrowing until it is lost in the recesses of the mountains. Palm trees are scattered



SAN SEBASTIAN, GOMERA.

about this plain at intervals. To the left is a square tower, and on the right a tall house. The strand is black, and as the waves break on it, the line of white surf forms a dazzling contrast to the inky lava ground to sand by the ocean. Extremely pretty is the whole scene, and stamped with a character of its own.

Leaving most of our luggage on board, we got out of the schooner in the fashion usual here. There is no attempt at a gangway of any sort, so I was lifted over the bulwarks by one man and dropped into another man's arms in the boat below. A very few minutes' rowing took us ashore,

when the boat was backed stern on towards the beach and kept in position just out of reach of the breakers. Two or three of the sailors, tucking up their trousers, jumped out, and lifted all the passengers—some half-dozen—and then the luggage, and carried us safely and dry ashore. Here we created considerable astonishment; and, as usual, the few who had congregated to see the boat arrive soon augmented to a fair number. Asking for the fonda, a tall, respectable man, dressed in white, came forward, saying he was the owner and would take us to it. So we followed him up the little street between two-storied houses, the postigos on either side lifting as we passed and remaining open, whilst we could hear whispered exclamations of astonishment and curiosity.

Our fonda is the fonda *par excellence*, for there is not another in the whole island. We were shown into the sala, a fair-sized room, with the usual bare boards. A washstand was put in here for us. When we had made ourselves a trifle tidier after our night on board, we went out to look at the Church of the Ascension, which was opposite. We met Lorenzo just coming out. He is very devout, and always visits a church whenever he can. I heard him telling his companions one day, when they were discussing what was of most importance in their religion, that "*La misa, la misa*" (the mass) "is the thing."

Pushing open the two entrance doors, of carved open work, we enter. The first object which rivets our attention, and faces us as we go in, is a black clock, about a foot and a half in diameter, on a pillar about six feet from the ground. The church is very plain, the walls whitewashed, and the pillars grey. The ceiling is of wood, mellowed with age into a dark brown. The organ-loft is over the entrance door, its carved sides and balcony, and seventeen stalls of plain fretwork nailed on wood, ruined in effect by the whitewashed walls. Wide, perfectly plain arches join the grey pillars together. The pulpit, of wood, which is so worm-eaten that it seems scarcely safe to get into, is painted almost grotesquely in green, gold, blue, red,



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and white; the workmanship is of the rudest description. On a pillar opposite the pulpit is a gilt figure, some five feet above the floor, and on the wall on the left of the church, and near the chancel, is a fresco of a battle between some ships and a fort. It is about twenty feet long by twelve deep, enclosed in a painted frame, and it bears signs of having been painted and partly whitewashed over. The fort has the English ensign flying from it, above a white standard, and there is a bell in it. A number of galleys fill up the picture, but flags and cannon-balls predominate, waving and flashing in and about the oars. The painting was executed by one José Mesa, a native of the town, in 1780. Whether it has anything to say to Sir Francis Drake's unsuccessful attempt to land in 1685, when on his way to the West Indies, or not is difficult to tell. Glas mentions an attack made in 1739 by two English vessels on San Sebastian, which also failed. As England and Spain were at war, it is exceedingly probable a couple of ships may have wandered here in search of booty, or it may be that when Blake attacked the Spanish fleet in Santa Cruz in 1657, a few of his vessels may have made an attempt on San Sebastian. The Dutch in 1599 appear to have been more successful, as the inhabitants fled to the mountains without fighting. As there were said to be seventy-three vessels in the expedition, they thought doubtless that resistance would be useless.* None of these accounts, however, correspond with the picture, which would seem to indicate that the English had landed and were in the fort.

Two windows on the right and one on the left light the church. There is no clerestory, but three small eye-windows at the west end. A figure of the Ascension, gaudily painted, was executed at Seville in 1792, and given to the town by another

* A MS of Bartolomé Roman de la Peña which Don Salvador has states that in 1571 a fleet of French and English ships entered the port and sacked and burned the city, also that in 1599 a fleet of ninety-nine ships again arrived, sacking the town, and that, in the Pass of Chirao, five Gomeros slew eight hundred of the enemy, who were said to be Dutch!

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native, Diego Fernandez Asebedo. There is a picture on the key-stone of the roof.

Altogether the church is plain, and betokens poverty and a paucity of artistic feeling of any sort.

We were quite ready for breakfast by the time we had explored the church. The fonda proved a good one in the matter of food, although the accommodation was meagre. We had fried eggs, roast meat, fish, figs, pears and prickly pears, bread and honey, chocolate and milk, and a confection of almonds and sugar. The bread, made in two knobs the size of a man's fist and stuck together, and the chocolate were the best we ever had; they were both the good landlady's *specialité*.

The eating-room, as usual, was bare and carpetless, a wooden table and stools its sole furniture. The door—there were no windows—opened upon the balcony, which was small and narrow, overhanging a tiny yard. Creeping plants adorn the walls and pillars, and hang in festoons over the stone filter, on which a cat is at present sitting. White pigeons fly about, canary-birds in cages are on the balcony, while below in the yard is a goat, which supplies the establishment with milk. Altogether, notwithstanding rickety stairs, broken boards, and its very small interior, the fonda is quaint and pretty.

Don Salvador proves himself a man of taste in more ways than one. He has collected a few Guanche antiquities, which he showed us. One, a small Guanche hand millstone, was seven and a half inches in diameter and one and three-quarter inches thick. It must have been the bottom stone, as there was no hole for the stick. Many modern books has Don Salvador, notably one by Don Gregorio Chil on the islands, which is coming out in parts, and of which I made a careful note. I little thought then how well I should know Don Gregorio later, and that he himself would give me a copy of his valuable work. Among the curiosities was a picture over the door of the Right Honourable W. E. Gladstone, which was carefully pointed out to us. I believe foreigners think the G.O.M. is the beginning and end of English govern-

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ment, and that England does not boast another statesman. A piece of pink-and-white coral thrown up on the beach after a storm and a sensitive plant were shown us as equally valuable. Carelessly lying on the sala table was an old paper MS, dated 1669, written by "Capitan y Sargento Mayor Bartolomé Roman de la Peña," in which some curious facts and traditions concerning this island are given. In 1494 it is said that the Gomeros rebelled at paying tithes, whereupon the Bishop, Don Diego de Muros, worked a miracle to show the power of the Church and how necessary was the duty of submission. He took a cheese and excommunicated and anathematised one half of it, which there and then turned black, but upon his blessing it resumed its natural colour! A clock and comfortable tables and chairs adorned the room. In one corner was a crucifix, in a glass case. A coloured sheet of the flags of all nations, framed, hung upon the wall, and a pair of field-glasses lay on the writing-table. Decidedly Don Salvador is a man of more taste and culture than is usual. The different articles enumerated were all in better style than in similar houses. The roof of the room was raised, and of dark wood. The walls, though whitewashed, had a dado of old-fashioned paper. The shutters were a brilliant blue, while red cotton curtains, or rather valances, hung above the window recesses. Several houses in the town have quaint balconies and window-shutters, of which we took a few interesting photographs. The favourite colour for shutters here is green, which gives a bright look, and yet is restful to the eye after the glare of the sun.

Our host, Don Salvador, offered after breakfast to escort us round the town and show us what was to be seen. We first directed our steps across a small street or two, and began to ascend the hill on the left, or east, of the bay. A winding path, half paved, sometimes passing between walls and up steps, led us rapidly higher. We sat down to rest at La Ila, the town facing us, the bay on our left. San Sebastian is completely surrounded by hills or mountains, and faces the deep

blue bay. Conspicuously in mid-valley, a little outside the town, stands a square tower, begun by Hernand Peraza and finished by Guillen Peraza, first Count of Gomera after the conquest. The barranco runs at the further side of the town; and the greater part of the flat, alluvial land is green with crops of black pepper and sweet potatoes. The cemetery is inside the old convent walls. Palm trees, whose fruit ripens



A QUAINT CORNER, SAN SEBASTIAN, GOMERA.

wave and bow in the strong wind which is always blowing here. After the conquest the town was called La Villa de Palmas, but the name was changed in later years. Continuing our walk to Buen Paso, by a path, a few feet wide, cut out of the perpendicular cliff, we were rewarded by a beautiful view of the calm, blue bay beneath and a fishing boat floating peacefully on its surface. Suddenly we turned an angle, and beneath us lay a little fort, at the extreme limit of the rocks upon which

it was possible to walk. It was in this fort that Hernand Peraza's wife and friends took refuge after his death, until Pedro de Vera brought them relief from Canaria. He was wicked and tyrannical, and drove the people to insurrection through his immoralities. A beautiful Gomera girl whom he liked, but who disliked him, betrayed him, and he was murdered by her countrymen in a cave in the barranco of Yganaga, or Magañas. Lifting our eyes a little above the ruined fort, and beyond it and the blue sea, rises Teide, more majestic from a distance perhaps than when close. Like a guardian angel, or like the spirit of the isles, wherever one goes throughout the archipelago it is impossible to leave the Peak behind. If we dip into the valleys and forget him perchance for a little, no sooner do we ascend a mountain than there he is again, stately, dignified, but ever present. Now we had forgotten the Peak, thinking only of Gomera, and suddenly we were brought once more face to face with it. The frame around the picture of the Peak was the rock-bound coast of Gomera, for the Buen Paso consists in a dip between the rocks leading to the fort, and through this dip we now saw Teide. Beautiful was the contrast of the black rocks against the blue sea, a frill of pure white foam round the base of each. This is decidedly one of the prettiest views in the islands, where there are several which stand out from among their fellows.

There are many pleasant walks around San Sebastian, which afford an opening for development. Of course they are in the rough at present, but they lead through valleys, up cliffs, over hillsides or mountains, so that life at San Sebastian need not be monotonous, nor locomotion difficult or unpleasant. I should like to prophesy a fair and prosperous future for Gomera, if—there is generally an *if* in the fairest case—there were only steam communication with Tenerife.

Descending, we crossed the town to El Torre. The tower is very strongly built, and no doubt was formerly a useful protection to the town, but is now used only as a barrack-room for a few soldiers. Two officers on duty kindly allowed us

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to mount to the top, whence there is a good view of the town, not so extensive, however, as that from La Ila. Beneath, in a garden, was a water-wheel for irrigation purposes. There is plenty of water in the island. I wish I had a pen of fire with which to beg, beseech, command, threaten, or do anything that would make the authorities really prevent the wholesale and wanton destruction of trees that takes place. Tenerife, which used to be a land of forests, and consequently water, is now in parts a desert. Gomera fortunately has not a large population, so that the growth of trees has almost kept pace with their destruction. The result is that the island is a garden of Eden. Irrigation is possible; the sun is always present; moisture hangs about the hill-tops; woodland glades and forests abound, rendering the natural features of the island still more beautiful from being clothed with verdure. This truth, however, we realised more fully on our return from Hierro, when we rode through and over Gomera's loveliest valleys and mountains.

Leaving El Torre, we visited the old Franciscan monastery which was established by Guillen Peraza, the first count, in 1533, as a sort of expiation for his many immoralities. There is but little of it now, only part of a balcony and the broad staircase leading from the patio and cloisters. Some poor people live in the few rooms left. It requires caution to walk along the dilapidated building, as every here and there the flooring is rotten, and a hole, through which we can see greensward or weeds beneath, has to be stepped across.

The cemetery surrounding the monastery is small. The grave of our host's family has a marble tombstone; all the rest have wooden crosses.

Returning to the town, we were taken to a house which is being repaired, and where there is an ancient tablet. A wide staircase leads to an upper room, whose floor consists only of beams at present. Carefully preserved in a wooden frame and built into the wall was a piece of marble about two feet six inches by one foot three inches. A coat of arms was

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carved and coloured upon it in seven divisions. Two of these appear to be the arms of the Canary Islands and of Gomera, but the rest, with the exception of the arms of Spain, are unintelligible. Some are supposed to be the arms of Don Guillen Peraza, the first Count and Governor of Gomera.

Don Salvador took us to another house, in which there were old paintings hanging in the corridors, portraits of the ancestors of the present owner of the house, and some of unknown individuals. An old woman who was in bed here seemed rather pleased than otherwise at seeing us, strangers though we were. A number of canaries in cages hung about the balconies.

Returning to the fonda, Don Salvador produced a Guanche skull and dinner. Whether the one was intended as an appetiser for the other or not I cannot say. The dinner was good. Potato soup, beef, ptarmigan, French beans cooked and served cold with vinegar and oil, fried potatoes, fish, something like pancakes in sweet sauce, and fruit formed the *menu*, served in this order.

We had a letter of introduction to a gentleman at the other side of the island, which we left with Don Salvador, who promised to forward it immediately upon seeing our vessel returning from Hierro, so that horses might be sent for us, as they were difficult to procure in San Sebastian. In all good faith, we gave our directions, and received assurances of their being attended to promptly. What a humbug Don Salvador turned out remains to be seen.

Meanwhile we had some bread and milk for supper, about ten o'clock, and were called to go on board again about 1 a.m. Don Salvador escorted us to the beach, where we went through the same process as when landing, being carried out to the boat and then rowed to the schooner. Nature has been kinder to Gomera in a landing-place than to Madeira, and yet San Sebastian is unknown, and Funchal is too full of English.

We turned into our bunk, such as it was, and laid our rugs on the boards, to make them a trifle softer, rolling up coats for

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pillows. Being first-class passengers, we enjoyed the society of the skipper and the remainder of the sailors, besides a few youths who had been over in Tenerife at the college there. A woman and child, second-class I suppose, travelled in the hold! She and I were the only females on board. The child was dying apparently of consumption, but was ordered to Hierro to try the effect of a mineral spring in that island, supposed to be efficacious for everything.

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# CHAPTER XI.

## *HIERRO—VALVERDE—SABINOSA.*

Between the daylight and the dark
  That island lies in silver air,
And suddenly my magic barque
  Wheeled, and ran in, and grounded there;
And by me stood the sentinel
Of them who in the island dwell;
  All smiling did he bind my hands
  With rushes green and rosy bands;
They have no harsher bonds than these,
  The people of the pleasant lands
Within the wash of the airy seas.

ANDREW LANG.

Droops the heavy-blossomed bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree,
Summer Isles of Eden lying in dark purple spheres of sea.

HORACE.

*September 25th, Tuesday.*—We are at last on our way to Hierro, that *terra incognita* to the rest of the inhabitants of the archipelago. So far as we can ascertain, no English-speaking person has been on this island since the days of Columbus. Even Glas, whose accounts of the other islands still remain the most accurate, never visited this island himself, so we have not the benefit of his experience. Little as is known of Gomera, still less is known of Hierro. It is therefore with somewhat of the feeling of discoverers and pioneers that we approach the most westerly island of the Canarian Archipelago.

When we scrambled on deck at 6.30 a.m., we found we were passing Los Organos, a point at the extreme north of the

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island of Gomera. A few rocky islets lie between this point and that of Vejira.

For the first time since our arrival in the archipelago, the sky was more or less covered with clouds of a rainy appearance. We knew, however, that in September no rain would fall. We were sailing, with a good breeze, close to the shore, so had a fine view of the high precipices which compose the coast line. There does not seem the smallest ledge on which the sole of a man's foot could rest from top to bottom. The summits are enveloped in clouds of white, rolling wool, with a wash here and there of ink by way of contrast. The Punta de Vejira is a wild, rugged-looking point running out from the mainland, and ending in a blunt precipice in the sea. The strata in its brown cliffs run downwards, at right angles, intersected occasionally by streaks of white in a perpendicular direction, a few reddish bits varying the colour. The surface is much seamed and furrowed. Two angular and small pieces of rock stand against the sky on the Punta, resembling in the distance a couple of men looking down upon the schooner beneath, as if watching its progress. As we began to sail westward, no longer hugging the coast of Gomera, we got a fine view to the south-west of headland after headland, wild and rugged, with coarsely serrated outlines against the cloudy sky, the rocks themselves looking black and foreboding. The only signs of life on sea or island or in the sky besides ourselves are two seagulls hovering near the edge of the cliffs. A couple of the sailors got out some young sepia, or cuttle-fish, and cooked them. We had heard of this being done, but seeing is believing; our informant indeed did not credit it himself.

Until noon we had a breeze, which bore us along pleasantly. There was a steady roll, the swell of the Atlantic, but the sea was not rough. The wind, however, died away, and although we sighted a cloudy, indistinct mass, supposed to be Hierro, at 1 p.m., it was five o'clock before we reached that island. A shoal of porpoises and birds accompanying their gambols, beguiled what was now becoming a rather tedious journey. An amusing discussion took place between us and the skipper.

We found he was steering due west from Gomera, so we asked him why he did so. He said because Hierro was westward; we declared Hierro was south-west. The patrón shook his head pityingly at our ignorance and obstinacy. There was no compass on board, the sailors simply steering vaguely in a westerly direction until Hierro came in sight, when they made for it as nearly as possible in a bee-line. The result of this proceeding was that we first went too much to the northward of Hierro and sighted the Salmon Rocks, looking exactly like a large ship in full sail, and beyond them, on the right, Punta de la Dehesa. Leftwards the Caleta, a low-lying point on the east of the island, was the most prominent object. It will readily be understood by our being able to see all these points that our course must have been almost due west after leaving Vejira on Gomera, as the sailors declared should be the direction, and that as soon as we sighted land our course was changed to an almost southerly one. I did not particularly enjoy the long swell in a small schooner, and was glad enough when, at five o'clock, it was proposed we should land at El Rio. This spot is a deep gully or creek running inland, protected on either side by rocks. Near the mouth of the creek there is a bar, and as the tide was low, we could not get into the little bay. The name El Rio (The River) of course implies a river. At present there is not the least sign of one, but no doubt there may be a mountain torrent in winter. Our boat was brought alongside a rock on the seaward side of the bar, but, owing to the swell, it could not be brought within several feet of the rock. A couple of men jumped ashore, and by their aid we jumped too, arriving, baggage and all, without a ducking. Scrambling and jumping along the rocks, we reached the shore. Here, in a sheltered position, lie a few huts and fishing boats. Hills, black with lava, shut them in on all sides. Of course no horses were to be seen, so, leaving our luggage with Lorenzo to look after it, we started along with the patrón, walking, for Valverde. A shrub grew abundantly where we landed, called both *carcosa* and *vinagreda* (*Rumex lunarin*) by the natives, who did not appear certain of its name. It is a round-

shaped bush, with tough, glabrous leaves, the solitary clumps being several feet in height. Dotted here and there all over the incline, it imparted a distinct feature to the landscape. Cattle browse upon and like its leaves. A zigzag path led up a cinder-strewn hill on the left. The climb was toilsome, especially as we had not eaten since the morning. Our breakfast then consisted of fish, sweet potatoes, and an oily mixture by way of gravy. Hunger is good sauce, so we managed a hearty meal, sauce and all. Having reached 650 feet of altitude, we rested for a few minutes, then started again. Another rest at 1,150 feet, when, at 1,600 feet, we struck the direct path to Valverde, situated on the top of the island.

Hierro is approached in quite a different fashion from the other islands. All its sides are precipitous. There is but little littoral, and that is surrounded by precipices. Consequently the towns or villages are on a plateau in mid-island. Valverde, the principal town—a collection of a few houses, more deserving the name of village—is four miles and a half from its port and a couple of miles from El Rio, the ascent in each case being abrupt.

The patrón tried to persuade us to put up for the night at a house he recommended. However, the priest of Hierro had kindly offered us his house and hospitality when we met him at Laguna, where he had gone to consult a doctor, there being none on his island. Walking through the clean little town late in the evening, we were the subjects of much curiosity to the villagers, to whom strangers are unknown. The patrón was constantly asked if we were *Francéses*, the last visitors to the island having been French, and *Ingleses* never having been seen before. We arrived at the priest's house at 6.45 p.m., to find he had not returned from Tenerife, and that his housekeeper was totally ignorant of us or the worthy *padre's* promised hospitality. It is needless to say that on Hierro there is not an inn of any sort, so that we could not simply turn away and go elsewhere. The good woman knew this as well as we did, so invited us to enter, and she would give us what she could.

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A horse had been meanwhile requisitioned and despatched for our luggage. Pending its arrival, we were supplied with supper, such as could be procured at a moment's notice. A young priest, left in charge of the parish by the Reverendo Señor Andreas de Candelaria, came and supped with us, and we obtained some information from him as to the best method of riding round the island. Lorenzo presently arrived with the luggage, when we ordered horses for next day. We were lodged in the priest's own room, I think, a very comfortable apartment, although the bed measured of course but three feet in width. The sala opened off it. The walls were more than two feet thick, so coolness was ensured. As in most Spanish houses, no means of washing was supplied in the bedroom. Lorenzo, however, explained that we should like a basin and water in the room. It is a very general custom to have one room for washing, where everybody goes for that purpose. It is not a habit, however, which commends itself to English people, who like to get their ablutions over before the day begins. Spaniards, on the other hand, dress first, or rather put on their clothes with a pitchfork, and about midday or later make an elaborate toilet. There are other nations, however, who act similarly, and I think it is one of the greatest faults of our American cousins that they are seldom presentable until the afternoon. Dirty work or necessary household duties are no excuse for a woman being untidy or dirty in her person, as, alas! I have often seen.

*September 26th, Wednesday.*—We rose late, at seven o'clock, and had what we call breakfast, what the good people here call coffee. We had, however, in addition honey and eggs fried in oil. Butter is not to be had in Hierro. Whilst waiting the arrival of our two mules and a horse to start for El Pinar, we noticed the curious-looking church, just below the priest's house. It has a low tower, with a mosque-like dome, the sides of which are painted a vivid blue and brick-red in streaks. A wooden balcony runs round the tower beneath the clock. Beyond and around is the town of Valverde, lying in a semicircle of hills,

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the houses curving round and climbing up and down them. The houses are not in rows, but scattered. Never more than four are clumped together. Some have flat roofs, and some the usual red half-pipe tiles. The walls are whitewashed, the wooden shutters, as a rule, unpainted. A great deal of greenery is agreeably mixed up with the houses. Towards the south-east the valley slopes to the sea, most of the houses facing that way; north-east a rounded hill hides the view, and shelters the town on that side. A small square, into which the priest's house abuts, lies in front of the church, which is 1,750 feet above the sea. From seven this morning the square gradually filled with men, anxious to see us, the hour of our departure being easily ascertained from the arrieros.

Promising to turn up again in a day or two, we started. The air was very pleasant, owing to the altitude. We had our tent, as we did not know where we were going, and of course our saddles, as I am certain there is not a lady's saddle in the island.

Hierro has no wealthy residents. The priest's house is, in fact, the only one of any size or accommodation, the remainder of the dwellings being those of peasants. The island is absolutely devoid of a road of any sort, and consequently of a wheeled vehicle. A good broad-paved path near the church led us out of the village at the opposite side to that which we entered. The paving soon ceased, and we got on a trodden path, pleasant and soft to the horses' feet. Some herbage, bracken, and nettles grew alongside of the track; and where fenced off, we found lichen covering the northern side of the stone walls. Birds in flocks and singly flew about and sang us their sweet song as we walked along. But few people were abroad. We met only one woman, with a mule, on whose back were small branches of trees. The path winds between and along the undulations in the hills. At the top of one of these, a cutting or slope looks down into La Caldera, which is perfectly flat, and cultivated at the bottom. Groups of peaked stones conglomerated, formed into fantastic shape, like druidical

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remains, are around and beneath. Where we stand, at 2,350 feet of altitude, the rocks are a brown-grey-like basalt. The southern wall of the Caldera is lower than the rest. That we were to come across so many of these cauldrons or craters, which point beyond dispute to the volcanic origin of the islands, we could scarcely have believed.

A slight mist hung about the mountains, which, while curtailing our view, made the air considerably cooler. Hedges of aloes enclosed the land on either side of the path, the soil of which seems deep and fair in quality. The path, unlike those in Tenerife, is not strewn with stones, but consists of firmly trodden earth, pleasant to the foot. We met two men and two boys, dressed in homespun cloth, a sort of brown heather mixture, carrying some chestnuts, probably to Valverde. We passed Tiñor, a cluster of low, thatched houses, on our left, the altitude here being 2,675 feet, the soil as we ascend becoming a sort of red sand, and more stony.

A canvas saddle-bag was thrown across one of our horses, something like an old-fashioned purse—a bag at each end. There is a hole in the middle of these bags, which slips over the head when walking, and forms a sort of plaster on back and front.

Two large pools of water invited the animals to drink. They are formed by the rain in winter, and being 3,000 feet above the sea, do not entirely evaporate. The water is muddy, it is true, but still it is water. A little grotto, with a tiny cross above, is at one side. Hundreds of birds, the canary-bird in particular, flock to these pools, and are almost indifferent to our presence. We now follow a flat path lying between the tops of the hills. Constantly we pass tanks for rainwater, a necessity here, round which the birds congregate. The natives of Hierro at the time of the conquest are said to have used cisterns, as they do now. The word *Hero*, or *Herro*, by which they called this island, some say, signified a cistern. The Spanish conquerors, not understanding the word, changed it into what from its sound they supposed the word to mean, namely iron,

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which in Spanish is *hierro*. To their minds there was nothing improbable in this, for they imagined that iron was found on the island, but they were wrong. The Frenchmen in the expedition similarly mistranslated the native word, and so misnamed the island Fer—Iron—while the Portuguese have called it Ferro, from the same interpretation. The French still speak of the island as Ile de Fer. It will thus be seen that Ferro has neither rhyme nor reason for its use, and is at the present day unknown to the natives. As the islanders appear to have been always called Herreños, it would seem reasonable to infer that Hero is the more likely pronunciation of the name. Where Hero really came from is quite another matter, as difficult of elucidation as the names of the other islands.

We see a crop of potatoes, green and fresh-looking. They are the second crop this year. Some rough rocks on our left, rising out of a ridge, look like a castle. Further on more potatoes, this time in flower, show man's presence to be near, and presently a few huts of stones, and thatched roofs, come in sight. Large red stones are on the thatches, to keep them down when the weather is stormy.

The valley now ceases, and we reach a large plain, sloping towards the centre and completely surrounded by hills. Eastward there are three bright red cones. In fact, there are cones all round. It is 10.30 a.m. as we pass a church and a few houses, which we find form San Andres (3,050 feet). The church is very poor-looking, being literally a barn and belfry.

Just before reaching the church we passed a dead horse. Crows around it in dozens a little reminded one of desert scenes. Apropos of dead horses, my live one goes very well, although he is so thin that I feel his backbone through my pad-saddle in a very uncomfortable manner.

As we get close to San Andres, we find there are more huts than we thought there were. They are built of materials the same colour as the ground, and so are almost invisible. The ground is cracked in ridges, like gigantic furrows turned up by



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a giant's plough. The houses here are surrounded by walls; and these and the thatches being dark, nothing is white and glaring, save the whitewashed church—at least, it was once. Close by we were shown a large hole in the ground, the entrance to a cave, which is said to run a long way towards the sea. Of course it is a Guanche cave, using the word generically.

The inhabitants of Hierro, as I have already mentioned, were, and are however, called Herreños. Hierro was the Capraria of King Juba II., the members of whose expedition brought descriptions which plainly identify this island, not only on account of the goats, but also because of the large lizards, which Bethencourt in 1402 still found there. Bethencourt's description, or rather that of his chroniclers, is very meagre. He speaks of there being forests of pine—"most of which are so thick, that two men can hardly make their arms meet round them"—and laurel, and says that the soil was good, that there were numbers of fruit trees and birds, that the water was good, and that there was a "great abundance of animals, such as hogs, goats, and sheep. There are lizards as large as cats, but harmless, although very hideous to look at. The inhabitants are a fine race, both men and women." Azurara, who gives an account of an expedition under Prince Henry the Navigator, mentions that then (about 1443) there were twelve Christians in Hierro, which had been conquered by Bethencourt. Galindo states that the people of Hierro were small, more or less fair, and sometimes blonde. Fortunately, however, in the MS translated by Glas, we have a much more detailed account of the ancient inhabitants of this now, as then, little-known people. He states that the Herreños were "of a melancholy turn of mind, for all their songs were on grave subjects, and set to slow, plaintive tunes, to which they danced in a ring, joining hands together, and now and then jumping up in pairs, so equally, that they seemed to be united." This dance is still practised in Hierro, and is called "El Tango." He continues, "They dwelt in large, circular enclosures, the walls of which were of dry stone, without cement, each enclosure having

one narrow entry; on the inside they placed poles or spars against the wall, in such a manner that one end rested on the top of the wall and the other on the ground, at a considerable distance from the bottom of it; these they covered with branches of trees, ferns, etc. Each of these enclosures contained about twenty families." They appear to have had only one king, so consequently were saved those internal dissensions which proved destructive to Tenerife. On the other hand, owing to their unpreparedness for battle, they were unable to resist the various pirates who from time to time devastated the island and carried off prisoners. Two versions of the conquest of the island are given, which may perhaps modify each other. One states that a soothsayer, Yore by name, had prophesied in the years past that when he was dead, and his bones in dust, "their god, Eraoranzan, would come to them in white houses on the water." Yore advised them not to resist or fly from him, but to adore him. Consequently, when Bethencourt's ships anchored in the port, the natives, remembering Yore's prophecies, firmly believed Eraoranzan had come, and greeted the invaders, much to the astonishment of the latter, with joy instead of with resistance.

They were monogamous, and appear to have had no distinctions of rank, with the exception of the king, so intermarried freely. They buried their dead in caves. Murder and theft were the only crimes punished. For the former "the murderer was put to death in the same manner as he had killed" his victim; for theft an eye was put out upon the first offence, and the second eye upon its repetition, so "that he might not see to steal any more." They had a goddess as well as a god, called Moneyba, worshipped by the women. Curiously, however, here, as in the other islands, they had no images, nor did they offer sacrifices. Their gods were those of imagination, to whom they prayed. But they believed that the gods visited them occasionally, resting upon such occasions on two great rocks called Ventayca, where, though invisible to their adorers, they heard their petitions,

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afterwards returning to heaven. When taught the Roman Catholic religion, they worshipped Christ and the Virgin under the names of Eraoranzan and Moneyba.

The path, leading as it does over smooth, undulating ground, devoid of vegetation, save potatoes occasionally, is usually confined between loose stone walls. There is a pleasant, cool breeze, and the sky is cloudy. Our animals are uncouth and untrained in every respect. They have never been required for civilised life, and where there there is no demand there is no supply. Tinder boxes are still used for striking a light, and it was with much interest I saw a man light his pipe as our forefathers used to do.

The soil is like caked sand, and where tramped it turns into several inches of dust. Sometimes the road, or rather path, leads through places which have the appearance of being cuttings. A small yellow flower, which attracted our attention, was new to us. The arrieros called it *gurman* (*Calendula arvensis*), or something similar, but the Herreños are very difficult to understand, they speak so thickly. White butterflies, somewhat like those at home, flitted by us, and heath, 3,500 feet above the sea, looked homelike too. A little further, and we came in sight of some trees on a conical hill, which were quite refreshing to the eye. Pines, silver-green in hue, and a shrub which the guides called *masilba*, looking in the distance like bushes of boxwood, formed the wood. *Breso* (*Erica arborea*), a large heath, which would make a good broom, grew in the banks. Beside the path grew an elegant herbaceous plant, just then in flower, *Sonchus leptocephalus*. The pines were in odd and contorted shapes, and were clothed to the ground. They were, alas! not close together, forming a thick forest, but thinned so that one tree scarcely threw its shadow upon another. This destruction must be since the conquest, for Bethencourt's chroniclers speak of the "large forests of pine and laurel."

There was a curious enclosure near here, which puzzled us much when we first saw it. It was an open space surrounded on three sides by walls, low stones placed all round at intervals.

This, the men told us, was a resting-place for a corpse and its bearers when carrying it to the burial-ground. With such a scattered population, the cemeteries are at great distances, and as the dead person must be carried by bearers, these resting-places are very necessary. We met some laden horses, and as we were on the road, there was no room for them, so they were driven over part of the hill. A Small Copper butterfly wandered past us. The undulating ground, with pines and shrubs, and the smooth, lawn-like surface, give, save for the absence of green grass, the appearance of a private park.

We now left the main road to see Las Playas, one of the features of Hierro. The island is three-sided, and on two sides are these curious precipices, the mainland between being a high plateau. Winding my arm round a pine tree, I leaned towards the edge of the precipice, because the foothold is unsafe. It is so steep, that, except in one place, there is no foothold for man, yet isolated pines grow from top to bottom wherever there is a ledge of soil. Standing where we do, we are at one side of a slightly curved bay, the back of which is a rocky precipice 3,000 feet high. That the cliff is not absolutely perpendicular we know from the fact of pines growing in crevices and on ledges, but to all appearance it is a precipice. A few birds soar beneath us. At the southernmost side of the bay a little bit of ground, lying above the sea level, has been cultivated to the extent of growing fig trees. The peasants descend to gather the figs by a steep path, which zigzags down the middle of the rocky wall, where it is not quite so perpendicular, though it looks as if it would be necessary to sling a person down with ropes. A white line of surf breaks along the sandy shore, behind which is a very narrow piece of littoral, in reality but a sea-border. The beach lies in undulating curves. It is at our side alone—the southern—that the pines grow; the other is probably too steep. Orchilla is gathered on these cliffs. The peasants, notwithstanding that accidents sometimes occur, still let themselves over by means of ropes. The centre of the ridge round the bay, rising to about

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3,500 feet, slopes at each end towards the sea, until within only about 1,000 feet of the water. The view is certainly one of the finest in the islands, standing on the top of that huge wall and looking down on the small plain it shelters, seeing the surf breaking while we are beyond its roar and watching the birds as they soar in space. The clearness of the atmosphere enables one to see objects distinctly, although diminished in size, as if through a glass.

Turning, we leave the shelter of the pines, and retrace our steps across the brown sward to the road. Whilst walking beside our animals, we found the buckle connecting the crupper and saddle on John's horse was broken. It was some time before we could rig up an arrangement, which was a cross between a crupper and a breechband, with our spare straps. It was now 12.30 p.m., and we had come a good distance. The paths are not so bad in this part of Hierro as in the south of Tenerife.

Just before reaching the village of El Pinar, we came upon a mulberry tree, simply laden with black, ripe fruit. Such mulberries I never tasted or dreamed of before. Lorenzo picked a large leaf, on which he put the mulberries. It filled both his hands. I was sitting on my horse, and as fast as he brought, I devoured them. They were luscious and cool, and so thoroughly ripened through, that they melted in one's mouth. What astonished us was that they were not already eaten by others. It seems, however, that they are the second bearing of the tree, of which, either from superstition or tradition, the peasants will not eat. Our men took a few, but not as many as we did. The height at which the mulberry flourished was 2,650 feet. Opposite the mulberry tree were two or three threshing-floors.

The dark, thatched roofs of El Pinar now came in sight. Some sheep and cows in pens show that pasturage is plentiful about here. The wool on the sheep is straight and bright yellow, with an oily appearance.

Some women were sitting on the roadside, doing nothing but

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basking in the sunshine. Warm climates encourage laziness, and there is a sad want of native industries.

Our men stopped the horses here, and, much to our astonishment, took for granted we were going to stay at El Pinar for the night. As it was not two o'clock yet, and as, alas! our time was limited for seeing Hierro, we were obliged to push on, otherwise an encampment amid the pines would have been enjoyable indeed. So, after some discussion, a little grumbling, and much sarcastic comment on Lorenzo's part at the poor walking powers of the inhabitants of Hierro, we finally started again.

The Puerto de Naos, the best port in the island, where Bethencourt landed after his conquest of Gomera, can be seen from here. He had with him Augeron, a native of Hierro, who, with many others, had been captured by Aragona pirates and sold as a slave. He was sent to Bethencourt by the King of Spain to act as interpreter. Hierro was almost depopulated by pirates from time to time, and in 1402, three years before Bethencourt's advent, four hundred unfortunate Herreños are said to have been captured and carried into slavery. Augeron turned out to be the brother of the reigning King of Hierro, Armiche, to whom Bethencourt sent Augeron to persuade the King to have his powerful protection and friendship. So well did he fulfil his task, aided perhaps by the readiness of the people after the prophetic warnings of Yore, that Armiche came peaceably to Bethencourt, with a hundred and eleven followers. His trust was rewarded by his being enslaved and a garrison of the invaders left in the island.

Leaving El Pinar in a northerly direction, we went up through scattered pines, with barley growing between their stems. Many of the pines were burnt, in that terribly wanton and destructive manner that is the deplorable custom here. At 2.15 p.m. we were 3,000 feet up, the ascent being gentle and through a pine forest. What a charm there is about pines! They soothe one, without being gloomy. Their needles, while admitting light and heat, yet temper both.

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There is nothing dismal about a pine forest, yet the stillness is intense. The needle-shaped leaves lying on the ground soften every tread to a whisper, and there is no rustle of thick foliage as a breeze passes over the tree tops. Long vistas of pine trunks give one a feeling of space, not of suffocation, as with ordinary foliage and undergrowth, for nothing grows beneath a pine. Being amid the pines carries one to Norway, and yet our northern tree has not the grace and curve of the beautiful, sensuous Canary species.

Three hundred and fifty feet higher there is a break in the pines and a little rising ground. This gives us a magnificent view on our left northwards, over plains and conical hills, all brown and covered with pines, rising higher and higher till they crown each cone. Where we tread is covered with turf and heather, all brown now, for it is September. I should like to travel in Hierro in May.

About 3 p.m. we were glad to call a halt for rest and food, as further on the ascent was steeper. A crack in the ground, like a miniature barranco, offered us a pleasant shelter from the sun. It ran back from a turn in the road, which changed its course here. Under the shelter of the high bank, and standing back from the path, in the angle of the road, was a little hut, built of loose stones. A man stepped out of the low doorway as we approached, and surveyed us with an amused and smiling countenance. The place seemed scarcely fit to live in, but we found the owners were goatherds, who only came here for the summer, tending their flocks. While I got out our luncheon of hard-boiled eggs, bread, and honey, John prepared his camera, and took the hut and two picturesque-looking men, who wore dark blue caps, with peaks hanging down at the side. Lorenzo, with great gravity and a superior air of civilised knowledge, placed himself in position, and told the men to stay quiet. They had no idea what was going to happen. Lorenzo must have a large share of Spanish blood in his veins, for his gravity is imperturbable. The corner of the little cliff in which we had our luncheon sheltered a lovely maidenhair fern and a yellow,

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hairy sort of moss. Southwards lie hills, sparsely covered with pines, while above us, on our left, is Mal Paso. The hut is 3,650 feet above the sea, a pleasant climate in these islands.

After half an hour's rest we mounted and rode onwards. There are many curious fissures, in which trees grow luxuriantly. A cross on our right, called Los Reyes, serves as an exact guide for the height, which our aneroid gives as 3,900 feet. The



GOATHERD'S HUT, EL PINAR, HIERRO.

name has an ancient sound, but I find it difficult even to conjecture its origin.

Still ascending, we now crossed a sweep of fine black lava, like cinders, in which the horses sank. Again a stretch of heath-covered mountain, blooming with white flowers, called by our guides *ortelanilla* (*Cedronella Canariensis*). Swallows flew backwards and forwards as we reached the summit of Mal Paso (4,400 feet). We were told we were on the highest point in the island, but it was not possible to see, owing to the mist

which rolled round the top of the precipice, on whose edge we stood, looking down on where El Golfo ought to be. The Admiralty charts give two higher points on the same ridge, which is not correct according to Fritsch. The mist was not on the southern side of the Mal Paso at all. It opened and closed and rolled along the edge of the precipice, just on a level with the top, and tantalisingly prevented our having what must have been a fine view. The track we followed, of our own choosing—for path there was none—led over loose lava, full of holes, into which our horses' feet sank. John's horse went above its knees in one place. We thought both were going to disappear into the regions below several times.

After riding along the top of the mountain ridge some distance, we changed our course, turning to the right and descending by what was really a track, although steep and of loose cinders, until we reached a dip in the hills (3,845 feet), at the foot of Taganasoja. This is a mountainous cone, lying near the main ridge. Our path led between both mountains. Enormous heaths, treelike in size, grew on each side and around us. The descent from this point to Sabinosa was one of the most lovely rides we enjoyed in the islands. It was a perpetual treat of green, a feast to the eye, with all the luxuriousness of a tropical climate and the verdure of a temperate. The path wound in and out of a forest (3,400 feet) of gigantic heaths, the undergrowth being thick and luxuriant, hare's-foot and other ferns growing in the wildest profusion, while bracken, moss, and lichen, all of the greenest, reminded one of the Emerald Isle. A species of laurel was also abundant, and of large growth; and we frequently stopped our animals and picked blackberries off the bushes, this at a height of only 2,650 feet. We came across a shrub, called by our arriero *tornillo salvage*, reminding us of wild thyme. It turned out upon investigation to be the labiate plant *Micromeria lasiophylla*. A gate across the path divided this luxuriant spot from one a trifle more barren. The guide called it La Cansela Quebrado, as well at least as we could understand his peculiar pronunciation.

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Soon after entering this wilderness of greenery, John, who was riding in front of me on a mule, single file being necessary, met with an amusing accident. He had taken his aneroid out of his pocket to see the height, and fortunately had replaced it, and was making a note of the altitude, when the mule knowingly perceiving that its rider was occupied, stopped suddenly and stooped to crop some ferns. The path was very steep; and John, note-book and pencil in hand, went straight over the animal's head, and landed in front, sitting upon the ground, having turned a complete somersault. The pencil and note-book were still in his hands undisturbed. The mule looked at him surprised at his sudden apparition. At first I was rather frightened lest some bones might be broken, and the guides were scared out of their wits. I shouted to John, "Are you hurt?" but found I need not repeat my question, owing to his laughter, which prevented a reply. Reassured, the ludicrousness of the situation was too much for me, and I joined. The absurd part was that he sat on the ground as he left the saddle, pencil and note-book still in his hand, so he might have continued his note! When the arrieros saw us laughing, they ventured upon smiling. All the way down my risible faculties kept coming to the fore, and sudden chucklings on my part would make the men look up to see what was the matter, when they would shake also with suppressed mirth. However, it was well the fall was so trivial, for a doctor could not be procured nearer than Orotava.

The path slightly ascended after passing through the gate, and verdure clad the hills once more, a lovely green wood, filled with ferns, tempting us to loiter.

Peach and apple trees grew 2,400 feet above the sea. We were then about half-way down, the path winding along the hill-side. Occasional patches of a little more level ground were cultivated. Poppies, bright and gaudy, reminded one of England, 2,100 feet up. There were not many trees here, but shrubs and undergrowth. The wood was simply lined with bracken, heath, and wild flowers. A rock or large stone was pointed out as a landmark, and called Piedra del Rey. These

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constant references to kings are very puzzling. Perhaps one of the Guanche houses formerly stood here.

It was now 5.50 p.m., and when at a height of 2,050 feet, the Punta de la Dehesa burst into view in the distance. Sabinosa lay at our feet, perched on an excrescence on the mountain side, really on the site of an old crater. It is above the sea, and a little inland. A small, narrow, and level plain lies beneath it, and beyond, running out into the sea, is the Punta de la Dehesa, famous as being the point through which Richelieu decided that the first meridian should pass, as the most westerly known land.

It was now getting dark. We had our tent with us, but there did not appear to be any place where we could pitch it, and we had not time to seek for a suitable camping ground before nightfall. We therefore asked the curious villagers who had gathered around us if there were an empty room anywhere. "No, none, none of any sort." Lorenzo took the matter in hand, and after inquiring from several people, finally appeared with a key in his hand, and bade us follow. We did, and, much to our astonishment, found ourselves in a church. We exclaimed that we could not sleep there, the people would not like it, and so on, but he said they did not mind, and that, as there was service there only once in three weeks, the Host was not in the tabernacle. A little yard surrounded the church, in which we practically did the encamping. We enlisted half the village to supply our wants in a few minutes. One brought water, another wood, a third charcoal, someone else bread, milk, and eggs. One good woman brought us two mattresses to lie upon. We were very unwilling to take them, thinking we might sleep better in our own rugs, but she and Lorenzo assured us they were *muy limpio* (very clean), so we could not refuse without hurting her feelings. By this time the kettle was boiling, and we were glad to get something to eat. We gave the men coffee after they had eaten their gofio, for which they were very grateful. I passed them the sugar in order that they might

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help themselves, but Lorenzo, to our amusement, carefully gave them one spoonful each. I suppose they would have finished the sugar if left to themselves, for I have frequently seen Spaniards more than half fill their cups with sugar. As sugar is rather an expensive item in the islands, Lorenzo, good fellow, thought he would look after our interests.

The mattresses we laid near the west door of the church, not liking to go near the altar. We need not have been so careful



CHURCH IN WHICH WE SLEPT, SABINOSA, HIERRO.

of the feelings of the inhabitants, for what was our astonishment to see the three arrieros take up their quarters in the chancel, stretching themselves on two seats that were there and on the steps! Before lying down Lorenzo brought in every article we possessed, saucepan and kettle included, and put them in one corner. I think it was an unnecessary precaution, the Herreños being as honest as the Babilones,* but there is a great deal of rivalry and jealousy amongst the inhabitants of the

* The inhabitants of Tenerife

islands, and there is no doubt that Lorenzo thought himself and his island vastly superior to the rest of the archipelago in honesty as well as civilisation. He lay down half-way between us and the other men, whether from the same feeling of superiority or in order to guard us I know not. We turned in with fear and trembling, not knowing what those mattresses might contain. But our fears were groundless; they proved indeed *muy limpio*. However, our rest was very broken; the church, an edifice of stone, struck coldly, and the men snored valiantly: so, from various causes, we slept badly, and were glad enough to rise at 6.30.

While I was getting breakfast, John took some photographs of our resting-place. A goat was grazing in one corner of the churchyard, and a few of our friends of last night were about. The owner of the mattresses came for them, and she really would not take any money, all we could do. She had her little boy with her, so we gave him something. The poor child was a deaf-mute. An old woman brought us some honey, which we put in a bottle. We were glad to purchase it, as Hierro is famous for its honey now, as at the conquest.

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# CHAPTER XII.

## *EL GOLFO—EL RISCO—VALVERDE.*

Happy the man, in busy schemes unskilled,
  Who, living simply, like our sires of old,
Tills the few acres which his father tilled,
  Vexed by no thoughts of usury or gold ;
    *  *  *  *  *
Or in some valley, up among the hills,
  Watches his wandering herds of lowing kine ;
Or fragrant jars with liquid honey fills ;
  Or shears his silly sheep in sunny shine.

HORACE.

*September 27th, Thursday.*—Having, as usual, done my part of the packing this morning—namely, the canteen—and finding my hands dirty, I asked a woman standing near to give me a little water. She at once complied, bringing it in a vegetable dish, a trifle larger than the flower-pot saucer at Santiago, in Tenerife. Leaving the men to finish the packing, we started at 8.30 a.m. down the hill to the mineral water, which is near the sea. A lava path of black cinders leads to the well, which is surrounded by four flat stones, forming a square about two feet high. Five feet further back is a stone seat, from which steps lead down towards the well. A small cliff rises above and behind, hiding the well entirely on the land side and affording a pleasant shade from the sun. Just now an ox, cow, and calf are sheltering in the hollows of the cliff, and idly switching the flies from their sides. A man in homespun trousers and cap and well-patched shirt let down an old rusty can, with a rope

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attached, for water, which we tasted. It was slightly warm, and had a very faint flavour of sulphur. We measured, and found the depth was thirty-four feet to the surface of the water. The curious fact about the well or spring is that it is below the sea level. The lava-flow, doubtless from the crater Sabinosa now stands upon, and down which we walked to the well, runs into the sea, forming a rough point immediately below us. The rocks are jagged and steep, and the sea breaks a few yards



MINERAL WELL, AND PUNTA DE LA DEHESA, SABINOSA, HIERRO.

beneath. The Punta de la Dehesa, of meridian fame, forms a striking and interesting object from the well. A little higher up are some huts, where those who come for baths or to drink the water live when here. It is said to be good for skin diseases. The man who drew the water carried a pole, or *lancia*, with which he hopped or jumped along, not taking the trouble to keep to the path, but going over the rocks.

Leaving the spa, we retraced our steps until, some few hundred feet higher, we came upon the riding horses and arrieros, and

once more mounted, at 9.25 a.m. The path lay along the hill-side, about 750 to 850 feet above the sea, where the rocks ended and the cultivated land began. Quantities of a grey shrub with small orange flower grew here. The natives called it *irama ;* it is really *Schozzogine argentea.* The headland of the Roques del Salmones stands out in the distance like a gigantic sentinel of seamed lava resting on jagged rocks, the blue sea all around. The rocks form the most northerly point of the Golfo. The rough land over which we pass has scattered through it fig trees and euphorbia; occasionally they intertwine—food and poison. A stone thrown at the stiff stalks of the euphorbia will break them and cause the exudation of the white, milky-like juice which is such deadly poison. Other wild plants grow on this rough ground at intervals. A little above us the land is terraced, and the flat places thus obtained are cultivated with barley and other crops. We are surprised by the number of cows, which, in proportion to the size of the island and population, is great. It proves that there is pasturage obtainable, and pasture means a sufficient rainfall. The want of water is the only difficulty that cultivation meets with in the archipelago. If the Herreños were provident in the matter of trees, they could grow anything. Ascending a little, we met our baggage mule, which had come direct from Sabinosa. The camera, which we had been carrying, was transferred to it, and we started again. A fine sweep of bay is this littoral, backed by the mountains or precipices of El Golfo. The slope to the sea is steep from the foot of the cliffs, along which we skirt half-way up. It is difficult to guess the distance from the cliffs to the sea, but probably from one mile to three would give an idea of the size. Occasionally we pass vine-presses, and figs drying by the thousand; the latter are a drug in the market in Hierro, speaking figuratively, for Hierro is guiltless of a market. Such figs, delicious, ripe, large, and juicy! So much prized are they by the inhabitants of other islands, that a few are occasionally specially procured. They grow wild, so we help ourselves as we ride along, turning aside



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to the trees and picking the fruit off as we sit in our saddles. The figs were rotting on the ground in considerable quantities, they were drying on the walls and housetops by thousands, and yet there is no trade in them between Hierro and elsewhere. If the Herreños, who are so poor, that they would do anything for a little money, knew how to prepare figs for the English market, they would soon rival and surpass those from Smyrna in public favour. Those we get in England are not to be compared to these in flavour and size, but of course they are dried and pressed in the orthodox way.

Numbers of crows are flying, and flocks of canaries—the real green bird, not the yellow one of civilisation—rise and take a flight, only to settle again a little further off. We met a woman with a basket of wood on her head and carrying one of figs, of which she gave us some unasked, with a bright smile. The day was again cloudy, not overpoweringly hot, and seemed quite pleasant after the south of Tenerife. It was marvellous to see the hare's-foot fern cropping up between the lava stones where nothing else would grow.

Our men used to adjure the horses to go on with a couple of words spoken so gutturally, that it was some time before I could discover that they were "Anda, caballo" ("Go on, horse"). They varied the accent according to the exigencies of the case. If special exertion were needed, they pronounced it thus: "An-*da*, ca*bal*lo," or "mulo" (mule), as the case might be, or if the animal did something he ought not to have done, the word would be pronounced, with an expression of grieved surprise, "ca-*bal*-lo."

A little cluster of houses called Jaralejos marked the spot where the road began to descend from here to Llanillos. This part is very thinly populated; in fact, there are no houses at all for some distance. Feeling very tired after being twelve hours in the saddle yesterday in one position, I availed myself of both stirrups. The relief from the side position no one can imagine who has not tried it. Further on we came to a house and vine-press; and as the men were trampling the grapes, we turned

aside to see the operation. A large square wooden place like a tank a few feet above the ground, with a shed over it to keep off the sun, was half filled with grapes. Three men, with their trousers turned up to their knees, their legs and feet dirty—grimy—trampled the grapes, the juice flowing out of wooden pipes into tubs placed to receive it. Turning back to the road, we met some cows. It seems odd to again mention seeing cows, but in these islands there are comparatively few, owing to the lack of rain and pasture. Goats' milk is always used, cows' being rarely procurable, and butter is seldom made. Even in Hierro, where there are really a number of cows, no butter is made, there being no demand, as the peasants don't know or care for it. A trade in that commodity might be done if they were only taught the process of preparation. But a great deal of energy and a little capital are required for any undertaking. There would certainly be a market in Tenerife for good butter, for in Orotava we actually ate tinned butter, abominable stuff. Numbers of the native gentry, besides visitors in Orotava, would consume a large quantity. Santa Cruz also, where so many ships call, and where so many merchants reside, would prove a good market.

We came upon a little plaza and a broken cross. Numbers of these crosses everywhere break the monotony of the roads. They are erected for trivial causes, a corpse having rested there on its way to burial being the most frequent reason. All the houses, or rather cottages and huts—I don't think we saw a two-storied house except in Sabinosa—had quantities of figs, tomatos, and pimientos drying outside them on the tops of walls, or wherever there was sunshine. We reached Llanillos, consisting of only a few houses, at 11.30 (800 feet), making no delay there. Half an hour's ride from Llanillos, a shrub called *sabina* (*Luniperus Phœnicea*) was pointed out to us, growing out of a rock. This is considered a landmark, and a curiosity in the eyes of the natives. We also saw a sort of shrub-tree, like a laburnum, called *tagasaste*, of which we were to have more experience later. A plant called by the guide *duranillo* was

the Virginian poke-weed.* El Golfo is more or less wooded, which gives a charming effect to the landscape.

Famous as Hierro is for trees of all kinds, there was one in times past which attained so much celebrity, that it was called a "holy tree." Many myths gather round it. Its virtue consisted in its being able to produce or distil water from its leaves. Galindo, in his history of the conquest, written in 1632, gives an account of the tree, which he had gone to the island to see. It was a huge laurel (*Laurus fœtens* †) standing by itself on the top of a rock. A cloud or mist in the early morning caught on the thick leaves and numerous branches of this tree, and during the day dropped down in water. A cistern, divided in two for man and beast respectively, caught the water as it fell. The tree, which must have been of very great age, was destroyed by a storm in 1612.‡

Thomas Herbert, who travelled in Africa in 1626, gives an amusing account of this tree, evidently from hearsay, for he only allows Hierro the possession of a solitary tree. "Famous in one tree (it has but one), which (like the miraculous rock in the Desart) affoords sweet water to all th' Inhabitants, by a heavenly moisture distilling constantly to the people's benefit. Heare Sylvester :—

"'In th' Ile of Iron (one of those same seven
Whereto our Elders happy name have given)
The savage people never drink the streames
Of Wells and Rivers, as in other Realms.
Their drink is in the Ayre! their gushing spring
A weeping Tree out of itselfe doth wring,
A Tree whose tender, bearded root being spred
In dryest sand, his sweating leafe doth shed
A most sweet liquor; and [like as the vine
Untimely cut weepes (at her wound) the wine
In pearled teares] incessantly distills
A royall streame, which all their cesterns fills
Throughout the Iland; for all hither hy,
And all their vessels cannot draw it dry!'"

* *Phytolacca decandra.*

† Or *Laurus indica* of Linnæus.

‡ "Noticias del Hierro," by Bartolomé Garcia del Castillo.

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We met a man evidently in full dress. The material was a sort of brown tweed, homespun; the jacket was short, and the sleeves open at the wrist; he wore a black straw, sailor-shaped hat, which must have been a bit of modern fashion on the top of the home-made suit.

Vines, rye, and cochineal are the chief occupiers of the land; there is also a fair amount of herbage. At 12.30 p.m. we reached Tigadaye (750 feet), and were at once transported to the land of Fairy Tales by seeing numbers of women with spindles, spinning as they walked or sat, low-crowned black hats not taking away from the effect. I felt sure I should be impelled to prick my finger, and so fall asleep for a thousand years or so. However, we left them in safety, without being bewitched, that is speaking for myself. A venta, the first we had seen, suggested lunch-time. There was no wine to be procured, however, only some mugs, a few peaches strung to the ceiling, and buttons hanging on the wall. Some bread and cheese happily turned up from somewhere, so we managed to get a little luncheon. We were now near the north-eastern extremity of El Golfo, and nearly beneath the cliffs at that end. The clouds rolled away, and we got a photograph of the Risco. As we neared this end of El Golfo, I asked the guide where we were going next, for there was apparently no path, no outlet. He pointed to the cliff in front of us. We could see nothing but precipice, and told him so. He persisted in pointing out what he called a path, and, with much difficulty, we at last discerned a zigzag streak like a vein in the rock going up the face of the precipice. "It is the worst path in the islands," they told us, and truly in some respects they were right. A few people stood around us as we photographed and ate our lunch. A big man, about six feet high, stands opposite me as I write these notes; he is only a yard away, and is much interested in my pencil, paper, and caligraphy. They have a good deal of colour in their faces in this valley. A little to the right, and above us, is a red, conical hill, on which, near the summit, is perched the church of Candelaria, with a few houses around.

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We left the venta at one o'clock, and rode on in all faith, but wondering much whither we were going. Several hamlets or clusters of a few huts we passed through: Belgara on our right, then Los Palos, and finally Guimar. The latter is immediately beneath the cliff. An hour's riding brought us to the foot of the Risco, and we began the ascent. The path, varying in width from three to six feet, is cut and blasted out of the precipice itself. In parts it is built up, in others carved out of the rock. It is paved with stones oblong in shape, and set so that the upper edge of each is slightly raised above the lower edge of the one in front. This affords a gripping place for the horses' hoofs, going up and down, and prevents them sliding from top to bottom, as they might readily otherwise do. Going up this evenly paved road reminded us forcibly of walking up an inclined wall. The turns were frequent and sharp. Sometimes at the angles a greater space was carved out, so that, if meeting others, one had room to pass, for it was scarcely safe or possible to do so on the path. We of course ascended in single file. Part of the time I led. When mounting at the venta, I rode sideways, but after we began to ascend the Risco, Lorenzo came to me and begged me to ride "the other way," for it was not safe. He pushed the stirrups to the extremities of my toes, so that I could readily disentangle myself should the horse go over, and, notwithstanding these precautions, looked very unhappy. When riding sideways, I was hanging over the precipice, and by merely looking down could see the top of John's head in the cutting below. My horse had an unhappy knack of walking at the extreme edge, and as, except at rare intervals, there was not even a stone to protect the edge, one cannot wonder at Lorenzo's uneasiness on my behalf. He gave me careful instructions that if the horse slipped, at whichever side was land, I was to throw myself off, while the horse rolled into space. John rode part of the way up, but could not stand it for long, preferring to trust to his own legs. The view is lovely. Beneath lies Punta Grande, a little rocky peninsula with a few houses upon it and a bay at each side,

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charming to look down upon. Leftwards lies the smiling valley, cultivated and peaceful. It is marvellous to think that this sloping wall is the only road between one of the most populous parts of the island and its capital, Valverde. It is a grand road in every sense of the word, and a triumph of semi-civilised skill. Near the top we met some men and women, with pack-horses and mules, returning from Valverde. They all carried long sticks or poles, with which they walked. We met where there was no angle in the road, so much care and ingenuity was exercised in passing each other. My horse was led close to the rock, and brought to a standstill when the laden horses and mules were led past, foot by foot, with extreme carefulness. The Virgen de la Peña, on the summit, was reached at 3.15 p.m., 2,200 feet above the sea. It was an awe-inspiring ride. As we stand on the top, we can look immediately down on the path beneath. We began the ascent above the Punta Grande, and finished it only a hundred yards or so to the northward, so that the path zigzagged between two confined points. The heat was terrific, the rocks refracting the sun's rays upon the road, which also reflected them. Men and horses were so wet, that the water was running off them. Not merely drops of perspiration, but rills of water, trickled down the poor beasts' sides and legs, while water could have been wrung out of the men's clothing. The chapel of the Virgen de la Peña is a little enclosure built and covered over, with a little image of the Virgin inside, adorned with flowers. A door is in the wall, and in it a grating, into which the passers-by have stuck red geraniums and pieces of pine. We only stayed for a few minutes; men and horses were too hot to delay in the breeze.

We were once more on the plateau which runs from one end of Hierro to the other. We passed over two small barrancos, dry of course, near one of which a number of sheep, with long, straight, silky hair, were penned. We met a cavalcade of donkeys, horses, and mules all laden going down the Risco. The donkeys were very large and fine. Cadamosto in 1455 mentions the number of donkeys in Hierro. The first house

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we came to we stopped at, and procured some excellent water for both man and beast, drawing it ourselves from a well with rope and buckets. How those poor horses drank, bucketful after bucketful! I never saw animals drink so much before, and their evident enjoyment of it was good to see. The country is tolerably flat here, and well populated for this island. The houses are thatched, and appear fairly good, and the farms well-to-do.

We crossed a barranco that was one immense rock, in which a groove had been cut by the water. Numbers of birds, speckled brown with white-grey breasts, flew about. The men of this part were not so dark as in the Golfo, and wore more hair on their faces, "mutton-chop" whiskers being the fashion on the island. One of our men, a tall, lanky individual called Juan, who used to be a servant to some English people in Canaria, wore whiskers of a very pronounced type of this shape. The men are tall, but loosely knit, and this style of wearing the hair gives them a sheepish, out-of-the-world look. They are open-faced, and, as a rule, both men and women have bright and clear complexions. The hair is not generally black, but dark brown. They are gentle and pleasant in manner, and quite capable of seeing and appreciating fun. They are not at all as grave as the Tenerifians, from which I should infer that there is more unadulterated Guanche blood left in Hierro than in Tenerife.

The Montaña de la Torre, which faces us, is like a piece of paper which has been caught up in the middle and the hand drawn downwards, crushing it, so seamed are the sides. Near it we found in blossom the winter savoury,* called by the natives *albaca*. Some houses near, going by the name of Casas del Monte, we reached at 4.30, and found the height 2,000 feet, so there is little variation on the plateau. A whole family was outside engaged in domestic occupations, forming quite a picture. The women and girls were sewing, and the men and boys chopping wood and making brooms, etc.

Further on we passed through San Pedro and Mocanal,

* *Satureia montana.*

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forming one large village. Near this we crossed a bridge over a barranco, upon which was carved an inscription, stating that it was built in 1855, and giving the names of the alcaldes in Tenesedra. A cross of course heads the inscription. A house here had a curious decoration in mortar along its wall, like a dado.

A field of cochineal that we passed was gathered in, the harvest over. There is not a great deal of the unsightly cochineal cactus in Hierro, so the reaction which has set in will not be much felt by the islanders. On the other hand, there is no sign of the island having benefited by the sudden influx of wealth which cochineal brought generally to the archipelago. There are no public works half finished and no large houses going to decay. All is poverty. The inhabitants are peasants, and the best of them are still but well-to-do peasants. Very pleasant are they, straightforward, and gentle, exceedingly like the descriptions we read of them in the few sentences that are contained in the MSS which were written on the islands. Times without number before the Spanish conquest had pirates landed on Hierro and taken captive many of the inhabitants, leading them into slavery. The people were evidently then, as now, too gentle and unwarlike to resist these attacks; it is stated that the island was much depopulated in consequence of these frequent raids. It was thus that when the Spaniards invaded the archipelago they were able to procure a couple of these slaves in Europe, and taking them with them in their ships, used them as interpreters. One often wondered until this fact was ascertained how the Spaniards were able to hold conversations and treat with the inhabitants of the islands, when apparently they had only come in contact with them for the first time.

We reached the foot of the Montaña de Tenesedra at 5.10 p.m., having been steadily descending, for the height was now only 1,600 feet. Passing along the side of a cultivated valley, we crossed it. Immense fig trees abounded everywhere, gourds crept over the ground, and potatoes were showing green. The

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September crop, however, is only used for seed. This district, called Calsado de Pinto, has a great deal of grazing land, though just now, being the end of the summer, everything is brown. The view opened, and we saw Echeydo, a number of houses sheltered by a hill above. Soon after we passed a cross fastened in a stone, Del Calbaris (? Calvario), as well as we could understand the name, also near this a *fuente*, or spring. We noticed here that when goats are grazing they are tethered by a rope, run through a hole made in the horn.

We reached Valverde and the priest's house at 5.45 p.m., tired, but much delighted by our ride round and through Hierro and pleased with the gentle inhabitants.

The priest's housekeeper welcomed us, and soon after the young priest came in, and we had supper together. After supper we found there was a sort of *tertulla* * being held in the sala for our benefit. I do not know who were present, but there were several men and women, the most respectable evidently in Valverde. They were very anxious to know where we had been, and what we had seen in the islands, and why we came. They got their information very much more easily than we got ours, for they knew nothing of anything we wished to ascertain. All agreed in saying that there were still immense lizards to be found at the Punta de la Dehesa. Later informants deny it; and as we did not see them, I fear I must leave that matter where I found it, wrapped in obscurity. Some day I hope to clear it up by personal inspection.

We were glad to get a good night's rest, and not to be obliged to start early on the morrow.

*September 28th, Friday.*—This morning we asked leave to go on the azotea, which the good housekeeper gladly accorded. A little ladder from a small yard led up to it, whence we could see the priest's garden, which slopes from the house to the church. The garden is in terraces, and contains fig trees, pumpkins, peach trees, and the coarse cabbage of the islands.

* Unpremeditated evening party.

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Part of the ground had already been cleared of some other crop, most probably potatoes.

We went into the church again, this time escorted by the young priest. The Virgin of the Conception is the patroness. The paintings on the walls are by one Marcus Machin, a native of the island. The same style of roof and beams is here as in the church at San Sebastian, but this is larger. The side chapels, which have octagon roofs, with floors of red tiles and stones in a square pattern, are dedicated to the Virgin of Carmel and St. Augustine. The paint on the woodwork is meant to represent white marble. The chancel is painted to imitate red curtains, and in the uncertain light is not a bad imitation. An old wooden trapdoor in the floor leads to the vaults. The priest led us up into the belfry, where, besides a bell with a cross upon it, there is also a clock. There is a view of the town from some old balconies outside, but, owing to the church lying lower than the priest's house, we had as good a one from his azotea.

Almuerzo being over, we were told the vessel would start soon, so we packed and took our departure. A gift to our bright-faced hostess was evidently not unacceptable, although reluctantly received.

Lading the baggage mule, we proceeded at 10.30 on foot to the port. A broad, winding footpath a league * and a half in length leads from Valverde to its port. One of our visitors of last night escorted us a little way. Two windmills, with well-patched cloth sails, are passed soon after leaving the town. Presently the patrón of the boat and some of his relations overtake us. The women wear red petticoats over print skirts, which are carefully tucked up. A mule passes us laden with various articles, among them a live cock tied to its side upside down, a custom prevalent among the Berbers in Morocco. The lower classes of most countries show little feeling for animals. The valley down whose side we passed was not barren by any means, being partly cultivated, but it was destitute of trees. It

* A Spanish league is three English miles.

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was blowing—it always does blow here—and the wind tempered the heat of the sun. Upon this road lies the cemetery, near the smaller of the two windmills. It is not large, and is surrounded by high walls. All the cemeteries are thus enclosed, for what reason I do not know, unless that the dead may be hidden from sight, anything reminding man of mortality being particularly repugnant to his mind. The sea lay in the distance far below,



PORT OF VALVERDE, HIERRO.

the coast and rocks not being visible. Suddenly, however, the road turned sharply to the right; and below us lay the port. It was a bird's-eye view, as the road, although now close to the sea, was some distance above it, the descent being steep and abrupt. Immediately beneath lies a little white house, at the extreme edge of the rocks. A rocky point runs out at right angles to the shore, forming a one-sided bay. Under the shelter of the rocks, riding calmly at anchor, lies our schooner. It is a pretty sight, and one we would remember, so the camera is

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called into requisition. As there is apparently but little bustle of preparation down below, we sit on the side of the road and enjoy the view. Northwards craggy points run into the sea, forming numberless little bays. Rough and jagged is the coast, the precipices guarding the island from the wild fury of an unrestrained Atlantic. Hierro was the most westerly spot between Africa and America, and the last Columbus saw on his two voyages to the New World.

As we sit, the people pass us in twos and threes, wending their way downwards to the port. The women for the most part go barefoot. In the matter therefore of straight toes and nails, this would be an artist's paradise. The going and coming of the schooner is the sole event of the week to the Herreños, and the only tie which binds them to the outer world. Hierro is certainly the most solitary of all the islands. Rarely is the rest of the group visible to her inhabitants. She is out of the beaten track, her commerce is very small, and her visitors few. We were told by all we met that no English-speaking person had ever been here before. The year before a French lady and gentleman had chartered a schooner and gone round some of the islands, Hierro being among the number. Hence wherever we went we were supposed to be *Franceses*. They and we are the only visitors, as far as we could ascertain, that Hierro has had "within the memory of the oldest inhabitant."

A few minutes' descent brought us to the beach. Here, out of the wind, and with the heat reflected from the cliffs, we were glad to take shelter under a rock, made into a cave by a wall in front towards the sea. The shadows farther in were already appropriated by three mules. Several persons waited to embark, and many more to bid them adieu. A guitar was taken on board, also bedding, besides boxes of every size and shape, but generally small. We climbed over the rocks a little distance to get into the boat. The rocks were basaltic or trachytic, and columnar in form, a little like the Giant's Causeway, the edges of the columns being much serrated. It was 12.50 p.m. when we got on board. The anchor was not

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weighed in the usual manner, but hauled on board the small boat by the sailors after they had deposited us on the schooner.

So once more we set sail and bade adieu to a spot in the ocean which had given us much pleasure—solitary, happy, singular Hierro, as far as the outside world is concerned,

"Sacred to silence and the solemn sea."

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# CHAPTER XIII.

## *SAN SEBASTIAN—NATIVE DANCES.*

The strength, the industry, and the civilisation of nations—all depend upon individual character; and the very foundations of civil security rest upon it. Laws and institutions are but its outgrowth.—SMILES.

If you wish a thing done, *go;* if not, *send.—Old English Proverb.*

*September 29th, Saturday.*—About 6 a.m. the outline of Gomera was plainly visible; nothing, however, could be discerned in detail, owing to a haze. The profile thus seen from the south is not much broken. The highest point is in the centre, whence the land slopes east and west to the sea. The western side appears much steeper where it meets the sea line than the eastern. A little to the west of the highest point there is a curious square-shaped wart protruding from the profile, which must, I think, be La Fortaleza, but it is difficult to tell, and the sailors are too busy playing cards at this unearthly hour to give one information, even if they possess it, which I doubt. Soon after we passed a bold headland, ending in a precipice in the sea. The strata, as one sees, more or less upon all this side of Gomera, are horizontal. Next we slowly loitered—for our sailing was little else—past two or three whitewashed houses facing the sea and a long, shed-like building, with red-tiled roof, probably the Tunny Fishery Establishment. Far up in the mountains was visible the hamlet of Alajero. A breeze sprang up about 12.30, or rather we got out of the shelter of

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the mountains into the trade winds, so we began to move along, though still slowly. The island on this side—if what is round can be said to have a side—is of a uniform brownish colour, shading off into various tints of grey upon the bare rocks that run into the ocean. The cave which is said on our Admiralty chart to contain fresh water now came in sight, and we could readily see it. The Playa de Santiago has a rather extensive beach, but at first we could see only one long, single-storied, whitewashed house, with red-tiled roof. A little to the westward, however, amid palms and other trees and a green undergrowth, a closer inspection revealed the presence of habitations. A schooner lay in the offing. A wide, flat barranco, the bed green with scattered shrubs, opens into the sea here, but we cannot see far up its course, as it soon takes a turn to the eastward. The Punta del Cabrito, with barranco of the same name, also green at the bottom, and terraced at one side to the top, next came into sight. We could only see one house. The background is of towering cliffs, surmounted here and there by wild, strange-looking, jagged points and pinnacles. It is a grand and majestic gorge. Sombrero comes in view, having the same appearance, and consequently the same name, as the Chasna mountain. The cliffs just beyond this barranco northwards are sheer precipices, it is scarcely safe to say of what height, distances are so deceptive, but I should think 1,200 or 1,500 feet. Their edges against the sky look very wild and serrated in outline. The rocks are dark grey, with the strata more or less horizontal, and with occasional horizontal red streaks.

The man steering is a very fair specimen of the natives of Tenerife. His dress consists of trousers originally of white duck, but patching being necessary, a strip of dark blue six inches long by two wide has been inserted on the knee of the right leg, and on the back patches of blue and white check, brown, yellow, and a circular spot of olive-green. He is guiltless of foot-covering. Sailors seldom wear shoes on board. His jacket is a loose blue blouse, patched with white, his hat black felt,

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with the centre of the crown open to the air. Notwithstanding this remarkable attire, his oval-shaped face, closely cropped hair, black moustache, and dainty cigarette between his lips have the refinement of a gentleman imprinted upon them, and in point of politeness he would outdo many of those who call themselves gentlemen at home. It needs but little travelling to convince an Englishman that his manners might be improved, and that his outward boorishness will only be submitted to in England. It is not necessary to be impolite to be honest. The Norwegians teach us that. The courteousness which pervades all classes of foreigners is rarely to be found in England amongst the middle classes, who form so large a proportion of the nation, and who are singularly devoid of that politeness which comes so naturally to all classes in every other nation.

Some authors affirm that the beauty of the present race in the islands is due to a number of Irish refugees who fled here after the battle of the Boyne. I do not think this is possible, for the number who came would not be sufficient to influence the mass of the people. Among the upper classes it is more likely to be true, as many of them have Irish names and know their ancestry to have been partly Irish.

We had some fowls in captivity on board, whether for food or as passengers I know not. They were tied by their legs with rags, and confined in a coop.

It was nearly three o'clock before we sighted the square white fort on San Cristobal. A strong breeze now caught us, and we ran along very merrily, but had to tack several times before we could run into the bay. There is always a breeze here, so it is at all times possible to sail close to the town.

The approach to San Sebastian from the north is much prettier than from the south, doubtless because one comes upon it suddenly and unexpectedly. We landed, as usual, in a small boat, and were carried ashore. This time we took all our luggage with us. A number of boys, by the directions of Don Salvador, who was awaiting us on the beach, shouldered our traps, and we formed a procession to the fonda. Dinner was ready, and



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we were ready for it. We had only had some salt fish and potatoes since leaving Hierro the morning before. It took about fifteen or sixteen hours' sailing both going and coming, though the distance between the nearest points of the islands is only some thirty miles. Vermicelli soup, boiled mutton and puchero, roast veal, cold bread and milk in a soup plate, peaches, and bananas formed our bill of fare.

Don Salvador showed us several old manuscripts, and among them one on parchment of the arms of a family whose descendants are still alive. The original founder was one Don Pedro Rodrigues de Ayala. The parchment, which is sheepskin, has about an inch and a half of the edge painted in red and white in florid style. The coats of arms are enclosed in circles of red or blue, about the size of a florin. It gives nine generations down to 1667. The male line failed after the sixth generation, and the genealogy was continued in the female.

*September 30th, Sunday.*—Got up, feeling tired, about 7 a.m. During the night the wind was very strong, howling like a gale in England. We thought it a storm, but the natives took it quite coolly, saying it always blew like that. A chorus of dogs yelping and barking did not any more than the wind promote sound sleeping. Don Salvador accompanied us at eight o'clock to see some more coats of arms, in which he seems to take a great interest. The first was in the church, over a side altar. A carved wooden one on a wall in the street and some on canvas in a house were also shown to us. The latter house has a well of good water inside the doorway. San Sebastian is well supplied with water, and indeed so is nearly the whole of Gomera. We returned to the fonda for breakfast, and watched the people assembling for mass from our window. The square or courtyard in front of the house was filled with two hundred people at a time, the vast majority being women, though there were more men than in Tenerife. A few white mantillas lightened the assemblage, but the greater number wore black *sobretodos*. The former are made of cashmere, and are

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not so long nor so large as the latter, which envelop the figure to the waist.

While awaiting breakfast we found Lorenzo cleaning the saddles and the landlady giving out the washing, such items being generally reserved for Sundays.

I asked Don Salvador if there were many bees, and this led to his taking us to see some in a neighbouring garden. The



PALM-TRUNK BEEHIVES, GOMERA.

hives, placed with their backs to a wall, were each made of a piece of palm trunk hollowed, with merely a flat stone on the top. This is about the only use there is for palm-trunks.

The doctor, who lives opposite the fonda, has a Guanche mummy, which we were told he would be pleased to show to us, so we went across and took a photograph of it. The mummy was that of a man, the height five feet one inch, size of the head round the forehead twenty inches. The right hand was laid on the hip. The mummy was bound with thin leather

which was sewn as finely as if with a needle. One traveller denies, what a former one asserts, that the leather was finely sewn on these mummies. There must therefore be a difference in the execution of the workmanship. The jaw was not tied up, the mouth being open. The toe-nails were good still, the limbs very straight, and the hands and feet slender, the cusps of molars more ground upon the right side than the left, but all well preserved; this points to gofio food, not bread. The ligaments and tendons were in good preservation. The mummy was laid on two chairs, and John took a photograph of it as it lay. There were fifteen people in a room about twelve feet square, and the window was crammed outside with spectators. I sat at the doctor's desk making notes while John measured, and no one spoke when I wrote. They evidently thought they would disturb me if they spoke! One feels awe in the presence of a corpse, but, unless conjured up, none in that of a mummy.

Later in the day the doctor sent in to know if we should like to go about an hour's walk into the country to see a fine view. We seldom lose an opportunity of seeing anything, but this time thought we had better rest.

We were surprised to see in *El Memorandum*, the best newspaper in the archipelago, a notice of our visit and travels therein. It turned out later that Don José M. Perlios, the "director" of *El Memorandum*, was in San Sebastian, so no doubt he inserted the notice.

Our Sunday ended in a peculiar and rather un-English fashion. Don Salvador brought in his sister and another woman to dance the island dances. Don Salvador first sang to the guitar accompaniment which Don José Perlios played. Then they danced several of the island dances, explaining each as they went along. The first was the "Malagueña," which Don Salvador said belonged only to Gomera. I found that what the inhabitants say with regard to their own island may be true, but their information about the other islands is nearly sure to be wrong. The "Malagueña" is known throughout the archipelago, not in Gomera only, and a form of it is common in Spain. Two

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people, a man and woman, face each other, and raising each hand alternately, snap their fingers while moving slowly in time to the music. Sometimes one sings, and sometimes the other. The woman in this case not liking to sing, the guitar-player took her part. They twined and intertwined their hands, sometimes back to back, then over their heads or on their hips, joining and separating. This pretty dance then ended with a very slow and graceful kind of waltz, when the man led the woman to a seat. They next danced the "Jota," or "Isa." For this there must be equal numbers of men and women, not less than four. They dance in a circle part of the time, and a great deal of the figure is "lady's chain." The "Folias" is a very old dance, a primitive one, and said to be used now only in Gomera and Palma. Four people stand in a square, but face in different directions, frequently changing partners. As in the "Malagueña," there is singing and snapping of fingers. Both men and women take two steps forward and back again; when they meet, they form as if about to waltz, but do not; they never touch each other during the entire dance, though often at the point of doing so.

Two or three people dropped in while the dances were going on, and as each entered the guitar was offered to him, but always politely declined. Evidently this was customary.

The "Sequidilla," or a form of it peculiar to Gomera, proved to be much the same as the "Folias," but the "Sequidilla Majoreros" is said to be danced throughout the province. *Majos* is the ancient name for the inhabitants of Fuerteventura, and is retained until this day in the form of *Majoreros*, so possibly this dance dates from before the conquest. It requires four people for the last-mentioned dance. Snapping of fingers and singing take a prominent part, the women crossing over backwards and forwards. The "Tango," said to be peculiar to Hierro, has, I am told, several names: "Santo Domingo," "El Tajaraste," and "La Saltona." Not having seen this dance under these various names, I cannot vouch for the truth of the statement.

It was a curious scene for Sunday—two stretcher-beds in

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one corner of a room whose general furniture and decorations were those of a sitting-room, our portmanteaus and a wash-stand in another part, in the middle the chairs cleared away and two men and two women dancing, while around sat half a dozen men and ourselves looking on. Don Salvador, a big man in every sense of the word, is in a white linen suit, and has closely cropped hair. At the first glance he seems to have a kind face, but a further acquaintance betrays a furtive, cunning expression in the brown eyes, not noticeable immediately. The women wear white handkerchiefs over their heads, white, loose jackets, and blue cotton skirts.

The "Sequidilla" and the "Sequidilla Majoreros" were unknown to all the men present except Don Salvador and Don José, so the latter danced guitar in hand, playing all the time. Every islander seems to play the guitar, be it ever so little, and to dance some of the dances. All console themselves day and night, on board the schooners and ashore, with and without guitar accompaniment, correctly and incorrectly, by singing the "Malagueña." It rings in my ears now, and seems an inseparable accompaniment to our journeys on horseback and on the ocean. As we rode along the lovely mountain sides in silence, suddenly the sound of the "Malagueña" would be wafted across from the opposite hills, as some goatherd wound slowly homewards. Or, with sails idly flapping and the boom creaking as we rolled on the surface of the Atlantic swell, while no breath of air filled the white canvas above our heads, when the stars shone over us, and all on board were wrapped in slumber, the man at the helm would chant the "Malagueña," extemporising in the most poetical and musical of European languages. The "Malagueña" is inextricably interwoven with the everyday life of the people. They express their thoughts in it.

It was very extraordinary, we thought, all this time that Señor Don Manuel Casanova Bento had not sent the horses. There were none procurable here, or we should have started for Hermigua. Don Salvador had promised that when the schooner came in sight he would send a letter to Don Manuel, so that,

by our calculations, Don Manuel ought to have received the message on Saturday night. All day long we asked continually if the horses had come, but were always answered in the negative. Don Salvador would look through a pair of opera-glasses up the valley and along the hillside whence he expected them to come, then, turning to us, would shake his head. At last, late on Sunday night, they arrived. We arranged therefore to start early next morning.

One of the most flourishing industries in the islands is boot-making and cobbling! The roads are so bad, there are a great many shoemakers required to keep folk shod. I had my boots mended in San Sebastian, and very well done, too. In the evening after dinner we went for a walk upon the cliff. The outline of Tenerife was barely visible, owing to the lateness of the hour, the sun setting behind the headland. The rocks along whose side the path was cut, we noticed, were twisted, as if when molten a giant hand had bent them. The view up the valley behind San Sebastian is magnificent. The outline of the mountains on each side, and closing the valley at the further end, is very jagged. There is a mysteriousness in the evening light which renders all around grand in the extreme, a background of dark clouds adding awe to mystery. A precipice and the horseshoe bay across whose calm surface "cat's-paws" are playing lie at our feet. The schooner, at anchor and motionless, rests upon the still waters, over whose surface a couple of boats glide noiselessly. As I write the clouds gather across the barranco in thick masses, chased by the wind; and the valley, as it lies beneath the shelter of the mountains, is perfectly black. A few yards from where we sit, but out of sight, is the Peak, and immediately above us, like mythological beasts, the gnarled and twisted basalt. Gradually as daylight fades the nearer and then the further stars light the firmament, and darkness comes on as one by one heaven's beacon lights appear. Reluctantly we retrace our steps to the village beneath, where lights begin to flicker in the dwellings. The path downward is steep and rugged, so must be traversed before night falls.

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# CHAPTER XIV.

## *GOMERA—SAN SEBASTIAN—HERMIGUA.*

The fresh hours of dawning are precious in the summer season in a sultry climate.—WASHINGTON IRVING.

*October 1st, Monday.*—The wind blows in a marvellously angry way here every night from about one or two o'clock until seven in the morning, but it does not mean anything; it is only bluster. When morning comes, all is peaceful, a gentle breeze innocently stirring the air, as if it had never done aught else all its life but gently rustle the palm leaves and tenderly kiss the orange groves.

We started at 6.15 a.m. Two horses had been sent for us, one a very handsome black animal, which I rode. Everybody called him *el caballo negro* (the black horse), so I suppose there was not another of the same colour in the island. Two men came with us, one for the horses and the other to carry our luggage. We were surprised at there not being a horse for the baggage, but found that it is customary here for the men to carry everything. They say the roads are too bad for pack-horses.

It was pleasant riding along in the early morning, the sun not well risen yet, the mountains only in sunshine, and the dew still hanging on the leaves in the valley. The path led along a perfectly level plain, until the mountains on either side gradually closed in like a defile. Generally we walked in

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the bed of the barranco, but sometimes the path diverged. Large and Small White butterflies flitted from flower to flower. The whole valley was one mass of flowers, of varied hue and size. There was the *balo*, or *Higera de Infierno* (*Gomphocarpus fruticosus*), the arghel of Syria, the leaves of which are employed for adulterating senna, and a small shrub with a white flower like a daisy—*ratonera* (*Maruta cotula*). Another, with an arrow-shaped leaf, was *sagitate*. Quantities of a large-leafed shrub like a tobacco leaf grew in the hedge or on the sides of the barranco, and it was called *iñame*. Canes and brambles were in one place, through the midst of which the path wound. Presently we *met* a little stream of water, just a trickle, which wandered in and out of the stones, finding its way oceanward. It was curious to actually see the water moving, not in a continual stream, but, like a pioneer, running over what was perfectly dry ground. The guides upon seeing it exclaimed that winter had come. There had been rain on the *cumbres* (mountain-tops) in the night, and the water was just now reaching the valleys. We met a goatherd with a flock of goats. I told Lorenzo to ask him how much he wanted for a kid; he said, "Four *reales*" (ninepence-halfpenny), cheap enough! A man who was riding with us was on a lovely little fawn-coloured donkey. We met another man with a laden donkey. There was a piece of wild mint in blossom sticking in the pannier on the donkey, and he took it out and gave it to me when passing, why I know not, save as a mark of courtesy in meeting a lady. These civilities are very gracefully performed, rendering travelling throughout the islands quite romantic.

Quantities of *balaterra* make the ground bright green. The hillsides, where too steep for other vegetation, are covered with the straight kind of euphorbia.

The next time we crossed the barranco it was near some houses, and the water, from being a trickle, was now a tiny stream. The houses above, of dark brown colour, were rendered beautiful by golden clusters of maize hung over their

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verandahs to dry. The arrieros had gone straight on a little while before, leaving us to follow the windings of the path. We now overtook them, and found they were quite wet, having met the barranco—as the water is called—in some of their short cuts. Much amusement was caused by Lorenzo's distress over his clean white trousers, he being a little bit of a "dandy." The rush of water came just before we crossed as if a sluice had been suddenly opened above, when, like a wall about a foot high, it came tumbling down the steep river-bed. Heavy rain must have fallen on the cumbres. The barranco widened a little, leaving room for some houses and cultivation, while figs and orange trees, dotted here and there amid the brown cottages, relieved and made picturesque the scene. The third time we crossed the barranco we had to lift our feet, for the water was up to the horses' haunches. There was no trouble in getting them over; they seemed accustomed to it, and walked cautiously, feeling their way step by step. They could not see the stony and uneven bottom, for of course the water was muddy. A beautiful canary, with brilliant yellow breast and green-grey back, sat on a rock and saucily eyed us with his head on one side. He was evidently chirpy over the advent of the waters. El Risco Mujeros is a curious long rock bridge, like an enormous flying buttress, but horizontal, about fifty feet above us. More birds kept coming to greet the water, sitting on the stones at the sides or in mid-channel and chirping or singing gaily. The water wagtail was the only bird familiar to us. Splendid views in every direction attracted attention as we wound in and out of the gorge. We have not yet got above the region of palm trees. They grow at the bottom of the valley, which is mostly cultivated. A curious rock lies in front of and above us, like a house, with an outside staircase and numerous cave windows. I fancy, had we time, an inspection of those caves might prove interesting from a Guanche point of view. Quantities of plantains were around us, and presently we came to a house which had eight or ten beehives. The path

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now led straight up a very steep rock, between some houses, Mito Fragoso, as well as I could understand the name. The stream as we again crossed it was not so wide, and much clearer in colour. It seemed also more content to run along quietly, not to hurry and scurry in the endeavour to see which drop should reach the ocean first. We sat down to rest under the pleasant shade of an olive tree. It was 7.45 a.m., and we were 600 feet above the sea.

The ascent became steeper as we moved upwards, apparently towards an amphitheatre of gigantic, ragged precipices, a fringe of scattered trees crowning their heights against the sky. The ground was actually so moist here, that we passed through a bank of rushes.

Our arrieros make a curious noise with their mouths when urging on the horses; it is a kind of clack, like drawing a cork.

In the centre of the amphitheatre, and at the bottom, palms were growing. The last we saw was at 1,000 feet of altitude, where we arrived at 8.10 a.m. Quantities of *Anla vaquilla* grew around, a small yellow flower, like our common weed in the fields at home. Some more palms flourish in the shelter of a very narrow barranco, in the centre of which is a ridge, up whose side we wind. Just above, where a solitary palm, the last straggler up the mountain, stands like a watchtower on a hill, we turn in our saddles to rest for a moment and to see the view behind. Looking towards San Sebastian, we see in the far distance a bit of sea, bounded on either side by sloping mountains, forming a triangle, a tiny, tiny one. We could see the windings of the valley and gorge beneath us up which we had come, stretching onwards until lost in that speck of blue sea. Numbers of dragon-flies and butterflies darted and flitted past us. We stopped to rest at 8.30, 1,400 feet up, a steep bank above and beneath us. A little stream pleasantly purled downwards in miniature falls and leaps. The men prepared to breakfast. One produced from somewhere a small bag made of a kid's skin, the legs sewn up; this was half filled with gofio. Placing the opening of the bag under the little waterfall, he let

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some water run in, and then, closing the neck, he kneaded the bag and its contents upon his leg above the knee. This custom is worthy of special attention, being identical with that of the Guanches. We were therefore much interested in watching the process and thinking how hundreds of years ago that lost race, of which we know so little, used similarly to prepare their food.

The men in Gomera are very fine; they have open countenances and lithe, active, muscular figures. The latter are shown off to advantage by the white shirts and trousers tucked up to above the knee or hanging loose just below it, a girdle or sash round the waist, suggestive of the "loins girded" of Eastern life. The Gomeros speak distinctly, but sound the *g*'s harshly. They are much easier to understand, however, than the Herreños, who speak thickly and gutturally. Somewhat more is known of the old inhabitants of Gomera than of those of Hierro. In Azurara's account he states that the people of Gomera were less civilised than those of Canaria, that they had neither clothing nor houses. "Their women were regarded almost as common property. . . . They made their sisters' sons their heirs. They had a few pigs and goats, but lived chiefly on milk, herbs, and roots, like the beasts; they also ate filthy things, such as rats and vermin. They spent their time chiefly in singing and dancing, for they had to make no exertion to gain their livelihood. They believed in a God, but were not taught obedience to any law." So their dancing propensities would seem to have been inherited. Bethencourt's chroniclers say that the Gomeros were tall and spoke "the most remarkable of all the languages of these islands, and speak with their lips, as if they had no tongues; and they have a tradition that a great prince, for no fault of theirs, caused them to be banished and had their tongues cut out; and judging by the way they speak, one could well believe it. The country abounds in dragon trees, and in other kinds of wood, and in small cattle." Glas's MS differs, however, in some respects from the above. It states that the men wore a sort of cloak made of goat-

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skins, and the women had petticoats and a head-dress that hung down to their shoulders, also of goat-skins, dyed and curiously painted. "The natives were of a lively disposition, of a middle stature of body, very active and dextrous in attacking and defending, and excellent flingers of stones and darts, to which exercise they were trained from their infancy, it being the common amusement with the young people to cast small stones and darts at one another, to avoid which they seldom moved their feet, but only waved their bodies to and fro; and so expert were they at this sport, that they used to catch in their hands the stones and the arrows as they flew in the air." They had renowned warriors, whose memories were cherished in their songs. One Gralegueya was a man of great size and uncommon strength, of whom a story is told that he and others having swum to a rock at some distance from the shore, they could not return owing to a "shoal of porpoises or sharks." It must have been porpoises, for Gralegueya jumped into the sea, and seizing one of them in his arms, dived to the bottom with it. In its struggles to get free it lashed the water, and frightened the rest away, when the natives swam ashore in safety. Glas states from personal observation that in his day there were plenty of deer—probably he means wild goats—and that more mules were bred in Gomera than in the other islands.

Just before stopping to rest by the streamlet a man overtook us, riding a horse belonging to the doctor. The saddle was from Habana, and is the most suitable kind for these islands. It was much the same as a Mexican saddle, being high in front and back, with the toes protected by leather from catching in the scrub. The front of the saddle is raised into a sort of round, flat piece, and there are numbers of rings all over it. Some of these were intended for a lasso, but could readily be utilised for other travelling necessaries. We took a photograph of the men and horses during our halt. The view southward is splendid. We are in a little gorge, filled with myrtles, palms, ferns, bracken, and other greeneries. Towards the east the

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sea is shut out by one side of the glen. Facing us is the centre ridge of the amphitheatre, a jagged brown outline, while beyond is the higher ridge of mountains running to the sea. The sound of the streamlet gurgling down is soothing; horses and men are almost motionless, what conversation there is being carried on in low, musical tones. Around fly, chirping merrily, numbers of canary-birds; while above hover sparrow-hawks. Peaceful moments such as these, when to exist is happiness sufficient, are a full reward for much toil; they are the mental resting-places of life.

Starting once more, we wound slowly upwards, the straight euphorbia now replaced by the rose-shaped species (2,300 feet). The ride was simply glorious, up a steep path or zigzag road, which six men were mending. There is no doubt that this path, considered so dreadful by the inhabitants, could readily be made into a good carriage road, and would form a magnificent drive. The view towards the sea from near the summit of the ridge was splendid. The little streamlet that we met early in the morning, now a fair-sized stream, and clear, not muddy, shone like a silver ribbon, flowing in and out of the narrow mountain defile. Green spots of cultivation and vegetation dotted its banks here and there, now one side, now the other, now both, while beyond lay the streamlet's destination—the sea.

At the summit of the ridge we stopped for a few moments in order to rest and shift my saddle, which had slipped too far backwards, notwithstanding the girth round the horse's chest. I had reins—not a halter—but no bit, a semicircular piece of iron taking its place over the nose. The ridge is literally a ridge. There are not half a dozen yards of level standing room. The top reached, straightway one descends the other side. A cross has been erected to mark the culminating point of the pass, which is 2,600 feet high, and where we arrived at 9.30 a.m.

The view from the top is wonderful, the sea at both sides of the island being visible. This knife-like ridge runs due east and west. Beneath lies an immense valley, and beside and above is a thickly wooded mountain. The view towards San

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Sebastian seems a direct line through the valley we have left behind. This northern side of the cumbre has an entirely different character from that up which we have just ridden. Here verdure runs riot, trees, shrubs, and undergrowth growing in wild profusion and luxuriance. Breso, jaya, and laurels are on both sides of our path, which winds downwards between the trees. We also found the little yellow flowering plant *Sida rhombifolia*, used as a substitute for tea throughout the archipelago, and numerous specimens of the pretty rock-rose peculiar to these islands (*Hypericum Canariensis*). For twenty minutes we wandered down an eccentric path through the most lovely wood, myrtles and glorious ferns brushing us as we passed, the fronds two and three feet long, tender and delicate, not strong and coarse, like bracken. Meanwhile our view was completely shut out. Suddenly, however, we reached a rocky eminence, where the "valley lay smiling before us." It was the Valley of Hermigua we looked upon, from an altitude of 2,200 feet. The valley is narrow until near the sea, where it opens out, and where the village of Hermigua, surrounded by cultivation, is situated. There is no flat space at the bottom in the higher part of the valley for cultivation. From the bed of the river the ground springs on either side until it ends in precipices. Leftwards and southwards the mountain side slopes to the river; and this is cultivated from the bottom to about half-way up. On the right side and above the valley a number of ridges run parallel with the sea, their tops being almost horizontal. Rising from their midst are the higher mountain ridges of the island, also running parallel to each other, but terminating in the long ridge we have just crossed, lying at right angles to the sea. The mountains on the left of where we stand are thickly wooded, and, with a majestic swoop, also run towards the sea at right angles. The lower ridges or spurs are dotted with vegetation, and the slope down which we are riding, and which faces north, is covered with woods. The slope is comparatively slight; and we descend by a steep, rocky, winding path through a glade of moss and ferns. Blackberries, ripe and luscious, grow in

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abundance, and as we ride along we pick them off the brambles on either side. We meet a man with a long pole, one of the climbing or leaping poles used throughout the archipelago by the peasants, corresponding in use to the alpenstock of Switzerland. The natives are particularly active, and leap immense distances when following their goats, like the Swiss chamois-hunter. These poles are a Guanche legacy, the leaping being spoken of particularly by the first rediscoverers of the islands as a noticeable custom of the *isleños*, and one in which the people of Gomera especially excelled.

The path winds along the sides of the ridges, the dips in the mountains being glens. Large and Small White butterflies are in abundance, and occasionally we saw a few that were red. We passed some pine logs, and a yoke of oxen ready to drag them to the bottom. Most remarkable to our eyes was the sight which next met them—a waterfall. Certainly it was not very large, but still a waterfall. Beautiful is the verdure of Gomera, the island being almost entirely green. Well covered by trees, water is plentiful, so that cause and effect react upon each other. What Gomera is, no doubt Tenerife was.

We soon reached the valley, where our path, a very fair one, followed the watercourse. Every spot was cultivated. A few houses, or rather huts, we passed at intervals, but the majority of the habitations were clumped together, forming the village of Hermigua. We were objects of much curiosity and interest to the people as we passed along. At one place we met a priest, dressed in a scarlet robe, and riding upon a mule. He carried in his hand a small iron box, in which there was a bell that tinkled loudly. I believe the Host was also in the box, as the priest was on his way to administer extreme unction, and those who met him for the most part knelt and crossed themselves. A few did not, at which I was surprised, but learned later that there is much freemasonry and much freedom of thought going on among the inhabitants of the archipelago. Some of the men are Indianos, a word used in the islands technically for those who have come from, or who have visited, the West Indies, and

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brought with them a contempt of the sacerdotalism of the priesthood and many other things connected with the Church of Rome. Whether they substituted anything in its place I found it difficult to ascertain, but rather fear that, while breaking away from the restraints of Roman Catholicism, they were also throwing off religion of all kinds. I state here, although we had not at this time come across the individuals—but for obvious reasons I do not wish to indicate who or what they were—that several among the better educated and more thoughtful had "Authorised Version" Bibles. These they had procured by means of the American Bible Society, who advertise Bibles for sale in the local papers, and about the contents of which they were much exercised, believing that they differed from the doctrines to which they were accustomed. No form of religion being tolerated in the islands save Roman Catholicism, all their disturbing thoughts and speculations arise from reading and the few, very few, outsiders with whom they come in contact. I may say at once that religious discussion in any shape or form was never brought forward by us. We avoided the subject, feeling that we were travelling through the islands by the courtesy and partaking of the hospitality of the inhabitants. But frequently the subject was forced upon our notice, and at one place in particular we were detained until a late hour of the night by the eagerness with which parallel passages of the Bibles—Douay and Authorised Version—were discussed and placed side by side with the practices and doctrines of the Church of Rome. At this house the inhabitants had had no intercourse with outsiders. Their inquiries arose solely from the reading of such secular books and papers as they could get in the first instance, and secondly by seeing through an advertisement where it was possible to procure a Bible and sending for one.

Meanwhile we are riding past rippling waters and lovely pink oleanders, or *adelfas*. A house is pointed out to us as the doctor's, and we find the altitude is 450 feet.

Presently a gentleman walks after us towards one of the largest houses in the valley, and as we dismount greets us as

our host, his daughter at the same time coming out of the house to meet us. We find Señor Don Manuel Casanova and his daughters—his wife is dead—kindness and hospitality itself. They immediately give us coffee and milk, and a delicious sort of short bread in twisted forms, a kindness we much appreciated, as it was now noon.

After resting for a few minutes, we went out to see the view and grounds around. Immediately beside the house some cochineal was being gathered in, so we begged leave to see the process. The leaves of the cactus were quite white with the insect. Women were engaged in brushing off the bugs with little brooms or whisks. They catch each leaf at the extreme point cautiously, for fear of being pricked, and then brush off the cochineal into large, oval, shallow baskets, made of straw, like a skep, about one foot wide and two feet long, after which the insects are dried in an oven. The women were covered with the whitey-grey powder off the insects. Don Manuel tells us that the price of cochineal used to be six shillings a pound, three shillings of which went to Government; now he gets only sevenpence-halfpenny a pound. It is certainly to the future advantage of the islands that cochineal fortunes are no longer to be made. During the few years that it was cultivated, the people were consumed with an intense desire to be rich, extravagant display was the fashion, immense and often useless buildings were begun and never finished, owing to the as sudden falling off of the trade and, all the other great and useful resources of the islands were totally neglected. All their money and land was locked up in cochineal, there were no crops in any quantity, cultivation of any sort save of the cochineal cactus was abandoned, and the islanders gave themselves over to a sort of riotous enjoyment of the fortunes that were looming before them. The consequence was that, after the discovery of the aniline dyes, the inhabitants were, from the highest to the lowest, almost reduced to poverty. When the crash came, the fall was so great, that it is only now the islands are recovering. The cultivation of grain, tobacco, and coffee, however, promises

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to give a truer and more lasting prosperity to all classes of society. Life is lived at a more equable temperature, not at the fever heat of intense excitement which before pervaded the community. From an artistic point of view, one cannot but be glad that the cultivation of the cactus is reduced to the minimum, for it is intensely ugly, and spoils the appearance of the country completely.

Don Manuel, jealous for his native island, said to us that we stayed a long time in Hierro, and were giving but a short time to the interior of Gomera. I explained that we had intended remaining longer in Gomera, and that we had been waiting for horses at San Sebastian. He said he sent off horses immediately upon getting our letter, which he received on Sunday afternoon. I then told him of our arrangement with Don Salvador that when he saw the schooner coming he was to send a messenger at once to Hermigua with the letter. It was only then that we discovered how shamefully Don Salvador had treated us. Instead of sending a man off on Saturday, he never sent until Sunday, on purpose to keep us at San Sebastian. Don Manuel was very much vexed. He said it was "just like him," and what might be expected. Don Salvador is an alcalde in San Sebastian, and I fear that alcaldes are synonymous with the tax-gatherers of the Jews as to their social status. It seems the alcaldes tax the people for the roads, the money generally undergoing a filtering process before arriving on the highways. I am afraid, however, that similar looseness of morals pervades other departments. There are officials specially appointed to take care of the forests, but a little golden palm-oil makes them take no notice of the wholesale destruction of trees. Where public officers can be bribed, the morals of the people must be exceedingly low. Don Manuel and many more of his countrymen would give much to see the Canary Islands in the possession of England. What has Spain done for the islands since she first set foot in them? Systematically robbed and plundered. What has England done, say, in Cyprus in the few years she has possessed it? Built roads; made harbours,

and *spent the taxation of the country in the island itself.* Here are these islands, that might be the brightest jewels in the Spanish crown, thwarted, restricted, and taxed out of all proportion to their resources, no improvements made and no encouragement given the inhabitants. What advancement has been made has been effected by private enterprise, and for the most part by foreigners, and those Englishmen. The coaling of vessels is entirely carried on by English firms, and the cable was laid by an English company, subsidised, it is true, by the Spanish Government. A sanatorium has also been started, the promoters of which are mostly English or have been educated in England. It may safely be asserted that almost the entire trade and improvements in the islands are due to the energy and enterprise of those who have English or Irish blood in their veins.

The only English who have visited Gomera within the memory of man came about twenty years ago, a Dr. C—— and his brother. Dr. C—— was so delighted with the place, that he often wished to return. This he accomplished the year before our advent, accompanied by his daughter. We are the next. How this gem—for it is nought else—can have been so long left unknown and untrodden I cannot conceive. Truly, it is out of the beaten track. To return there will be an ever-present day-dream until we can accomplish it.

We told our host of the extortion of the patrón of the schooner. He says all the patrónes are very bad. I was praising the peasants, upon which he replied that they were very well except where money was concerned! There are others, I fear, just as bad nearer home.

We dined at two o'clock, and I trust our hosts will forgive my giving details of their very excellent repast. Soup in cups in which floated pieces of bread, then fried eggs, potatoes fried in slices, and delicious, delicately flavoured banana fritters, a Cuban dish, comprised what may be termed the first part of the meal. Then followed fowls and potatoes, preserved peaches, a large, fresh fruit somewhat like a melon, pears, fresh peaches, and bananas.

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Dinner over, we all went on the azotea, from whence we had a glorious view. Don Manuel's house lies on the outskirts of the village, on the side of the mountain, some 400 or 500 feet above the sea. Beneath and to the left the land slopes towards the ocean. The farther side of the valley is also a high mountain, terminating abruptly in a cliff at the sea, the Punta de Camino, while beyond, apparently but a little distance off, is the point of Teno, above which rises the Peak.

The next piece of land to Don Manuel's has been procured by the Englishman already mentioned, where, we hear, he intends to build a house. Land at Hermigua costs £600 for two hundred *fanegadas* (twenty-two *fanegadas* make one acre).

Our host told us there was no means of educating his daughters in the island. It was a great distress to him that they should be entirely dependent upon him for whatever knowledge they might acquire. They were exceedingly pleasant girls. The eldest, about seventeen, perhaps not so much, had been taught all she knew from her alphabet upwards by her father. What a sad sort of life for people of position! Very pleasant to us as travellers was it to wander in these islands, but for those who cannot afford to send their children abroad for education it must be trying. Those who are sent from home come to England, chiefly to Stonyhurst and Roehampton.

There are only two pianos in Gomera, one in Agulo and one in Valle Hermoso, the instrumental music being supplied by guitars.

The natives are tall and lithe, and walk well. The men in Hierro, though perhaps taller, are loose in figure; but the Gomeros are well knit. They, as a rule, wear a moustache, and sometimes a little beard round the chin, no whiskers. They are brighter and more intelligent-looking than the Herreños, and although gentle, not so simple as the former. One can understand such men resisting and being aroused to reprisal by their conquerors when badly treated, though welcoming them in the first instance for the sake of past European captives who

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had taught them handicrafts. As to the women, one word suffices for them: they are lovely—and don't know it.

We had much interesting conversation with Don Manuel. Growing luxuriantly in his garden was a plant (*Cassia occidentalis*) brought by him from the West Indies, of which place it is a native. The roasted seeds of this plant are used in the Mauritius as a substitute for coffee. He gave us information about different kinds of potatoes and when they were planted. The earliest are planted in January and dug in July, another kind is planted in February and ready in June, while a third, put into the ground in March, is dug in July. Two-thirds of the produce is exported to Cuba.*

Besides potatoes, sugar-cane and maize are grown extensively, at Hermigua 5,500 *fagas* of maize and 25,000 *quintales* of canes being produced in the year.

Meanwhile the day was waning, and the beauty of the scene was becoming greater every moment. The Peak reared its head clearly and distinctly against the sky as it caught the rays of the setting sun, while the lower mountains of Gomera and Tenerife were buried in the gloom of approaching night, a bank of clouds allowing nothing of the lower portion of the Peak to be seen. Lights began to twinkle in a few dwellings, so reluctantly we turned and went down into the house.

Our host told us that when in Santa Cruz he asked Mrs. Camacho, of the hotel there, to show him how to make tea in English fashion. She took him into the kitchen, and explained to him the process, how the water must be boiling, etc., and he

* There are several kinds of potatoes grown in Hermigua :—

*Potata Bonita negra*
„ „ *del Tanque*
„ „ *amarillenta de Canarias*
„ *de flor blanca*

The quantity produced is gauged at 67,000 *quintales* (a *quintal* is 104 pounds). Out of every 30,000 *quintales* 20,000 are exported to Cuba. One plant of potatoes produces 460 *gramos de tuberculos*. The price is from five to ten *pesetas* (four shillings to eight shillings) the *quintal*.

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instructed his daughter accordingly. I fear, however, that the tea usually sold is not by any means good, so that it stands a bad chance when compared with coffee, which can be home-grown. There is no duty on tea or on any import, so that English people living here could readily obtain the best of everything at moderate prices.

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# CHAPTER XV.

## *HERMIGUA—AGULO—VALLE HERMOSO—"CUMBRES."*

From the sounding sea,
Dewy and fleet, let us rise and soar.
Dewy, and gleaming, and fleet are we!
Let us look on the tree-clad mountain crest,
On the sacred earth, where the fruits rejoice,
On the waters that murmur east and west,
On the trembling sea, with his moaning voice,
For unwearied glitters the Eye of the Air,
And the bright rays gleam;
Then cast we our shadows of mist, and fare
In our deathless shapes to glance everywhere
From the height of the heaven, on the land and air,
And the Ocean stream.

ANDREW LANG.

And now a golden curve
Gives one bright glance, then total disappears.

J. THOMSON.

*October 2nd, Tuesday.*—This morning at about six o'clock the Peak was visible from our bedroom window, but by 8 a.m. a thick bank of clouds hung over the top of Tenerife, completely obscuring the mountain. At the same time, the whole of the south-western part of that island was clear and free from clouds. The northern side is not visible from here.

Six women are again busy this morning brushing off the cochineal. The cactus is planted in rows. Each woman takes a row, and breaking off the upper leaves, brushes the cochineal into her basket. With a spoon and shovel any stray insects

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are removed that may be left on the lower branches, these not being broken off. The brushing process over, the leaves are carefully cast behind, so as not to interfere with the bare feet of the brusher. The crop is good in quality and heavy. The strong north-east wind blew the white dust off the insects.

The land at Hermigua produces 4,000 *pesetas* worth of cochineal, a fourth of which money goes to the Government. Other taxes are proportionately heavy. If a cow be taken from Hermigua to Agulo, the next parish as we would say, five *pesetas* must be paid, and two *quartos* for each pound of meat bought or sold.

Early this morning tea was brought to us, and later we had what is here called breakfast. Soup with bread floating in it, fried eggs, rice, beefsteak, raw onions and parsley, fried potatoes, banana fritters, roast fowl and potatoes, wine, peaches, pears, preserved peaches, cakes, coffee, appeared to us poor wanderers, accustomed to scanty quantities and great appetites, a sumptuous repast.

At 10.50 we proceeded on foot to Agulo, accompanied by Don Manuel and his daughters. The distance between the two places is short, half a mile or a mile, and the walk charming. Immediately above our host's house, the cliff, which is almost perpendicular, is dotted over with openings, said to be Guanche caves. I would we had time to explore. Weeks or months would not be too much to spend in Gomera to do justice to its beauties and curiosities. We met the doctor on horseback, and had a few moments' conversation with him. A good path amid fine scenery leads round a headland and a dip on the other side of which lies Agulo. The boundary between the two is marked by a cross, "Cruz del Viento" ("Cross of the Wind"), 625 feet above the sea.

Tenerife opens into view, so that we can see beyond Adeje. Beneath are a few huts on a flat promontory close to the sea, called Tepe, and as we turn round the cliff, we see a cluster of houses at the top of cultivated land, like a castle crowning the heights. This is Agulo. Evidently Agulo is considered

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a show-place, if such a phrase can be applied to this isolated and out-of-the-world spot, and is a summer resort for the inhabitants of Hermigua, being cooler and closer to the sea. The town is situated at the western side of an amphitheatre of hills and cliffs, down which, we are told, innumerable waterfalls dash in winter. At present there are only a couple, long, narrow streaks of silver falling straight down the cliffs, which in November will be masses of white foam. Another fall near the road makes a double leap in winter, but at present contains no water. Two springs supply the town plentifully with water all the year round. The barranco winds downwards, and at an inner bend a small wooden bridge is thrown over, near which some women are washing on the banks. Water is dripping everywhere, and the rocks are overrun by green creepers. The grey-green cactus grows in clumps upon the cliffs, while the brown mould, dark from recent rain, looks refreshing and sweet. The land is neatly terraced from the houses to the sea, and is very productive. At present the ploughs are busily engaged. Wells abound, and there is no lack of water for every purpose. Sugar-canes can be grown here; consequently we see quantities flourishing, looking like weeds in marshy ground, their large leaves waving gracefully in the breeze.

The Gomeros are very tenacious of the honour of having given to the West Indies their staple of the sugar-cane, a plant indigenous to this island, from whence, it is said, Columbus transported it on his second voyage to America.

Numbers of people and children, dressed chiefly in pink cotton "prints," came out to gaze at the strangers. At the top of Agulo is a flat piece of land, reminding one, with the cliffs surrounding it so immediately, of the bottom of the Albert Hall!

Aguacatas and lovely oleanders make the houses picturesque. Don Manuel has another house here, a summer residence, on the verandah of which we sat for a little while, facing the mountains and falls. Even the bottom of the mountain slopes is terraced upwards as far as possible. It is curious to note

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that the best houses in Agulo place their verandahs and sitting-rooms facing the mountains, not the sea. The latter is always present at Hermigua as well as here, but the cliffs being very grand, and the waterfalls rather a rarity, they are more enjoyable to the summer residents. Don Manuel's house is 550 feet above the sea.

We now bade farewell to our thoughtful hosts, whose kindness and hospitality were unsurpassed, and their society really enjoyable. Our stay with them was a bright spot in our journeyings. They were much vexed that we did not remain longer and get to know their island better, but they were not nearly so sorry at our inability to linger as we were.

Just outside Agulo we rode past a cemetery. Over the gates, which were surmounted by a cross, was the inscription—

"Beati mortui, qui in Domino moriuntur."

The road descends, and then rises up a steep gradient, until 650 feet of altitude is reached. The path, which is very steep, then winds upwards along the side of the mountain. A woman met us with a round pad made of bracken on her head, on which to carry a basket or load of any sort. In Tenerife this turban is made of rags or cloths. The ferns are cooler, I fancy, and certainly more picturesque.

At the top of the Pass of El Roquillo, we stopped under the trunk of a tree used as a watercourse, and looked back and down. Beneath is a basin surrounded by steep, perpendicular hills, the sea at the foot blue and rough, for it is blowing hard.

The road now winds inland, on tolerably level ground, along the side of the mountain. Beneath is the barranco of La Trabasia, while the mountain on the opposite side leaps in a series of bluffs down to the sea. The wind, which is still strong, blows the dust over us. The path on both sides is well wooded, there are many homelike brambles, the soil is good and not stony, and, except in a few places, the road could readily be turned into a highway for vehicles. A mist is rolling

over the tops of the mountains above us. All around are mountains, thrown together apparently without method, for they lie at all sorts of angles. The elevated valleys lying between the hills are cultivated, maize growing everywhere. Our route to-day lies entirely through wooded regions. Just now the bright green, feathery breso is on each side of us as we gently ascend. Near the top the view opens out, and we see the other side of the ridge, and look down into part of the Valle Hermoso, a ridge of mountains lying beyond, and a smaller one below.

We stopped at the "Cruz Etérno" ("Eternal Cross"), where



EL ROQUE DEL VALLE HERMOSO, GOMERA.

three roads form a triangle (2,275 feet high), in order that our men might light their pipes! They were splendid specimens of the muscular Gomeros, and Lorenzo, although smaller, was not behind them in activity. It was 2 p.m., and pleasant riding, not at all too hot. Immediately after leaving the cross an immense blunt-topped rock came in sight, rising up from the middle of the valley, a rocky bridge covered with grass joining it to the mountain side, down which we were riding. The mountains on either side of the valley tower up above this magnificent sentinel. This view of the gigantic monolith, framed in luxurious vegetation, is unique and beautiful. Our arrieros called the monolith by two names, Tosersali and El Roque del

Valle Hermoso. The former I never heard again; the latter seemed the better known. We next crossed a ridge, the road lying in the middle, joining two high hills, somewhat like the Coupée at Serk, only here on each side is a valley, not a bay. A grand mountain chain sweeps around in a circle, ridges or spurs running down from the top towards the centre of the valley. For another few minutes we pass through woods, when, again emerging, we come upon Buenavista, a turn in the road where the valley and its town, lying snugly below, come in sight. From this height the valley appears like a little plain lying at the foot of a number of ridges which run down to it, like the arms of a star-fish, but instead of ending in a gradual slope, stop abruptly. One of these bluffs is completed by the immense monolith already described, and called *par excellence* "El Roque" ("The Rock"). The spaces between these ridges or fingers are miniature valleys, cultivated and green. The town is perched upon the hillside, a little above the bottom of the valley, the flat ground of which is reserved for cultivation. The usual terracing is quite a feature here, and the land being very steep, the terraces are close together. There are only one or two azoteas in the village, upon which we look down from a height of 1,850 feet. The hills around have a creamy red appearance, and are dotted with breso bushes. It was now 2.45 p.m., and although so close to our destination that we could see its houses, we had still some distance to ride. The descent was steep, and the horses went down with so much reluctance and timidity, that we dismounted. Numbers of palms are around, and a few houses. We walked down a small and charming barranco, called Las Rosas, where we came upon a woman gathering peaches; she gave us some, and while picking them the ripe fruit fell around her on the ground. The tree was so heavily weighted, that the boughs had to be propped. I forgot to mention that when descending the mountain we saw a few codeso bushes.

We arrived at Hermoso at 4.30, and presented our letter of introduction from Don Manuel at the house of Señor Don

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Domingo Garcia y Gonzales. He was out, but an old man came and talked with us for some time, until Don Domingo arrived, when we had dinner. An excellent repast it proved. The bill of fare was rice soup, boiled mutton, and potatoes, fried beef and fried potatoes, fried fish and potatoes, and a fritter of some sort unknown, butter, cheese, white bread, fruit, and coffee. We were delighted and astonished to get really good and fresh butter, and white bread was an unexpected luxury. Not but that I think the native flour is the better. The butter is made in the Valle Hermoso, where there are plenty of cows and grazing. We had not tasted any since leaving Orotava, more than three weeks ago, and never expected to get it in the heart of Gomera. The good woman of the house herself attended upon us, Don Domingo only eating with us.

The "beautiful valley." has lovely women as well as lovely scenery. The girls are simply pictures that one never tires of looking upon. Perfect oval faces, generally dark eyes and a wealth of dark hair, complexions fresh and delicate, small, well-poised heads and shapely necks, the figures tall and well moulded, carried with a stately yet easy natural grace, form nearly the perfection of womanly beauty. Their charms are heightened by their being completely ignorant of their good looks. They have at present no one to tell them they are beautiful.

> "Who hath not proved how feebly words essay
> To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly ray?
> Who doth not feel, until his failing sight
> Faints into dimness with its own delight,
> His changing cheek, his sinking heart, confess
> The might, the majesty, of Loveliness?"

Is this unusual beauty a Guanche inheritance, for at the conquest the Gomera women are said to have been handsome? Curiously enough, in the other islands we heard the Gomeros spoken of as ugly. How such an egregiously incorrect rumour has arisen, I know not. Does it arise from ignorance or jealousy?

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We had a great deal of difficulty in procuring horses to take us the next day to San Sebastian. One of the arrieros from Hermigua would have gone on, but the other would not, and horses, it seems, are scarce. Fortunately we had another letter of introduction, which, when produced and forwarded to its destination, procured a horse and mule.

A lantern was lighted when we were ready to retire for the night, and we were conducted to another house. Here we had a good-sized room and a comfortable bed, but the house was, I think, new, for none but ourselves slept in it. In our bedroom there was a pile of mattresses in a corner and a grass mat full of maize in one window, in the other a lot of earthenware pans, under the bed two guitars and soup tureens, and under a table some willow pattern crockery. I noticed there were no large cups, which suggested that the meals at which we use tea or coffee in quantity are unknown here. Our sleeping place is 475 feet above the sea.

*October 3rd, Wednesday.*—We rose at 5.45 a.m., wakened by a man chopping wood just outside our door, and very soon were brought some delicious chocolate and biscuits. We went on the azotea, this being one of the few houses here possessing a flat roof. Little advantage was to be obtained from it in the way of a view, so, descending, we walked through the still empty street downwards towards the sea. A great quantity of a lovely mauve flowering plant abounds, called *trepadora*. Maize hangs out of the windows and on the balconies and verandahs of the houses in large quantities, giving a brilliancy to the scene that is very picturesque.

As we walked along, camera in hand, our host joined us. We were surprised to find a good carriage road, which following, we turned a corner, an angle of land jutting out into mid-valley. Before us opened the other and lower part of the valley, with the sea beyond, while behind lay the village, completely hidden. Palms waved in the breeze, with clusters of golden dates upon them, while the winding river-bed wandered to the sea, a trick-

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ling stream now only in its bottom. The fruit of the palm here is neither good nor perfect, Don Domingo tells us, the heat not being sufficient. Only at San Sebastian does it ripen in perfection. Hare's-foot ferns in great profusion nestle on every available spot on the palms, clinging to impossible places. The valley towards the sea widens a little, and is almost flat-bottomed. The people are busy irrigating their fields. Orange groves are around, but the fruit will not ripen till January. The road, really a road, and not a path, is hedged with aloes. This the only piece of carriage road in the island joins together the upper and lower portions of Hermoso, which are a quarter of a mile from each other. Here there are a few houses. The church, towards which we next turned our attention, is very small, consisting of only chancel and side chapels, the aisle not having yet been built. The arches, having a span of about twenty-four feet, stand on grey stone pillars. The floor is of good stone, set with the corners pointing north and south. There are three bells. Outside are the very thick walls of the remainder of the church, which is not roofed in yet.

Logs for firewood are brought from the mountains in lengths of about ten feet. A hole is bored at one end of the trunk. Through this a rope is passed and attached to oxen, which draw it down. The valley is very lovely, and that gigantic monolith towering above makes it unique. I am not sure, however, that Hermigua, though scarcely so deep, is not as beautiful.

After breakfast we said good-bye to our kind host, starting at 10.10 a.m. We found a horse and mule awaiting us, the latter the smallest mule I have ever seen, being only the size of a donkey. Turning southwards, we passed through the village towards its upper end, on the right-hand side of the valley. A turn in the road, and the village is hidden from sight, but we gain access to another and higher part of the valley, whence there is a splendid view of "El Roque," lying behind.

The men in Gomera carry coarse canvas bags, either checked or striped. They are made of a straight piece of fabric, about

three feet long and perhaps a foot wide, at either end of which is a bag, and exactly across the middle a long slit is cut. This hole is large enough to admit the head, the bags hanging over the back and chest. Sometimes they are decorated at the corners and sides with tufts of red and blue flannel or stuffs. The girdles or scarves—*ceñidores*—that the men wear round their waists are about four yards long. Our new man to-day took off his and twisted it on his head like a turban, upon which he placed the portmanteau. The *ceñidores* cost about two shillings, so are a costly part of dress to the people, as prices run here.

The valley or Barranco del Ingenio, one of numerous barrancos which lead from the mountains into the Valle Hermoso, is the one up which we ride. Little side valleys between the spurs open out into the main one, first on one side, then the other, our path turning and twisting as we wind along near the bottom. Clinging to the face of one of these spurs, we passed a most picturesque village—Puestelagua. The houses are perched one above the other on the steep hill-side, so steep, that it seems as if they must be glued there, or they would fall. The roofs are of dark tiles or thatch, contrasting with the green, waving palms which are scattered amid the dwellings, their roots on a level with one cottage and the leaves looking in at the door of another. Again we see hare's-foot fern growing on the palm trunks; in fact, it grows everywhere.

Soon after leaving Puestelagua we crossed the barranco bed and ascended one of the spurs already mentioned as jutting into the main valley. "El Roque" is really just such another spur, only much larger, and ending quite precipitously. The one we ascended of course sloped a little, but was steep enough to make a zigzag path necessary. The flies trouble my poor little mule so much, that I fear, in its endeavour to shake them off, I shall go too! It is risky occasionally when there is only a foot or two of path to ride along above a precipice.

All the spurs end in hard masses of rock. When we



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reached the top of the one we ascended, we found on the summit a neck of road some ten or twelve feet wide, where we rested for a few minutes (1,800 feet high). At our feet lies Los Loros, a good-sized village, interspersed with palm trees. It is now 11.40, and we have a long day's journey, so must not linger. As we ride along the top of the ridge, we see valleys on either side beneath us, snugly enclosed on three sides in the shelter of the mountains, the fourth opening to the main barranco.

The mountains have a curious spotty appearance, owing to bresos and myrtles growing in isolated patches. A red, coral-like moss, a species of *selaginella,** brightens and surrounds the bases of the trees. At a height of 2,175 feet we stopped under a large Spanish chestnut. Below, on the right of the path, a tiny spring oozes forth. It is closely hidden, so that none but those who know the road would suspect its hiding-place. Some 500 feet further up, we found traces of rain, which probably fell during the night. After leaving the chestnut, the path ran through woods such as only Gomera can produce in beauty and quantity. Sheltered from the wind, and with a loamy soil, trees, bushes, and undergrowth thrive. Laurels grow until they are trees, myrtles and breso are clothed to the top with moss and lichen, while the ground is covered with a green carpet of creepers and mosses. The soil is soft and pleasant to the horses' feet, and only the dull thud of the shoeless animals breaks the stillness. The quietude became almost oppressive at last, when suddenly in the far distance rang out from some goatherd's lips the musical "Malagueña," more of the major in its tones than in Tenerife. Many of the rocks here, which are a brilliant vermilion, are soft, crumbling almost with a touch. We suddenly came upon a small flat, open space, pretty, owing to the contrast between the red soil and the bright green brushwood. Immediately in front of us was a party consisting of a couple of women, three men, and a donkey laden with potatoes. The women are much

* *Denticulata.*

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fairer here than in Tenerife, and have a good colour. We had scarcely time to note of whom the party consisted, when the donkey, a diminutive animal, got into a groove in the road made by the rain and fell. It did not attempt to rise, and indeed I don't think it could do so, for when down nothing was to be seen of the animal, the load on its back completely hiding it. We thought of course unloading would be necessary to enable the poor thing to get on its legs, but the Gomeros have a different mode of raising fallen beasts of burden! The owner, standing with a leg on each side of the donkey, simply put his arms underneath it and lifted it on to its feet. When up, it appeared no larger than a big Newfoundland dog, and was completely hidden from sight by the burden, which did not appear heavy, but bulky. The race of donkeys in Gomera is almost liliputian, but this little one was the smallest I ever saw in my life. They are so pretty, too, that one pets them like a dog. They are seldom ridden, owing to their size. Perhaps the fact that one always feels inclined to ejaculate on seeing them, "Dear little thing!" will give a better idea than aught else of the breed of donkeys in Gomera.

The road to Chipude branched off on the right (3,600 feet), where there was a triangle of roads. Our friends with the donkey took the way to Chipude, and we pursued ours towards the cumbres. Near this, at 1.15 p.m., we crossed a flat piece of common, lying fifty feet higher than the cross-roads, called by the arrieros Laguna Grande. Whether this is ever a lake is doubtful, but in winter it is just possible sufficient water may gather here to form a large pond, or perhaps only a marsh, as at Laguna, in Tenerife. The men did not seem to know, from which I conclude they seldom or never crossed the cumbres in winter.

Once more we entered a wood, on the opposite side of Laguna Grande. A mist now came on, and we were glad of our plaids, in which, by a judicious manipulation of the corners, we managed to completely envelop ourselves, and so keep dry and warm. So dense was the mist, that we could not see more than a few

yards on all sides. Silently we wandered over the cumbres, along paths thickly lined with woods, clouds of heavy, cold, wetting mist driving in our faces. The wind was blowing strongly, and when we were away from the shelter of the trees, it, in conjunction with the mist, gave one a feeling of confusion and bewilderment. Several times we dismounted, and walked for some distance, driving the horses in front of us, both to rest, and because we could go faster where the path was bad. On one occasion John hurried after his horse to throw the stirrups across the saddle, when the animal, perhaps expecting a trick of some sort, struck out with his hind-leg, hitting him full in the stomach. Luckily the force of the kick was spent ere it reached him, so that it was only sufficient to throw him against a rock without hurting him. We were surprised, especially John, as the animal had shown no previous viciousness. We were so enveloped in fog, that we began to wonder should we lose our way. The track did not seem beaten sufficiently, and the men kept hurrying on in front, sometimes separating in a suspicious way, as if uncertain where to go next. Some places up which we dragged ourselves and horses were certainly not parts of a path. We were so accustomed, however, to follow anything which even indicated a track, that, but for the manner of the men, we should not at once have suspected that we were lost on the cumbres. Glancing at Lorenzo, we saw his brows knit anxiously, and, after questioning him closely, drew a reluctant nod from him in confirmation of our fears. It is not pleasant in a thick mist on the top of a mountain, precipices on either hand, the day on the wane, the country strange, to feel that the guides have missed the path. Evidently the route was not one frequently trodden by them, so that, the mist coming suddenly, the path itself was not sufficiently well known to be recognised without landmarks. Anyone who has ever been in a fog will understand this. The wind was tremendous, too, and instead of clearing the mist away, seemed only to blow it all around us in greater density. My little mule proved very good, and plodded along bravely, keeping up a quick walking

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pace. After a long time we perceived that we were near a precipice, a valley evidently being below on our right. The men stopped, and waiting, anxiously watched the mist clouds. Suddenly one huge cloud rolled aside, revealing for about five seconds a deep, cultivated valley, with some houses, far beneath us. The guides uttered an exclamation of delight, brows cleared, anxious looks passed away, and we all went forward cheerfully, and much relieved that we were once more cognisant of our whereabouts. Very soon we passed a little hut, a mere cabin. Asking who lived so far from the haunts of man, the guides shook their heads and hurried onwards. The owner of the hut was a "very bad man, a robber," so they said. Whether they feared him as a highway robber and possible murderer, I know not, but certainly they quickened their steps, kept all together, and cast furtive glances behind them.

Not so very far from the robber's hut, in confirmation of the old adage doubtless, "The nearer the church, the farther from grace," was a small church, that of Las Nieves, a roughly built little place, standing on the edge of the precipice and overlooking the valley on the right. The mist was gone by this time, having been left above. Though we had descended a little, we were still riding along the top of a mountain ridge, on our right Sombrero and on our left, once more the companion of our wanderings, its summit just visible above the intervening mountains, the Peak of Tenerife. The more one sees El Pico the more majestic does it appear.

The road was not very interesting. We had left the woods behind, and the mountains were barren, though capable of cultivation. All along our route to-day the soil has been good and fertile, and nothing save men and money wanted to render, by judicious treatment and conservation of forests, the island of Gomera a veritable garden of Eden.

A glorious sunset, of crimson hue, warned us that night was coming. There was no moon, so to be benighted on the cumbres would not be pleasant. The path was now descending slightly, and becoming rough and stony. As long as daylight

and level ground lasted my little mule kept up pluckily. But careful riding was now necessary, the mule was going more slowly, and although it had never yet made a false step, one felt it would soon be a possibility. Rapidly the light was fading out of the sky. The road was becoming very steep and zigzagging downwards. Calling Lorenzo, I said, "We shall go faster if I dismount." "We shall, Señorita, if you don't mind," he answered. Every second being valuable, I was off before the animal stopped. John had previously dismounted, so we both hurried down the zigzag road as fast as possible. Large, loose stones and smooth, flat rocks, slippery through dryness, were not conducive to easy walking in the fast-growing dusk. Racing the light requires speed, so we take to running, jumping over stones and rocks, keeping a sharp look-out where our feet go. Only a hurried glance can we occasionally spare towards the west, where scarcely a streak of crimson survives. When the last blush fades, night falls. One moment more, and we reach the bottom, to find a fairly good path leading across the plain and over the barranco to the town of San Sebastian, where lights now glimmer from every house.

We reached the fonda at 6.10 p.m., the men and horses arriving ten minutes later. Had dinner, which was soon ready, and went to bed tolerably tired.

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# CHAPTER XVI.

## *SAN SEBASTIAN—OROTAVA—SANTA CRUZ DE LA PALMA.*

The ever-changeful sea, whose moods are as manifold as a woman's. . . . See it under the moonlight, when the reflex of our wayward satellite looks like a silver path for angels to tread. Always the sea is beautiful, always alive. A mountain is beautiful, but with a dumb, inarticulate beauty. The sea speaks.—

M. AND F. COLLINS.

Red flashed the sun across the deck,
Slow flapped the idle sails, and slow
The black ship cradled to and fro.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

*October 4th, Thursday.*—We had to rise early this morning to start once more for Tenerife. Leaving the fonda at 5.30 a.m., we walked up the well-known path towards Fort Cristobal. Where the rocks jut out into the sea and help to form the bay, and where we had seen fishing boats nestling, we now found a boat awaiting us, to which a few minutes' walking over rocks brought us. Our luggage was carried by the sailors. One small box over which we were keeping careful guard, which Don Salvador had taken into his charge, we found, to our horror, had been transferred to a little boy of about nine. Considering that it contained all the negatives that we had yet taken in Tenerife, Hierro, and Gomera, we watched its journey with anxiety. Imagine how we felt when we saw the poor child, with bare feet, striving to carry this weight—for glass is heavy —over the rough rocks. At one place, where he had to climb

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downwards, the box slipped from his small fingers; he tried to hold it, and so far succeeded, that it only came down with a slow thud. It was impossible to reach him, as we were in the boat, so we had to wait with what patience we could. It was some days, too, before we could ascertain if any damage had been done. The box and its contents, however, proved a triumph of packing, for not a plate was broken. If our journey through the islands had only been accomplished a few years later, we should have been saved much anxiety as well as extra weight by having only paper or films instead of glass to carry.

Once more we are on board. A farewell, and a long one, we fear, must be said to Gomera the beautiful. Here, if anywhere on the face of the earth, would one be content to be banished from civilisation and buried amid nature's beauties alone. Here we can fully realise the ancients thinking they had at last discovered the Elysian fields that Homer in poetical vein described so fitly, his imagination dreaming of that which was indeed a reality, though beyond his knowledge.

A strong breeze soon carried us past San Cristobal and the cross surmounting the cliff above. It and San Sebastian were lost to sight as suddenly as they had been revealed.

After half an hour's good sailing the breeze died away as we neared Tenerife, and it was two o'clock before we reached Guia. Here Lorenzo went ashore. He did not like the sea at all, and besides on leaving Guia he had forgotten his *manto* in the cave, a great distress to him, not only from want of it, but because it was new. He asked us therefore if he might leave us and go ashore, walking from Guia to Orotava. After dropping Lorenzo and some other passengers, we again set sail along the coast. We made very little way until near Buenavista, when we caught a breeze, and little doubted but that we should surely get to Orotava by night. A calm, however, fell upon us again; and we only reached Garachico at 2 p.m. on Friday, October 5th, to which spot, I believe, we simply drifted with the tide. It was a dreadful voyage, so hot on

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deck, so close in the stuffy cabin, the boom rolling and squeaking, the man at the helm singing the everlasting "Malagueña," importuning in impromptu verses the wind to blow and the ship to go. We suggested being rowed ashore at Garachico, but they would not do it without extra payment, whereas we thought they should take less if we left them sooner! We preferred waiting, especially as we believed that night would see the end of our journey. We arrived opposite the Puerto de Orotava between 8 and 9 p.m., but because it was dark, they would not land us, so we had to endure another night of rolling and suffocation.

*October 6th, Saturday.*—With the first streak of dawn we insisted on being put ashore. We left the schooner at 4.30 a.m.; and notwithstanding hunger, headaches, and aches of every description from being for two days on board, we thoroughly enjoyed a most lovely sunrise, the sky one rosy blush. The sailors rowed abominably, in windmill fashion, out of time, and as if they and the oars were out of joint. As we reached the harbour—for there is part of a mole here—an old man standing in a shed on the opposite side to the landing-place shouted to us. The men stopped rowing, when the following colloquy, of course in Spanish, took place:—

"Where do you come from?"

"San Sebastian."

"Where are you going to?"

"Santa Cruz."

"Any sickness?"

"No, Señor!"

"*Vamos!*" *

Two seconds sufficed for the interrogations, and we were rowed ashore. Our luggage was taken to Mr. Turnbull's, when we were thankful once more to get the chance of plenty of water and English baths and basins. Some bread and milk supported the inner man until breakfast-time. A budget of

* "Let us go," or rather the equivalent to the French "Allons!"

English letters awaited us; and as we had not heard from home since our arrival in the islands, the greed with which we read them may be better imagined than described.

We were glad to rest after our month's journeyings, and occupied the remainder of the day in unpacking and settling our accounts. I should recommend everyone to have a very clear understanding of the terms upon which he engages guides and arrieros. Although everything was settled amicably with Lorenzo in the end, we very nearly came to loggerheads over a technical misunderstanding. The agreement was that we should pay him a dollar a day and his keep. By the latter we understood his food. It seems, however, that he meant his clothes as well, that is to say whatever expenses he might incur in our service—purchasing new shoes or mending old ones, buying or patching of trousers, and such-like things.

We can say of Lorenzo, as Washington Irving does of his Biscayan guide, "Like a true Spaniard, though treated by us with companionable familiarity, he never for a moment, in his utmost hilarity, overstepped the bounds of respectful decorum."

Having occasion to go to the chemist's, we were shown into a little sitting-room leading out of the shop, although we were only waiting for an ordinary medicine, not a prescription, to be given to us.

We find the next vessel sails for Palma on the 15th. This gives us rather a longer rest than we desire, but we can utilise the time by acquiring information here.

A gentleman staying in the hotel brought us back to real civilisation by entertaining us with brilliantly executed classical music. Another, of whom we had heard much, proved to be an old British Association friend. The world is small.

*October 7th, Sunday.*—The mail by Cadiz leaves Orotava every Sunday evening, and as it is the quickest and most certain way in point of time of sending letters to England, one generally writes by it. Letters unfortunately often go astray, and it is usual

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to register quite ordinary letters in order to ensure their safe delivery.

Mr. Reid, our vice-consul here, holds a service on Sunday morning at his own house. Being a Scotchman and a Presbyterian, he mixes a few Church of England prayers with a lengthy discourse from some Scotch divine's works, endeavouring thus to suit his hearers, who are generally Church-people, and his own proclivities. He most kindly took us into his garden after service, where we pulled oranges off the trees. It teaches one extravagance in the use of the golden fruit to get it thus in quantity, for here one merely sucks the juice, discarding the pulp. There is a marvellous difference between the flavour of oranges when picked ripe and the taste of those to which we are accustomed in England. The latter are picked unripe, and become mellow on the journey. They never, however, attain to the full, rich, *orangy* flavour of the mature fruit. It is possible to get ripe oranges in England from these islands, for we have done so. I must say that I think the full, delicious flavour is not to be attributed only to the ripeness of the fruit, but to the fact that the oranges are from the Canary Islands. The testimony of those who have travelled in many climes bears out this statement. We do not know what oranges are as a fruit in England. Their flavour is poor, thin, and watery compared with the golden apples of the Garden of the Hesperides. In the gardens at Telde, in Gran Canaria, boxes of oranges are packed beneath the trees, the fruit being picked and put direct into the cases for two dollars (eight shillings) a hundred. At that price it would not pay commercially, but there is no commerce in fruit between England and the islands. There might readily be a good trade,* to the advantage of both countries, were there only enter-

*Since writing the above the Messrs. Miller, in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, have started a regular trade with England in fruit. Owing to the uncertainty of the arrival of the steamers from the west coast of Africa, the fruit was frequently spoiled by being kept waiting, but now, the cable being laid, a cablegram from Bathurst on the departure of the steamers thence allows time for the fruit to be gathered and packed.

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prise for the undertaking. English markets could be flooded with fruit of all kinds *ripe*, not imperfect, as it usually is now, and from the exportation of figs, fresh or dried, the Herreños ought to make a good and comfortable subsistence. It is grievous in all the islands to see their individual capabilities wasted and the community impoverished when it might be happy and prosperous. There is such diversity, too, among the products of the islands, that they need never interfere with each other in their exports.

Just as we were thoroughly enjoying rest a message was brought to us that there was a vessel going to Palma to-night. It was a brigantine that ran usually between Palma and Cuba, and had only come over to Tenerife to discharge some cargo. Being therefore a much larger vessel than the *correo* (mail) schooners, we decided not to lose this opportunity of better accommodation. We felt little disposed, however, to start so soon again, especially as we expected to endure similar hardships to those we had just been through, if even slightly mitigated by the size of the vessel.

Mr. G——, who had been to Garachico, returned this evening. He had seen the chemist there, and had told him that we had mentioned his great kindness to us, at which that good Samaritan was much gratified.

To arrange for our journey across to Palma, we went to see the captain of the vessel at his office. At first he refused to take anyone, but when he found that we were English people, he said he would be most happy to oblige us and would take no money for the journey. Very differently did the boatmen act who took us out to the vessel. They refused to row a quarter of a mile to the brigantine, lying in the offing, under three dollars (twelve shillings). We appealed to Mr. Turnbull at such extortion, but he seemed to think it was the ordinary fare, and, in fact, said he could not do anything. Before leaving, a Spaniard who had received permission also to cross in the *Matanzas* came to the hotel. He mounted the stairs and appeared at the top when we were at supper, his luggage in one hand and, to our horror as

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well as amusement, a basin in the other! This preparing for illness is very disgusting, and the barefaced way in which these bedroom utensils are carried about and on board by passengers is, to say the least, trying to English sensibilities. We left at 11 p.m., and got on board in a few minutes. The *Matanzas* was rolling so heavily, being in ballast, that we had to jump for the ship's ladder as the boat rose on the swell and clamber up the side in the darkness. A lantern above the bulwarks showed us the friendly hands ready to drag us over the side. The captain asked us how much the men required for bringing us out, and when we said, "Three dollars," he uttered a few Spanish oaths, stamped his foot, passed his hands through his hair, and looked as angry and distressed as a man could. He said, "They are perfect robbers, and you shall not pay it. The villains!" and so on. "Why, one dollar is too much for them." A bargain is a bargain, and as we had agreed to pay the three dollars by Mr. Turnbull's arrangement, we did not like to withdraw from it. But our worthy captain simply refused to give it to the men. Reluctantly, and with muttered curses and threats, he at last consented to give them two. We were below in the cabin during his colloquy with the boatmen, and could hear him on deck telling them to leave his ship, for that they were nothing but robbers and dishonest rascals.

We considered ourselves in paradise, notwithstanding the rolling of the ship, for not only was there a main cabin, but we had a small one to ourselves, containing a couple of berths, with mattresses and bed-clothing, besides minor luxuries that most people would consider necessaries.

*October 8th, Monday.*—When we awakened this morning, we expected to find ourselves in Palma or at any rate almost there. Great was our disappointment therefore to find we were only a few miles from Tenerife. The wind had failed, and we were idly floating hither and thither with the tide. The captain, Señor Don Fernando Cabrera Lopez, was very kind, and made us eat whether we would or no, and we were

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not sorry to recruit our strength by lying still, passing the day between eating and sleeping !

*October 9th, Tuesday.*—Still no wind. We are about fifteen miles from the Puerto de Orotava, where we can see the houses. We might just as well have been peacably on shore as rolling out here, doing nothing. About one o'clock a breeze sprang up, and hope filled our hearts ; but it was very light, and what there was came the wrong way. Turning our eyes from the restless billows and never-changing shore, we studied our companions on board. The men were very fine, of good physique, and for the most part handsome. The captain was a tall, broad, kindly individual, with a good though not handsome face. He had a magnificent Newfoundland dog on board, which generally accompanied him on his voyages to Cuba, also a thorough-bred carriage-dog (Dalmatian) and four black puppies, who took after the father, and not the mother, in appearance. The unfortunate mother, the carriage-dog, had only three legs on which to hobble about the deck.

The *Matanzas* is a brigantine of two hundred and forty-three tons burden. Don Fernando, not expecting to spend so much time between Orotava and Palma, had not provisioned with fresh food for so many days ; our dinner therefore to-day was made up of raw herrings, sardines, and tinned peaches.

During the evening we sat upon deck in the poop, which, after the small and dirty schooners we had been in, seemed large and clean. Another advantage was that, save for the occasional visits of the captain, we had it to ourselves. I forgot ; there were two turtles in a tub that shared the poop with us, but they were noiseless companions. Don Fernando sat and talked to us about Palma, the West Indies, his wife and children, and various matters. He told us that his ship can carry four hundred emigrants. He takes them to Cuba or Venezuela, and charges seventeen or eighteen dollars each for the journey.

The sea was calm, although there was a slight roll, the usual

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Atlantic swell. Very lovely was the night, as the moon, shining across the waters, made an angels' path to paradise. We are quite content to rest thus in mid-ocean; we needs must, for until the wind does blow, the ship can't go.

We asked Don Fernando what he called the Newfoundland, and could scarcely understand at first that its name was *Dog*, the *o* pronounced long. The sailors had named it thus, hearing English sailors calling it "the dog."

*October 10th, Wednesday.*—It occurred to the captain this morning that we might perhaps like to wash! Accordingly his cabin, being the only one which boasted a basin, was placed at my disposal. The doctor came down and mixed some Florida water with the water in the basin for me, a delicate attention, but one of which I was scarcely worthy, after being waterless since Sunday. I felt a scrubbing-brush would have been more to the purpose. John had a shave, but in the middle of it the captain, seeing what he was doing, sent the doctor down to shave him! As he preferred being his own barber, the doctor insisted at any rate in holding the looking-glass for him!

Early this morning we had coffee and biscuits, as usual, and went on deck about 6 a.m. We found the *Matanzas* was drifting, with Tenerife on her port bow, a dead calm still prevailing. A thick bank of solid white clouds stretched from the sea half-way up the Peak, so that the summit of the latter looked like an island suspended in mid-air.

The decks are being washed; that is to say, one boy throws a bucket of water down, and two men with palm whisks, not hard brushes or brooms, tickle the boards. Bits of orange-peel that were sticking in corners yesterday still remain peacefully in their crannies after the operation. Apple rinds that have wandered near the bulwarks rest there unmoved. When it is remembered that there are half a dozen dogs, two cats, and a tortoise loose upon deck, it can easily be imagined how clean is the normal state of the boards.

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The Newfoundland, displaced by the cleaning process, takes to the poop, where, after scratching the deck for a few seconds, after the manner of his prairie forefathers, he curls himself up on the sunny side. The carriage-dog, having been kept awake all night by her four pups, now courts repose, but one black imp, partaking very strongly of his father's looks, is wakeful and inclined to play, so the two are engaged in a snarling match. The turtles are busy disporting themselves in the tub, playfully snapping at one another with their parrot-like beaks, until a boy feeds them with bits of raw meat.

We had drifted further north during the night, so that now we have Palma, Gomera, and Tenerife all on our port side as the *Matanzas* heads to the westward. Presently a steamer, bound towards Palma, passes with aggravating celerity, while our sails flap uselessly. Provisions are getting short in quality, though not in quantity, being of the commonest description and in tins. The fowls become fine by degrees and beautifully less. There is no chance of starvation, but we have a variety of odds and ends. Breakfast to-day consisted of biscuits, cheese, raw bloaters, black beans and rice, sardines, rice and a lump of salt pork, an omelet of eggs, sliced potatoes and bits of ham—called *tortilla de jamon* *—potted salmon, potatoes in their skins, salt fish, and wine. The bill of fare is lengthy, but many would not care for the items, various though they be. We were hungry, and enjoyed the repast immensely. The *comedor* is a tiny deck cabin, in fact only the passage at the top of the companion leading to the cabin, the saloon below not being used for meals. The accommodation is limited, as the captain, doctor, and three or four mates are all there. I pleaded being afraid to venture in for fear of sea-sickness, and sat outside, with a chair for a table. There were no tumblers or glasses to drink out of, so the wine-bottle was handed round for all to drink from "turn-about." This was done by the men in a curious way. The bottle had two openings: one a very narrow spout in the side, the other, larger, on the top; somewhat in the fashion of a teapot.

* See Appendix.

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Both corks being removed, the bottle is lifted above the head and about six inches from the mouth, when the wine is shot out of the narrow spout down the throat. It requires great dexterity to accomplish the feat without spilling a drop, as the men always succeeded in doing.

I sat on deck all day, knitting most of the time. The sailors were very much interested in my work, one even coming aft deliberately to look at it. Ship's biscuit and oranges formed luncheon. The Spaniard whom the captain also took as a passenger has been lying below all these lovely days, his basin his only companion. Nothing would induce him to come upon deck. At last to-day the captain and doctor half carried him up. He only stayed five minutes, however, and, notwithstanding everyone's persuasions, went down again to his stuffy cabin, not to reappear until we cast anchor in Santa Cruz de la Palma.

As usual on board ship, one has little to think of but eating, so we are well pleased when we find it dinner-time once more. The captain served round first some American cheese and biscuits, with a bit of raw herring, and to us some potted salmon; he also put a tin of sardines before me for my especial benefit. Puchero followed, with lumps of salt meat in it, then fowl, baked in grease or oil, with potatoes, and some sweet stuff of gofio and molasses as pudding. My drink consists of oranges, with which the captain keeps me plentifully supplied, seeing I do not always take wine.

After dinner we sat on the poop, and enjoyed a most magnificent sunset, the lights all over the heavens being marvellous in colour. We thought at the time that the wonderful changes and combinations were from local causes, but many weeks later we ascertained that throughout the world the after-glows were creating comment and wonder, and science was at its wits' end to account for them. Sunset faded, but only to give place to moonlight, which lit up the sea gloriously. At sunset the captain hoped for a breeze, and shifted the sails



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first one way and then another, until, finding it useless, he finally ordered the main-sail down altogether.

> "Day after day, day after day,
> We stuck, nor breath nor motion,
> As idle as a painted ship
> Upon a painted ocean."

*October 11th, Thursday.*—No further on our way this morning. We still float idly in mid-Atlantic. In fact, we are drifting further north, for during the night the sailors saw the light on Anaga Point, at the extreme north of Tenerife. At 6 a.m. it rained heavily. It is a grey morning now, and we can discern snow upon the Peak. The temperature at 8.30 was 73° F. (22·8° C.).

Our canteen has excited curiosity on board, so we brought it up this morning to show the crew, after which the boys cleaned the smoke off the saucepan and kettle, and generally gave it a rub-up.

Two fish suddenly appearing astern, we all eagerly looked forward to fresh fish for breakfast. A line was got out, but the water was too clear, so a long pole was used with which to trouble the surface, when one was caught. It was about the size and shape of a five-pound salmon, but a little thicker and deeper. The colouring was very beautiful, of blue and yellow; hence its name—*dorado* ("gilt-poll"). The other fish, witnessing the fate of its comrade, at once made off. Breakfast came next. We had biscuits, of course no bread. To-day we had white haricot beans instead of black, made into a sort of thick broth, stewed chicken and potatoes (the former tough, as usual), raw herring, salt fish and potatoes floating in oil, our fresh *dorado*, sardines, huge oranges, and ginger nuts.

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"Teneriffe and its Six Satellites."

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# CHAPTER XVII.

## *PALMA—ARGUAL—CALDERA.*

How wound we through the solid wood,
With all its broad boughs hung in green,
With lichen-mosses trailed between!
JOAQUIN MILLER.

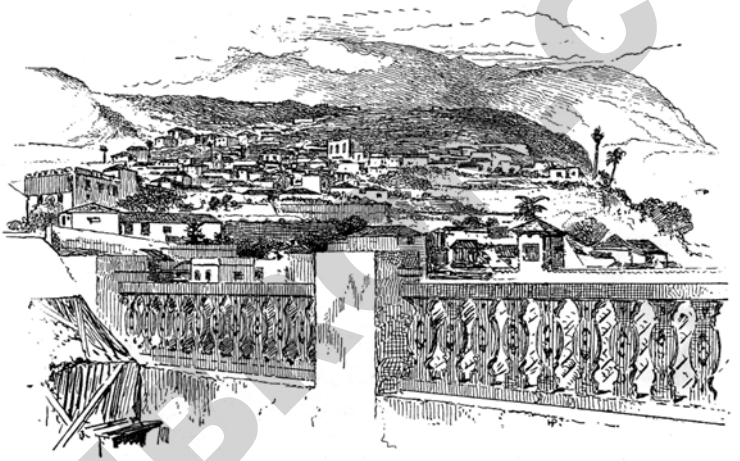
Better ride on an ass that carries me than a horse that throws me.—*Spanish Proverb.*

*October 12th, Friday.*—We were wakened during the night by the delightful feeling of bustle on board, and then at last we heard the swish of the water as the good ship cut through the waves. Rising, we went on deck before six o'clock, when we found ourselves close to Palma, and at 6 a.m. cast anchor, in fifteen to twenty fathoms of water, in the roadstead before Santa Cruz, the capital, four days and a quarter since we left Orotava. A steamer can do the journey in some four or five hours, the distance between the two nearest points of Tenerife and Palma being about fifty miles!

Santa Cruz de la Palma, or, as it is invariably called throughout the island, La Ciudad (The City), lies upon a sloping hillside, the white houses, with flat roofs, rising above each other as they cluster at the foot of the mountains. The situation has been compared to Funchal, in Madeira, but there the mountains rise more abruptly from the town than they do in Palma. From the sea the town appears as if lying at the foot of the mountains—which are really in mid-island—and between two

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precipitous cliffs. The ground slopes upwards from the sea, and the houses climb the slope in scattered groups. Southwards white houses are dotted pretty thickly over the landscape, on the declivity between the mountains and the sea, while many small eruption molehills give a unique character to the scenery as they rise amid cultivation of all kinds. Towards the north the main chain of mountains rises more precipitously. Everywhere there are trees and greenery. It is yet early in the day, so the mists have not rolled from the mountains. But



SANTA CRUZ, PALMA.

while I write the sun touches the lower edge of the mist-cloud lying half up the hillside, and forming a rainbow, mixes with the strip of sunshine, falls athwart the green woods, and, with the white houses dotted over the red earth, produces a brilliant and beautiful mass of colouring. As the sun shines downwards he gets behind the mists, and gleaming through in a horizontal line half up the mountain, produces a curious effect. The lower half of the island is clear, but in shadow, the upper rolled in mist, a strip of light lying between. Gradually the background clears, and the barrancos open up. The town on the

south side is bounded and sheltered by a small caldera, a miniature *golfo*. The northern side is a tolerably gentle slope, but immediately behind the town, in the centre, the land is very steep and cut up by barrancos. The bare cliffs close by the sea are covered with euphorbia, whilst in mid-town rises a perpendicular bluff. The mountains are green, and wooded to their summits. Palma may be called the Highlands of the archipelago, for, although Tenerife is higher, Palma ranks next, and has a greater extent of high mountain than any other island.

We tried to get a couple of photographs of the town from the *Matanzas*, but we lay a little too far off. Friends of the officers boarded us, and were astonished to hear how long we had been becalmed. There was a slight swell, so the landsfolk did not stay long; the few moments they were on board being sufficient to place some of them *hors de combat*. We hastened ashore therefore with them, and, as no one seemed able to recommend a fonda, we determined first to deliver our letter of recommendation to Señor Don Manuel Yanes, a gentleman who has been in England. We found Don Manuel at his office, and hearing from him that the steamer from England which calls first at Palma and then goes to Tenerife is expected early next week, we decided to start for the interior of the island after breakfast. Don Manuel kindly took us to a fonda near the sea. Here we got a room and had a wash, very necessary! Breakfast followed. The food was not particularly good, the meat was tough, and the cooking indifferent. There was a nice view from the comedor, and in other hands this might be made a very comfortable little hotel. The rooms are a fair size and airy, and the position of the house is good.

As it is said to be only four hours' journey across the cumbre to Argual, we did not start immediately, but went to see the church of San Salvador. The altar has a curious mechanical arrangement, by which the crown-board and curtain are raised from behind, whereupon two cherubs come out. The floor is of black and white tiles laid in squares. There is a unique

picture of St. Peter, depicted with a cock. The font, which is of white marble, is massive, and stands on a square pedestal. This and an embroidered cope of English work, which we were shown, are positively affirmed to have been brought from St. Paul's Cathedral in London by traders in the sixteenth century, during the reign of Henry VIII.; the time of the Reformation being that assigned to their advent in Palma. Those who showed us the church did not, however, tell us that the font we saw was of so early a date.

It will be remembered that it was Alonzo de Lugo who conquered Palma in 1492, taking six months before he could subdue the heroic islanders, after which he invaded Tenerife. Several raids had been made on the island previously by both Portuguese and Spanish, but without much effect, the natives bravely and effectually defending themselves. Captives were taken, however, occasionally. Azurara, who wrote an account of Prince Henry the Navigator's conquest of Guinea and an expedition to the Canaries in 1448, gives the male population of Palma at that time as five hundred. De Lugo landed at Tazacorte in September, 1491, where, fortifying his camp and building a chapel to St. Michael, he, by means of presents and promises, reduced the south-west portion of the island. The people of the northern part were made of different stuff, it would seem, for they resisted. But, by kind and judicious treatment of his prisoners, De Lugo conquered them also. At La Caldera, however, they came to an engagement. Here the people, under their chieftain, Tanause, made an obstinate resistance. De Lugo and his troops ascended by the bed of the river now called the Barranco de Angustia. He was defeated, but finally Tanause, knowing he was in a *cul-de-sac*, agreed to submit on honourable conditions. Through a mistake, however, in the hour that the surrender was to take place, a misunderstanding of which the Spaniards were only too glad to make use, a combat ensued, and Tanause was taken prisoner on May the 3rd, 1492. The chieftain Tanause, who accused De Lugo of breaking faith, was sent along with some others to Spain as trophies of the con-

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quest; but too noble-hearted to bear captivity, starved himself to death on the voyage. The Palmeros struck one more blow for liberty when De Lugo had gone to Tenerife, but upon his sending one Talavera and a few soldiers to them, some of the natives joined the Spaniards, and helped to subdue the others. Bloodshed ensued, and, the chiefs and ringleaders being put to death, the island was finally and for ever vanquished.

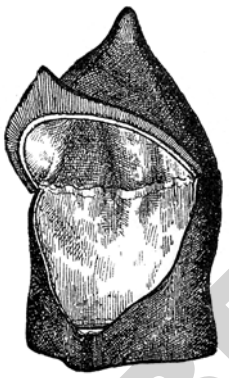
Leaving San Salvador, we went to see the oldest silk loom left in the island. Palma used to be famous for silk-weaving, but there are few looms now, the influx of machine-made silk from Europe superseding the native hand-looms. A silk scarf or sash, twelve and a half inches wide, was being made when we saw this loom. The sashes are made four yards long, the price being from two to four dollars each. The one upon the loom was of a magenta shade, a colour in our eyes not at all attractive. True crimsons and scarlets were unprocurable.

In the principal street we came upon a heap of sweet almonds, about two feet high, put at one side of the road. They were taken out of the shells and ready for export. There is a fair trade done in them. Being nearly ready to start, we bought some bread to stave off starvation, not knowing when we should get anything to eat. I also purchased some Berlin wool, which was very dear, and we had the crupper mended that was broken in Hierro. Details such as these, apparently trivial, are really important considerations in these islands before leaving a town for the country.

Our mules being ready, we started at 1.50 p.m. for Argual. Turning up a side street, we soon got into the only carretera in the island, which leads out of the town to above the little caldera, in corkscrew fashion, for a distance of seven kilometres, We obtained a fine view of the curving bay, with its black strand and gleaming white breakers, and several schooners in the offing, about 225 feet beneath. Far in the distance, high up in the sky, we could just discern the top of the Peak, the remainder of Tenerife being completely hidden. At the three-kilometre stone we were 450 feet above the sea. The road has

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been well engineered and metalled, the ascent being gradual and in tolerably wide sweeps. The day is cool, and the sky cloudy, like a summer day in England. Our arrieros—we have only two—have poles, the inevitable *lancia* carried by all the islanders. The horn tip at the business end of the vaulting pole as used by the Guanches has given place to the iron tip of to-day. The only difference in their dress from those elsewhere in the island is in the cap, which is curious and peculiar to Palma, although something similar is worn in Lanzarote. It is close-fitting, made of navy blue and red cloth, bound with yellow. It is all peaks, or rather points, and is never worn on the head in what one would suppose to be the correct way, but stuck jauntily on one side. Mantos are worn here much the same as in Tenerife. There is more costume left in certain districts of Palma than in any of the islands. This may be from the island's outlying position, or because, owing to De Lugo's clemency, there is more pure Guanche blood, and consequently customs, left intact than where the natives were more effectually reduced in numbers by warfare.



PEASANT'S CAP, PALMA.

Tufts of really green grass delight and rest the eye. After Gomera, Palma is the most beautiful island. Indeed, one is sometimes doubtful as to which is the more lovely, but one generally ends in deciding that Gomera is the "gem of the ocean." Its beauty is more minute than that of Palma. It, however, cannot boast the magnificent scenery which Palma possesses in and around the Caldera.

At the fifth kilometre we are 725 feet upwards, and it is 2.30 p.m. The land slopes in tolerably gentle fashion from the sea, is all cultivated, and in many places requires but little terracing. Looking eastward, we see the Peak of Tenerife, still appearing like a phantom, mid-sky island.

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At La Cruz del Arboles, where there are a few houses, we left the carretera for the older and shorter road. Near a venta we once more crossed the new highway, and passed up a lane, of the Devonshire species, between high walls, lined with mulberry and chestnut trees. Later another high wall and on the other side blackberry bushes on a bank remind one of many a spot in England. Some cacti, however, dispel the illusion.

Two boys driving oxen met us, wearing hats and short leathern aprons (*samarrones*), rounded at the corners. These, which most of the inhabitants of Palma wear, and which are a distinctive feature of their dress, are of sheepskin. The skin of the hindlegs is cut off and fastened on to the skin of the forelegs of the animal, so as to be long enough to go round the necks of the men. At first one has the impression that everybody is a blacksmith, until one finds that leather aprons are the invariable fashion.

We next came to a "Surrey lane," beside which there was a house approached by an avenue of vines. Heaths and breso, which is a kind of heath, began to put in an appearance at 1,350 feet. The houses and land are good, and wear a well-to-do aspect. A few feet higher, at three o'clock, we stopped on a little bit of common to take some views of the district. In front lies the ever-present Tenerife; below to the right is the hamlet of Breña Alta, on the other side of a little wooded gorge. The land immediately beneath slopes gently, forming almost a sort of plateau, until it ends in a rising mound, the crater above La Ciudad. Our arriero, seeing we are halting for a few minutes, takes a tobacco leaf out of his pocket, and prepares to smoke. It is odd to see a whole leaf used. It was home-grown, and apparently had not been fermented. Northwards the village of Puntellano nestles on the hillside. We only lost fifteen minutes by our halt. Passing down one side of a glen and up the other, filled with feathery breso and Spanish chestnuts, we stop at a little venta. Several women are about, all wearing absurdly small, round straw hats on top of their heads over the handkerchiefs, a later and most unbecoming fashion, which

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prevails near the capital. One woman is just leaving the venta with a tin of hot milk, of which I have a glass, while John and the man have some native wine. A couple of girls, one with blue eyes, the other with hazel, but both with light hair, look upon us shyly, yet fixedly, and quite unconscious of the fair picture they make. Turning our mules upwards, we pass through woods of tall chestnuts, laurels, and breso, the road winding steeply through the forest. Finding that we were going too fast for the baggage mule, we stopped at 2,350 feet, and waited for it. We would linger long under the shade of the chestnuts, looking on the green-clad hills, but time passing, and our sumpter mule having arrived, we press upwards once more. It was our last view for some time, for we almost immediately entered the clouds and lost sight of everything. The woods in their luxuriant foliage and undergrowth, the damp from the clouds hanging upon the leaves and dripping downwards, making all a brilliant green, remind one of Ireland. At last we reach the summit of El Paso, 4,300 feet high by our aneroid,* at 4.50 p.m. The view ought to be grand, but clouds obscure everything. Just as we were looking round in despair for a break in the mist, it cleared off, and we could see lying below, on the west, a plain of well-cultivated land. The descent seemed abrupt, and from the bottom to the sea almost at one level. No valleys or mountains bounded the view, which could not compare for beauty with that from the pass in Gomera, where we looked down upon Hermigua. But trees or greenery of any sort are always beautiful, and there is more cultivation here, the configuration of the ground and soil being suitable to agriculture. We did not delay upon the summit, for it was now late, but passed down through a pine forest and along a straight plantation of pine trees, at the end of which we came to a little chapel on a plateau. El Pinto de la Virgen is a square-built edifice of plain stone, and doorless. Instead of finding ourselves near the sea-level, as we expected, we found we were yet 2,500 feet above it. The slope was so gentle,

* Vidal gives this in the chart as 4,640 feet.

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however, that we started off at a rapid trot down the bed of the barranco, which, composed of small stones, made a good road. The sun now was rapidly descending, and as when he sets night falls without intervening twilight, it behoved us to hasten, for we were still some distance from Argual. We passed some houses scattered alongside the barranco, which our guide told us are called Las Cuevas (The Caves).

We started riding this morning, much to my disgust, with a Spanish bridle, or *cabestro*, which is really only a headstall, on the mule. A half-circular piece of iron fits over the nose, while beneath are two straight pieces of iron, one of which slips through a ring in the end of the other, and is joined to a single rein. This rein is sometimes formed of leather, but on my mule it is an iron chain, which reaches nearly to the saddle, where a piece of rope joins it for holding in the hand. Owing to the amount of iron chain, the rein is so heavy to hold that I am obliged to twist the rope round my hand several times to prevent it slipping entirely out of my grasp. This form of bit is a very powerful curb, for when pulled it compresses the iron over the nostrils and behind the mouth, stopping the animal's breath. It is unnecessary, except for untrained horses, and cruel, for the iron chafes the skin and generally keeps a perpetual sore upon the nose. It is hardly suitable for quick riding, for when a horse stumbles it is no help to pull him up, but rather otherwise. I suffered by it, for, as we were riding at a very rapid trot, my mule stumbled, and I instinctively pulled up the rein, but the animal fell and threw me off. Luckily it lay quiet, and I soon disengaged myself. John was in front, and the arriero behind; and both rushed through the fast-deepening darkness, expecting to find that all sorts of casualties had happened. They were agreeably disappointed, however, for I was not even shaken, and felt as well as if I had not fallen at all. Mounting, we rode on, a little more cautiously perhaps. We passed several villages, two called "Arriba" and "Abajo," with reference to the pass, also another, Matamar, but what they were like we could not see, as it was now dark, save for faint

moonlight. What appeared to be a long wall and bridge in the gloom turned out on closer inspection to be an aqueduct. The watercourse was just the width of the wall and covered in. It conveys water to Los Llanos. We presently arrived at this little town, a clean place, with fairly good houses and a couple of plazas, that near the church having seats in it. Our destination was still further, as we had a letter of introduction to Señor Don Miguel de Sotomayor y Fernandez, who, along with his brother Don Manuel, lives at Argual. The road to their houses led alongside of an aqueduct, much larger than that of Los Llanos, from which the water dripped upon the roadside, giving rise to a bank of ferns and wild flowers of luxuriant growth. This aqueduct was made by the Sotomayors at their own expense, for the use of the people on their estate and for the purposes of irrigation.

It was quite dark as we rode through a gate and large square yard to Don Miguel's house. We were shown into his office, whilst our letter was sent to him. Presently he entered; and after a few minutes' conversation, he took us to the house of his brother and sister at another side of the courtyard. They most hospitably welcomed us, and after a short interval we had dinner. It is very good of the inhabitants thus entertaining perfect strangers, and there are but few nations which so readily do so. We met with an immense amount of real hospitality of this kind. Often we arrived late in the evening at a stranger's house, sometimes with a letter of introduction and occasionally with none, and were taken in, hospitably treated, and sent on our way rejoicing. If I mention the style of our reception, our rooms, and the food we got, I trust it will not be considered a breach of hospitality, as it is only done to show the different manners of living and various customs and habits peculiar to another nationality.

The Sotomayors are one of the oldest Spanish families, they are some of the real aristocracy of the archipelago, and were among the first settlers here, coming before the conquest with Juan Rejon from Spain, one Don Alonzo Jaimes

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(? Yanes) de Sotomayor being standard-bearer to Pedro de Vera, the conqueror of Gran Canaria, and brother-in-law to Juan Rejon. Two brothers now own and manage the estate, which is large. A considerable number of people are employed by them, for they grow sugar-cane, tea, coffee, vines, and tobacco, besides the ordinary necessaries of life. Don Miguel brought under our notice a fruit which he said was new in the islands, called *saldia.* It is like a melon, but pink inside, and has black seeds. Much as I enjoyed conversing with our hosts, I was glad when they suggested our going to bed, for I was very tired. We were shown into a room on the ground floor, in which there were four beds in a row. Everything was supplied to us, even to scents, pomades, and tooth-brushes! Similar ample provision for the traveller we found in many houses, especially among the upper classes, so it is evidently customary.

Spaniards generally journey with little or no luggage, thus avoiding a pack-horse. Of course it is more expensive travelling with luggage, but I fear we English could not do otherwise. We thought, indeed, that we had only the bare necessaries of life with us, and that we were very economical to require only one baggage mule. I am afraid our Spanish friends thought otherwise.

I was suffering terribly from sun-spots, which chiefly came upon my hands, and at night irritated me so much, that I could hardly sleep. Don Manuel noticed them, and offered me a cooling drink and something to rub upon them. I was only too glad to avail myself of his kind doctoring. His wife laughed, and said he was an amateur doctor to the whole neighbourhood, very necessary, I should think, as the nearest medical man lives at La Ciudad. Don Manuel's treatment I found most efficacious.

*October 13th, Saturday.*—This house stands 850 feet above the sea. The temperature in our room at 6.30 this morning was 70° F. (21·1° C.). One of our windows looks out upon

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an immense square, formed by this house, a couple more dwelling-houses, and some offices. It is a little like a Cambridge quadrangle. In the centre is a pond, surrounded by rough stones, rockery fashion, round which grow three groups of the graceful papyrus. Pigeons, white and black, flutter and pick up grain on the ground. Our other window looks over a beautiful garden; a well-cemented tank in the centre giving means of irrigation, while washing sinks are at one side. What a beautiful place in which to do prosaic laundry-work under the shade of the oranges and myrtles!



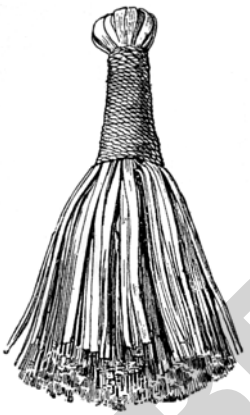
ARGUAL, PALMA.

Leaving our bedroom, we wandered out and upstairs, and finding a maid-servant, asked the way to the azotea. Here we had a splendid view of the mountains. Those on the western side of the Caldera take a sweep round to our left; they are precipices, and their outlines are very jagged. Near the sea we can see, climbing the steep cliff in zigzag fashion, a road which leads up and over the lowest part of the wall round the Caldera, and which we hope to traverse to-morrow. In front of us, and partly hiding the Caldera—as it forms one end of the curving wall which surrounds the crater—is the Pico de Alejanado. The crowning summit of the jagged outline round the Caldera is the Pico del Muchachos. To the right of Alejanado

is the undulating plain or slope through which we passed yesterday after crossing the main chain of mountains running down the centre of Palma. The land around is well cultivated, and particularly so in the immediate neighbourhood of this house. There are large plantations of sugar-cane, green and fresh-looking, while quantities of tobacco plants droop their long green leaves gracefully on their stiff stems. Bananas and calabashes are drying on the azotea, while a monkey chained there looks at us with those half-human eyes that attract while they also repel. Our hosts seem fond of animals. Besides the pigeons and monkey, there are three dogs, some cats, four guinea-pigs, and seven birds in cages round the verandah. We had tea and sponge-cakes this morning early, and now we are to have breakfast "when the mules arrive"! We were rather amused at breakfast not being served until the arrival of the animals, so that we might start immediately after well prepared and strengthened for our day's ride, the hour at which the arrieros might arrive being deliciously uncertain. We stay another night with our kind hosts, as we wish to ride up the bottom of the Caldera, an expedition requiring many hours. Breakfast partaken of, we start at 9.40. Before doing so, however, we had been talking to Don Miguel about the peculiar dress of the natives. He brought us a hat or cap worn in one of the neighbouring districts. It is made of dark brown, almost black, homespun material, with a peak in front and a flap hanging down behind, in fact very like a "sou'-wester." This he kindly gave to us, and said he would procure one of the leather aprons. Just as he said so, a man passed across the courtyard wearing a *samarron*. Calling him over, he requested him to give his apron to us, which the man did, there and then taking it off. He had written his name on the back in ink before the skin was sent in its rough condition to be prepared for use, so as to ensure getting the identical skin again. Our hosts gave us some native palm brushes, made of split palm leaves. The smaller ones, of about eight inches in height, are used as hand-brushes

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for clothes or furniture. The larger have handles stuck into them, and are used for household purposes. Our friends came to the door to see us start, and Doña Antonia plucked a palm branch and held it over her head as a sunshade, and a very picturesque one it made. We rode through some lanes and below the village of Argual, until in a few minutes we reached the eastern side of the Barranco de Angustia, along the bottom of which the Spaniards went when conquering the island. We, however, rode along the top of the east side, not more than about 150 feet above the river-bed. The opposite cliff for some distance from the sea is divided into two parts, the lower half of which is precipitous, containing caves. There are also most curious slits, as if the precipitous cliff had been cut down from top to bottom by gigantic and powerful cheese-scoops. These semicircular slits begin and end abruptly. The upper half of the mountain slopes a little at first, and here a few scattered houses are built, and the land terraced; but the slope soon becomes abrupt and then precipitous. As we walk along the edge of the barranco half-way up its side on a narrow path, we can look backwards down by the narrow, cliff-bound river to the sea, where, near the shore, a schooner is riding at anchor. The best port in Palma is at Santa Cruz, and, indeed, Glas says it is the best in the archipelago, as a sailing vessel can get in and out of it all the year round, and the anchorage is safe. But at the mouth of this barranco is another, not much frequented, on account of westerly winds. It was here de Lugo landed, and the little town of Tazacorte is now on the site of the fortified camp of that famous leader.



PALM-LEAF BRUSH.

As we wind along the narrow path the slope beneath us becomes precipitous, nearly as steep as at the opposite side. We can look down into the contracted gorge, where a stream,

like a silver thread, winds beneath. The distance makes the water appear small in quantity, but there is in reality plenty of it, enough to form the water supply of Argual, whither it is conducted by cut channels and aqueducts. The river-bed is of grey lava, which Fritsch calls Caldera conglomerate-stone. It is now over 1,000 feet beneath us, and there is as much more precipice above on the side we are traversing. The cliffs opposite present precipices of some 3,000 feet in height. Occasionally the perpendicular character of the scene is varied by a sloping piece of ground on the side of the cliff, where, the soil being favourable, the land is terraced, and where cling a few cottages, with white walls and red-tiled roofs. Or at the bottom of the barranco, a few feet above its bed, one sees a little spot—at this elevation looking like a plateau, but not really flat, for it is terraced—covered with canes and tobacco, green and refreshing to the eye against the brown mountain sides. Wherever on the cliffs earth has accumulated, there a pine tree has taken root, and greenery surrounds its base—curiously bright, tender spots on the brown barrenness of basaltic-like scenery. In front of where we are standing there is a little plateau at an angle of the road. We can see both sides of the barranco towards the upper end. Numerous ridges or spurs from the main chain or circle of cliffs forming La Caldera run down towards the centre like converging rays. The walls of this gigantic crater are between 3,000 and 4,000 feet of sheer precipice before the spurs begin. These spurs or ridges are intersected by gorges, which lead into the main gorge or barranco, running into that of Angustia, by which we have entered. According to Lyell, the Caldera is three or four geographical miles in diameter, and the barranco four and a half geographical miles long. The water falls 1,500 feet from source to mouth.

Sunshine touches some of the ridges, while shadows fall on others. The jagged edges at the top of the Caldera wall are likewise partly in shadow and sunshine, while soft white clouds chase each other over the heights. Our resting-place is a jutting piece of rock, a spur ending so abruptly, that the path



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downwards must be cut out of solid rock. It is called El Paso de las Viñas, and our aneroid gives it as 1,400 feet * above the sea. We go down a winding cutting in solid rock, like a circular staircase, where there is so little space between the rocky walls, we deem it advisable to dismount and walk. It is short, however, and soon opens on a path, which also descends. We pass a water trough about a yard square, just large enough for a good bath, and full of clear, limpid, and deliciously abundant water. Big rocks, masses of conglomerate, hang over it. I stop to write, and as I am on foot, I have to run after the mules, which have gone on. Caves in the rocks as I pass look inviting shelters from the sun, and of which some goats wisely take advantage. We descend by a ridge or spur, whose rocky substance is twisted like a gigantic wasps' nest, and reach the bottom at 11 a.m. A man below on a mule waited until we were down before he commenced to ascend, the road being too narrow for us to pass each other. The pack-saddles used here have no peaks, as in Tenerife. The owner of the mule wears one of the peaked brown hats, a white shirt, and red scarf round his waist; he carries a whip in his hand, which is a sort of lancia, or pole, a piece of iron being let in at one end with which to goad the animals, as well as for climbing. Under our saddles there are pads of the same shape, bound with red, which, with red-bound breechbands, look very striking against the dark brown coats of the mules.

Crossing the bottom of the barranco, we ascend a rocky spur on the other and western side, whence we can see the cemented watercourse running along the side we have just left in a straight line to Argual. Glas states that the inhabitants would not use this water, as it was considered "unwholesome, by reason of its being tainted with other water, of a pernicious quality, which mixes with it in the cauldron." This prejudice must have been removed later, for the water is freely used now.

* Fritsch gives the height of this as two hundred and forty metres, so either he must have mistaken the place, or the figures apply to another spot, perhaps the bottom of the pass.

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We continue to ascend until we come to a house belonging to a sort of steward, or *medianero*, of the Sotomayors, called Camacho. The Caldera belongs to Don Miguel or Don Manuel or both; I am not clear on the point. Our arriero ran up to the house with a message from Don Miguel, whereupon Camacho himself, an elderly man, came with us to show us the way still further into the Caldera. The path led upwards through quantities of *tagasaste*, a bush a little like lavender on a large scale. Don Miguel gave us some of its seed, and we have since reared the plant in England and Ireland. It is said to be particularly good food for horses and cattle. We ascended until we reached from 2,800 feet to 3,500 feet, where the path wound along with sheer precipices above. After reaching this height we stopped at a place called the Punta (Point) to look down into the Caldera beneath and up to the rocky wall which surrounds it. The view at first sight was disappointing. Clouds obscured the sun, and stretching all round, formed a thick, heavy pall. They lay below the mountain-tops, thus considerably diminishing their height. One is inclined to imagine that the bottom of the Caldera is flat, but this is far from being the case. The spurs, rising 3,000 or 4,000 feet in height and terminating in saddle-backs, run downwards into the centre, and there form broken masses and massive pinnacles, partially clad with pines. The ridges themselves are tolerably thickly covered with pines, though some are used for pasturage for cattle. The soil over which the green pines are dotted is of a yellowish-red colour. On the ridge a little beneath us stand a couple of cottages. A dog barks at our intrusion, starting a wonderful echo after two seconds, which he promptly answers again and again. Above us the cliffs rise perpendicularly until lost in the mist. Looking down the gorge seawards, we see an expanse of cultivated, sloping land, in the midst of which lie Los Llanos and Argual; beyond, the sea, looking calm and blue in the distance; and in the far, far-off horizon the faint outline of Hierro is just discernible. The sun is shining there, though not upon us. It is, in fact, chilly, and we are not surprised to

find the temperature is 58° F. (14·5° C.), though it is only 1.15 p.m.

The men seat themselves, and eat their breakfasts, I suppose they would call it, of cold roast pork and bread. Our guide asked John when he looked through the camera was he measuring the number of feet from the sea! It was an instrument he had never before seen. We would gladly have encamped and wandered amidst the beautiful gorges in mid-Caldera had we only the time, but from this point it is impossible to ride, one must walk, and a couple of days at least would be required to explore its recesses.

We started on our return at 2.10 p.m. Bad as the ascent had been, it was nothing to the descent. The path was simply of the breakneck description, with every vice a road could have. We once more passed Camacho's house, and said good-bye to his pleasant, bright, fresh old face. His vine-clad cottage was surrounded by various kinds of fruit-trees, and potatoes were cultivated around. We reached the bottom at 3.45 p.m., and had we not had guides, should never have guessed where the entrance to the Paso de las Viñas lay hidden. We arrived at the top of the pass at 4.10, and at Argual at 4.40 p.m.

Don Miguel, before daylight waned, took us to see the process of making tobacco and cigars which goes on upon his estate. The leaves, after being plucked green, are hung up to dry, by means of a cord run through the base of the stems, in a dark room, well ventilated, for from twenty-five to forty days. They are then taken to the sorting-house, where girls spread them out and tie them in packets, according to the quality and colour, which vary considerably. The packets thus sorted and tied up are placed in a square cane stand in another room. In this they are packed tightly and covered by a matting, upon which large stones are placed. The leaves are then left there to ferment from twenty-five to forty days, when they become more or less of one colour, after which they are made into cigars. It is in this last particular that the Canary Island cigars fail. They have not yet got the practised hands to roll

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and trim, and the cigar, though good in flavour and by many considered equal to Habanas,* is not sent into the market in the same condition outwardly. It is also too dark in colour, which is probably caused by overfermentation. A thermometer is kept in the centre of each stand of leaves, so that the temperature may be carefully regulated, but I fancy the methods at present used for effecting that object are not satisfactory. The cigars are said to be very excellent in flavour, though strong. The Spanish Government bought a monopoly of the produce of many of the manufactories† in the islands for a certain number of years, and are selling these cigars in Spain *sans peur et sans reproche* as Habanas!

Leaving the tobacco, we walked round the plantation. The coffee plant is a shrub somewhat like a laurel. It is here placed between bananas to protect it from the wind. The berry is first green, then red, and when ripe a light brown, about the size and shape of a blackberry. When the outer skin is peeled off, there is a hard nut inside; this when dried divides, and the unroasted coffee is ready. Two crops are gathered during the year, the better being that of March.

A curious but doubtless efficacious swimming belt was shown to us, made of two pieces of palm-wood, each about a foot long, joined together by pieces of cotton.

* *B* and *v* are frequently and incorrectly transposed in Spanish; in this way Ha*b*ana often becomes Ha*v*ana.

† Since leaving Palma I have been informed that the cultivation of tobacco and its manufacture into cigars has greatly increased and promises to enrich the island.

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# CHAPTER XVIII.

## *PICO DEL MUCHACHOS—SAN BORONDON—LAS SAUCES.*

A mighty waste of mist the valley fills,
A solemn sea! whose billows wide around
Stand motionless, to awful silence bound,
Pines on the coast through mist their tops uprear,
That like to leaning masts of stranded ships appear

W. WORDSWORTH.

*October 14th, Sunday.*—We said good-bye to our kind hosts last night, as we are obliged to start early this morning. It is unfortunate that we cannot rest here to-day, but our only chance of avoiding days of hardship on board one of the island schooners lies in our being able to reach La Ciudad by Monday, upon which day the steamer is expected from England. The unfortunate becalming and loss of four days in coming here has thrown us out in our plans. The journey from Tenerife to Palma is generally rapidly accomplished, as the wind is usually favourable. It is the return that is frequently so slow, owing to the north-east trades blowing the greater part of the year.

Since three o'clock the men have been outside the door and our window with the mules, the latter breaking our rest with the stamping of their hoofs. We started at last, bread in hand, at 6.10 a.m. We could have left while still dark but that we wanted to take a photograph of the place, and had of course to wait for indispensable dawn. The light is very actinic in these islands, and exposures should be made as rapidly as possible. We took with us from England a dark-tent, in which we deve-

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loped trial plates to serve as guides for exposure; otherwise we should have been hopelessly out. A winding path leads down into the Barranco de Angustia, near Argual. Two hundred feet from the bottom we find the temperature is 68° F. (20° C.). Mules appear from various directions, and we get into a train of animals all following each other one by one—seven mules and one horse. We feel like Eastern pilgrims meeting and amalgamating our caravans. At the bottom we stopped to put the camera on our pack-horse's back, not having delayed at Argual for the purpose. The ascent of the Vuelta de Magar, as the pass over the mountains to Tigarafe is called, is very steep. The road is a mass of large stones or rocks, up which our mules must climb, for they cannot be said to walk. There are many men with their mules, so we have a good opportunity of studying the island type of build and physiognomy. The men wear whiskers, and have well-knit figures. They are not so tall as the Herreños nor so polite as the inhabitants of Tenerife, but they seem light-hearted and witty, and if descended from the Benahoares, should be brave.

Between the visit of Bethencourt to Palma and its conquest in 1492 a serious attempt to subdue the island was made by the Spaniards, under Guillen Peraza, who, with two hundred archers and three hundred men from the already-conquered and settled islands of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura, landed and marched into the interior. The rocky nature of the country and the valour of the natives, who leaped from rock to rock with ease, obliged the invaders to retreat. Guillen Peraza, in an attempt to rally them, was killed by a stone, in the throwing of which missile the natives were great adepts. The troops fled, carrying off, however, Peraza's body, to Lanzarote, where it was buried. A dirge was composed to his memory, which is said to be sung at the present day by the Palmeros.

Many of the customs of the ancient inhabitants differed considerably from those of the other islands, but the food was similar. He was considered cleverest who could steal without being discovered. Their manner of worshipping was to sing

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and dance round great pillars of loose stones, erected in each district, performing feats of agility before them. In one place there was said to be a natural pillar of stones, called Idafe, "upwards of a hundred fathoms high," to which they sacrificed sheep and goats to prevent its fall, which they feared. They held the sun and moon in great veneration, but here, as in most of the islands, they adored one God, greater than all, whom they called Abora. If a man felt that he was dying, he asked his friends and relations to bear him to a cave, where they laid him on a bed of goat-skins, placing some milk beside him, closed the mouth of the cave, and left him to die alone. They also buried their dead in caves. There is no doubt that they were acquainted with the art of writing, for a stone on which are hieroglyphics has been found in a cave in the Barranco Velmaco. It is broken in three pieces and partly worm-eaten. The deciphering of it has not as yet been accomplished by *savants*.

Soon we reach, at 7.10 a.m., a sort of plateau, which from the other side looked like a line drawn along the face of the cliff. It is 750 feet above the river bed and a couple of hundred yards wide. From this elevation we can see into the Caldera, which looks broader from this point of view than from where we saw it yesterday. There are ten animals now, two men on horses having joined our cavalcade. One of the horses trips and falls on the uneven pathway. It is well it is at a broad part of the road, and not where unguarded precipices are near. The men when thirsty drink out of tiny barrels, which they put to their mouths. The contents are sometimes water and sometimes wine. We met a number of country people apparently going to church, for they were dressed in Sunday best. It was fortunate for us that it was a *fiesta* day, as we had thus the opportunity of seeing the costumes. One man wore the brown cap like a sou'-wester, and a loose coat of the same material to below the knees, where it was met by gaiters and shoes of undressed leather. Another wore an unbleached linen shirt, with turned-down collar and turned-back sleeves, the edges ornamented with stitching in coarse white linen thread, some-

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what like satin stitch. It was a very pretty and clean-looking costume.

At 7.30 a.m. we arrived at the top of the pass, and found we were 1,750 feet above the sea. One of our party blew a shell like a horn. Whether this was usual or a special intimation of his arrival to his friends we could not ascertain. The view as seen from the summit is that of a sloping table-land leading down to the sea from the chain of mountains running through the middle of the island. The unevenness of the surface is lost in the height, and the craters that rise here and there look like low mounds. Below lies the point of Juan Graje, which is the bluff at the extreme end of the ridge we have just crossed. This perpendicular cliff, of nearly 800 feet, must present a fine appearance from the sea. Further north, however, in the Punta Gorda district, there are precipices dropping into the sea 1,100 feet in height. The peasants in Palma chiefly smoke pipes, not cigarettes, and even a few of the women, like some of the Irish Celts, are addicted to the use of the weed. We have just met one enjoying her pipe. The ground here is sloping, and we have a magnificent country spread out to view, a land of oranges and bananas, of figs and pomegranates, as well as of peaches, pears, and apples. The western slopes of these islands, where the land is fertile, are the most luxuriant, owing to their being sheltered from the hot wind, Levanter as it is called, that crosses the Sahara, and which kills and blights vegetation, and occasionally brings locusts. This wind comes but rarely, sometimes a whole year passing without its advent, and when it does come, it blows but for a day or two, the outside limit being generally three days. It affects sick people, retards progress, and, in fact, acts on man, beast, and vegetable much in the same way as our east wind, save that the Levanter is stifling, not cold. Owing to the short time during which it blows, one does not lay much stress upon its existence, for, although the worst feature of the Canarian climate, it is a very minor and insignificant evil compared with those from which other countries suffer.

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We passed above Tigarafe along a rocky road, which led over a ridge, from whence could be seen the Barranco de Angustia and the Valley of Los Llanos. Here we parted with our fellow-travellers, who were bound for the fertile slopes and villages of Tigarafe, while we were to cross the cumbre. After some searching and knocking at the doors of a couple of little huts, we saw a man working in his field. Our arriero hailed him, and asked if he would guide us over the cumbre by the Pico del Muchachos to Las Sauces. He said he would, and asked three pesos (nine shillings) for the journey. When the bargain was concluded, he dropped his spade and ran to his little hut, close by, whence he immediately returned carrying a bag. This he quickly filled with higos-pigos, or *tunos*, as prickly pears are called here, from the cactus around, and throwing it on his back, without further preparation, hastened after us. *Tuna* is a Spanish-American name given to several of these cacti, and no doubt the great intercourse between Palma and the West Indies has caused the adoption of the name. Our guide of course carried a lancia, but not a very long one. His dress consisted of coarse white shirt and trousers, the last loose and reaching to a little below the knee, a blue cap, the worse for wear, on his head, and the samarron, or leathern apron.

We stopped for a few minutes rest and to breathe the horses on a tolerably level eminence, 3,500 feet up. It was 9.15 a.m., and cool, it being 65° F. (18·4° C.) in the sun. A little higher, at 4,000 feet, we came upon codeso bushes. At one place the path led close to the precipice overhanging the barranco, so close indeed, that without dismounting we could look down into the gorge beneath. Los Llanos is still visible, and the lava stream which Nuñez de la Peña says was caused by the eruption of 1677 flows in mid-valley, distinctly marked. The oldest eruption in Palma on record took place on the 15th of April, 1588. Beyond, the outlines of the hills, or rather mountains, although many of them are beneath our present level, are as clearly defined as if drawn by a sharp-pointed

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crayon on white paper. Very grand is the view, so grand, that if it could be transported anywhere within easy distance of England, it would soon become a show view on a very extensive scale. It was even to us magnificent, although it is possible to be so satiated by such an excess of beautiful scenery, that at last it palls on the eye, as sweets do on the palate. It is not possible, I think, to really enjoy any scene until one becomes familiar with it, not the familiarity of those who have been born and brought up within sight of its beauties, which often breeds contempt, but that familiarity which follows an acquaintance when life is matured.

As we ascend clouds begin to blow up from the Caldera, like whiffs of smoke. It is 10 a.m., and we walk along a narrow ridge just above where we were yesterday in the Caldera, the precipice on one side and steep slopes on the other. It is difficult, almost impossible, to discern the horizon at this height, partly because of the blending of sea and sky and partly because of the mist clouds which roll hither and thither.

We think it is quite time for breakfast, as it is nearly eleven o'clock, so stop on a plateau some ten yards square. Our thoughtful friends at Argual have supplied us with bread and meat. A mist makes one melancholy, and it is comparatively chilly [65° F. (18·4° C.)]. So as soon as we and the men had eaten we started again, hoping the clouds would blow away further up. It is curious how sharply defined these mountain mists are. One moment we are in sunshine, and the next buried in white, rolling fog. It has a corresponding effect upon the spirits, which invariably fall to zero as soon as we enter, and as rapidly rise upon passing out of the clouds. Quantities of codeso at 6,600 feet of altitude were to be seen. I picked a leguminous flower (*Adenocarpus vinosus*), too. Pines were numerous, the beautiful *Pinus Canariensis* and *crepa* (*Ruta pinocala*), a low shrub, good for goats, growing amid loose stones. Suddenly we emerged on a level with a bed of clouds, stretching around us as far as the eye could reach,

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soft, snowy, billowy, fleecy down, beautiful beyond comparison. The sun shines above us in a blue heaven; the gloomy, drifting grey mists are left behind; their upper surface is below us, and transformed by the sun into a bright white sea.

"A single step, that freed me from the skirts
Of the blind vapour, opened to my view
Glory beyond all glory ever seen
By waking sense or by the dreaming soul!"



LA CALDERA, PALMA, FROM THE RIM OF THE CRATER.

As we look around and endeavour by means of the earth which we know lies beneath to tell our whereabouts, we fail signally in finding a landmark; we might be looking upon ice-floes in the Arctic regions. Something in the far distance, however, like a tiny dark cloud, makes us look a second time, as it appears more defined in outline than a cloud is usually. The object is a small triangle, the apex at the top—a little pyramid. Suddenly a light breaks in upon our dull brains, and we exclaim, "The Peak!" It is the Peak indeed, that omni-

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present genius of these islands, but so diminished in size from our seeing only the summit, that we scarcely recognise it, and apparently so close, that it seems impossible to be a part of Tenerife. Between us and it lies, not a blue sea, but a white, motionless mass of cloud. Solidity is its leading feature, so much so, that we feel it might be possible to step upon it and cross to Teide. One other landmark is ours. The extreme summits of the wall around the Caldera, the Pico del Muchachos and Pico de la Cruz, are just visible, forming a semicircle, the centre of which, as well as the outside, is filled with a snowy sea. The effect of the jagged outlines against the soft clouds is very striking. Just where the clouds touch the cliffs, a little motion and want of definition is discernible, softening the edges as if stencilled. We tried to get a photograph of this remarkable scene, and were fortunate enough in succeeding.

The depressing effect of the mist upon our spirits being removed, it seems as if we all, horses included, climbed more joyously upward. The rocks here are of different formation, having a slatey cleavage. The path is but a goat-track, and that of a bad kind. The horses climb yard by yard, putting their fore-legs deliberately on a rock, and dragging their hind-legs by one supreme and deliberate effort after them, our hands buried in their manes. Occasionally we come to a bit of smoother walking, and pass over a depression of loose soil, brilliant red and orange in colour, with a touch of grey that is almost mauve to tone it down. Presently we see red pumice rocks similar to those on the Cañadas in Tenerife, and at about the same altitude. A green shrub with a leaf like a myrtle, called *malfora* (*Hypericum floribundum*), grows plentifully around.

At last we reach the summit. It is 1.15 p.m., and our aneroid measures 7,400 feet. The Pico del Muchachos is generally considered the highest point of Palma, though the Admiralty chart gives the Pico de la Cruz as forty feet higher. There is at any rate little to choose between them. Our first impression upon seeing the rocks, or Los Roques as they are

called, which at the extreme edge of the crater form the Pico del Muchachos, was that we were beholding the ruins of some ancient castle. These rocks on the summit, pillars of red pumice, thrown together anyhow, have formed themselves into fantastic turrets, bastions, and castle walls, roofless truly and broken, as if bombarded. The attack, however, has been made, and the castle a ruin, through the elements. First fire and later water and wind have worked their wild will here unrestrained. Bare, rugged, and exposed on every side to the fury of storm and rain, the ruins of Benahoare's castle still stand, and rear themselves proudly as the highest spot in the Canary Highlands. Across the snowy sea to Teide is but a



SUMMIT OF THE PICO DEL MUCHACHOS.

step for the gnomes and sprites in their rambles, but the journey must be performed before sunset and after sunrise, as at the touch of the fairy queen of night the ice-flow vanishes, the magic path is gone.

We dismounted to rest the horses, as well as to photograph the rocks. Our guide, with his apron, stood in the foreground, while the mules, with the various straps for the purpose of keeping the saddles in the middle of the animals' backs, were to one side. The guide watched the rocks anxiously, as if he feared some evil would happen to them from the mysterious apparatus, and all unconscious that he himself was on the ground-glass.

The Peak is still distinctly visible. The mass of cloud lies

between us and it, but has become more broken near Tenerife. The horizon is undiscernible, and the clouds above seem to be reflected upon those below. This effect is doubtless due to the upper ones being whiter and more massive-looking, from the sun having caught them. The phenomenon is very curious, for the reflection takes place apparently in a lake in the sky. To the right of Tenerife, a bank of clouds hides Gomera, except at its southern side, where a portion peers out from a mass of vapour lying above and below it. It is said that the Pico del Muchachos is visible at a hundred and one miles' distance. At our feet, we know, must lie a vast cauldron, but all we can see is a mass of white clouds like a pall a few feet beneath us and the topmost crags of the Caldera, which are only just discernible. The rest of Palma is also cloud-hidden, except westward. Here a break in the cloud-curtain enables us to see the district of Punta Gorda lying beneath and sloping towards the sea. While gazing through the broken rifts of cloud to the westward we behold hosts of islands, great and small, flitting and changing among the clouds, any one of which might be San Borondon, that mystic island that is now and again found, only to be lost once more in the Atlantic. This island is one of imagination, but it is curious that it has existed in men's minds since the earliest days. Ptolemy and Pliny both mention it, and, owing to its magical character, whereby it could not be reached, call it Aprositus. It is only in later times that it has been called San Borondon or Brandon, after the Scotch proto-navigator who is supposed to have landed there in A.D. 565, at the same time that he is also said to have endowed the water-tree of Hierro with its virtues. This latter story is undoubtedly older, and we may reasonably suppose the other is also more ancient. One or two sailors at different times have solemnly sworn to having landed upon or seen the island, but morning or a storm caused them to lose, never to find it again. In 1519, when the Canaries were formally ceded in the treaty of Ivora to Spain by Portugal, San Borondon was actually mentioned as one of the group by the name *Ilha*

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*nao Truvata* (Unfound Island)! The only explanation of the mysterious appearance of the island is of course that of mirage. The landing of individuals on an unknown island may be accounted for readily. When the art of navigation was in its infancy, charts and maps were very imperfect, and the relative distance of one place from another was frequently wrongly placed. Maps of the Canary Islands down to within the last century are markedly incorrect. Glas warns mariners in his day against the errors in the charts. At the present moment there is not an exact map of any of the islands, except the English Admiralty charts, which, though absolutely correct in outline, are useless for interiors. We have been obliged to fill in and alter mountains, paths, and towns for ourselves as we travel through the islands. It is easy therefore to imagine a mariner landing on a part of Madeira, or Porto Santo, or the Salvages, and, ignorant of his whereabouts, at once settling in his mind that he is upon the mysterious and seldom-seen San Borondon. Man is ever fond of the mysterious, and in an age when it was impossible to verify travellers' tales, anything almost could be related with impunity. Added to that, there was always hanging about San Borondon an air of probability, for had not the inhabitants of the Canaries seen it themselves from their own shores? therefore what more probable than that sailors had landed upon it? It was usually seen to the north or north-east of Tenerife and Palma, and always in remarkably clear weather. Those who saw it describe the island as being some fifty miles long, and 6,000 or 8,000 feet in height; high mountains were at either end, while the middle was depressed. Clouds lay above it, as one sees them in most of the Canarian group, and the distance from the spectator was generally reckoned as one hundred and twenty miles. A few deny the mirage explanation, but offer none better. Some yet undiscovered phenomenon may be required before we can fully understand the sudden appearances and disappearances of many lands and islands that have often been described to incredulous ears. That islands rise from the deep, are seen for a

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time, and again submerged, is of course well known and authenticated.

So firmly, however, was the existence of San Borondon believed in, that an expedition actually left Canaria in 1526 in search of it, a search which of course proved fruitless. Not content with this negative evidence, the people of Palma collected all the reports upon the subject, and sent out a vessel with a Franciscan friar on board to exorcise the spirits which controlled this mysterious island when they should find it. But the island, like spirits from the vasty deep, refused to appear when called upon. In 1721 yet another exploration party started, this time from Santa Cruz, sent by the Governor under official direction, and in which two chaplains took part. But the uncanny island again refused to appear, even at the bidding of the Church of Rome. Since then no other attempts to find San Borondon have been made, and its last recorded appearance is in 1759.

We started again at 1.50. The temperature had fallen to 56° F. (13·4° C.), so we were glad to walk for a while, after sitting upon the summit in wraps. The path now led among masses of rock, on the inside, as it were, of the Caldera wall. A curious thin rock like a slate stood out from the side of the crater at one spot, while others were like flints, but in masses. The rocks, all in gigantic groups, sometimes of red pumice and again hard trachyte, seemed like a geological medley, if such a thing were possible. The most curious formation of all, and one which must have struck the native mind as being uncanny, because it is called "Para de Roberto," is an immense wall running down towards the Caldera, about a foot and a half to two feet thick; it stands, where the path divides it, some way above our heads. Its course is perfectly straight, its sides flat, and the stones of which it is formed all fit compactly and evenly into each other. I find no record of it anywhere in my researches,* and yet to my

* Bory de St. Vincent mentions a rock of Tyme, near Tyarafe. But it is difficult to locate his names, as he had never been in the islands, and wrote his account from MSS and other works.



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mind it is one of the wonders of Palma. It may indeed be the Idafe of the ancient inhabitants, and which they worshipped. It is said that Idafe was situated in the Caldera, into which this rock appears to descend. Perhaps the one or two who have been upon the summit of Muchachos have not passed this way, and it is not so high that it could be seen from any distance. No one told us of its existence. The peasants who pass the rock are too much accustomed to its strangeness, while the intelligent and educated people are content with their valleys and immediate surroundings, and do not explore the mountains.

The Caldera wall from this point of view appears to have headlands, the clouds which lap its points representing the sea. Beneath, on our left, are pine-clad hills and valleys. The path along which we ride is really a series of stairs, with this disadvantage—the steps are uneven, and our legs are nearly broken by the rocks on either side or torn by the codeso bushes, so little room is there. The only human beings we have seen since we left the top of the Vuelta de Magar were two lads or youths dressed in costume going to La Ciudad. At 7,000 feet, and at 3 p.m., we find the path branching. The upper one, to the right, leads to the capital, the lower, to the left, which we follow, to Las Sauces. Five hundred feet lower we reached the clouds and entered the mist once more. The path was now delightful and comparatively easy. We passed through pine woods, codeso bushes forming the brushwood. The sun—for the mist did not last long—slanting across our path, lit up the boulders and stones through and over which we passed. A break in the woods reveals Las Sauces lying below on a point of land. We dismounted and walked part of the way—for the path was very steep, and the soil slippery from the damp mists—down a ridge or spur that slopes from the summit to the sea, Las Sauces being situated near the bottom. On both sides of the ridge are gorges. That to the left contains a waterfall, which tumbles between pine-clad cliffs. The gorge to the right is the more thickly wooded of the two, and is

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deeper. Its sides are steep and green-clad, while at the bottom we can hear the rush of a stream as it roars amid the boulders and beneath the ferns and moss to its home in the sea below. But little of it reaches the ocean; its life is spent less selfishly, for it waters the plains and littoral, and brings plenty to the thirsty land lying beyond in the broad glare of the sun. As we descend close by this gorge, we have leisure to admire its steep and richly clad sides, steep, deep to magnificence, and solitary. No sign of life breaks the stillness, which would be oppressive but for the murmur of the stream hidden in the depths. Above us magnificent pines, of huge girth, give a welcome and pleasant shelter, softening the glare while permitting the sunbeams to enter through their feathery needles. What was our horror to see one of these giants laid low across our path! He was too high to clamber over, so we had to find a way round as best we could. Timber must be procured, of course, but the way in which the pines are destroyed is wanton in the extreme. A hole is made low down in the trunk, and a fire kindled therein. The tree is then allowed to burn, until, from its own weight, it falls. The best of the trunk is thus consumed by the fire, and frequently the flames spread, when a part of the forest is destroyed. Do the Palmeros think that the barrancos which water their plains the summer through will never cease, that the streams are as sure to flow as the existence of the hills is certain? It will not take many years before the mountain slopes are devastated. Already the wood-cutters, or wood-burners rather, have further to ascend ere they reach their supplies. The forest is surely but steadily receding before the destroyer, and some day, when too late, Palma will present the barren aspect of the south of Tenerife, and, as in parts of that island, trees will be found scattered singly, small and weak in form, like the remnants of an army returning vanquished from the fray. Glas states that the forests were first destroyed by a great drought, which occurred in 1545; that afterwards, when young trees began to spring, rabbits, brought by Pedro Fernandez de Lugo, the second governor, to the

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island, destroyed them. Before this destruction, he also affirms that manna used to be gathered on the mountains and exported to Spain. It would seem that formerly the sugar-cane was freely grown in Palma, so much so, that sweetmeats were even exported. This would indicate an ample amount of water, the sugar-cane requiring a bountiful supply of moisture. The descent having become more gentle, we mount and pursue the path through woods of myrtle and heath, the banks luxuriant with moss and ferns and dripping with refreshing moisture. So good is the path, which wanders down the side of a glen, that we feel it might readily be made into a driving road. We come to a bit of open ground, the turf green and short, a big rock sheltering it from the sun forming a model camping ground. If one only knew where encamping was possible, it would be easier to arrange the day's journey. With horses of one's own, well known and tried, it would be much pleasanter to ride without guides, save of course when crossing the cumbres, and thus loiter where one liked. It would be less expensive also to buy a horse, use him for as long as necessary, and then sell him at the end for probably as much as one gave for him. The difficulty would lie in first purchasing the animal, which would require the assistance of an honest Englishman accustomed to the natives.

Soon after passing the camping ground we rode down a path at one side of the glen. The soil was of red clay, and moist with mists. My mule, which was unshod, slipped occasionally, but nothing of any consequence happened until we came to a piece of steeply sloping road, some fifteen or twenty feet in length, when the animal's hind-legs slipped faster than its fore, and all four gathering together, it slid from top to bottom, with me on its back! My feet were almost on the ground as the mule sat on its haunches, so I could have jumped off if the slide had been a crooked one, and there had been danger of our going over the edge into the depths of the barranco below. As it was, the arriero stood at the bottom of the slope with a face of horror and anxiety, until, the comicality of tobogganing on

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muleback striking me, my laughter produced a smile upon his face. Poor man, that is the second fright his mule and I have given him!

We now reached the open, leaving trees and greenery behind, save a little sward here and there. The soil was still of the same clayey nature, so that our progress was necessarily slow. It was getting late, and we could see Las Sauces beneath, gradually lighting up as darkness fell. It was 6.30 p.m. when we arrived in the plaza, where we found the house to the master of which we had a letter of introduction. The host was out, but his wife received us until he could be found. She told us that Don Manuel Yanes was staying in Las Sauces, and presently he came in to see us along with Don —— He told us he was returning to La Ciudad next morning, as he expected the steamer to arrive that day. We congratulated ourselves on our haste therefore in crossing the cumbre.

We paid our guide, and said farewell to him. He had proved efficient and an active, pleasant companion. His name is José Domingo y Garcia, of Tigarafe, and any who cross the Pico de Muchachos cannot do better than engage him for the journey. We were very glad when, supper over and the strain of necessary conversation with our kind hosts ended, we were shown our room. We had had but little change or rest from the saddle from 6 a.m. to 6.30 p.m., so slept without rocking.

*October 15th, Monday.*—Some coffee was brought to us at 6.45, when we were dressed. Our host took us for a walk, after first assuring us that Don Manuel was not going to La Ciudad until after breakfast, as there was no sign of the steamer, whose coming can be seen from here. We walked up a hill to a cluster of cottages called Lomitos, where there is a water-mill, commanding a very pretty view of the town, from which we looked down into the Plaza de Monserrat, of which the inhabitants are very proud. It is a fine square for such a small place. At one side is the church, and at the other a public garden, only begun, but with a promise of things to come

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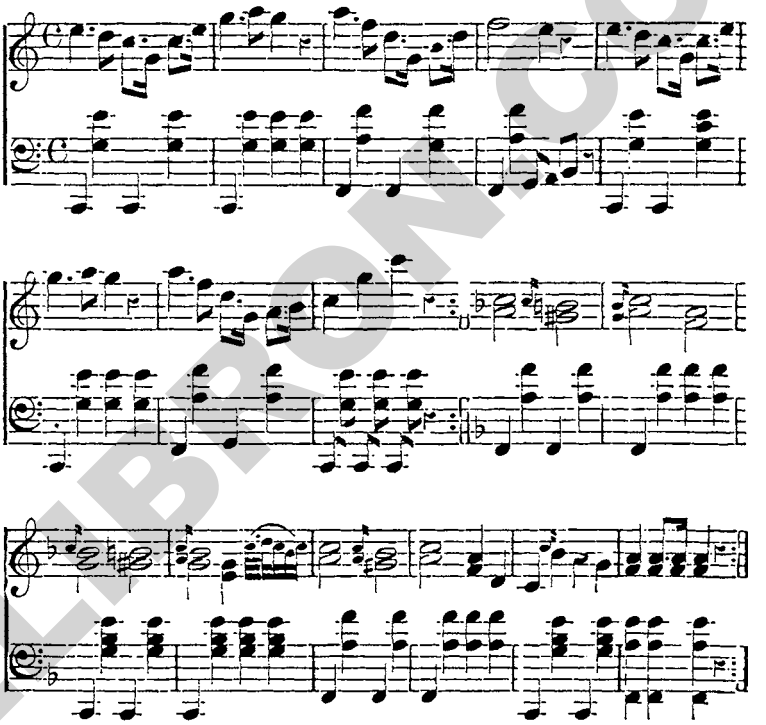
and certainly a step in the right direction. To the left of Las Sauces is a terraced hill, and on the right a fine dragon tree, near a large house belonging to Don Manuel's wife's uncle. Green trees are rather plentiful, and add beauty to the town, while the aspect is enhanced by the blue sea forming the background. Las Sauces is situated 800 feet above the sea.

We entered the mill, which grinds gofio, wheat and maize being the two kinds in general use. A couple of pretty girls, in the native cap of blue and red, which, worn on the side of the head, gives a jaunty appearance, are waiting until their corn is ground, when they will carry it away. Although the interior of the mill is not very different from the interior of the windmills, yet it is worth noting that it is water, not wind, that is the motive power. That rare and indispensable article is actually so plentiful, that it can be wickedly wasted in turning a mill and watering trees in the plaza below. Truly Las Sauces has much to be proud of and thankful for in its water supply. Leaving the mill, we went up some high steps to the aqueduct outside, which conveys the water to the wheel. A cross, as usual, is erected on the top, where, we find, the height is 250 feet above the town. There is a fine view from here of many houses around, the town itself being hidden by a rise in the hill. Whole fields are covered with onions, which grow plentifully, and being within reach of La Ciudad, they are easily carried thither for export. We next went to see the dragon tree, which is a very fine specimen, just inside a high garden wall. The road outside is paved with stones of all sorts and sizes, and as we stood to take a photograph of the tree, a number of children, girls and boys, barefooted, brown-skinned, and curious, got upon the pavement, and were also included. We walked on a little further, and then returned to the town by another route. As we passed through one street we heard music of a peculiar and measured sort coming towards us. Turning to look, we saw a funeral. Four little boys, dressed in grey, carried a tiny coffin, which was slung upon ropes for that purpose. Behind them came two acolytes, then a man

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carrying a cross, followed by two priests. Next came the band, consisting of trumpets, drum, cymbals, and kettledrums. They played a sort of march, which is called a funeral march. It was so very unusual in character, that later I begged for a copy of it, which was kindly given to me by the bandmaster.

LA AURORA MARCHA.



The musicians had a peculiar way of resting upon the toe of each foot as they marched in time to the music. They, as it were, stepped to one and three, and rested the toe of the other foot on the ground at two and four. We followed the procession to the cemetery. The priest said but little over the grave, and

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that in a perfunctory manner. Room was made for me as I stood in the background, and I was ushered forward to the grave. The corpse was uncovered. It was that of a little girl, of, it might be, two years of age. She was dressed in white muslin, with rose-coloured ribbons. The pallid, sunburnt skin and dark hair contrasted painfully with the bloodless and unhappy expression of the lips. I was shocked. A child when dead usually looks so peaceful. A quantity of quicklime was



LAS SAUCES.

thrown upon the child and into the grave, the coffin lid was replaced, the mould was shovelled over as quickly as possible, and all hurried from the scene. The cemetery is small, entirely surrounded by high walls and an entrance gate, a dreary, desolate place in which to put a loved form, even though it be but clay. I must say the mourners—save the mark—seemed much more interested in us than in the ceremony they had just been performing. The fact of none of the near relatives attending a funeral renders the last services to the dead liable to be performed in what seems, at any rate to onlookers, a heartless

fashion. I was told in Palma that the music at funerals, and this particular march, was common to all the islands. Having learned by experience not to trust what the inhabitants of one island say of another, I inquired later both in Tenerife and Canaria if such were the case, and I was informed in Canaria that music, if paid for, occasionally accompanied a funeral, but the particular march and marching of the musicians that we saw in Palma was unknown. It may therefore be considered peculiar to the island.

We went on until we reached the Barranco Herradura, a rather fine gorge, with water and trees. Turning towards the sea, we walked down its banks for a short distance, until within sight of the *faro*, or lighthouse. This is quite a modern building, and is evidently considered one of the sights of Palma. We were more interested in the people than the light, so did not care to waste our time by seeing it. Three men only are in charge of the faro. Turning towards Las Sauces again, we were taken into the house of Señor Don José Francisco Martin y Hernandez, to see the view from its windows. The good people were much pleased by our taking a photograph of the scene. They gave us some excellent native red wine. The house was new, and the owners young married people, with a couple of children, one of whom, Adela Martin y Gonzalez, was a pretty little thing of a year and a half. The view that was considered the best was of the one straggling street of the town, creeping up the hillside, a background of green hills and mountains, down which we rode yesterday.

I was presented with a bit of the tree from which Las Sauces derives its name, a sort of willow (*Salix Canariensis*). The withes are used for wickerwork and by coopers. Two other plants were also given us, *Mirabilis salappa* and *Datura Metel*, which latter, when smoked in a pipe or cigarette, is used as a cure for asthma.

We now returned to breakfast with our friends, after which we once more walked out to inspect the town. The ride to La Ciudad would only occupy a few hours, and as when the

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steamer arrived it had to unload and load, there was ample time for us to get to the town after it came in sight. We therefore left ourselves entirely in Don Manuel's hands, as he was obliged to be at the port for business purposes upon its arrival.

The church in the Plaza de Monserrat is much the same as churches elsewhere, the roof of carved beams, but there is a new floor of *teà*—pitch-pine. The chancel floor is laid with red and yellow tiles, and a little organ, looking as if it were a cupboard, occupies one side. In a side chapel we were astonished to see hung round a pillar a number of small wax figures and miniature models of limbs and other portions of the human body. These, it was explained, were presented by those who desired to secure the welfare of themselves or others or the healing of some infirmity, and who at the same time made a vow or promise which they would fulfil if the request were granted.

We left at noon. We were a goodly cavalcade, for, besides our three horses, we were accompanied by Don Manuel and several other gentlemen on horseback. Don Manuel rode a horse which had never been shod, and it was then nearly eight years old, with sound, well-shaped hoofs.

Our first stopping-place was San Andres, a short distance from Las Sauces, and near the sea. It is really the port of Las Sauces, being almost a part of it, one might say. It is a much older place than Las Sauces, but as it unfortunately possesses no water, but has to be supplied from the barranco, it is going down in the world before its younger and more prosperous rival. San Andres is remarkable for possessing the oldest church in Palma. It is much visited by people from all quarters of the island, who come to gain healing from the *Gran Poder de Dios* (Great Power of God) which is supposed to be exercised on those who pay the church a visit. Here, as at Las Sauces, dressed dolls and wax images are stuck round a particular pillar. The floor of the church is of white and red bricks, laid between oblong pieces of wood. We were also shown carved figures of St. John and the Magdalene, and a life-sized carving of Christ, lying in a wooden box; "the dead Christ" they called

it. We only caught the word *dead*, and when we saw the box, thought we were going to be shown a corpse or mummy. These figures were all made and given to this church by a native of La Ciudad. Outside in the churchyard the aromatic healing eucalyptus grows. Near the church are the remains of a *convento de Piedad*. The last monk, San Francisco, died about 1867.

Leaving San Andres, we descend into the barranco of San Juan, and reach the sea itself at the bottom and mouth of the gorge. The barranco is rugged and barren, with precipitous sides, on which grows nothing but euphorbia. From Las Sauces to the capital the country is cut up by a series of barrancos. Fortunately they are not, as a rule, very deep, not immense, like those that prevail between Guia and Adeje, in the south of Tenerife. The second was La Galga, the descent into which was bad. Rocks lay at the bottom in heaps, and in caves in the sides sheep sheltered. On the way up on the other side was a cave dwelling. Our three Spanish friends all dismounted, not liking the descent, and were rather surprised that we sat on our animals. They did not know to what we had recently been accustomed in the way of bad roads, and we in turn were astonished at their timidity. But few, however, of the native gentlemen know anything of their islands, save the immediate neighbourhood in which they live. Still fewer know anything of any island but their own. They used frequently to tell us that we knew far more about the archipelago than anyone living in the islands. We found the depth, or rather height, of this barranco from the southern side to be 400 feet. In the distance, lying behind us, we could see Las Sauces and San Andres. The women about here that we meet wear jaunty little blue caps, similar to those of the men. At La Galga village, 1,200 feet above the sea—for we have been steadily ascending over cultivated land —we stop for a few moments. It is 2 p.m. Here is a good-sized farmhouse, more like a large farm in England than any we have seen, and a church. The owner is also like English farmers at present—bankrupt. So the English farmer is "not

all alone unhappy." The Palmero's land extends from the summit of the mountain to the sea, but he is a ruined man, and the land all mortgaged at eight and ten per cent. The church of San Bartolomé is the second oldest in the island, and dates from 1651. A little further on we come to the Barranco Nogales, the descent into which is very steep, the sides being precipitous. They are festooned with brambles and breso, while a bridge near the bottom aids in rendering the gorge picturesque. It is 3.30 p.m. before we reach the village of Punteñara and church of San Juan. We rode over a little bridge, on which is a cross, covered with blue and white paper. The road now winds amid the scattered houses forming San Juan, which lie along the heads of a number of short and shallow barrancos, more indeed like English glens. Grass grows on the slopes, and the land is cultivated here and there, while trees flourish luxuriantly in nooks. We rode round the church, and saw, to our horror, an *osario* (charnel-house). Don Manuel tells us that after three years the bodies are taken out of the ground and put in the *osario*, which is generally open to the heavens. It is fortunate the air is remarkably dry, or pestilence would be the result. There were no monuments in the churchyard of any sort. Two windmills in the neighbourhood had curious vanes, one a cock in a boat! the other a fish.

A little further along we came to Santa Lucia, another straggling village, large enough, however, to boast of a venta, where Don Manuel invited us to rest and eat something. We were glad to do so, for we cannot get accustomed to Spanish hours. The long fasts between meals do not suit us, particularly when taking so much exercise. Don Manuel told us that he himself much preferred our English ways, he had been in England, and whenever he could, adopted our hours.

There is a little church at Santa Lucia, and a number of palm trees scattered throughout the village renders the place pretty. There is also a gentleman's residence, which gives importance to the district. The venta produced sardines, bread, cheese, and wine, and we sat outside enjoying luncheon and the view.

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Starting again, we passed round the top of the barranco of Santa Lucia, and descended its further side to the bottom. Here we found half a dozen cemented washing holes, where the village laundry evidently is held. Two men just now came in sight at the top of the barranco, but instead of following the road, they ran and jumped by means of their poles down the steep banks, or "braes"—the Scotch word aptly expresses it. They were bright, vivacious men, and as they and our arrieros chaffed each other and as they, respectfully withal, chaffed our friends, they reminded me more of the Irish peasants than any islanders I have seen. There was a readiness about their answers and a bright intelligence in their faces that was suggestive of wit and humour. No doubt there is a large amount of Irish blood in the veins of the present inhabitants of some of the islands, but it is a little difficult to find out where it is except among the nobility and gentry, whose genealogies are carefully preserved. Some cave dwellings in this barranco once more instance the strong Troglodyte tendency in the archipelago, a sure witness to its past races.

We met a woman by a cross (1,100 feet) in full dress. She wore a black bodice, laced across the front, a handkerchief over her shoulders, the point at the waist, and one of the costume caps. These caps all the women between this and Las Sauces wore. We stopped by the cross to admire the view stretched beneath us. We also wanted to photograph the woman in costume, but she retreated within her house, close by, and could not be induced to come forth. We had to turn the camera on ourselves instead therefore. The horses and mules were on the road, and we, in various attitudes, upon the arable land above. A man in costume with a leaping pole was quite pleased at being put in the foreground. The cross formed the background. The spot we stood upon was on the slope of Mount Tenagua, whence is a fine view of Santa Cruz (La Ciudad) and the ships at anchor in the roadstead. The bay has a graceful curve as seen from here, and the sea looks calm and peaceful, with the schooners, like toy boats, riding motionlessly at

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anchor. The white houses dotted over the brown slopes of the neighbouring hillside look comfortable as they nestle amid their farms. Near us fires are burning on the mountains, probably of rubbish off the fields. Fastening the cameras once more on the pack-horse, we mounted and rode downwards. We soon crossed the Barranco Seco, and shortly after that of Gomero. Both these were very steep. The bed of the latter we descended, until we reached the sea, passing round the bluffs in which it ends, and riding along the beach. We also passed the mouth of the



HALT ON MONTAÑA TENAGUA, PALMA.

Barranco Las Nieves, but did not enter it. There are said to be nine barrancos between Las Sauces and the capital, which, if only spanned by bridges, would make the distance between the towns a mere bagatelle. We entered the town through a gate and wall, and as we passed under the arch, and our cavalcade clattered along the stone-paved streets, with

> "Spanish spurs with bells of steel
> That dashed and dangled at the heel,"

I was reminded of tales of the middle ages. The windows and postigos were filled with fair Palmeros looking upon us as the dames of old looked down from their windows upon many a gay scene.

We determined to try the other fonda this time, for Santa

Cruz de la Palma boasts two. It is situated in mid-town, not in so good a position as the first, and not such a good house. A huge, fat woman is the hostess, Isabel de Leon, viuda de Palmasio (widow of Palmasio), No. 14. This at first sight seems an insufficient address, but all the houses in the island, and indeed in all the islands, are numbered, so that the number alone without street or district is sufficient. I may say here that although the food was much better, I do not advise anyone to go to this fonda, for we learned later that the widow has not that social reputation that English people like.

After an excellent dinner we went to bed, and we hoped, and fully intended, to sleep.

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# CHAPTER XIX.

## *SANTA CRUZ DE LA PALMA—ORIGIN OF THE GUANCHES.*

A simple dwelling, which shall be our own,
Where we will sit and talk of time and change,
As the world ebbs and flows, ourselves unchanged.

P. B. SHELLEY.

We pray you, set your pride
In its proper place, and never be ashamed
Of any honest calling—let us add,
And end; for all the rest, hold up your heads
And mind your English.

JEAN INGELOW.

*October 16th, Tuesday.*—I had a pleasant night. About midnight I wakened in a state of irritation from the sun-spots on my hands, and lit a candle, intending to rub my hands with Don Manuel Sotomayor's alleviative wash. It was unfortunate that I dispelled the darkness, for "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise." I found my bed swarming with *chinches!* They were running up and down the white curtains and over the sheets, and when I lifted the pillow, they rushed from underneath it by the hundred. Jumping out of bed, I shouted to John, who was sound asleep on a stretcher-bed in the corner. The bed with the white curtains, being the more attractive-looking of the two, had been assigned to me, but, alas! it was a whited sepulchre. I said, "Oh, do come here and see what these things are," but he was too sleepy to move. I described

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them carefully—"brown and like ladybirds." "Do they bite you?" he said. "I don't think so," I replied; "it was the spots on my hands wakened me." "Well, if they don't bite, why trouble about them? Go to sleep," which he did. I am pretty philosophical when necessary, but I could *not* get into that bed with those things and think of them crawling over me by the thousand, even if they did not bite. Pitching the pillow on the ground, I turned Keating out of the portmanteau and sprinkled the powder carefully round the outer edge of the bed. I then stepped cautiously into the middle, and curled myself into as small a compass as possible. For some time I watched the futile efforts of a dozen or two that tried to pass the barrier, but which failed in the attempt, sometimes barely escaping with their lives as they staggered away from the, to them, overpowering obstacle. Becoming at last convinced, about three o'clock, that they would not be able to cross the ramparts, I slept in peace, if uncomfortably, until morning. John's bed proved quite clean. When I asked him in the night if he had any *chinches*, he said that as he was not bitten, he was not going to look! but there were none, and I believe mine was the only bed in the house so infested.

After coffee at seven this morning we went on the azotea to see if the steamer had arrived, but there was no sign of her. A strong north-easterly wind was blowing, notwithstanding which we were able to get some good views of the town. The azotea is large, extending over two houses, although belonging only to this. In one corner is a washing tub, of the usual cemented kind, but it is very unusual to see one at the top of the house, and water laid on to it. Throughout the house there is water supplied by a good spring in mid-town, which never fails. In another corner is a hen-coop, containing a few hens. A low wall runs lengthways across the azotea, upon which are some flowers in pots, a calabash, and quince jam in tins and on plates. The house, like many others in this town, is three-storied. On two neighbouring azoteas some gentlemen came out and conversed across the roofs with each other, no doubt the usual morning gossip.



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We gain a good view of the town and neighbourhood from the roof. Close beside us on our left as we face the mountains is the dark grey stone tower of the church of San Salvador. Bells of various sizes hang in its belfry, also a clock which strikes the quarter-hours. The lower and principal part of the town is formed of two long streets running parallel with the sea-shore. One, however, is much longer than the other, and is really the main street, in which this house stands. The rest of the town straggles up and clings to the hillside wherever there is ground sufficiently level for building purposes. Just about mid-town, immediately behind and above the main street, there is a precipitous rock, which is crowned by houses. The grey, perpendicular mass, a bit of wildest nature rising in the very midst of man's handiwork, gives a picturesqueness that can scarcely be equalled elsewhere. The houses, or rather azoteas, are painted pale blue, sea-green, and yellow, the latter colour predominating. The walls are white, but the balconies and windows are coloured to match the azoteas, the whole effect being bright and cheerful. Immediately in front of the fonda to the westward is a dip in the hills, down which the Barranco Dolores flows. In its sheltered valley a number of palms grow, tall and stately, their graceful leaves swaying in the breeze. They do not, however, come prominently forward as an adjunct to the town, as do those of San Sebastian in Gomera. To the left is a caldera, the sea side of which is broken down. It is always called La Caldereta, to distinguish it from the great Caldera for which Palma is so justly famous. The background beyond the town, barranco, and low hills is formed by the high mountain ridge which bisects the island from north to south, as the Apennines do Italy. Palma is the highest island in the archipelago, for, with the exception of the Peak and Cañadas' wall, its mountains are more lofty than any others in Tenerife or the other islands.

By the time we had finished our observations and photographs, we discovered that our camera, and perchance ourselves, had excited so much curiosity in the neighbour-

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hood, that the azoteas and windows, especially those near the tops of the houses, were tolerably well sprinkled with curious eyes. We therefore went down.

Juan and Domingo, our arrieros, came to be paid and to bring our saddles. We happened to give Juan a dollar with a hole in it, which he returned to us, saying it would not pass here. Remembering we had received it from our landlady, we returned it to her. She took it consciously, knowing that she had tried to pass it off on us. A great deal of the money is pierced with holes, and when this is the case, it is not considered worth its full value. Our landlady considered the muleteers overpaid, although they did not charge so much as in the other islands.

We took a walk round the town and into the market. This is a square enclosure of tile-roofed sheds. Bunches of bananas and birds in cages are suspended from the eaves, huge calabashes lie on the ground, while vegetables and fruit of all kinds—red pimientos, sweet potatoes, onions, melons, etc.—flowers, shrubs, wood for burning, and basket-covered wine-bottles, all help to form, with the picturesque attire of the country people, a bright and pretty scene. The dress of the women in and near the town is very unbecoming. Over the usual handkerchief, which is doubled three-cornerwise on the head and tied under the chin, is placed a small round, sailor-shaped straw hat, so small, that as a shade it is perfectly useless, and looks ridiculous and out of keeping with the remainder of the dress. The hat, brim and all, is about the size of the crown of an English child's sailor hat. The back part is raised very high, sloping towards the forehead almost perpendicularly.

The pathway round the market sheds is paved with small stones—petrified kidneys—laid in patterns. We took a photograph of the sheds and some of the buyers and sellers. When photographing in the town, crowds of people always gathered round us, and we had to watch that they did not through curiosity open the case and expose the slides to the sun.

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The Barranco Dolores, which we had noticed from the azotea, runs down the centre of the town. It is a small river-bed, and the houses are built close to its banks. It is bridged at every street. Along the sides of the bridges there are seats, and in the evenings these are favourite lounging places for the inhabitants.

We have been introduced to many people in the town, and among them to Señor Don Manuel Peres Abreu, who kindly showed us his collection of Guanche relics. Among them were some skulls and bones. Three of the skulls had indentations on the right side of and above the forehead, so deep as to be almost holes. Some skulls that we saw later in Santa Cruz de Tenerife and in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, had similar marks. It is curious to note that they were all in the same place, as though the weapon with which they fought or stone thrown was always the same, and handled in a similar way by the warriors. A very perfect stone plumb was among Don Manuel's collection, also a pipe-head, a complete bowl of earthenware with ornamentation upon it, a horn spoon of good shape, and a small clay spoon, used doubtless for gofio. There were also some shells, which had been found embedded in lava.

There is a museum, started five months ago, in which there are some Guanche relics. It is well to preserve these, as the day is not far distant when visitors will be carrying off all they can find.

The post of alcalde, or mayor, is much sought after in these islands. It is an office, although honorary, which usually fattens those who hold it, but, in some mysterious way, not much improvement in the town is effected. As one gentleman told us, "what is prohibited is done, and what is ordered is omitted." In Santa Cruz de la Palma, the people select fifteen individuals, whose names are sent to the Government, for the post of alcalde. One is chosen as chief alcalde, and then the second and third alcaldes are elected by the people.

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Usury is permitted up to ten per cent., but usurers of jewels get twenty per cent. In reality, however, from one *peseta* to one dollar a month is paid for the loan of four dollars.

There are two newspapers printed in this town. One, *La Patria*, is issued weekly, and is political; the second, *La Asociacion*, is published when the mail comes in, about four times in the month. They are like all small provincial papers in the islands and elsewhere, and were glad to insert such items of news as our arrival and destination, etc.

It is unfortunate that the coming and going of the English steamer is so uncertain, for had we known that so many days would elapse before its arrival, we might have ridden to the south of the island and seen the hot spring there upon the south-west coast. That at Fuencaliente was destroyed two hundred years ago by an eruption, the cinders and stones thrown in 1677 from the neighbouring crater filling it up completely. As it is we must wait here day by day, but there is much to see in and around the town, so that we do not by any means waste our time.

We turned into the church of Santo Domingo, in the parish of San Salvador, whose grey tower we saw so distinctly from the azotea this morning. There is much gilding about the interior, and the floor is of red tiles. A Flemish nobleman, the Marqués de Guisla Guiselin, has a private chapel at one side. There are six churches in the parish, two of them large.

We next saw the only silk steam factory there is in the island. It was, however, unfortunately not working, so we could not inspect it closely. The best cocoons come from Gomera.

A Spanish gentleman who was going to England by the next steamer to enter the School of Mines was introduced to us, and most kindly was our escort on several occasions to sights in the neighbourhood. Don Mauricio Morales took us to see a country house, or *finca*, belonging to the Sotomayors, situated to the south of the town. We had to pass beneath the cliffs of La Playa de Diabel and walk upon the sandy beach

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to reach our destination. It is only possible to pass round here at low water, the road being tidal. Coming to a low wall, we climbed over it, and found ourselves among the cochineal cactus. We passed on and entered a paradise of gardens. Nature and art combined, the former in the luxuriance of verdure, the latter in the arrangement of the ground, to render this spot perfectly charming. Gardens were laid out at various levels, so that in order to reach them one was constantly passing under and over rocky bridges and up and down winding paths, amid a labyrinth of trailing creepers, flowers, shrubs, fruit, and ornamental trees. All this is kept green and luxuriant by irrigation. In the centre of the garden is a well, round which a camel, blinded with wicker pads, walked with slow and stately tread, drawing water. The manner of drawing is by means of tin cans fastened on an endless ladder of ropes over a wheel, the cross-bars being of wood. As the cans rise, filled with water, they turn over, and the water is poured into a trough, which is in connection with a tank. This form of drawing water seems to be similar to that described by Mr. W. J. Maxwell in his "Letters of an Engineer" as being practised in Syria, except that the wheels there are larger. We, however, came across larger wheels later in Fuerteventura, which is more Eastern in its customs as well as geographically.

The walks in the garden were paved with pebbles, much in the same manner as the pavement in the market. The gardener who took us round broke off oranges with twigs of the tree attached, and gave them to me. A wild luxuriance prevails everywhere. Creepers wander in reckless fashion, as if they do not know where to entwine themselves, so rapid is their growth. Sensuous oleanders, brilliant geraniums ten feet high, the lovely plumbago, straggling eucalyptus, balsams, bananas, orange trees, and numerous other plants, known and unknown, vie with each other in rendering this enchanted spot a garden of Eden. Leaving the garden, we entered the house, which is remarkably pretty. A passage runs round the

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outside, into which the rooms all open. The floor of the drawing-room is of inlaid wood, and in the comedor are delightful corner cupboards. The outside of the house is painted red and white, and yellow at the top. There is a grand view of the town, the ships at anchor, with the cliff of La Playa de Diabel in the foreground. Red wine was produced by the caretakers for our benefit as we sat in the sala resting and enjoying the view. The Playa de Bajamas, as this *finca* is named, had been a piece of waste ground, which, owing to its proximity to the sea, no one had cared to use. The Sotomayors were willingly allowed to have it at a rent of twelve dollars a year (two pounds eight shillings). It had proved a profitable speculation, for in a good season it had produced five hundred *quintas* of cochineal, which even at the present low prices must have been very remunerative. As a summer resort for bathing and boating one cannot conceive a more charming spot.

Entering the garden, we once more passed by the cynical camel at his work, and through the geraniums, oleanders, and orange groves out upon the beach.

We noticed a limekiln as we neared the town at its entrance gate, where is the *transitu de consumos*. The stones are brought from Fuerteventura, it being easier and cheaper to obtain them from that island than from the Caldera. Vessels going with cargo to Fuerteventura have no exports to bring back, so, rather than return in ballast, they load with limestone. A road into the Caldera, the cutting of limestone in its recesses, and the consequent destruction of the wild beauty of the place are not what lovers of nature would wish to see. We met two fishermen, one in a red blouse, the other in red trousers and blue shirt, and we also saw some oxen, which are used here for drawing V-shaped sleighs filled with stones for building purposes.

A few of the names given to the streets of La Ciudad may be of interest. The principal street is, curiously enough, called "O'Daly," showing that there must once have been some noted Irishman in the island. Other streets are Santiago,

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Simonica, Blas Simon, Cincuenta, Cuna, Vandale, Garachico, Joros, Pilar, Mata, Vie Jas, Molinos. The names are printed very plainly at the street corners.

This evening after dinner we went out to see the town. There happened to be moonlight, so no lamps were lit. The town can be fairly lighted by oil lamps when necessary. Turning to the right, we wandered up the street. We made several purchases of baskets, such as the Palmeros use to carry to market. We also bought a cap and girdle. Extortionate prices were not demanded for these things. There is less exaction or even naming two prices in Palma than in any of the islands; in fact, I do not remember an instance of extortion of any sort during our stay there. Wandering on, we came to a shop with "Panorama" written outside, so we entered, paying a few *centimos*, and saw through little peepholes rough paintings magnified of places in Spain. There was no other visitor present while we were in the place, and I should think five minutes was sufficient to see all the pictures.

*October 17th, Wednesday.*—At an early hour this morning, about 7 a.m., the butcher's stall in the market was thronged by a crowd of noisy women, boys, and men buying meat. Goats were wandering about the town in small flocks as if ownerless. There are such pretty goats here. We tried to procure a pair of tan-coloured ones, but did not succeed, not having time to see about them ourselves. It is difficult also to get pure tan goats, as breeding is not carried on with much care.

The captain of the *Matanzas* had asked us to dine with him, and he renewed the invitation to us for to-day. The doctor, however, came to tell us that the captain's child was very ill, and that they were unable in consequence to receive us.

We took some letters to the post-office, but found it shut, much to our amusement, the mail not coming or going that day. We then called on Mr. Yanes, to hear if there were any chance of the steamer coming soon, but the agents were as much

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in the dark as ourselves. When the cable is laid, in another month or so, things will be different.

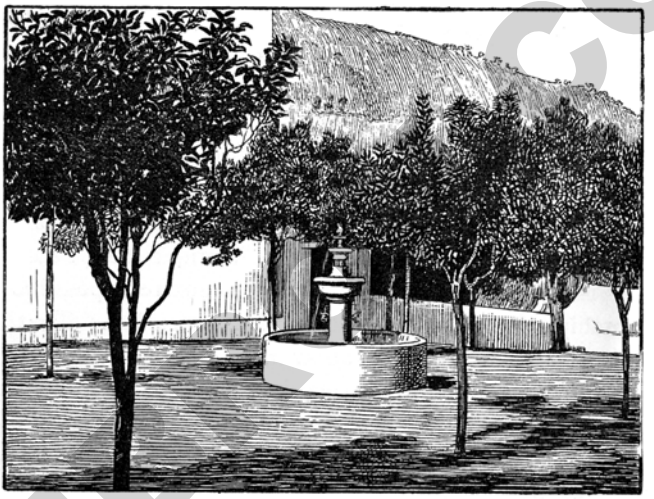
As we entered our fonda, a woman carrying sponge-cakes accosted us. We bought some, and found them very good. Seven cost thirty-five *centimos* (about threepence-halfpenny).

Don Mauricio called for us in the afternoon, and walked with us up the Barranco de la Madera to the little village of Las Nieves. In this we passed a scooped-out place called the Cueva de la Virgen—although it is hardly a cave—because an image of the Virgin being carried to Las Nieves in 1805 rested here for a time. Many people make pilgrimages to the spot, and numerous miracles are said to have been worked here. For instance, the cave, though only capable of holding fifty persons, increased so as to hold two hundred. When we saw it, it would not hold ten. Again, the lamp before the Virgin remained alight although not fed with oil. The worship has been continued from the earliest times, according to Viera, but as Palma was not Christian until the conquest, it is scarcely possible that the worship of the Virgin was carried on earlier. That they adored a woman as well as a man-god is known. The Guanches may have had a procession and worship of some sort in this cave which later was converted into a worship of the Virgin. Most extraordinary were the miracles said to have been performed. Volcanoes were extinguished, and a fire which began in the town upon the removal of the figure from the church where it was kept ceased upon its return! The pious Viera is my authority for these stories of the miraculous and incredible.

We walked to the top of the ravine, Don Mauricio feeling the exertion in the heat more than we did, where we found a little square, or plaza. A fountain, painted bright blue, and from which flows excellent water, is in the middle, and arranged regularly around the square are orange trees, laden with fruit. One side of the plaza is formed by the church, while on another is the priest's house. Seats against the walls of the house tempted us to rest. They are painted a French grey, and

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pleasantly contrast with the windows and doors, which are bright green. Other houses are whitewashed, the windows and balconies being red. The church, which dates only from 1876, is whitewashed, and its door painted red, with the exception of the knobs, which are picked out in light green. Two balconies over the vestry door and the west window are likewise green. A footpath round the square is paved. A gentleman, the captain's cousin, is resting in the plaza, as well as ourselves,



THE PLAZA, LAS NIEVES, PALMA.

waiting for Don Fernando, who has gone somewhere into the country to seek for the doctor, as his child is much worse. Later the baby died. They had lost three children out of four, poor people. The more one sees of the way children are reared all over the world, the more one wonders, not that they die, but live, all laws of physiology being set at nought.

The priest's landlady asked us to pass through the house to see the view from the back. We were quite unconscious that we were sitting with our backs to a house that is perched on the edge of a steep decline into the Barranco del Rio. Passing

through the dwelling, we came out on the other side upon a three-cornered sort of yard, guarded by a low wall, and in which were several children and a couple of women. Below lay a wild gorge, chiefly formed of rocks and stones. A watercourse guides the water along one side, turning on its way two gofio mills. A little arbour, formed of a stone seat covered with poles and branches of trees laid across, we found a charming resting-place, while the view from it was very pretty. No doubt the worthy pastor sits here and meditates upon his Sunday sermon.

Turning homewards at 2.10 p.m., we descended, readily reaching La Ciudad at three o'clock. We next went to the gaol, near the church of Santo Domingo, entering by a small door, which is always open. The large door is carefully barred, a needless precaution when the smaller is open, one would think. Inside we came upon a pleasant garden filled with plantains. The bedrooms are large and airy. Each prisoner brings his own mattress, and each has his box of clothes in his room. There were a few men and women. The former are employed in making pipes, while the latter wash and sew. The whole affair seemed very informal, as if playing at being imprisoned, and to escape did not appear difficult. We only saw one chain, and that was in the bottom room in a stone floor. I suppose the Government trusts to the small extent of the island preventing the final escape of criminals. There is but little crime, however, theft and petty larceny being the chief.

Leaving the gaol, we went with Don Mauricio to see Mr. Laremuth, to whom we had been previously introduced. Mr. Laremuth is American consul, and had been English consul, but through some mistake or misunderstanding he is not now. The English are not represented in this island, therefore.

We had been very anxious to see a Government school, and had much difficulty in persuading our friends to take us to one. After continually reminding everybody day after day and disgusting them no doubt with our importunities, we have at last succeeded. In a comparatively small room we found fifty boys,

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presided over by a master. This pedagogue gets 1,500 *pesetas*, or about sixty pounds a year, with the usual allowance for requisites, equalling a fourth of the income. The globes are English, also some of the copy-books; others are French. We were shown both the writing and drawing of the best pupils. The former was a little angular, the latter very good. We had great, enormous difficulty almost in getting the master to show us other than the *best* of everything. The boys are taught reading and writing, very little arithmetic and geography, and a trifle of Spanish sacred history. The school hours are from nine to eleven and from three to five. The children were very clean and well dressed, but I am a little suspicious that the worthy master had been informed of our intended visit, and that all consequently was in "apple-pie order."

There are three public or primary schools in La Ciudad, one for girls and two for boys, and about eight private schools, of which three are for girls. The townspeople are anxious to educate their children, but the country people are indifferent.

On our return to the fonda we found Mr. Lavers and his father awaiting us, also M. Alvarez, the son of the French consul, who came to see the photographic apparatus, as he is a photographer, and consequently interested therein.

We took a turn round the town this evening. The shopping is done at night here, so that the town looks very pretty, all lit up, and the streets comparatively full of people.

We have another room for to-night, I am thankful to say. Two Spaniards, a father and son, staying here, have heard of our dislike to *chinches*, which must be unusual, and with a kindness and disinterestedness for which we cannot be too grateful, have offered to give us their room, and have taken ours instead, *chinches* included!

*October 18th, Thursday.*—We awakened a few times during the night with a feeling of uncertainty as to what this room might contain. We had carried a few *chinches* in with us in our belongings, as it turned out, and there were the inevitable

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*pulgas*, the lesser evil, which attack one both in and out of the house.

The first news which greeted us this morning was the arrival of the steamer. If we had only known it was not coming until to-day, we might easily have seen the rest of the island. However, we must leave something for our next visit to the Canarian highlands.

Mr. W. Lavers kindly came for us and took us to see his tobacco factory. We then went to his mother-in-law's house, a very old dwelling, with magnificently carved doors and ceiling. The ladies showed us a great deal of work of various kinds done by the old lady. Some was like Macramé lace, only in crochet cotton, and used for trimming towels. Some curious coverings for the feet, to be worn in bed, were made of coloured prints and crochet. She had also made flower-pots of various woods, herbs, and shells. This latter idea was introduced by a Spaniard from Cuba, who brought a pot thence made by a Chinaman. Doña —— copied it, and made much handsomer designs of her own. The most wonderful piece of workmanship, however, was a rose, or rather several, made out of the lining membrane of an egg-shell. It was a marvellous piece of delicate manipulation. When shown the roses, we were asked to guess of what they were made, but failed utterly. The time, patience, and delicacy of touch necessary for their execution, make it difficult to believe that such a feat could be accomplished. All the works were marvels of skill, and will be valuable heirlooms in the family. We consider ourselves fortunate in having seen not only the work, but her by whom it was executed. A couple of Guanche handkerchiefs, or what might be taken to be handkerchiefs, one of fibre so fine as to be almost lace and one of coarsely woven flax, said to date from the conquest, were also shown to us. In order to reach the garden, which we were next asked to visit, we had to go upstairs. It was very curious to be taken to nearly the top of the house and to walk out through a door on to the garden. This house is situated on one of the steepest slopes of La Ciudad. The garden is near the roof,

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where the ground slopes less, but even then has to be terraced. The entrance to the ground floor is off one street, whereas a gate out of the top of the garden is in another, the actual distance traversed being short, but very steep.

We drove in a carriage up to the Church of the Conception this afternoon, two gentlemen accompanying us. It is situated 1,100 feet above the sea, on the brink of the Caldereta. Fifty feet higher is the highest point of the brim of the semicircular precipice forming the cauldron, which is a miniature of the great Caldera. So immediately above the town are we, that we can see into its streets, the whole of it being spread out like a map before us. These bird's-eye views give one a better idea of a city than any other. We met a young fellow shooting on the slopes and cliffs of the Caldereta, for there are numberless pigeons and rabbits. The sportsman was a stalwart individual, with fair hair and blue eyes, and in his shooting get-up looked extremely like an Englishman. He said he had had no sport to-day. A couple of brigs, a brigantine, and two schooners, as well as the English steamer lie in the offing beneath. The *correo*, or mail schooner, which weighed anchor just as we left the town, is out of sight, the day being hazy.

We entered the carriage and started at 4.45, our pair of good little horses flying along. A new and clean-looking venta on the way down tempted the gentlemen to stop and have some beer, a change from the native wines. There are a couple of beds here, and it might be a pleasanter place in which to stay than the town, unless La Ciudad boasts a better fonda in the future than there is at present.

Our friends dined with us at the fonda, and we gained some further interesting information upon the island. The winter temperature of La Ciudad is from 59° F. (15° C.) to 64·4° F. (18° C.), and the summer from 73·4° F. (23° C.) to 82·4° F. (28° C.). It will thus be seen that this town is one of the coolest places in summer, although there is scarcely a degree of difference among the islands. The population of the island is nearly 40,000, of whom 8,000 reside in the capital, rather

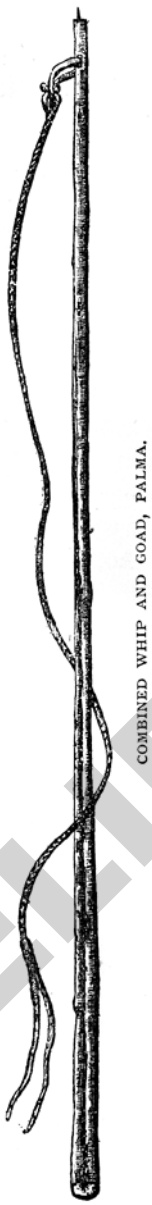
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a difference from the time of the conquest, when there were supposed to be only five hundred men in Palma. This would give the population as about 2,500. The town is garrisoned by a battalion of 1,000 soldiers. The tide has a rise and fall of seven feet, except during the equinox in March and September, when it rises a foot and a half more. After dinner a native artist called with Mr. Yanes upon us. He tells us that there is a gallery of paintings worth seeing in the Villa de Orotava, at the Marqués de Castro's house. A book of "Cantos Canarios," * by Teobaldo Power, a Canarian composer, is obtainable at Madrid. This information I elicited on inquiring if there were no native songs. When the name was given, I said, "Surely the composer is an Irishman, not a Canarian." They could not tell me in Palma, but later I ascertained that Teobaldo Power is of Irish extraction, his great-grandfather having been an Irishman. He is now at Madrid, where he is considered a first-rate pianist and composer, holding the position there of organist to the royal chapel.

On my expressing a wish to obtain one of the whip-goads used by the arrieros in this island, Mr. Yanes took us out in search of one. They are not procurable in the shops, being home-made articles. It was dark as we went through the streets. Suddenly we were ushered through a doorway in a gate, and found ourselves in a wide, dimly lighted passage, partly open to the sky, with steps half-way along, leading to a lower level. Laying his hand on my arm, Mr. Yanes told me to take care how I stepped, and peering on the ground at my feet, I perceived that it was covered with men lying asleep in different attitudes in their ordinary white clothes, a few in mantos. As we stepped further into the apartment, some, being roused and having opened half an eye, became rapidly wide awake. I think it was the advent of a lady in their midst rather than the fact of our being foreigners that wakened them

* "Cantos Canarios," por Teobaldo Power, Carrera de St. Geronimo, 34, Madrid. Price $7·50.

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COMBINED WHIP AND GOAD, PALMA.

completely. Mr. Yanes proffered my request that they would sell me a whip. One man who was about to offer us his had his outstretched arm drawn back by his neighbour, who told him it was not good enough. Eventually only one man proved willing to part with his goad, the others not being able to do without theirs on the morrow on their return home. As our eyes became accustomed to the gloom we noticed two smiling faces among the many handsome ones around, which we recognised as those of our arrieros Juan and Domingo. This sleeping place is used by the countrymen who bring their goods to market or for export. At daybreak they betake themselves and their mules homewards. With a hearty "Buena noche," we left them to their slumbers. The whip, I may mention, cost two and a half pesetas (two shillings), a price considered just. The man said the lash and goad cost him nearly that, and I was told it was correct, one more instance of the non-extortion of the Palmeros, that I am only too happy to mention. The whip, which I still possess, is four feet in length, of unpeeled, hard wood. The lash, of leather platted, is fastened by a piece of leather through a hole near the upper end of the stick. A small spike a quarter of an inch long is firmly embedded in the point. Two pieces of straight leather, seven or eight inches long, are stitched to the end of the lash, which is altogether very heavy and quite capable of hurting the tough skins of the mules. Mr. Yanes then took us into a clean-looking *café*, with marble tables, quite a modern place, nicely fitted up, where we

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had ices made with milk, and called *mantecas.* It was an ending to the day I appreciated more than the food with which we began it, for at breakfast this morning we were served, as a great treat, with snails! They were boiled in their shells, and to add to the tempting nature of the repast, our worthy landlady, seeing we despised the dainty, proceeded to eat them herself, drawing the snail out of its shell by means of a hair-pin, which she took for the purpose out of her hair. Observing that John was vainly endeavouring to extract one from a shell, she offered him the use of her extractor, whereupon, with indecent haste, he searched wildly at the bottom of his waistcoat, and fortunately was able to produce a pin.

*October 19th, Friday.*—We have one more day here, as the steamer is still taking in cargo, and does not leave until to-night. Rising at 6.30, after some coffee we sauntered down to the wharf to see in what state of animation it might be. We found men putting the cargo into the *Saffi.* Coloured cloth was one of the items. The surf was high, and the mole, which is not long enough, hardly protected the boats as they were being loaded. Oxen brought down barrels of almonds from the stores, which the men carried on their shoulders, walking up to their chests in the sea in order to put them into the boats. There was a crane also working, every endeavour being made to save time. Some boys were bathing on the beach, brown, merry urchins of slight build. We went round by Mr. Yanes's office to take our berths to Orotava, and were considerably astonished to find the modest sum of twenty-five pesetas each (£1) asked by Messrs. Forwood Brothers for the run over. Unfortunately at present there is no competition in the steam line, so one is obliged to give what is asked or go by sailing vessel. As the distance is only fifty miles or so, the fare is out of all proportion. Returning to the fonda, we had breakfast at 9 a.m., when some of our friends called for a chat. The kindness and attention we have received in Santa

Cruz de la Palma, and indeed in the whole island, from the gentlemen is not surpassed by the inhabitants of any of the islands.

I must mention here that if a person dies who is connected, however remotely, with a family, that family is thrown into mourning. Now with us that would not mean what it does here. In the Canaries the rites of hospitality are suspended, and those who are in mourning neither pay nor receive visits nor go out. To such an extent is this carried by the women of the family that they suffer both in mind and body from the confinement. The immediate result to us was that we could not be entertained in La Ciudad, several of the residents not being able to show us hospitality because they were in mourning. One could understand this of course with near relatives, but with distant connections it seems a very useless custom. There must be a great deal of humbug about it, for people cannot pretend to feel overwhelming grief for those whom perhaps they have never seen. Any habit which confines people to the house is much to be deprecated, as it lowers the nervous system and generally undermines the health. There is a struggle being made by a few of the best families against this custom. Those who have been educated in England see that we do not mourn for our loved ones less because we go out and do our duty and business in this life, not finding it conducive to usefulness to immure ourselves in our houses. But it is a noted fact that customs connected with marriage or the dead are the most deeply rooted and most difficult to alter in any nation. It is from these one obtains clues to the origin of a people whose antecedents are obscure.

The Guanche mode of burial is the best means we have of identifying that race, although aided in the research by other facts. Could the caves in the recesses of the valleys of the Atlas mountains, seen but never approached by Hooker and Ball, be entered and searched, remains and even mummies similar to those in the Canary Islands might probably be found. The origin of the ancient race, now extinct as a nation, that

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formerly inhabited the Canarian Archipelago, is lost in obscurity. As it is a subject which to this moment puzzles *savants*, I may be excused from endeavouring to elucidate the mystery. Suffice it to say that the generally accepted opinion is that the natives of the Canary Islands found here at the conquest came from the neighbouring coast of Africa, and that their language and customs have affinity with those of the Berbers and Arabs. That there was a tribe called Canarii inhabiting a forest beyond the Atlas mountains, on the river Ger, we know from Pliny's account of Suetonius Paulinus's travels. An inscription has recently been found in the ravine of Los Balos, Santa Lucia, in Gran Canaria, which begins in the same type as the celebrated inscription of Tougga. As the date of the latter is almost certainly known to be at latest the second century before our era, the engravers of that of Santa Lucia must be of the same date, if not more ancient. M. Verneau has also found at Los Balos two other inscriptions, totally different and unfortunately incomplete. M. le Docteur Hamy thinks he recognises certain Phœnician letters, of an extremely archaic type, at the edges of these stones. Some inscriptions found at Los Canales, in Hierro, by Don Antonio Padron some years ago have also been studied without much success. The Libyan character has, however, been recognised.

There are several facts about the ancient inhabitants that are remarkable and indisputable. The most significant ethnographical feature is that they embalmed their dead. Now at present there are only three nations known to have embalmed—the Egyptians, the Peruvians, and the Guanches. The Guanche mode of embalming is said to be similar to that of the lower class of Egyptians, although Prichard thought otherwise. There is no doubt that in many ways the Guanches were highly civilised. Their customs, their integrity, their laws, all point to a civilisation that could not have sprung from a savage race, but must have been the outcome of ages. Their connection with the Berbers being settled, and evidence being allowed to exist in the similarity of the modes of burial between

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them and the ancient Egyptians, we now only lack the link which binds the Berbers to the Egyptians. There is much which renders the finding of this possible, but, alas! until the recesses of the Atlas mountains have been explored proof will still be wanting on this most important point. Sir J. D. Hooker and Mr. Ball mention in their work * that when penetrating a defile known as Ain Tarsil, 3,000 or 4,000 feet above the sea, they saw caves some fifty feet above them, in the sides of the cliffs, which they considered to be natural cavities enlarged by human hands. Where the edge was broken away, it was made good by irregular blocks of stone. "The most singular point about these dwellings is the fact that they are all near the top of the cliff, where the rock is nearly vertical, in positions that cannot now be reached without a ladder or other artificial assistance." They add that the Moors, as usual, "refer these, as well as all other antique remains, to the 'Christians,' and stories of concealed treasure . . . make it almost impossible to attempt to explore or examine them." The joint authors think the position of these caves was chosen as being more secure against attacks of man or beast. Whether the troglodytes used a notched tree as a ladder or trusted to their superior climbing power is uncertain. It will be seen that these descriptions apply exactly to the caves in the Canary Islands, numbers of which are yet unvisited owing to their inaccessibility. Ain Tarsil lies between the Atlas and the sea, in the lower part of the chain of mountains in the south of Morocco. The only traveller who has penetrated this defile besides Sir J. D. Hooker and Mr. Ball is M. Balansa, who, however, does not appear to have noticed these caves. It is not to be wondered at therefore that their apparent affinity to the caves in the Canary Islands has never been remarked.

May it not be possible, from the anxious care with which these caves are guarded, that they are not merely empty and unused dwellings of past troglodytes, but that they contain mummies, like those similarly situated in the Canary Islands?

* "Marocco and the Great Atlas."

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From personal observation in the islands, I quite believe that they were peopled by Berbers only, possibly by more than one tribe. The distinction usually drawn, dividing Lanzarote and Fuerteventura from the remainder of the islands, their populations being said to have come from a different source, does not in my opinion hold good, that is to say if the present inhabitants are to be taken as at least partial descendants of the Guanches, a point on which I feel very certain. It is curious that to the present day the names of some of the inhabitants of the islands do not in the least correspond with the names of the islands. The consensus of opinion is in favour of the name of the archipelago being derived from the tribe Canarii, or Kanar, living beyond the Atlas. I would venture to suggest that they, being the principal colonists, possibly named the whole group, and that consequently the inhabitants of the other islands were, for some time at any rate, called by tribal names which survive in different forms. Various are the constructions put upon these names, and the old names and the modern are mixed in a manner difficult to unravel. Majo, which is said to be the ancient name of the people of Fuerteventura, has been converted into Majorero by the Spaniards, who also try to explain that Majo comes from a *shoe*, referring to the curious foot-coverings of the natives. This is a poor explanation, for the shoes are similar to those worn in other islands. It is more likely to be from Majorata, the supposed ancient name of the island. Conejo, in like manner, is explained as a Spanish word, the inhabitants of Lanzarote being now called Conejeros, because of the number of rabbits in the island. It seems curious, if this explanation be true, that the Palmeros had not this name, as rabbits are said to be so plentiful in Palma. Titre-roygatra, which was the ancient name of Lanzarote, certainly does not seem to have any connection with Conejo. I have spoken elsewhere of the numerous names belonging to Tenerife, and they also admit of a tribal origin. Palma has quite lost its name of Benahoare, or Benehoave, and the present race are called Palmeros. As to Gomera no one attempts an explanation,

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unless it be that it comes from Gumero, or Gomerita, a tribe mentioned by Leo Africanus as inhabiting the mountains of Mauritania. Numberless are the definitions of Hierro, already mentioned; but whether it comes from Hera, Juno, or Hero, the son of Gomer, according to P. Maestro Sarmiento, or Haoaros, another tribe mentioned in conjunction with the Gumeros by Leo Africanus, or Hiero, who was a tyrant of Syracuse during the first Punic war, or none of these, is a matter not yet decided. But the signification of the names of the islands renamed by the Spaniards as they are now known is equally difficult of elucidation. There are no more palms in Palma than elsewhere. Fuerteventura is the least likely of all the islands to be considered as worthy of its name, *fuerte*= strong or fort, *ventura*=chance, luck, or, as some say, Buenaventura=good fortune. Viera states that Canaria is undoubtedly a Latin name, and draws certain deductions therefrom. This, however, is scarcely an argument, as, whatever names the islands or their inhabitants possessed, they would be latinised by the conquerors. Instances of this mispronunciation and consequently misspelling are numerous, all conquering nations more or less altering the names of the places conquered. A difference in language is sufficient to make even European nations completely alter names. London is made into a monosyllable and spelt differently by the French, while how completely do we English saxonise Latin names, Napoli having little in common with Naples, nor Livorno with Leghorn. Get a jack-tar to spin yarns about the places he has touched at, and if it be the first time one has spoken to a sailor, it will be found that after listening to Jack for perhaps half an hour one has only just discovered to what quarter of the globe he is alluding! The same reasoning will also apply to Suetonius Paulinus, who would of course pronounce the name of the tribe he called Canarii in Latin fashion, which Pliny would also be inclined to perpetuate. Guanche, as I have already remarked, applies *only* to the ancient inhabitants of Tenerife, though now used generically for the ancient in-

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habitants of the group. That this name has also been altered or modified to some extent is conjectured. Tinerfe, some say, is Chinerfe, and Teide, Echeyde, which is said to have signified Infierno (hell), and from this the island before the conquest was known in Europe as the Isla del Infierno. Bory de St. Vincent works backwards, and tries to show that the ancient Egyptians came from the Canarians, who were the remains of a nation which inhabited the lost Atlanta! The leaves of the laurel were placed on the head of a Guanche king at his coronation, and were similar to the lotus placed on the head of Isis. The *colocase*, a plant whose root is eaten and whose leaves are represented in Guanche paintings, also accompanied the gods of Egypt. The best argument is perhaps that the mummies are embalmed in a similar way, and the incision for extracting the entrails was done in Egypt by a stone which, like the *tabona* of the Guanches, was of hard basalt. Both used caves in which to lay their dead, and both used tombs of pyramidal form. Upon this latter fact Bory de St. Vincent lays much stress, and goes into detail upon it in a way that shows he never saw the crude stone tombs of the Guanches, or he could not have compared them, save as a general idea pertaining to both nations, with the magnificent monuments of Egypt.

Messrs. Hooker and Ball mention that the Berber or Riffian houses are built of mud mixed with stone. Houses similarly built are to be found in the Canaries at the present day; and at San Bartolomé, Tirajana, in Gran Canaria, a Guanche house with a roof of these materials may yet be seen. The two main branches of the Berbers are mountain people; and the Touarecks of the Great Desert, from whom some of the Guanches are supposed to have come, are of the same stock. A curious fact is that the Berbers are decidedly superior to their neighbours in intelligence, industry, and activity, and we have ample proof that the ancient inhabitants of the Canary Islands had laws, institutions, and customs that would not disgrace a civilised community.

The best living representative of the great Berber language

is that of the Touarecks, and of them the tribes of Ayguer and Ahazzar; it is called Tamashek. It possesses a rude kind of writing, which to the rest of the Berber stock is unknown, but which is used only for rock inscriptions or on shields. M. de Rochemonteix finds a similarity of grammatical foundation between the Berber and ancient Egyptian languages, which would still further confirm my theory of the probability that the custom of embalming will one day be found to have been practised in the recesses of the Atlas. From the Berbers to the Canarii is but a short step. And the Oasis of Ammon, inhabited by a people speaking the Touareck language, forms another link with Egypt. It is also not difficult to believe but that a connection existed between the ancient Egyptians and their near neighbours of the desert, who would thus connect the continent from east to west. In fact, the Touarecks are proved by Hornemann and Marsden to have extended over the entire Sahara from west to east. Until, however, Morocco is opened up to civilisation, it will be impossible to give to the scientific mind satisfactory proof of the origin of the Guanche race and the mode of embalming their dead.

The temperature at noon to-day in the shade was 78° F. (25·6° C.), and at 9 p.m. it was 77·5° F. (25·3° C.). We went on board about nine o'clock, a man carrying our luggage to the wharf, where we took a boat to the steamer. It was a pleasure to feel ourselves under the British flag once more, and to hear the sailors talking in our language. A sense of relief and security arises from the mere sight of the union-jack that only those who have been deprived of it for a time can thoroughly appreciate. There is a tonic effect about it. One feels that to be an Englishman, taking the word in its full sense, is cause sufficient to make one lift the head higher and to step more proudly. It was with sensations such as these that we stepped on board even a very ordinary—half-trading, half-passenger—boat. Our countrymen were on her, and that was sufficient. There were a good many Spanish passengers, as this boat on her homeward

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route touches at Canaria, Lanzarote, and several places on the west coast of Africa, and at Cadiz. Our friend Don Mauricio was also on board, *en route* for England. I felt quite happy at being able to translate for them their requests. They were feeling that helplessness now that we had so often felt in the presence of a language that is not mother-tongue. I fear the sailors held them much in contempt, as the chief desire of most of the Spaniards was to get into their berths as rapidly as possible. Spaniards are not good sailors. One unfortunate was already *hors de combat*, and as his berth was in sight of the saloon, and the door open, the steward shut it with a bang and—language! Poor wretch! The captain had not done this trip before, and Spanish ways were new to him. The shore agent could speak about six words of English, and the captain could not speak any Spanish, so they were at sixes and sevens, much to our amusement.

*October 20th, Saturday.*—We did not start last night until about 11 p.m., and then we only went at half-speed, as at Orotava one is not allowed to go ashore until daylight. When on deck in the morning, Don Mauricio asked me, on behalf of many of the Spaniards, if I would ask the captain if they might go ashore at Orotava and join the vessel again at Santa Cruz, going by land from one to the other. I of course proffered their request. The captain was, however, so disgusted with Spanish ways, seeing only the worst of them, and not knowing their good qualities, that, in true English fashion, he said, "They may go to the —— for all I care!" I did not translate this, I need hardly say, but turned to the anxious faces watching me and told them the captain gave them with pleasure the required permission. The captain, a jolly English sailor, kindly insisted upon our remaining for breakfast on board, the English fashion of which we much enjoyed. We came ashore with the captain in the agent's boat, but not knowing it, the men, when out of his hearing,

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demanded and obtained four pesetas. Once more we had reached the land of extortion. Letters awaited us at Mr. Turnbull's, and the home news being good, we were content.

Mr. Louis Renshaw de Orea called early this morning, having missed us when last we were here. He gave us much information, with a promise of more to come, which he very faithfully kept. He knows English, Spanish, and French equally well, so is a most valuable aid, there being no fear of mistakes of misunderstanding. Mr. Renshaw is of Anglo-Irish as well as Spanish descent. He was educated in England, but having lived most of his life in Tenerife, is thoroughly conversant with the manners and customs of the inhabitants.

In the afternoon we called upon some of our friends, but we felt quite done up, so, after a welcome tub, turned in, glad to have a decent bed again. The temperature here is 78° F. (25·6° C.), the same as at Santa Cruz de la Palma.

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# CHAPTER XX.

## *OROTAVA—VILLA GARDENS—THE DRAGON TREE—TAXATION.*

Green is their garden and orchard, with rare fruits golden it glows,
And the souls of the blessed are glad in the pleasures on earth that they knew.
ANDREW LANG.

Trees from all parts of the world are gathered together in that one spot, of the rarest kinds. The flowers with which we are familiar as exotics in our forcing-houses luxuriate as in their natural home.—FROUDE.

Land of flowers and summer climes,
Of holy priests and horrid crimes.
JOAQUIN MILLER.

*October 21st, Sunday.*—Some medicine that we had ordered from the chemist's opposite was sent in this morning by a little boy. The child asked three pesetas, and thinking there must be a mistake in the price, John went over, and was told the cost was two and a half pesetas! So the youngster thought he would make fivepence on his own account.

We spent the morning writing home letters for to-night's mail until the hour for service at Mr. Reid's. Stamps are not sold at the post-office here, but at a shop specially privileged. This is universal in the islands, and unless directed to the shop, it is impossible to tell where stamps can be procured, for there is no outward sign. Letters in Orotava are not delivered; they must be called for; in our case this occasioned no inconvenience, as Mr. Turnbull always sent for the mail.

We noticed when out to-day that the shoemakers were all

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working. It seems they take Monday as their holy or holiday, and work instead upon Sunday. St. Crispin is the patron saint of cobblers. I have never seen better mending done anywhere than in these islands. The volcanic nature of the soil is destructive to footgear, making the superior knowledge of the art of patching very necessary.

We were shown over a cigar manufactory here to-day, this being the only time the owner could conveniently devote to us. It is much the same as the one at Argual, but smaller. The only disadvantage of this climate with regard to the manufacture of cigars is that it is too dry; there is not sufficient moisture in the air, as there is at Habana. In order to obviate this, in this factory a jet of steam is continually issuing in the fermenting room, and can be regulated to keep up the desired moisture. The idea, originated by the owner, is clever and apparently successful.

Tobacco has only been cultivated in the island since about 1873. An insufficiency of knowledge with regard to the preparation of cigars for the foreign markets and consequently bad sales have prevented the cultivation assuming anything like large proportions. In 1876 the Spanish Government offered to protect the cultivation, and bought the stock, but, owing to its bad quality, desisted from further purchases. This of course caused general disanimation, and the cultivation was to a great extent abandoned. A few planters, however, with worthy perseverance, continued, and in 1879 sent new samples to the Government, who decided to give it another trial. This proving satisfactory, a fresh purchase was made in 1882, and the tobacco admitted into the Government factories, and classed as *partido* of Cuba. The production in 1882 was 200,099 pounds, in 1883, 300,000 pounds, and if the Government continue buying, and the sales in other markets are satisfactory, it is soon expected to exceed 2,000,000 pounds. The report on the last consignment to the Spanish Government classes some as *vuelta abajo*, *partido*, and *vuelta arriba*. The prices at the last sale were five pesetas (four shillings and twopence) per kilogramme to

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three and a half pesetas (two shillings and elevenpence) per kilogramme. The cigars at Orotava when we were there were selling for about thirty dollars per thousand, a weight of about fifteen pounds.

Many of the ceilings of the houses here are not flat, but slope upwards for some distance from the spring of the wall on all four sides, the actual centre of the ceiling being much smaller than the corresponding floor. This gives the rooms a great height, making them appear large and airy.

We dined at five o'clock with the Marqués de Candia, at his country house, La Paz. The Marqués and Marquesa and their family speak English well, having been educated in England. They are very musical, and are a most charming family circle. Being considerable landowners, their opinions and acts are of weight with their countrymen, and deservedly so.

*October 22nd, Monday.*—We arranged this morning to ride to the Villa,* as the town of Orotava is called. We are staying at the Puerto de Orotava, almost immediately above which lies the Villa, about a mile and a half distant. A new carriage road has been made between the two, so that driving is easy. This very road, however, is a subject of disagreement and grumbling. All orders from the Government and all petitions to it with reference to any part of the island must be transmitted through the officials at Santa Cruz. Now between Santa Cruz and Orotava is an implacable and undying political feud. Santa Cruz is the principal port of call in Tenerife, and the capital, not only of the island, but of the Province; hence it gets all the trade and all the strangers. Unfortunately, however, it is not a town nor has it the surroundings that tempt foreigners to stay in the island, and upon seeing it many turn away and direct their footsteps elsewhere. The temperature is slightly higher in Santa Cruz than in the rest of the archipelago during the summer, and the hotel ac-

* Pronounced *Veelya.*

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commodation is not of the best.* Those who know of Orotava pass by Santa Cruz and hasten thither. Hence Santa Cruz is jealous, and does what it can to thwart Orotava. All matters of improvement urged on by the latter are pooh-poohed or altered so effectually, that they become useless, or misrepresentations of what is required are made to the home Government. The case for Orotava lies in a nutshell—it is beautiful. Therefore, if Orotava could only be the port of call, strangers would learn that Tenerife is not the barren desert that it is imagined to be from its eastern side, and money would flow from other countries into the island, rendering it rich, prosperous, and happy. The Orotavians require and urge one gigantic measure—a harbour. They complain that, owing to the representative to the Cortes being a Canario,† the harbour which should have been theirs has been given to Las Palmas. There is no reason why both islands should not have a harbour. Certainly the island of Tenerife ought to have a port where ships at all seasons might ride in safety, but whether that harbour should be at Santa Cruz or at Orotava is another matter. A mole was commenced at Puerto de Orotava, having been clamoured for, but it proved a well of money which was either thrown into the sea or never went further than the engineers' pocket. So it remains unfinished and almost useless up to the present. There is, however, on the east of the Puerto de Orotava a spacious bay, partly surrounded by rocks. This, on which experts have been asked to give their opinion, is said to be capable of making a fine harbour. Owing to much urging on the part of the *diputados* of the district, engineers have been sent from time to time to report upon the matter and draw plans. Underhand work of some sort, it is said, has prevented

* Since leaving the island I learn that an hotel (the International) has been started in the city by English people.

† Since writing the above, Leon y Castillo, the representative, has been made *Ministro de la Gobernacion*, so it is supposed his influence will procure everything for Gran Canaria. It is surprising he does not extend his patriotism to the archipelago.

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a favourable report reaching Madrid. Money is a very powerful agent in the matter. The Bay of Martianez, upon its eastern side, is partly enclosed by rocks, which only need concrete between to make that side into a breakwater. There is one drawback to forming this into a harbour: the barranco empties itself into the bay. This difficulty, engineers say, can be overcome. Besides, the barranco very seldom has water in it, only once in a few years. At the present time it is almost beyond dispute that Orotava is the heart of the island. It is in the centre of the fertile district. Not only is it beautiful, but its port would be more accessible for the export of the wine, fruit, and other produce and industries of the inhabitants. It is a shorter distance, too, from Orotava than from Santa Cruz to the lovely and little-known islands of Palma, Gomera, and Hierro. As it is also the starting point for the Peak, strangers go thither. At present yachts, when they visit the islands at all, must anchor at Santa Cruz, their owners driving the thirty-eight kilometres (about twenty-four miles) across the island to Orotava. Of course a harbour at Orotava would be almost a death-blow to Santa Cruz. But I would suggest this idea to the thoughtful consideration of all Tenerifians. Would it not be better for all to join in making Tenerife the principal island, irrespective of the town, be it Orotava or Santa Cruz? The time is not far distant when the fact of there being a commodious harbour in Gran Canaria will attract shipping, and consequently capital and strangers, to that island. A certain number will always seek Tenerife on account of the Peak, but if added to that there be a good harbour at one of the most beautiful spots in the world, Tenerife would not only rival the other islands, but certainly would eclipse Madeira. This, I do not think, could happen were the harbour at Santa Cruz, the situation there not being suitable for visitors, owing to its lack of verdure and distance from the Peak, even were it possible to make a harbour at that place. What Santa Cruz fears of course is losing her position as the capital, a position that Las Palmas earnestly covets, and for which she is striving hard. There is little

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chance of Santa Cruz increasing much in importance except as a coaling station.* The advantages she now possesses she has had for a century, whereas Las Palmas is increasing by rapid strides. The Peak will always make Tenerife the centre of the archipelago, and it is only right that that island which is the wealthiest, which contains the vast majority of the aristocracy, is the largest, and has the greatest population, should also possess the capital of the province. The population of Santa Cruz and Las Palmas is at present equal, both containing about 16,000 inhabitants,† but whereas all the wealth of Gran Canaria is centred in Las Palmas, that of Tenerife is scattered throughout the island, notably in Laguna and the Orotavas. The population of Gran Canaria is about 90,000, whereas Tenerife has 105,000 inhabitants. If we add to these the other islands of the group as they are geographically as well as governmentally arranged, we find that the western division is by far the more important. Palma has some 39,000, Gomera 12,000, and Hierro 5,500 inhabitants, making a total of 161,500 against 119,000 in the other three, Lanzarote having 17,500 and Fuerteventura 11,500. The entire population therefore of the archipelago is in round numbers 280,500, which may be better understood by comparison. It is a little more than Edinburgh and a little less than Sheffield, or almost identical with the 290,000 inhabitants of Belfast.

The miserable jealousy between the two large islands is contemptible. Contact with the outer world will, it is hoped,

* Coal shipped from Santa Cruz in 1882 . . 18,000 tons.
" " " 1883 . . 35,000 " [1]
" Las Palmas in 1883 . . 4,500 "
" " " 1884 . . 6,700 "
" " " 1885 . . 18,390 "
" " " 1886 . . 38,800 "
" " " 1887 (5 months) 28,150 "

† It is impossible to ascertain the exact population, as, whatever the returns may be, each island makes its capital contain the greater number of inhabitants, irrespective of the real facts!

[1] Or nearly double. I have not been given returns up to date of Santa Cruz.

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remove this. The envy, hatred, and malice between Santa Cruz and Orotava is, however, paralysing, and if it be not thrown off, and broader, nobler views of life acted upon, will end in the destruction of both. The archipelago ought to act upon one principle, taking for its motto "United, we stand; divided, we fall." The unwholesome jealousy which characterises the islanders is not productive of good works, but only of bad words.

The road between the Villa and Puerto de Orotava is said to be another instance of this trivial jealousy. The Orotavians say it has been made with many useless curves, rendering the distance absurdly and unnecessarily great between the two places, the contractor, who was paid by time, spinning out the job as long as possible. The distance by the old road is three kilometres, by the new ten! We at any rate did not use the latter, preferring, as do all pedestrians and riders, the older and more direct route, which is not very steep.

The engineer of the carreteras is one Clavijo. The roads are, as a rule, well laid out, the geological formation of the ground being well adapted for road-making.

Mrs. Branckar, who has kindly offered to escort us, as she knows nearly everyone in the Villa, is, like myself, riding a donkey, while John is mounted on his old friend Saturno. We start at 10 a.m., and clatter up the paved streets. In a weak moment I consented to dispense with my own saddle and use the arriero's, which I much regret, as it feels all angles. However, the distance we have to ride is short.

We stopped at the Botanical Garden to tell Mr. Wildpret of his friend in Gomera who was so kind and hospitable to us, and then rode on to the Villa, where we went first to the fonda, to leave a bag of necessaries and secure beds, as we meant to stay there for the night. In order to reach the inn we had to pass through the plaza. This is unique of its kind, for, instead of being surrounded on all sides by houses, there is an abrupt descent upon one side, the town stretching so much beneath, that a clear and unimpeded view can be had of the sea, the Puerto, and part of the valley. Behind the low wall, on which



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lamps are erected, is a broad promenade, and behind it a still larger portion covered by immense plane trees, under whose shade one could sit upon the stone seats and watch the lovely sunsets that illumine the sky over Palma. At the back of the trees and seats is a long building, part of which is the convent of San Agustin. We obtained a striking view of the Peak,

"Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,"

from the wall bounding the plaza.*

We dismissed our steeds at the fonda, ordering them for the next morning, it being our intention to visit then the wood or forest of Agua Manza, which lies above the town, and from whose depths comes the spring of water which watereth the valley of Orotava. Of this more later. Meanwhile we walked to the house of the Marquesa de la Quinta, and asked leave to see her garden. We did not expect to see the Marquesa, as she is mourning for an only son; but hearing of our visit, she kindly came to meet us and brought us into the house. The Marquesa must have been a lovely woman. She is still fine and handsome, though now elderly. The strong air of melancholy pervading her face can be understood in one who has lost an only son and who is herself a widow. But other causes have rendered the Marquesa's trial still more painful. Her son was a Freemason, and the Church of Rome would not in consequence permit him to be buried in its cemetery. The Marquesa has therefore been obliged to lay his body elsewhere, and, in order to have for it a suitable resting-place, has erected a handsome mausoleum of white marble in her own grounds.

We went upstairs, and from thence out into the garden, which is extensive, but owing to the steep nature of the land, is terraced. Most of the walls forming the terraces are covered by creepers. At the top of the garden stands the mausoleum. It is a melancholy idea, and it would have been better for the Marquesa's peace of mind if the Romish priests had allowed the poor harmless clay to rest in peace in the burial-ground out

* See frontispiece.

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of her daily and hourly sight. We gladly turn to the luxuriance around. The scents are delicious; it is impossible to tell whence they come, for every plant seems to be giving out perfume, save perhaps the immense magnolias, which reserve theirs for night. The beds are small and shaped fancifully, the high outside borders being of box, with tiles inside. Were it not for the coffee trees and other tropical plants, we might fancy ourselves in an old English garden, and from this side the house looks like an English cottage, long, low, and tiled. Quantities of birds in cages hang up under the magnolia, and seem to enjoy themselves as much as captives possibly can. Entering the house again, which is a picture of cleanliness, comfort, and beauty, the Marquesa took us to the comedor, from a window in which there is a view of the mausoleum. It looks well from here, towering above the foliage, as it stands on rising ground at the top of the garden, a large tree in the foreground breaking the eternal blue of the sky above the monument. At the Marquesa's request, we take a photograph of the tomb, but it is rather too distant to make a good picture. The Marquesa gracefully acknowledged a few copies we sent her of it later. Plates on the walls and cupboards filled with china, besides other ornamentation, give an air of comfort to the comedor not usual in Spanish houses.

We next paid a visit to the house of the late Señor Don Lorenzo Machado. His widow, Doña Balvina, and her daughters received us most courteously. The garden here is on more level ground, so is totally different in character from the Marquesa's, though equally lovely. There are a few terraces and some water. We sat at the end of one terrace talking to the ladies, while they most kindly gave us some of the many fruits in the garden, and told us of everything it contained. The Abyssinian plantain lives three and a half years, and its leaves grow five yards in length. Arums flourish in wild beauty and abundance, and are not treasured as the apple of one's eye, as they are at home. Chrysanthemums greeted us as from England. Oleanders and other flowers mingled with

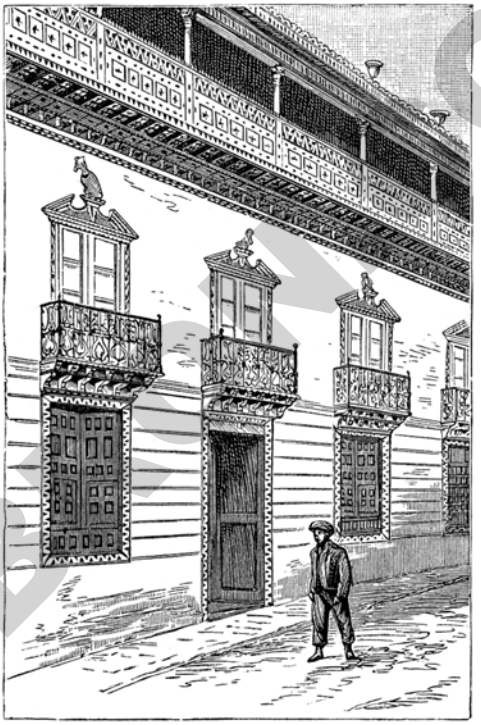
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fruits of all kinds, while a coffee plantation suggests utility combined with beauty. Pomarosa is a fruit that, if eaten with the eyes shut, it would be difficult not to believe one was eating roses, the taste and scent are so similar. The aguacate is a long green fruit, and, I think, disagreeable to eat, but that is a matter of taste. Some think anones, mangoes, and custard apples, which we had next, equally disagreeable. Doña Balvina most kindly sent a tray of wine, soup, bread, and biscuits into the garden for us. We thoroughly enjoyed our nectar and ambrosia, sitting amid foliage and fruit that by their beauty would seem scarcely intended for mortals, but—we were in the Elysian fields. I wished that I could have lived in this charming place and written amid the oleanders and magnolias of the beauties of Orotava. My pen would surely have flowed more freely and fully in such a peaceful and poetical atmosphere. Perhaps not. Such surroundings are enervating. England, with her rough winds, sunless skies, and cold weather, gives her sons and daughters the energy that has made her name and placed her in the foremost rank among nations. It is well, in whatsoever land one lives, there to be content. But those who have time at their disposal will scarcely care to linger amid the cold, dirt, fog, and gloomy skies of an English winter when a few days southward are sunny lands, laden with fruit and verdure, where the birds sing amid the foliage, and where the ills that flesh is heir to lessen, if they do not cease.

Don Alberto Cologan, son of the Marqués de Candia, met us here, and after luncheon took us to the Marqués's house in the Villa—not where we dined last night—to see the great chestnut tree planted in 1493. Only one branch of it is alive now. Some seeds, however, having fallen inside the old trunk, have grown into a tree which springs out of the parent. Very curiously, too, has the new tree spread one of its branches along the inside of an old bough. The new trunk is thus cradled in the old. This new growth is bursting open, and, in fact, destroying the old tree. The branch of the giant which is

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still alive is only some three feet from the ground, and is as thick as an ordinary tree. The base of the trunk, at three feet from the ground, we measured, and found to be thirty-two feet in circumference. The chestnut is not indigenous to this archipelago, so must have been introduced by the Spanish



BALCONY OF DON JUAN GUARDIA'S HOUSE, OROTAVA.

conquerors. Hare's-foot ferns grow in the old tree. A wall was built at one side some years ago, and into it the tree has grown.

We were next taken to the house of Don Juan Guardia. It is a large, three-storied dwelling, and along the highest windows runs a most lovely old wooden balcony, which is

carved beautifully, and is so light in appearance as to suggest delicate iron tracery. This splendid bit of work is painted, with cruel vandalism, bright green and white picked out with yellow; but even these glaring colours cannot destroy its grace and beauty. The peep into the patio through the open doorway was pleasing. A fountain and figures were in the centre, but almost hidden by a wealth of greenery, restful to the eye after the hot glare of the street. A small boy, in white shirt, jacket, and trousers, carries the camera, and a few boys and men hover near whenever a photograph is being taken. We obtained a good street view, giving the postigos and the curious spouts from the roofs of the houses, which when it rains pour their water on the footpaths and the passengers' heads. Entering Don Juan's house, we pass up a fine broad staircase. An interesting old carving of St. Lawrence and the gridiron is in a niche on the stairs. The rooms are decorated in French style, with mirrors and gaily coloured papers. One of them is a large ball-room, with several antechambers opening off it. Passing out to the azotea, we obtained a fine view of the Valley of Orotava, with the Peak in the distance, rising above the Tigayga saddle-back. Beneath lies the cemetery, with its numerous white marble crosses or monuments. The Church of the Conception towers above all, with double turrets and centre, mosque-like dome. On the left is the hospital, once the finest edifice in the island, but the original building was burned. The Jesuits' college was also burned. Fire has dealt freely and unkindly with the Villa de Orotava. Glas gives an account, at once pathetic and amusing, of a fire in the convent of Santa Clara, which took place one morning while still dark. He relates the fact as having occurred "two years and a half ago," which would be about the year 1761. Viera gives it as happening in 1761, on July 27th. The convent "was burnt so suddenly, that the nuns had but just time to save their lives: it is the custom of many people in that country, when the weather is hot, to sleep without shirts or shifts; therefore some of the poor nuns, not having time to cast anything about them,

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made their escape stark naked, when some of the crowd who were assembled on that occasion took off their cloaks and threw them upon them. Several fellows went into the cells of the convent, and, in sight of all the crowd, sat down composedly and crammed themselves with the conserves and sweetmeats belonging to the nunnery, notwithstanding the vicar called aloud and threatened them with excommunication." The Jesuits' college was once the scene of an amusing episode. The convent of Santa Clara was again burnt, and the nuns scattered. Seeing, however, that there were only two monks inhabiting the newly built monastery, the sisters thought it a waste of good space, and forty of them came one day in a mass and demanded admission. They pleaded that they, as well as the fathers, were Jesuits, and that the house was much too large for the two fathers, whilst the nuns had very insufficient accommodation. Whether the pleading had any effect or not, the sight of so many women certainly had, for one father fled and the other locked himself in his oratory! A year later, in 1718, the nuns left, and the fathers had their own again, when the college was really opened as an institute for learning, and seventy pupils entered.

Leaving Don Juan's house, we next visited the Church of the Conception. The outside, massive and not beautiful, is flanked by two towers, containing bells, on either side of a broad façade, ugly in the extreme. But if the outside be so unlovely, the interior is full of interest, and in many ways of beauty. Four pillars of *canteria*—a stone found in the island—slender and surmounted by almost Corinthian capitals, are on each side, the intervening arches being of most graceful shape. But the principal objects of interest and admiration are the pulpit and altar. The former is of grey marble, with the four Evangelists carved in white bas-relief on green marble panels. Cherubs' heads at the top of the panels between the Evangelists, in my opinion, spoil what otherwise would be a rich and harmonious effect. The staircase, of painted wood, to represent marble, is also an artistic mistake; unvarnished and unpainted oak or the

native pine, a lovely wood, would be much more effective. The pedestal on which the pulpit rests is the most beautiful bit of carving in the church, and perhaps in any church. An angel in Carrara marble with wings, draped in robes, concealing yet suggesting the beautiful lines of the figure, supports the pulpit. The delicately moulded arms are raised, and the hands placed behind the head. The figure is perfectly upright, and appears to be with ease bearing the weight of the pulpit on head and hands. So perfect are the proportions, that the pulpit does not appear as if weighing down and overpowering the slight and graceful figure which supports it. The altar, standing in the middle of the chancel, is also of Carrara marble. The centre is a dome supported by six pillars, each composed of a single piece of marble. Surmounting the dome is a figure of the Virgin in Carrara, holding a cross, and round the base of the roof cherubs are seated, their legs hanging over the edge. On either side of the two front pillars is a winged archangel in Carrara, kneeling on rough blocks of marble. The angels are well executed, and are graceful figures. The door of the tabernacle is of silver. The altar cost 30,000 dollars (£6,000), and was consecrated July 13th, 1879. The church was built at the end of last century, and cost a million pesos (£150,000). There is a curious figure of San Francisco de Borja in a chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Candelaria. It is well modelled, painted in black and gold, and about three feet high; a black aureola is on the head, and a silver-crowned skull in its left hand. The figure opposite of San Juan Nepomuceno is also well designed. Altogether one's eye is not hurt here by the grotesque paintings and figures that so often disfigure the churches in these islands. This is decidedly the most artistic church in the archipelago, which may be readily understood when one remembers that in it the majority of the *crême de la crême* of the isleños worship. We had several friends with us, and one gentleman who had the charge, or at any rate the keys, of the sacristy, took us thither to see the vestments. These were very gorgeous, brocaded in many colours with a large

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amount of silver and gold threads. A few were of the years 1750-60, also a book-stand, used when the church was consecrated, a hundred years ago. One vestment of green, with gold and strawberry colour worked upon it, was said to be very ancient, and would make South Kensington look to its laurels. A piece of gold lace, worked like a Guanche handkerchief, was also shown to us. The sacristy is large, well lighted, and has a good stone floor. Round the walls are a few indifferently painted portraits and a well-carved image of the Virgin of the Conception. We noticed "Las Andas," a sort of movable altar-piece of beaten silver, an old wooden table, massive and painted dark green, and a quaint washing-stand. There was also a plain wooden case of an old eight-day clock.

Leaving the church, we returned to Doña Balvina Machado's house to see some pictures of the Cavalier and George III. periods, and then went to the Marquesa del Sauzal's to see the site of the famous Dragon Tree. Descriptions of this tree have been given by nearly every traveller in every language who has visited Orotava and written thereon. This unique vegetable curiosity and the Peak were the two objects visited by strangers. Now it is no more, having been destroyed in successive storms in 1819 and 1867.

The *Dracæna draco* is not really a tree, but a kind of gigantic asparagus. What has made it so famous is the slowness of its growth. So slow is it, that the dragon tree of Orotava was by the most moderate botanist considered to be six thousand years old, while many placed its age at ten thousand. When Alonzo de Lugo conquered the island, he found that the Guanches performed their religious ceremonies in the hollow trunk of this particular specimen, its great age even in their day rendering it sacred to them. By de Lugo its large cavity was turned into a chapel, where mass was performed. Humboldt in 1799 gives an account of this vegetable curiosity. He says, "Its height appeared to us to be about fifty or sixty feet; its circumference near the roots is forty-five feet. We could not measure higher, but Sir George Staunton found that ten feet from the ground

the diameter of the trunk is still twelve English feet, which corresponds perfectly with the statement of Borda, who found its mean circumference thirty-three feet eight inches, French measure. The trunk is divided into a great number of branches, which rise in the form of a candelabrum, and are terminated by tufts of leaves, like the yucca." Piazzi Smyth in 1856 gives the height as sixty feet above the ground, forty-eight feet six inches its circumference at the base, and at six feet from the ground thirty-five feet six inches, and twenty-three feet eight inches at fourteen feet five inches above, "where the branches spring out from the rapidly narrowing conical trunk." It is difficult to give an idea of a dragon tree to those who have never seen anything similar. The trunk and branches are smooth and perfectly bare, but the outer bark is divided into what can be more fitly described as scales than aught else. The branches are bare of leaves, except at the extreme points, where long, narrow, sword-like leaves, about from two to four feet in length and one or two inches wide, stand out stiffly like spikes. The branches are thick and clumsy in appearance. The old dragon tree was said to have been somewhat in the shape of an hour-glass; that is, although forty or fifty feet round the base, it narrowed to less than half that size, and again increased as its branches spread out, until their outer circumference would be about two hundred feet. This monster, with its huge body, thick arms, and numerous fingers, could readily have been mistaken by the ancients for a dragon guarding the golden apples in the Garden of the Hesperides. When the storm in 1867 broke off the upper part of the tree, some of the branches lying on the ground measured eighteen feet in circumference. Notwithstanding that the trunk was supported in every way to keep it standing, it fell, and there is now not a vestige of it left. In its place, however, is its child. A seedling of the giant was planted in 1877 on the exact site of the old tree. It is a healthy plant, some four feet high; there is only a single stem, of course, from the top of which shoots out a mass of sword-leaves. When a dragon tree once branches, it never grows higher, but con-

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tinues to spread in width. The branching takes place only after it blossoms. It generally does not flower for fifteen years, or even thirty. There is a dragon tree thirty years old in Doña Balvina Machado's garden, which has not blossomed yet. In the Cape Verde islands, where this sort of dragon tree is to be found, one was known to flower when only eight years old. The African dragon tree has a similar flower to that of these isles, but the form of the tree is different.



THE YOUNG DRAGON TREE OF OROTAVA, TENERIFE.

The garden of the Marquesa del Sauzal is well, one might say beautifully, kept. It is not easy, in a country where everything grows so rapidly, to keep a garden in the order to which we are accustomed in England, but the Marquesa's, while still looking wild with the wildness of nature, has yet the restraint of order distinctly marked. Standing near the infant dragon tree is a curious palm, of immense height. The stem is exceedingly slender, and about half-way up there is a curious constriction. It is said this tree is as old as the Guanches, and at the

time of the conquest was a landmark to the Spaniards. It is 110 feet high, and is reported to be taller than any palm in Europe. The house is some twenty or thirty yards distant, and the Marquesa told us that in a storm the tree bends until it knocks the tiles. Shortly before the death of the Marqués, while he was ill in bed, a terrific storm came on, and he could not rest or sleep, thinking that this palm, which had braved so many centuries, would probably be broken before morning, and the second glory of his garden gone. However, it still stands, and probably owes its preservation to the fact that it bends before the wind. It is exceedingly courteous of these inhabitants of the Villa thus allowing strangers to enter their gardens and admire the contents. As the numbers of visitors increase, this will, however, no doubt, be found a tax upon their kindness. There is all the more reason therefore that the Garden of Acclimatisation should be enlarged and turned into a public botanical garden, where the luxuriant vegetation of the valley could be freely studied by all visitors.

Don Alberto showed us over his father's house, where we noticed some excellent oil-paintings. Portraits of two of the Marqués's ancestors, with decidedly British faces, firm and determined, and eyes of Saxon blue or Irish grey, attracted our attention.

There is a church in the Villa of note, though not from its internal beauty, like that of the Conception. Santo Domingo is notorious at the present day for cock-fights, which take place within its precincts! It is generally a question with Spaniards as to whether their religion or bull-baiting and cock-fighting proclivities come to the fore, and in this instance the latter have very much prevailed. It seems scarcely credible that such a scandal should be allowed to exist.

Mrs. Branckar returned to the Puerto, having given us her kind escort all day, and saying good-bye to our other friends, we went to the fonda for dinner. The food was good, and we had a clean bedroom. It was here the Prince of Wales's sons stayed on their tour round the world in 1879. They and the

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younger officers got up an impromptu dance in the evening without ladies, which they seem to have enjoyed.

There is a guest-book at the fonda, in which English, French, Americans, and Germans have made remarks, but there is a notable absence of anything Spanish. The pictures here, as all over the islands, when not religious subjects, are of a sentimental character. "Mazeppa" is a favourite. Such stories are portrayed in a series of coloured French prints, the lettering below being at one side French and the other Spanish. The comedor is a long, narrow room.

It may be of interest to add a sequel to the account the young Princes have given of their stay in Tenerife.

They left the fonda in the Villa to ascend the Peak at 3 a.m. on December 5th, 1879, accompanied by the captain and some of the officers of the *Bacchante*. Ignacio Dorta, considered the best Villa guide, and a second guide, Manuel Reyes, were in charge of the party, while Mr. Reid, the vice-consul, also accompanied them as far as the Cañadas. It was too late in the season to go to the summit of the Peak, so they only ascended to where a good view of the centre cone could be had, namely to the Cañadas. Even at that height they speak of its being "bitterly cold." After breakfasting between eight and nine, they rode westward to Icod Alto, returning by Realejo to Orotava. Of the view from here the Princes say, "From this point we got one of the finest views we have ever seen," and describe the valley as "a long slope of everlasting fertility and loveliness." It was late before they arrived on that same night at Santa Cruz. But their duties were not over, for, although very tired, they were, or rather Prince Albert Victor was, present at a ball given in their honour by the vice-consul, Mr. Edwards. It was said Prince George had fallen off his horse descending the Peak, and so was unable to be present. The opening of the ball was delayed until late, awaiting their arrival, and even then dancing had to commence without them. An eye-witness told me that the appearance of the officers as they entered the

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room, tall and erect as English officers are, and dressed in uniform, was very striking to the Spaniards. What also struck them as curious was the plain way in which the Prince was dressed, and that going up the Peak the Princes were clothed as two ordinary young English gentlemen would be. There were but few islanders in uniform besides the consuls, who were present in official dress. Mrs. Edwards did the honours of the ball, which was held at her house in the Calle de la Marina. The day the Princes arrived in Santa Cruz (December 3rd) they visited the museum, and the English flags in the church were taken down for their inspection, as they were for ours later. The next day Mr. Benjamin Renshaw's carriage, with a pair of horses and a black leader which had been sent from Laguna, conveyed the Princes and captain to that town, where they lunched with Mr. Renshaw. The inhabitants of Tenerife were much surprised to see that the captain sat in the seat of honour in the carriage, while the scions of a royal house took the inferior place. They did not understand how the Princes could be looked upon as midshipmen only, and treated accordingly. Much credit is due to the common-sense of the heads of our royal families that they put the younger members under wholesome restraint and discipline, which makes them the better able to rule others when the time comes. Another episode which interested the natives of Tenerife was that when driving from Santa Cruz to Laguna a stop was made at a venta, and upon the Princes being asked what they would have, they said, "A piece of bread." This simplicity was much admired by the people, who thought it wonderful to see "those accustomed to eat what they pleased content and even glad to have only a piece of bread!"

The taxation of the islands is very heavy, and is retarding trade. Spain takes all she can squeeze out of the archipelago, putting as little as possible into it. The natural resources of the country are thus terribly crippled. It is said that the taxation has become heavier since General or Marshal Serrano paid a visit to the islands. As representing Spain, he

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was received with very great hospitality. At Orotava all kinds of invitations were showered upon him by the aristocracy of the Villa, who entertained him nobly. In order to make a better show, plate and other valuables were lent by one to the other as each in turn entertained the general. Unfortunately, however, what seems to have impressed the guest was the wealth of Orotava from a taxable point of view, and the hospitality thus dispensed has been followed by heavier taxation. Whether the fact of these increased burdens following upon the visit of the general has a logical sequence or not is not for me to say, but it is the impression in Orotava that it has. Many patriots sigh, who know the possibilities of the islands, that they do not belong to England. One gentleman said, "Oh, if England only held them, were it but for twenty-five years!" I heartily echo that wish. It would be a happy day for the isleños. But I fear such a thing is not practical in these modern days, when might is not always right. I don't suppose Spain would thank us for the suggestion, little use as she makes of the archipelago.

There was a most curious project made about 1706 in England with reference to these islands. The Palatines, driven by persecution from their homes, crossed to England, and encamped on Blackheath.* It puzzled the Government what to do with them, and it was proposed to send them to the Canary Islands. But "whether the project is to settle them in some uninhabited island there or to give them a share in some island already peopled by Spaniards, or whether the old inhabitants of Palm Island or some other are to turn out," does not appear clear. It was further suggested at that time that "perhaps in this peace this place to be restored to Spain, or we may retain it as well as the West Indies." The author concludes by saying that we already, however, possess almost the whole trade of the Canaries and buy their wines. Besides, he feared it would place the Palatines too near "the Spaniards and their Inquisition."

* "Declaration by the Elector Palatine." J. Williams, London, 1707.

A little later, in 1748, Pitt wrote that England ought to use all her efforts to exchange Gibraltar for the Canary Islands. England of course neither could nor would consent to this exchange, although it is just possible Spain might, so little is the value of the archipelago known in the Peninsula, and so great a thorn in Spain's side is our possession of Gibraltar. Pitt was a long-headed statesman, and understood how England would develop all the resources of a possession of which Spain could neither then nor now make anything. Their resources developed, the Canary Islands might be the brightest jewel in the Spanish crown. With a wisdom not initiated or followed by the parent, the inhabitants of the islands have abolished monasteries and scattered the monks. Convents now only remain, but even these help to bleed the unfortunate peasantry. When the lands were almost choked with monasteries, the poverty of the inhabitants was extreme; and during the reign of the Inquisition trade of any sort languished, owing to the heavy dues that had to be paid to that institution. When Glas was in the islands, he says that "the priests not being satisfied with their tithes, nor the friars with the revenues of their convents, have found ways and means to load the inhabitants of these islands with many impositions, which would be tedious to enumerate; and though they are not all established by law, yet it would be dangerous to refuse the payment of any of them. For instance, every fishing-barque from the coast of Barbary is obliged to deliver a certain quantity of fish to each convent (monastery); and when the mendicant friars go about from house to house, they are liberally supplied with alms: if any one was to refuse them or give a surly answer, he would surely be marked as an object of their vengeance, and thereby be exposed to the Inquisition. All ranks of men here who have any point in view or scheme to pursue take care in the first place to secure the leading men of the clergy in their interest; when this is done, all their obstacles are easily surmounted."

The Inquisition was only abolished in 1820, but for a

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hundred years previously was allowed to exist inactive. The Church property and monasteries have been sold, and the clergy are now paid by the State. The absence of hundreds of useless individuals, living by the compulsory charity of the populace, has considerably enriched the inhabitants; and their departure has been the precursor of a better morality and the development of a mental energy that only requires the education of the peasantry to complete the transformation and render the islanders free.

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# CHAPTER XXI.

## *PUERTO DE OROTAVA—FREEMASONS—CUSTOMS.*

In men whom men condemn as ill
I find so much of goodness still,
In men whom men pronounce divine
I find so much of sin and blot,
I hesitate to draw a line
Between the two, where God has not.

JOAQUIN MILLER.

When the moral health is sound, the political health cannot be seriously disordered.—FROUDE.

*October 23rd, Tuesday.*—When the horses arrived this morning to take us to Agua Manza, we felt so completely knocked up, that most unwillingly we returned to the Puerto without accomplishing the journey. One has to be acclimatised to the various and luscious fruits before one can take them in quantity with impunity.

Agua Manza is the wood on the slope of the mountain behind Orotava. The Villa is built on the lower slope, and even the streets of the Puerto are on the hillside. The Villa has, however, some of the steepest streets it has ever been my lot to see, exceeding even those of Funchal; it is also a most extraordinarily built town. Scarcely two streets run parallel; their width varies, even the same street being broad and narrow. The houses, which are old, have been erected by those who could afford to pick and choose a site, so are built irregularly, and the walls of the streets are festooned here and there with lovely

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creepers. These ups and downs, odd angles, and unexpected turns render the town quaint and exceedingly picturesque. The water which gathers in the woods of Agua Manza and flows from thence to the Valley of Orotava makes it habitable, the people comfortable, and the gardens luxuriant. It is conveyed through culverts down the streets, and supplies whoever puts his own pipe in connection with the main aqueduct. This is a great waste of power, as consequently a number of small pipes run side by side where one large one would suffice. The water is always on except for one day in each month, when the cistern or reservoir is being cleaned. Payment is according to the size of the pipe. The English hotel at the Puerto, a four-storied house of considerable size, pays one toston a quarter, or four shillings a year!

The wood of Agua Manza abounds with ferns, moss, and every conceivable beauty in greenery, and is shaded by noble trees untouched by man's hand. The Guanches knew the value of this wood to the valley below, and protected it, as fortunately the present inhabitants are also doing. There is of course a staff of officials to look after the forests, but how carefully this is done we know in Palma and elsewhere. It may be said that we English cannot afford to throw a stone in this matter, when at the present moment the famous Kauri pine of New Zealand, which takes eight hundred years to come to perfection, is being wantonly destroyed, cut down, and burnt. We might plead that we have not had possession of New Zealand four hundred years, but, on the other hand, where is the superior civilisation and officialism of which we boast? The Maoris are not as wise as the Guanches were, or have become demoralised by the colonists' example.

Here in Taoro * lived the king, or *mensey*, of the island, and even when Tenerife was divided among his nine sons, he who reigned in Taoro, and his successor, was considered the chief of the chiefs. His residence was in Arautápala, the Orotava of to-day. This was Benchomo's kingdom. His celebrated

* Guanche name of Orotava.

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brother, Tinguaro the brave, and his sister Dacil, also famous in history as the most beautiful as well as the most courageous "Guanchinesa," belonged to Taoro also.

The temperature in the shade at the Villa at 7 a.m. was 64° F. (17·7° C.), a very moderate degree of heat. The streets are lit with oil lamps at night, few and far between. They are paved with kidney-stones, except opposite a few houses, where evidently private pavements have been laid down. The fonda faces south-east in a street which, as usual, is sloping. It is wide, however, and the house stands at the corner overlooking, to the north-east, a large and, just now, from the crops having been removed, bare piece of land, enclosed by a low, cemented wall. Below is a one-storied building, which is evidently used by several families, and looks as if it had been an old convent. At the lower side of the neighbouring square a lofty dragon tree rears its Medusa-like head, and overlooks the valley. There was a fine view of the Peak this morning as we walked up the hill from the fonda towards the Plaza de San Agustin. Looking across and above the town, we saw Teide rising majestically and calmly. Not a cloud was in the sky, and every wrinkle and every mark on its sides was distinctly visible. The Puerto de la Cruz—the real name of the Puerto de Orotava —looks but a small collection of houses, lying below on the right. The fonda here has a very extensive azotea, on which is a shed containing two beds, not at all a bad place to sleep in summer. Water is laid on to the house.

After dinner at the Puerto, which was at 2 p.m., we went out for a walk, and a most interesting walk it proved to be. Leaving the fonda, we turned to the right, and taking the first street to the right, left the town in a westerly direction. We pass Mr. Reid's store, a large and well-stocked building, and Mr. Renshaw's house, painted white and blue, and shortly are walking on the land of Dr. Perez's *finca*. *Quinta* and *finca* are used indiscriminately. The former is the Portuguese and the latter the Spanish word for a kind of small country residence, partly garden and partly farm. The English translation of this

word is *farm*, but as the use of this would convey a totally wrong impression to English readers, the Spanish word had better be adhered to. For a considerable distance we walk over a vast chaos of broken-up and soil-less ground, covered with stones, looking at first like a river-bed from which water has long been absent. This had once been in a high state of cultivation, but in March, 1880, a waterspout burst on the Peak, and the water, rushing down with tremendous force and invincible volume, swept away everything into the sea, besides bringing down upon the unfortunate country quantities of large stones. To prevent the recurrence of this disaster, thick walls of well-cemented stones at various angles are being built—we saw the labourers at work—all down the slope. Young fig trees are now planted at intervals over the malpais, being about the only plants which can flourish in such uncongenial circumstances. Our road, or rather path, leads through the open space in front of the one-storied houses. The large horizontal beam of a winepress opposite the house is a conspicuous object. Some men are engaged upon it just now, either preparing it for use or cleaning it after the vintage. Striking objects about the land here are huge pyramids of loose stones, constructed in one or two steps, which have been collected from the surface to admit of agriculture. Their bases are some twenty yards or more square, and they tower to a height of some thirty or forty feet. We pass through an avenue of young palm trees, which in a few years will be a magnificent plantation, and on emerging from the shade our attention is taken by a surgical-looking plot of ground. It is a plantation of cochineal, covered with white rags. The upper leaves of the cactus are so thickly covered, that the effect is most peculiar. The bags contain the mother-insects, and each bag is affixed to one or more of the thorns of the leaf. The material is coarse grenadine. We are again reminded of this industry by passing a small oval structure of cemented stones, with a small door—a cochineal oven. After the insects are collected they are placed in the oven

a short time to kill them and prepare them for the market. Dogs run out and bark at us from every little house or hovel as we pass. If they be small, we take no heed; but be they large—and dogs here are of all sizes and mongrel breeds—we take the precaution to arm ourselves with a handful of good-sized stones. This is necessary, as the animals are untrained and vicious. We pass some fine specimens of the *Eucalyptus Lehmann*, just out, full of its peculiar horned fruit. There are many species of eucalyptus growing in these islands, and all seem to thrive. In the Botanic Gardens there are no less than thirty-two species. We leave the rough track we have been following, and turning to the right, clamber down over some volcanic rocks till we reach an old stone aqueduct, about three feet wide. This gives us a smooth path, following which we soon reach the regular road and emerge by the seaside. But before turning our faces towards the town, we walk a few yards off the carretera in the contrary direction, whence we have a fine and close view of some black volcanic rocks, with holes through them, in which the sea is just now churning in white and foaming masses. By the roadside a man with a billhook is cutting some yellow flowering shrub, the name of which, on being asked, he says is *herba blanca*. We notice the large vertebra and a few ribs of a whale quite bleached by the sun and sea under a rock on the shore, where the animal was recently thrown up by the tide. A great many tamarisks flourish all along the shore, and very graceful, though straggling, shrubs they are, with their greyish green feathery branches. It is curious how salt the leaves taste when put into the mouth. This is the case even when the plants are growing many miles from the sea. A small whitewashed building standing alone upon a rock which juts out into the sea challenges attention. There is a chasm between the rock upon which it stands and the mainland, with which it is connected by a plain bridge of a few planks. It is a fortress, garrisoned by two soldiers. We next come to the Spanish cemetery, enclosed with white cemented walls, and the door being just now wide open, we

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enter. The enclosed space, as in all the cemeteries on these islands, is not large. The ground is thickly planted with black, plain wooden crosses, most of which have white ends. Several have a glass panel let in, beneath which, on a piece of paper, is written the name of the deceased person. A few mausoleums of marble are placed round the sides of the cemetery. To one of these a curious interest attaches. Some years ago an Englishman named Morris was murdered near this spot. He was a clerk of Mr. Reid's, and was entrusted with the key of the safe. He, unfortunately for himself, appears to have been of a foolish, bragging disposition, and instead of, like any other man, carrying the key and saying nothing about it, he boasted of the possession, and displayed it upon his watch-chain. This continued so long, that it at last excited the cupidity of a couple of the natives. In any other country his life would not have been worth an hour's purchase. Here, however, the people are so honest and free from crime, that to set about murdering a man would take a great deal of time to consider and require an immense amount of provocation. In fact, murders are so exceedingly rare, that when one does occur it is not only a nine days', but a nine years', wonder. Two men enticed Morris out of the Puerto for a walk, murdered him, then returned and robbed the safe. Morris was of course missed, but no trace of him could be found, for an ingenious hiding-place for his body had been secured. The murderers had removed the slab of one of the oldest of the mausoleums in the cemetery, one which had not been opened for twenty years, and flung his body in, replacing the marble, as they thought, exactly in its former position. But murder will out. Unknown to them at the time, they broke a chip off the edge of the marble slab, and to this circumstance was due the discovery of the murdered man. Three or four days after the murder the funeral of a child took place. When the corpse arrived at the cemetery, it was found that the proper certificate had been forgotten, so, while one of the mourners returned to the town to get it, the rest dispersed themselves in the cemetery. A blind boy was of the party,

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and he, walking about, perceived a very disagreeable odour, and following it up, arrived at the mausoleum. He then called the attention of others to the spot, and they saw green flies coming out of a freshly chipped-off cranny in the marble slab. Upon returning to the town the authorities were informed of the discovery, and knowing that this particular tomb had not been used for years, and there being at the time much talk about the missing clerk, a party at once went to the cemetery, opened the mausoleum, and found the remains, greatly decomposed. The murderers were discovered, and being found guilty, were, after considerable delay, executed in July, 1881.

The extreme sentence of the law is effected by garrotting, which is said to be second only in humaneness to beheading. Two turns of the lever and screw that compresses the iron collar round the throat of the criminal against an upright post behind him produce instantaneous strangulation without a struggle. Very seldom, however, is this horrid public spectacle witnessed. Murder is a crime scarcely ever committed by the natives of these islands, and it is only for murder or treason that capital punishment is inflicted. When a case does occur worthy of the death of the perpetrator, the numerous formalities or red-tapeisms of the law proceed with a dilatoriness that is incredible. The execution of the sentence seldom takes place sooner than two years after the commission of the offence and detention of the prisoner, and there are instances of that term being nearly doubled. Even after sentence has been pronounced in the islands, the case may be sent to Spain unless the provisional tribunal of the Audiencia says that the sentence is without appeal. If the criminal should, however, belong to the island militia, he is tried by court-martial, and if sentenced to death, is shot at once.

Later we saw the horrible garrottes in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, where there are two, a second having to be made for the last execution, which was the double one of Morris's murderers.

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A grave in the cemetery has just been dug. It is about four feet deep, and most irregularly shaped round the sides. Amongst the earth which has been thrown out is a skull. A funeral now entered. The black coffin was borne from the town on men's shoulders, and some twenty or thirty men followed. There is neither priest nor music. Music is not in general use here, as in Palma, and doubtless in this instance the relatives were not able to afford to pay for the priest's services. We noticed the caper plant growing here



MONUMENT ON THE SHORE, OROTAVA.

and also the *bougainvillea*, which has such magnificent purple blossoms. All along the shore we have passed great clumps of the stiff, columnar *Euphorbia Canariensis*, the plant which perhaps of all others is the species which most strikes the visitor fresh from European vegetation. A little further nearer the town on the left, and close to the sea, rises a circular, dome-shaped cupola, with six plain pillars, erected upon a steep and solitary rock. Steps have been made on the town side to the summit. The inhabitants of Lanzarote about the end of the last or beginning of this century

were in great distress for want of water, which almost caused a famine in the island. Many of them came to Orotava in search of work from the then prosperous Orotavians. Instead of setting them to do something useful—there was not a road on the island at that time—this ugly and perfectly useless monstrosity was erected. The six pillars and the cross surmounting the whole have been added since that time, and an inscription in verse to perpetuate the imbecile, though humane, projector of the work.

"Es todo lo que vemos excelente
Al inventor resulta mucha gloria,
Este peñon conserve eternamente
De Luis [Carlos] Lavaggi la memoria.

"Si Colon el ingenioso
A España dió un nuevo mundo,
A un genoves sin segundo
Se debe este sitio hermoso.

"A Taoro nuevo brillo!
Un buen estrangero dió
Y do este punto, afamado
Medio Teide descubrió."

The view of the town from here is perhaps the best that can be obtained within a short distance. The near background is gracefully formed by the cliff of the Marquis of Candia's property of La Paz, with its two characteristic palm trees. Turning our face inland, we see at our feet the little, wall-enclosed English cemetery, with its waving palm and other trees. This quiet-looking little "God's acre" has recently given rise to a good deal of contention in Orotava. A well-conducted, inoffensive Freemason died, and the priests resolutely refused the corpse burial in the public cemetery. Under these circumstances, the alcalde thought proper to arbitrarily insist upon the man being buried in the English cemetery. Mr. Reid, the English vice-consul, naturally firmly resisted this unjust proceeding, when the alcalde said that if the burial

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must take place in the public cemetery, the wall should be pulled down to admit the body, as the place should not be desecrated by its being brought in through the gate! Childish as it may seem, the wall of the cemetery was actually pulled down, and the unfortunate man was about to be buried, like a dog, in a corner where rubbish was accustomed to be thrown. The family of the deceased then came to Mr. Reid, and requested him kindly to allow the interment in the English cemetery, for they preferred this spot to the place and mode of interment intended by the alcalde and priests. To this request, and not to the unjust command of the alcalde, a courteous assent was at once accorded. Thereupon a fierce discussion in the papers of the island ensued, and, amongst many unpleasant incidents, one writer remarked that it was odd that an Englishman should spell Spanish better than an alcalde. The authorities have since demanded that the key of the English cemetery be handed to them, and this has been done, by many, it is thought, unwisely, though under public protest. The plot of land in question was first given to the Dutch by the Spanish Government, but for more than fifty years past—long enough to establish a title—as testified by Mr. Charles Smith and other old residents who have lived that time on the island, it has been in the undisputed possession of the English. The Dutch, it appears, died out in Orotava, though there is said to be a settlement of them or their descendants still in Taganana, a northern district of Tenerife; and since the English have been possessors the wall around has been raised, trees planted, and the cemetery well kept and cultivated, while formerly it was open, unkempt ground. Thus the matter rests at present. The whole affair is interesting as showing how feeling runs on the island. There are many Freemasons in the archipelago, where they are most certainly the salt of the earth, almost every intelligent, educated, and thinking Spaniard belonging to the craft. If the progress and enlightenment of the islands be alone considered, it would

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be well to see their numbers increased. There is a touch of infidelity among them, more, however, in reference to some of the superstitions of the Church of Rome than a general disbelief in everything of a religious nature. The individual in question, however, had not the least taint of scepticism, so there was the less reason to refuse him Christian burial.

It used to be customary to bring the body before burial into the church, but since the cholera epidemic the custom has ceased. The dead are now laid in a mortuary chapel close to the church, while the funeral service is performed in the church. A low sort of bier covered with black cloth, on which the coffin containing the corpse was formerly placed, is now put in front of the high altar, surrounded by candles, with a cross and candles at the head. This sort of deputy-corpse is a curious sight to the visitor.

We re-enter the town through the district called Ranilla.* The street is wide, paved with the unpleasant pebble stones, the houses on either side being small and of one story. After going about fifty yards a curious object meets our gaze. It is a volcanic blowhole, about sixty or seventy feet high, rising abruptly from the midst of the houses over which it towers. It is made of hard black lava, and reminds us that this quiet, sleepy-looking town has once been the scene of terrible destruction, of horrible fury, and molten rocks. When will this mighty volcano break forth again, and its molten streams of fiery fluid rush impetuously by the shortest courses to the sea? None can say. On every hand around are signs of the fearful past, and the history may be repeated at any moment. A little further on, about fifty yards down a street to the south, is another of these solidified bubbles, the side facing us being hollow and cavelike. The former has a large cross upon the top, and in front of it, facing the street, a "Calvary" has been built. The appearance of this from the other side of the street is striking. The whole of the front is made of wooden bars set vertically in tiers, so that it looks like a large cage in a menagerie. It contains several

* "Little Frog."

crosses and the usual ornaments, besides being used as a store-house for the paper lanterns used on *fiesta* nights.

There was a strong wind to-day from the south-east instead of the usual north-east trade-wind. This is the most trying wind that blows in the archipelago. It is the Levanter from the Sahara. Fortunately, however, its visits are few and far between, for it makes everyone cross!

*October 24th, Wednesday.*—Mr. Louis Renshaw came in this morning, most kindly bringing us some English papers. Later John went with Mr. Branckar for a walk, leaving me to peruse the news and rest. The following is an account, written by the former, of what they saw:—

"At 11 a.m. we set out for a walk, turning our faces eastward. On our way we pass the Spanish fonda, a clean-looking house, and the German boarding-house, and reaching the barranco, cross it close by the sea. A broad walk, fringed on the seaward side with tamarisk trees, here runs on the left round the town to the harbour. The present harbour is almost useless; nevertheless, the mole is being continued at long intervals. The site where a real harbour could be made is undoubtedly here. There is already a wide bay, with a projecting headland, on the north, and if a mole were run out to meet it, a really magnificent harbour would be procured. The nature of the sea bottom admits of a mole being easily made, and it is to be hoped the authorities will set prejudices and jealousies aside, and work for the benefit, not only of Orotava, but of the whole island.

We now ascend by a path winding round the face of the cliff upon the summit of which is the Marquis of Candia's house and grounds. The path is simply a narrow ledge on the side of the precipice, nothing more. The soil we walk upon is red and powdery, while above is a lava stream, whose dull brown contrasts not unpleasingly with the gay colour beneath. Under an overhanging rock, in a slightly expanded portion of the path, we come to two short pipes of stone projecting a foot from the surface of the mountain, from each of which clear, limpid

water is running. It is the famous water of Martianez, and is said to be the purest and best in the whole island. We found the temperature of this water to be 63° F. (17·3° C.), when the air was 69° F. (20·5° C.). Mr. Charles Smith, who has observed the temperature of the spring for many years and at all seasons, informs us that it never shows the slightest variation. It is reported that whalers prefer to take in this water, as it is said to keep better than any other. The formation just above the pipes looks like a very loose conglomerate, the interstices between the stones being scarcely filled up. There is a good view of the town we have left, the morning sun making the whitewashed walls, the green shutters, the red tiles, and the azoteas clear and distinct. Pursuing our walk after drinking some of the water and testifying to its coolness and purity, we soon arrive at a cave, going back a short distance into the cliff, but with a high roof and wide entrance. It is formed in the loose conglomerate. The floor has given way at one place, and there is quite a circular opening, about four feet in diameter, through which we see light coming from seaward, showing that this lower cave has an opening in that direction. Passing this, we have to stoop low at places to avoid the overhanging rocks, and are continually brushing with our elbows clumps of lovely maidenhair fern and disturbing numberless pigeons, which wheel round and fly off. The walk requires a good head, for the sea is thundering some hundred feet below, and the descent to the shore is quite precipitous. There are several little hollows in the cliff, full of fine red earth; perhaps scarlet more nearly describes the colour. Above our heads the strata have been much contorted, and a few bits sticking out look, against the clear blue of the sky, like large earth-serpents craning their necks over the sea from their subterranean abodes. We now have to leave the path, for a landslip has occurred, rendering progress in the same direction impossible. The cliffs here being less precipitous, we take advantage of a somewhat steep slope, and arrive at the top. On the summit we find the land more or less

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flat and cultivated, though a barren plateau of considerable width is left in its native wildness of rocks and scattered vegetation. On this strip goats are feeding, and a most picturesque scene it is. A goatherd is sitting on a projecting rock above the precipice, his long pole in one hand and his chin resting on his knees, as he dreamily gazes out to sea. Even thus might a Guanche have often gazed before the advent of the ruthless invaders. He is clad in short white trousers and shirt, with a scarlet band round the waist and a black felt hat. The goats are browsing around him and down the side of the precipice, where it makes one giddy to look as they leap from point to point. Gigantic specimens of the artistic square-stemmed euphorbia, with its many stiff columns pointing to the sky, are around, and here and there small clumps of a pretty little purple flower.

Leaving this scene regretfully, and continuing along the top of the cliff, we arrive at a most curious natural phenomenon. There is a sudden break in the cliff, where a short, precipitous ravine runs inland from the sea. The side of this nearest the town—west—has been, as it were, cut down from top to bottom by a scoop or gouge. Down this half-tube the strata are shown to be composed of thin layers. The appearance is as if an immense pile of brown paper had been cut down perpendicularly at the edge by a cheese-scoop. Similar scoops, though not so perfectly formed, we saw in the Barranco de Angustia, in Palma. At the east side of this ravine, a little further on, we find a goat-track, following which in its zigzagging downward course, we reach the entrance to the ravine by the sea. Clambering over huge boulders and large stones, we turn to the right, and are within the circle of the scoop. Looking up, we see how sheer are the sides, while an ass's bones and skull on the floor prove how fatal a fall from the top would be. The circle at the bottom is complete, save for the side by which we entered. From west to east the diameter is nineteen feet, the entrance at the east side being nine feet and a half across. The strata, which from above we have com-

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pared to layers of brown paper, we now find to vary from two inches in thickness to twenty inches. The softer soil between having fallen out for a depth of a foot or less, leaves the harder strata very prominent. The height of this chimney would be about 150 or 200 feet. We return to Orotava by a higher path, just beneath the wall of the Marquis of Candia's garden, arriving at the fonda at 1.30 p.m."

Mr. Renshaw called for us this afternoon, and took us to his father's house, the Sitio de Luna. His father and family are from home, so he is leading a bachelor life at present. The place has been newly terraced and laid out, and is on steeply sloping ground. We walked to the top of the garden, from whence there is a good double view of the town, mole, and sea, and also of the bay where the harbour might be. The further side of this bay is bound by a curious rock, which stands erect upon the point; it is called Rapadura, from a sort of sweetmeat made of that shape. Behind is a view of part of the valley as seen between two cones, the mountains in the background and the Peak a little to the right.

As an example of how cheaply one could live here, I may mention that a furnished house in Puerto de Orotava, containing seven large rooms, kitchen, and offices, the sala sixty feet long, is let for fourteen pounds a year. There is a magnificent view from its azotea, and a fountain on the terrace, which is always supplied with water. The furniture is very old and solid. A good-sized unfurnished house for a family can be easily procured also in Puerto, with a small garden, for eight to ten pounds a year. There are no taxes to be paid by the tenant, except a small tax, according to the rent of the house, upon each inmate of age, called "Cedula de Vecindad;" neither is there income tax of any kind.

Servants get from eight to twelve shillings a month, and leave at a moment's notice. The parlourmaid at our hotel, a nice-looking girl—a priest's child—took herself off this

morning because the cook, like all cooks, possesses a bad temper, and pitched into her! Meat is fivepence a pound, and vegetables are very moderate. There is a difficulty at present in getting cow's milk, goat's being chiefly used. This could readily be overcome, however, and if pasturage sufficient to produce butter and milk be not procurable in Tenerife, Gomera is at hand to supply butter at any rate.

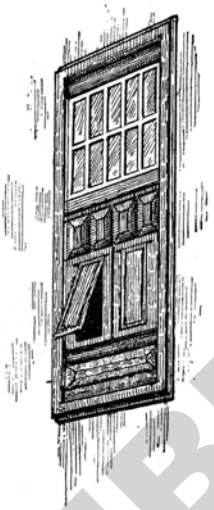
Palma is considered to have the best goats as well as horses, though many say the horses from Fuerteventura are the best. Good horses cost from twenty to thirty pounds, but young and untrained animals may be procured at from about eight to ten pounds.

*October 25th, Thursday.*—A little rain fell early this morning. The temperature at 8 a.m. in the shade was 72° F. (22·3° C.). The Peak, which one always looks at the first thing in the morning and the last at night, and which one consults all day long and talks of as one would the barometer and the weather, was visible, although there was a slight haze over the lower mountains.

We took a day's rest in the house, as there was much writing of various kinds to do. Our evenings here in the hotel are very pleasant. Mr. Branckar's music is in much requisition, and he is most generous in complying with our demands. It is delightful to sit by the open windows, looking out on the stars, which here shine so brilliantly, and listen to the masters feelingly interpreted. Night after night we are much amused by the various *novios* (which may be translated lovers) in the street, who stand against the walls of the houses beneath the windows of the ladies they admire. I watched one man with much interest. He never spoke, and seldom looked at the postigo which was open above him, showing that a señorita was there; he scarcely moved except to change his weight from one foot to the other! What a tedious courtship, especially as it frequently goes on for years! Glas gives an amusing account of the Canary Island youths of his

time. It seems it is very easy to become emtangled in an engagement, but very difficult to get out of a dilemma, and he says that he seldom left the islands without having several refugees on board who were flying from engagements they had never intended to enter into, but which were forced upon them.

It is surprising the seclusion in which the daughters of the gentry live.* One would think that they were so immoral that they had to be closely guarded. Such, however, is not the case, as they are exceedingly virtuous. It is the remains of an old and effete fashion which each family in turn is afraid to be the first to break, lest they might be spoken of lightly. To say that to be confined to the four walls of a house, to never go out except to mass, or to visit at a neighbouring house, is healthy, is absurd. It is this which robs the Spanish ladies of their beauty, for which while young they are so justly famous; it is this which gives the elder women that settled sadness of face which is so distressing to see. A contented old age is a beautiful sight. The intercourse between the young of both sexes is also much hampered and restrained. How can a woman get to know her future husband if she never sees him but in the presence of others? Young people cannot talk freely of that which is nearest to them in the presence of their elders. The freer and more unrestrained the intercourse between the sexes, the more the right position of women, both before and after marriage, will be found. Besides, as one gentleman said to me, "The imprisonment of women does not prove their virtue; that is best proved by fighting in the world, and not



POSTIGO, OR FLAP WINDOW.

* Since writing this I see that a pamphlet on this subject has been published by an Anglo-Canarian, Louis Renshaw de Orea, entitled "Eslavitude Domestico."

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being immured." It is well known that this cloister-like seclusion of women would not prevent a girl doing evil should she choose to do so. It sounds absurd to say that a girl cannot venture outside her own door alone! A slight improvement has been made in this respect, and two girls have been known actually to walk abroad and—not to have run away with every man they met! It is needless to say that a walk, even if filled with trivial incidents, is more conducive to health of mind as well as body than loitering in garden or house, where there is no change of scene from one week's end to another. Trivial gossip is apt to be engendered by those who have no interests outside their immediate family, and who do not mix with the outer world and have their ideas altered and trivialities thrown aside by the broader, wider, and stronger views of life taken by the sterner sex. As a rule, those nations where freedom of intercourse between the unmarried of both sexes is greatest are those where the women are most virtuous after marriage as well as before. Take England, for example, or, better still, take Ireland, whose women are noted, even occasionally blamed, for their freedom of manner and acts, and yet the Irish nation, the real Celtic, is one of, if not the most moral people on the face of the globe, a fact proved by statistics.

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# CHAPTER XXII.

*THE REALEJOS—ICOD ALTO—BARRANCO DE CASTRO.*

Speak for yourself, John.

LONGFELLOW.

But, oh! what muse, and in what powers of song,
Can trace the torrent as it burns along?
Vines, olives, herbage, forests, disappear.

COWPER.

*October 26th, Friday.*—As I did not yet feel up to a long ride, John, accompanied by Mr. Renshaw, who kindly went with him and Lorenzo, rode to-day to Icod Alto, from whence one gets the finest view of the valley of Orotava. He has given me the following account of the day's adventures and scenery:—

"Our plan to-day was to ride to the top of the mountain above the village of Icod Alto, whence, we are told, a good view of the Valley of Orotava is obtainable, thence to the Barranco de Castro, and to return to the coast, visiting the Rambla de Castro on our way. Though it is almost impossible to obtain reliable information as to distances, we clearly saw that this meant a long day in the saddle, so at 6.40 a.m. I set out from the archway of the fonda, accompanied by Mr. Louis Renshaw and our old companion Lorenzo, on foot, carrying the 5 × 4 camera. Reckoned by months, our acquaintance with the last-named was slight, but the closeness of the companionship during our travels made the period seem almost

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like the same number of years. Together we had starved and thirsted, together we had been lost, together we had sumptuously fed when wine and provisions fell in our way, and above all, over the rough ground as well as over the smooth he had always proved himself watchful, genial, and courteous.

We leave the town, hardly yet awake to the bustle of the day—if Puerto can ever be accused of bustling—and proceeding westward, cross the barranco, or stony ground, down which the water burst with such devastating fury in 1880, higher up than we crossed when visiting Dr. Perez's farm. From this higher elevation we obtain a better idea of the action of the water. We pass a solitary house, built upon some flat rocks and slightly above the surrounding land, looking like an island, for the torrent of water had divided above it, and swept down either side. It had a lucky escape from destruction. We can now see the cemetery very nearly in a straight line below us, near the shore, and can understand what a narrow escape it too had from being swept, with its mortal remains, into the sea. Upon our left, as we ascend, a number of men are at work upon a public wall built by the side of the barranco, to prevent a recurrence of the late catastrophe. Very strong the wall looks. Built some four feet wide and six or ten high, of *piedra molinesa* (the same stones that are used for grinding in the mills), well set in a mixture of Roman cement, sea-sand, and hydraulic lime, it seems solid enough to withstand the greatest force of water that the Peak clouds can hurl against it. Just now that mighty monster is enveloped in clouds. We cross the carretera, and then our path leads us through La Vera, a mere collection of a few poor houses, at an altitude by my aneroid of 700 feet. We pass on the left the Montañeta, giving its name to the hamlet clustering around its base. These wart-like excrescences upon the ground look in the distance quite black. They are, in fact, mostly composed of black cinders. But a nearer view shows some red tints scattered about the heap. In fact, an inspection reveals scoriæ and trachytes in every stage of calcination, the colours ranging

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from black or grey to brilliant red and the yellow of ochre. The surface is quite sterile, and rising thus, destitute of vegetation, from a fertile and verdant plain, the Montañeta is from every point a striking feature of the landscape.

All this time we are steadily ascending the gentle slope of the mountain called, with singular inappropriateness, the 'Valley' of Orotava, and emerging upon a more level tract of country, see straight in front of us the village of Cruz Santa, and for the first time to-day obtain a view of Villa Orotava, some distance off, on the left. The black cinder-heap—the Montañeta—200 or 300 feet high, and of considerable length and breadth, is now upon our right. A curious white line running horizontally upon it, near its base—for it arises abruptly from the slope, looking like a gigantic black wart upon the land—stands out clearly. It is an aqueduct to carry water to the lower villages for domestic and irrigating purposes. The path we have been following is, as usual, stony and rough, but compared with other roads on the island which we have already traversed, it may be said to deserve the epithet of good. Following a path between two walls, so narrow that it is with difficulty we can squeeze our horses sufficiently against one side to allow some mules to pass which are coming down laden with wood on either side of their backs, we soon arrive at Crux Santa, the little village we had seen ahead of us, and get off our horses to ascend to the cross, which stands on the top of a little rocky promontory jutting out on the slope. I make the height at this place to be 1,450 feet.

Adjoining, and immediately below, the cross, is a large paved round threshing-floor, where doubtless in the autumn the trampling oxen may be seen. From this spot we can see the Villa Orotava, the east end of the Puerto, and the mountains culminating in the Peak behind.

A girl meets us carrying balanced upon her shapely head a huge basket of magnificent pink and white cinerarias. Lorenzo, with the greatest politeness, stops her, and, much praising her flowers, begs a bunch of blooms, which he hands

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to us with a courtly bow, removing his hat at the same time.

Some raindrops are falling, so we hastily remount and push on through the village. In the plaza men are busily engaged in putting up flags and gaily decorated masts, for a fiesta—"Our Lady of Mercedes"—is about to be held. At 8.15 a.m. Realejo Alto is reached. The two Realejos—Alto and Abajo, Upper and Lower—form really one long, continuous, straggling village, or rather country street, a barranco dividing them. We push on down the steep and roughly paved street, from the top of which is obtained a good view of the church, the oldest in the island, built on the site of the baptism of the Guanche kings. The feature that strikes one first is the fact that it possesses a spire, the first I have seen in the islands. We have since inquired, and find it is the only spire in the archipelago.

Dismounting, and leaving our horses in Lorenzo's charge, as it was now raining, we were glad to hurry on down the street and run into the church. Mass was being performed at a side altar, eight kneeling countrywomen forming the congregation. Two were clad in the white flannel mantilla, edged with satin of the same colour; the rest wore upon the head yellow, red, and speckled handkerchiefs.

We sat down on one of the side wooden benches, to wait until the service should be ended. These benches are somewhat peculiar; the back is of roughly carved wood, but the seat is a long box, in which church candles are stored. Several of these box-benches are placed down the side walls between the altars. Four stone pillars are on either side, the arches being wide, bold, and plain. The first arch on entering upon the right has given way at the keystone; in fact, a distinct bulge is visible, which should be seen to at once. The flooring of the nave is of plain, small stones, of the two aisles of red bricks. The roof is of wood, in the usual Canary style, with the beams carved as elsewhere, but the wood on the whole much darker and older than I had previously seen. The pulpit is a primitive box of wood, with the panels of

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carved and gilded wood. While we were noting these details, mass had ended, and Mr. Renshaw sending a message into the vestry, we were courteously invited to enter by the priest, who not only showed us the vestments and church utensils, but himself conducted us over the church and up the tower, explaining to us every detail. The chancel is paved with white and black square tiles, looking like inferior kinds of marble. The church was built two years after the conquest, the patron saint being James. The best vestments are old, and of fine crewel work, which would serve as patterns for South Kensington, so well blended are the colours, perfect the workmanship, and natural the flowers and shading. The robed Virgin, which is carried in procession, is worshipped under the title of 'Our Lady of Remedies.' The fiesta is in September. There is a large cross of wood, about twelve feet high, covered with solid silver plate, which is used on fiesta occasions. Upon the base are a number of strips of silver, engraved with dates. The latest dates I noticed were 1803 and 1805. It was—and the priest bitterly regretted the use of the past tense, for he said people were not so liberal to the church as formerly—the custom for the gentleman who paid the expenses of the fiesta for the year to place upon the cross at the base his name and the date, on a silver strip. The high altar calls for no comment, but upon its right, in the nave, is a copper slab, level with the floor, with a coat of arms, and bearing the date 1648. Over the altar, on the left wall on entering, is a curious, even grotesque, old picture, representing souls burning in purgatory. The font is of one large excavated stone, three feet in diameter. We inquired as to the archives of the church. The earliest were most unfortunately burnt some years ago. The oldest now extant we saw in a wooden cupboard near the font. The book was of paper, bound in leather, and the first entry —a baptism—bears date 1542, the writing being very good and clear, and the ink even now jet-black. Surely for such ancient and valuable records some receptacle more secure than a common wooden cupboard should be provided. Unless a safe is given

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by the Government or some generous benefactor, the chances are that the archives which survive will some day share the fate of the others.

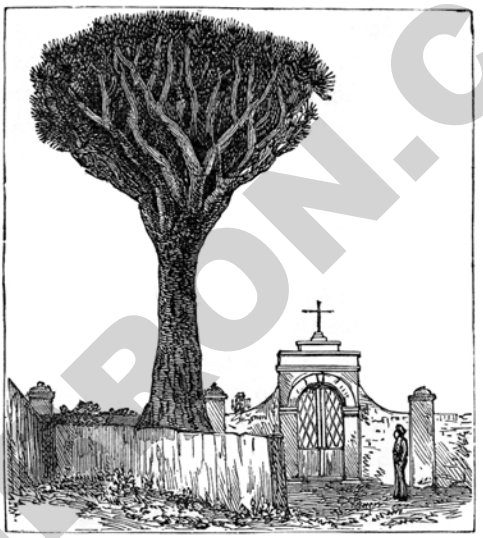
The tower is not over the church, but adjoins it. We ascend to the bells, which are six in number. The altitude here is 1,200 feet. The largest bell is chimed in cases of fire; the clock claims another; one is the mass bell; one is too old to be used, but it still hangs there, though its voice is never heard; and one, we notice, was made in London. The spire is a wooden erection, covered upon the outside with glazed tiles. Many of these are off, so that the structure has a careless, tumble-down appearance; this, the dilapidated arch, and the archives demand the prompt attention of the Government, for surely Tenerife will not allow the oldest church in the island to continue long in such a dilapidated and even dangerous condition. The tower was built in 1774, the aisle upon the right on entering 1677, that on the left in 1663.

Thanking the priest, and telling him we trusted funds would be forthcoming to enable this ancient and historically interesting fabric to be repaired, we mount our horses again at 9.45 a.m., and descend a short distance to Realejo Abajo. A deep barranco separates the two villages, which is crossed near the bottom by a bridge. In 1820 a waterspout or fearful deluge of rain flooded this barranco, and swept away in a few minutes more than a hundred dwellings, destroying two hundred and forty people. The marks of this terrible devastation are still apparent, the land being much torn up and scoured.

We dismount by the gates of the cemetery, for here is an enormous dragon tree, which is mentioned in the history of the conquest of the island. It stands in solitary grandeur outside of and to the right of the gates, upon a bank facing the end of the straggling street, and is the best dragon tree to study in the whole island. That at Icod de los Vinos is older, but the view of it is not so unimpeded as here. This tree is seen in perfection by itself, isolated from all other vegetation, a circumstance which seems just to suit the character of the strange monster.

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The aneroid gives the altitude at the base of this tree as 1,025 feet. A little lower down the street we turn to the right, and arrive at a small venta, where we order breakfast. As we have ridden our animals somewhat hard, we take Lorenzo's advice and order them wine. A small half-pint black bottle is produced, and each beast has this quantity of red wine poured down its throat, to its evident satisfaction. While we are sitting upstairs, looking out of the window at the drugging of



DRAGON TREE OF ICOD ALTO, TENERIFE.

the animals, we hear the strains of a piano, sounds rather unexpected in such an out-of-the-world spot. Our breakfast is not long in coming. It consists of fried eggs, wine, coffee, and sardines. We leave at 11.15, and reach the pretty village of Tigayga in fifteen minutes. Large bushes of heliotrope straggling over the walls perfume the air for a considerable distance, the purple colour of the blossoms making the village a series of artistic nooks and corners. We now begin the stiff climb of the day, up the vueltas of Icod Alto. The

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path winds in more or less of a zigzag manner up the side of a precipice. It is gruesome to think of what would happen if a horse stumbled. The path is bad and stony, and Lorenzo proves useful when we meet a series of four horses carrying wood down to the valley beneath by holding the heads of the animals and arranging the passing. The climb is steep, and as we halt now and again we see below us the long, straggling village of the two Realejos, beyond them the three cinder-heaps, or *montañetas*, which lend a significant feature to the Valley of Orotava, and every here and there a white dot or dots representing a house or hamlet. At each turn of the road the view improves, growing more extensive and sublime. We reach a farmhouse, and passing behind it, find a goat-track, which is one of the roads to ascend to or descend from the Peak, and which no doubt the young Princes of Wales traversed. Here we leave our horses in charge of Lorenzo, and climb up over the grass—for up here there is turf like that of any English common—until we attain an altitude of 2,450 feet. This spot is the culminating one of the bluff or mountain up which we have ascended from the valley. A view here bursts upon us which quite baffles adequate description. The whole Valley—as it is called—of Orotava is spread out like a distinct relief map at our feet. Our faces are turned directly downwards, and we can see the Villa, the Puerto, the Realejos, in fact every village, house, and tree of the famous valley. The outline of the coast—the black margin, with its sea fringe of white—forms a pleasing frame to the scene on the left, the mountains rising aloft and culminating in the mighty Peak, a stupendous setting on the right. The view, though vast, even gigantic, is not terrible, for the clear light and the beautiful play of colours in the plain beneath render the pasture smiling and soothing. Surely this is a glimpse vouched to mortals of the true Garden of the Hesperides, of the real Elysian fields. Blessed are the people inhabiting such a spot; happy ought they to be! But as our eye wanders to the mountains bounding the plain on the far side of Puerto, we see

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wreaths of thin white smoke ascending like warning signals to heaven. It is a sad side to a lovely picture. It tells of the wicked destruction of the forests, of gigantic pines, of beautiful laurels, and graceful myrtles sacrificed wholesale for the need of the moment, quite regardless of the future. The coast line is visible as on a map, and a bird's-eye view is obtained of the bay under La Paz. As we gaze the whole scene grows in beauty, and increases in sublimity. The mind, helping the eye, produces this effect. Can it be that that mere shadow upon the plain is the deep barranco which was so toilsome to cross? And is that mere pimple the mighty cinder-heap whose base takes so long to ride round? Objects which were big in our eyes when standing upon the plain below now seem small, but the mountains which appeared from below to be of quite ordinary size now assume their right proportions. This is a spot, in fact, from whence the proportions of the physiognomy of the island are corrected. The bluff—La Corona is its name—from whence this view is obtained juts out slightly over the valley, its precipitous sides clothed with arborescent heaths and umbrageous laurels. It is a far finer and more impressive view of the valley than that seen upon approaching it from the north along the carretera from Santa Cruz. As we gazed at the marvellous scene thin streaks of white mist have been floating lazily about in the abyss at our feet, and now quite suddenly they collect, amalgamate, and in a moment we are upon an island of some thirty yards diameter, bounded all round by an impenetrable white sea. The contrast of the vastness of the view a minute ago and the present very circumscribed area is startling. It is eerie to think of the depths lying a yard in front. Nothing is visible but the outcrop of rock, covered with brilliant yellow and grey lichen, upon which we have been sitting, and three herd-boys, attracted by the novelty of strangers on the bluff, who have silently crept up, and now sit close to each other, hugging their blankets tightly around their shoulders. The temperature here at 12.30 p.m. was 63° F. (17·3° C.). We waited ten minutes, but there being

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no sign of the mist lifting—in fact, it seemed to increase in density and dampness—set off at a trot downwards over the turf. We had reached the summit of La Corona just in time, most luckily. We soon arrive at the farmhouse, and here find Lorenzo with the beasts. One of them had given him a black eye, having suddenly jerked its head up when his face was in close proximity. Icod Alto is reached, and here we get below the mist, which, we perceive, is merely a band encircling the mountains above. To this band of mist no doubt Orotava partly owes its equable temperature. We can now see, in addition to the coast towards Orotava, the coast line, on the other side, away to Garachico and its sentinel rock in the sea. We pass a number of aloes, and our conversation turns upon the proposed industry to be derived by utilising the fibre. The want of a staple in the islands at the present time makes the inhabitants eagerly listen to and investigate any chance of establishing an industry which will profitably employ the land. Probably this pressing problem will be solved by several crops being grown, and from what we ourselves saw and heard, it is likely that the most advantageous will be wine and tobacco. The Barranco Castro is reached at 1.15 p.m.; and we look into its depths, beautifully clothed with verdure and trees. The descent to the bottom is very steep, and as we wish to see the fine laurels for which this barranco is famous and to drink of the good water, equally renowned, we dismount, and tying our animals up to trees, rapidly run down the zigzag path, bordered with ferns and shaded by laurels and heaths. In ten minutes we reach the spring issuing from the precipitous side of the rock at the bottom, and splashing into a circular natural basin. Six yards further up is another spring, which flows into a trough for the use of cattle. The bottom of the barranco is here most picturesque, and this effect was increased when two artistically clad boys appeared, clambering over the huge rocks and driving some donkeys to water. The donkeys drinking, the boys, with their poles, sitting on fern-clad boulders, stolidly looking on, the straight wall of the barranco in the background, made a scene

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as romantic as could be desired. The sides of this barranco and the floor lower down are covered with magnificent specimens of laurels. Some are very old, gnarled, and grotesque. They grow to forty or sixty and more feet high, and have trunks thick in proportion. We retrace our steps, and again mounting and crossing a bluff, once more descend—but this time on horseback—into another branch of the same barranco.



SPINNING, JUAN DE LA RAMBLA.

The Barranco Castro forks, and the blind end into which we first went runs north a little, and then joins the branch in which we now are. A fine view of the Peak here suddenly burst into sight, the sugar-loaf and mountain down to the Cañadas streaked with irregular lines of snow. In fact, every view of the Peak excites admiration, and the greater the variety of views, the deeper the admiration. Whether entirely veiled by clouds, except the extreme summit; or with a band of white across the Cañadas; or with wreaths of mist floating about it from the sea upwards; or sugared on the top; or standing out with every wrinkle, every barranco, sternly visible against the cold, clear morning sky, Teide is always magnificent, frequently sublime. Towards the sea, the end of the barranco is crossed by a bridge, over which the carretera goes, and it forms a prominent object from this elevation. At 2.10 we reach La Guancha, a small hamlet of no particular interest, and thirty minutes more find us with our faces turned once more towards Puerto, clattering over the paved street of San Juan de la Rambla, the quiet, sedate little village which we had already passed through

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upon our way to Chasna. We draw rein at the same venta at which we had previously halted, and again appreciate the famous malmsey wine of this place. One of the daughters of the house was spinning. Under her left arm she held the *rueca*—a piece of cane about three feet long, the end of which for ten inches is split into four or five pieces, where is placed the rough flax—and in the right hand she held, between thumb and first finger, the tip of the spindle (*huso*), a piece of heavy wood, spindle-shaped, and with a projecting rim round the bottom. This she kept twirling round, and the thread, guided thereto by the fingers of the left hand, was wound round the body of the instrument. Seeing that I was interested in the process, she took us into an adjacent shed, and showed us a weaving machine of the rudest construction, evidently entirely home-made. Here the thread she had just spun was being made up into cloth about thirty inches wide for trousers and other garments. The colour was not quite that of what is called brown holland, but a faint grey, obtained by dipping the thread in a weak solution of ordinary ink. The peasants about here sell this rough linen at about ninepence a yard.

Mr. Renshaw's horse had cast a shoe, and as there was no forge in this neighbourhood, Lorenzo undertook to doctor the hoof so as to enable the animal to be ridden home. His process was new to me. He caused a flat-iron to be well heated at a brazier, and then, daubing the hoof over thickly with tallow, brought the iron close to it, thus causing the fat to melt and run up into the hoof. He informed us that this operation made the hoof hard and compact. At any rate, Mr. Renshaw rode the animal home—and we had some hard riding on the carretera—without its going lame or suffering any discomfort.

The lengthening shadows on the road warned us that it would not be prudent to linger at this agreeable little hostelry, so, bidding the hostess a final adieu, we mounted and continued along the road towards Puerto. A little distance further, and we pass the Piedro del Gallo—a huge boulder rock,

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which some day or other must have fallen from the heights above and rolled over to where it now lies, on the left of the road. The side of this rugged monster next the sea is slightly hollow, and a cottage, with inhabitants, nestles in its rough embrace. A huge rock had, we heard, fallen a few days ago from the heights at Garachico, a little further along the same coast. We now turn off the main road, and follow a track on the left, leading down to the shore. This we soon reach, and here, jutting out into the sea, we were surprised to see a second Giant's Causeway. The columnar pillars, as in the north of Ireland, had been broken off at various heights, and the angular facets form horizontal platforms of irregular sizes and dimensions. The sea washes over part of the formation, but part appears to me to be always high and dry. In extent this curious formation is not so large as the Giant's Causeway, nor are the columns quite so regular. At 5 p.m. we arrive at the Rambla de Castro, and riding into a paved courtyard, dismount. There is nothing remarkable about the house, which is simply a pleasant summer residence by the sea. The grounds around, however, show evidence of the expenditure of much money, patience, and ingenuity in their construction. The de Castro family very generously allow picnic parties to take place here, and the gardens have already assumed somewhat of the 'happy day' style. By the side of the house a steep miniature but natural barranco runs down to the sea, in which was a little rivulet. The water is now carefully dammed up, so that it may accumulate in a basin. When the visitor has descended to a rustic bridge spanning the barranco and signified that he is looking in the right direction, a sluice is opened, and the cascade rushes out in a beautiful fan shape. This business-like plan of attempting to add to the beauties of nature is slightly jarring upon the feelings, as it is, I remember, in the Catskill mountains, in the United States; yet the spot is lovely, that cannot be denied. The walks, shadowed by orange, palm, and other trees, invite sauntering. The steep inclines are made easy by well-placed, broad, and low

stone steps. There is abundance of water flowing through the barranco, and consequently its steep sides are entirely clothed with luxuriant vegetation. Wherever there is water in this country, there is luxuriant vegetation. One place is called the 'Water's Mother,' where several streams collect and join their currents. At another spot a low wall, serving for a seat, has been built at a distance of twelve feet round a magnificent oak tree. When seated here in the shade, one can see on the other side some cool rocks, down which water slowly drips, covered with exquisite ferns. Walks have been cut down the sides of the barranco, and here and along the sea-shore abound orange, fig, palm, and other trees, whilst the broad, beautifully veined leaf of the taro runs riot everywhere. At the further end of the domain, the path ends on a promontory overlooking the sea in a miniature castle. The large black lettering upon the little shed at the back says, '1808. S. Fernando.' A circular low wall, fourteen feet in diameter, has been built upon a rock 300 feet above the sea level, and within this upon the ground lie eight dismounted cannon. Altogether the place presents a curious mixture of artificial humbug and natural wildness. The view of the sea and cliffs is beautiful, and the shed at the back doubtless affords satisfaction to the picnic people who frequent the place.

Scattered here and there along this part of the shore of Tenerife are other country houses, or *ramblas*, many of which are in lovely situations. But darkness is fast coming on, and we make haste, mount, and push on to the carriage road, where, wishing Lorenzo good-night, we put spurs to our horses, and are shortly at Orotava."

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# CHAPTER XXIII.

*TEMPERATURES—CLIMATE—TAXATION—GUANCHE CUSTOMS.*

We who love gardens are in the best of good company. The wisest and the noblest of men, all the poets and gentlewomen in every age, have loved the seclusion and privacy of a garden, where the treasures of nature have been gathered together for their pleasure and delight.—WALTER BESANT.

How, like ruined organs, prone
They lay, or leaned their giant fluted pipes,
And let the great white-crested, reckless wave
Beat out their booming melody.

JEAN INGELOW.

*October 26th, Friday (continued).*—The tinkling of the goat-bell begins at an early hour here in the Puerto, as the little animals are brought into the town to be milked. The days now are like the choicest English summer weather. It is, in fact, the *verano de San Martin* (Indian summer). Sometimes the sky is overcast, and occasionally there is a little threatening of rain. There is in a very slight degree here at present that delightful uncertainty as to what the weather will be in a few hours that reminds us forcibly of our island lying further north in the Atlantic.

The climate of the Canary Islands will be better understood by the tables given in the appendices than by any assertions of its salubrity. It is the one point that has been frequently studied, chiefly by foreigners, and quoted in pamphlets and articles

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on Tenerife. The Valley of Orotava, about which almost the whole of the available statistics is concerned, faces the sea due north, on sloping ground, and is completely protected on the south and east by the Peak and its chain, and partially on the west by Tigayga. Dr. Wild, who travelled through Madeira and visited Santa Cruz and Orotava about 1840, says that thirty-four degrees of dryness is the usual state of the atmosphere in Orotava, whereas in Madeira it only once reached that state during the nine years of Dr. Heineken's stay in the island. The annual mean temperature of Madeira he gives as 65° F. (18·3° C.), that of Orotava 70·9° F. (21·6° C.), and that of Santa Cruz 71¼° F. (21·8° C.). The Rev. R. E. Alison, in the *Quarterly Journal of Science* for 1866, states that he went to Tenerife with the worst symptoms of consumption, and that in three months after his arrival he ascended the Peak. He gives a table of temperatures, in which the *mean* annual temperature of Santa Cruz is 70·5° F. (21·1° C.), of Laguna 62·51° F. (16·9° C.), of Villa de Orotava 66·34° F. (19° C.). He also gives the *mean* temperature of the four seasons of the year, taking spring as March, April, and May.

| | Fahrenheit. | Centigrade. |
|---|---|---|
| Spring | 64·25 | 17·91 |
| Summer | 70·95 | 21·63 |
| Autumn | 69·71 | 20·95 |
| Winter | 60·40 | 15·8 |

A similar cure was effected in the case of Mr. Charles Smith, who left England when young, with one lung gone and his life despaired of, to seek health at Orotava. He married and had a family, living to a ripe old age. He returned to England many times, and on two occasions was shipwrecked, once suffering much, and losing valuable instruments and notes. During his residence on the island, he three times ascended the Peak. Dr. Marcet's notes on Orotava are so recent, that they need not be repeated here. M. Belcastel has gone very fully in a pamphlet, written in 1861, into the advantages of Orotava compared

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with other places. He gives the following *mean* temperatures for the year 1861 :—

| | Fahrenheit. | Centigrade. |
|---|---|---|
| London | 50·6 | 10·4 |
| Paris | 51·8 | 11 |
| Pau | 57·6 | 13·2 |
| Nice | 59·6 | 15·4 |
| Rome | 60 | 15·6 |
| Madeira | 66 | 18·9 |
| Orotava | 68 | 20 |

But what is perhaps a better test, he chooses for the five months of our northern winter the *lowest mean* temperatures in these respective places :—

| | Fahrenheit. | Centigrade. |
|---|---|---|
| London | 42·8 | 6 |
| Paris | 43·4 | 6·4 |
| Pau | 44·4 | 6·9 |
| Nice | 50·4 | 10·3 |
| Rome | 51·8 | 11 |
| Algiers | 59·8 | 15·4 |
| Madeira | 62·4 | 16·9 |
| Orotava | 64·4 | 18 |

M. Belcastel remarks, as I have done elsewhere, that the atmosphere, as well as the thermometer, sleeps, the pressure remaining the same for six months. With a pardonable burst of enthusiasm, the Frenchman continues, "Ah! I am astonished that, with the fever of locomotion racing through the veins of this century—I am astonished that one hesitates to risk a voyage of a few hours to save the life of a son, a brother, a wife, a sister," and ends thus: "Happy shall I be if I am able to save one life, if only I make a ray of joy to be born in one mother's heart."

During the evening Dr. and Mrs. Hjalmar Öhrvall, of Upsala, Sweden, arrived. Much later, after we had returned to England and he to Sweden, he kindly sent me a table * of the observations he made during a six months' residence in Orotava, at the same time stating in his letter, "I am entirely recovered.

* See Appendix.

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The stay in Tenerife has perfectly cured my chest-disease, and I am convinced that the climate of these lovely islands is extremely suited for invalids." These, being the observations of an eminent physician, are worthy of consideration. From his tables one sees that the net humidity * of Orotava is 64·9°, while Madeira, according to Dr. Grabham, is 76°. Dr. Öhrvall made his observations three times a day, at 8 a.m., 2 p.m., and 9 p.m., by which he fixes the mean temperature of each month. M. Belcastel states that one can bathe on the 31st of January as readily as the 31st of July, but Dr. Öhrvall proves this possible by giving me the temperatures of the sea at the end of the mole at noon upon the first day of each month, the average for the three first months of the year being about 65·4° F. (18·6° C.).* The number of rainy days during the winter season was for 1883-4 enormous and abnormal in both Madeira and the Canary Islands. Dr. Öhrvall gives them as seventy-eight, whereas by observations in previous years made by Mr. Honegger they ran thus :—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1878–79 | . . . . . | 23 rainy days |
| 1879–80 | . . . . . | 50 „ |
| 1880–81 | . . . . . | 46 „ |
| 1881–82 | . . . . . | 45 „ |
| 1882–83 | . . . . . | 42 „ |

The temperatures taken later, and expressly for me, by Mr. Béchervaise,* have reference to Las Palmas only, with the exception of one month, when they refer to Santa Cruz. The situation of Las Palmas is not the same as Orotava, as it has no shelter from the east. Practically, however, throughout the islands, the temperature of every place situated close to the sea scarcely varies by a degree. In this lies a great advantage. Those who, while ordered to seek a warmer climate, are yet anxious to have variety and change of scene, and not to be cooped up in one spot, can move from island to island whenever so disposed without danger and without fatigue, the journeys being performed by boat. I am not of course advo-

* See Appendix

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cating that invalids, or indeed any but the strongest, should travel by schooner; but it will be remembered that interinsular steamers will probably soon be started.

It is wonderful how these islands have grown in their shipping in the last few decades. As late as 1850 there were no vessels, except a few small sailing ships, and the Spanish mail, which came once a month, to be seen in or around the islands. Steam was practically unknown, while now the largest steamers * of the best European lines anchor in the harbours of Santa Cruz and Las Palmas, and there is even partial interinsular communication by steam.

An improvement much wanted has been made in the matter of Government pensions. Formerly any official, even if he had only been in office a day, was entitled to his salary upon retirement, which might be at once! He must now have held office a number of years.

Curious stories are also told of the taxation and what it leads to in the shape of deceit and fraud. A first-class merchant was asked by the Government in a certain town to send in a return of the lumber sold by him in a year. The chief authorities returned the paper, saying it would not do, as the amount sold was greater than what was sold in the capital by all the merchants put together. He was obliged therefore to furnish another return, with the figures altered to suit the authorities! The Spanish Government and officials make a man a rogue even if he have no desire to be one. One fact to instance this is worth a thousand sweeping statements. A vessel containing about two hundred and fifty tons of coal arrived at a port and paid wharfage dues. The shipper complained against the high charges, when he was told that his plan should have been to have entered the tons as fifty only! This procedure would not have been accounted dishonest; not to do so was considered foolish. The authorities are all good-natured, and really *expect* frauds of this kind to be perpetrated. Spain would be a wealthy country if her taxes actually reached

* See Appendix.

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the exchequer. If some of the cultivators, however, paid taxes upon the whole of their produce, they could not live. It is well known that only a quarter or third of the taxes is paid. The taxation upon food is most unrighteous, and bears most heavily upon the poor people. Their wheat, for instance, is taxed in the field, and again in the form of bread. At the fielato some rough work goes on occasionally, women being frequently searched, and that rudely. If anything will drive Spain into republicanism, it will be these internal taxes. The people detest them, and though most peaceful and longsuffering, fight occasionally with the collectors. The Spanish Government should listen to their best friends, and at any cost abolish these obnoxious imposts. The republicans promise their abolition, and such promises are more powerful than the heads of the Government are perhaps aware.

There is a good tax, and one which we in England might adopt, in some modified form, with advantage, as it would prevent the keeping of duplicate books and making fraudulent entries. Each set of business books is obliged to be stamped and numbered consecutively on every page. The books are then sent to the judge, who also stamps each leaf. Upon the first is a note stating the number of leaves. No book can be presented in a court of law for the recovery of debts or other purpose which has not been stamped.

A queer story, but unfortunately not a singular one, is told of an officer in Santa Cruz, who, colonel though he was, was not above making the shopkeeper from whom he was buying Government stores enter a much larger quantity than he actually took!

An eccentric tax is a salt tax. Every property is *supposed* to consume a certain amount of salt, and it has to be paid on each house and piece of land. If a man own land in several places, it comes heavy. Houses are cheap everywhere, except in Santa Cruz, and land has fallen in value since cochineal has not paid.

Dr. Öhrvall is very musical, composing as well as rendering the compositions of others to the enjoyment of all. Mr. Ren-

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shaw and John got home in time for tea and music, and as the former sings, we had quite an enjoyable evening.

It will not be long ere it be impossible to note arrivals in the valley. At present the cases are isolated, so stand out in one's memory.

*October 27th, Saturday.*—After breakfast this morning we went for a walk through and about the town. Turning towards the sea, we entered the plaza, which is well planted with plane trees, eucalyptus, tamarisk, palm, orange, acacia, and juniper. A trench in the ground three or four inches deep and broad runs round the square close to the trees, by which they are irrigated, while in the middle is a fountain filled with large gold-fish.

Leaving the plaza, we passed on through the lower part of the town, which, from its paved streets and salt smell, might be an English or Scotch fishing village, to the road to the cemeteries and the curious rock monument. We turned aside for a few minutes to the pier, from which a number of boys, most of them quite naked, were amusing themselves by taking headers off the mole. Some jumped in feet foremost, but all seemed perfectly at home in the water, fearless even to the smallest. Like the Guanches, they live in the sea, but not on it. The day was cool and cloudy—

> "Who would be doomed to gaze upon
> A sky without a cloud or sun!"

very pleasant for walking, and we enjoyed sitting upon the handiwork of the Conejeros and admiring the view. From this spot the Puerto looks tolerably level, and is principally composed of red roofs and white walls. The background is formed by the upper part of the cliff beneath La Paz, the two palm trees crowning the heights. A little nearer to us, but still forming the background, is Mr. Charles Smith's long, commodious house, with its pretty green windows and yellow walls. In the distance, on our right, as we face the Puerto, and just appearing above the low line of hill or undulation which rises immediately

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behind the Puerto, is the Villa, and rising above it the woods of Agua Manza and the mountains. As the eye sweeps still onwards to the right and west, we see what may be called the centre of the valley, lying between the two cinder cones, dotted with fairly sized houses and many trees. In only one spot is there desolation. A curious grey line winds down at the left side—the course of the waterspout. Still farther to the right, and beyond the second cone, is a more sloping, cultivated, and wooded valley, plentifully dotted with large fincas. Behind all this the mountains form a circular chain, enclosing the valley on all sides from sea to sea, whilst above all grim and awful Teide keeps his eternal watch; at least, we know he does, but at the present moment he is hopelessly hidden, capped with clouds. The size of the valley is about fifteen miles by ten. The coast line on both sides of us presents the same features, sloping points which are abrupt, but not precipitous. The leading character of the scenery is, in fact, sloping, except at one place. The headland of Rapadura, the proposed extreme limit of the harbour, lies to the north-east beyond the Puerto. Seaward to-day there is nought but the sea. Near the Puerto a schooner, probably the correo from Palma, is struggling to the roadstead in a heavy sea and a scarcity of wind. Beneath us, among the jagged rocks, are the sunburnt figures of naked boys sailing toy boats between the rocks where the pools and fissures are sheltered from the surf. The loose, scattered masses of lava form here a coast line anything but desirable as a landing-place for even a small boat, and are a more effectual barrier to foes than the small square towers built for defence and magnificently garrisoned by two soldiers apiece! Landwards, immediately beneath this cupola, lies the road from the town running westwards. Fine, laughing girls, barefooted, wend their way homewards. They wear large straw hats, which are made in Icod de los Vinos, and may be purchased for fourteen *quartos* (about fourpence) at Realejo. One carries a large basket on her head, in which, we can see, are two new pairs of boots. A hundred yards further inland than the road and

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immediately opposite this is the English cemetery, a square, high-walled enclosure, filled with waving palms, figs, oleanders, and other trees. A few hundred yards westward is what looks like a small storehouse, built on the rocks by the edge of the sea. It is a fortress! Close to it is the Spanish cemetery, with a few trees and monuments and many crosses. Cool as the day seemed, we found on our return to the hotel at 1 p.m. that the thermometer registered 74° F. (23·4° C.) in the shade.

So far the majority of foreigners who have settled in the Puerto are Swiss. There are at present about twenty-six of that nationality. Our worthy landlady here will receive all foreigners into the boarding-house except Spaniards, whose ways—speaking of course of the ordinary run of those who go to the fondas—are such as English people cannot tolerate. That disagreeable habit of clearing the throat, etc., is of course unpardonable in refined society, but the utter immorality of the men of the middle classes is what is most objectionable, it not being possible to keep a respectable servant in a house which Spanish men of the middle classes frequent.

This afternoon we went to a large house in the Puerto, near the Sitio del Pardo, belonging to an elderly lady, Doña Antonia Dehesa, the widow of a Cuban millionaire, who wishes to sell the place, but is asking more than anyone seems willing at present to give. The entrance to the house is different from the ordinary patios. We go through a hall and passage, the floors of which are of marble, and an inlaid marble table stands in the entrance hall. Passing out, we find a large patio, surrounded on three sides by a broad verandah, in which are cane chairs, and a cane lattice-work, which divides the patio from the garden, leads towards the latter. In the centre of the patio is a marble fountain, around which quantities of roses bloom in flower-beds. Birds in cages, both native and foreign, hang about, and creepers falling a little over the high lattice-work above the verandahs protect from the sun. On one side the verandah overlooks the garden, which is on a little lower level. We passed through another hall,

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in which hung a lamp, in excellent taste with the surroundings, to a garden, where was a pond, on whose surface some swans and ducks lazily enjoyed themselves. Pigeon-houses and rabbit hutches were numerous, whilst irrigation, carefully carried out, kept the orange, citron, plantain, and pomegranate trees, the lovely pampas grass, and graceful juniper in perfect foliage. At another part was a number of monkeys, which swung on cross-bars, and had a goodly length of chain upon which to disport themselves. They were kept beautifully clean, as were all the animals. In fact, everything about the place was in perfect order. Personally, I should prefer this house and situation to any I have seen; it is more open, not so enclosed as Spanish houses usually are, and it is also midway between the Puerto and Villa, giving a better opportunity for variety and exercise than if one lived in either town.*

Leaving Doña Antonia's, we crossed over to the Sitio del Pardo. Mr. Smith and his wife were unfortunately not at home, having gone to Laguna for change of air, as many from here do. Laguna is a sort of meeting-place for the Santa Cruz and Puerto de Orotava residents, having a cooler climate than either of those towns. The garden in the Sitio del Pardo is laid out in terraces, and well filled with trees of all descriptions. What delighted our English eyes was, however, a piece of green sward, which, though small, was level and green as an English lawn. Bananas, oranges, guavas, and papayos (a fruit like a melon) are in quantities, and are guarded, as usual, by a dragon tree, of which we took a photograph. Roses and geraniums grow wild, and maidenhair in profusion, while red dragon-flies flit around. Outside the first garden is a more open space, terraced, with a path leading through its midst up the hill to a summer-house, whence there is a fine view of the Villa, Puerto, and Peak. From the first terrace we get a good and pretty view of the house. It is painted pale

* Since writing the above, I find this very house has been procured for the new hotel or sanatorium of the "Orotava Grand Hotel Company," which opened September 1st, 1886.

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yellow, picked out with green on verandah, balcony, and azotea. In front rises the dragon tree out of a foreground of plumbago and bougainvillea, the green of laurels and orange trees filling up the space around. The walks are laid out on a chaos of lava and stones, a large round cistern accounting for the prevalent luxuriance. There are a good many rhamnus bushes. Three young dragon trees grow without care in what is unmistakably native soil. In shape they look like carrots, having the point only in the ground.



SITIO DEL PARDO, OROTAVA.

We wended our way back to the Puerto, passing through the plaza. A large church situated here is in process of restoration. The floor is being newly paved in diagonally placed stones. The altar on the left is carved in florid style. The pillars of the altar on the right are in a style of architecture I have never before seen. The sculptor has carved them as if they were made of soft material, round which he has tightly drawn a cord in a spiral manner from top to bottom. The pulpit is a wooden structure, containing paintings of the

four Evangelists, depicted writing in books with quill pens. The other church in the plaza has two carved altars, and the pavement is old and uneven. There is really but little to be said about most of the churches in these islands. They repeat themselves, with a few exceptions, with wearying monotony.

The women, nearly always dressed in black, with mantillas, wearing no gloves, but carrying fans, glide along the shaded side of the street. A few, with modern ideas, dress, however, in European fashion. I must say I like the mantilla; it is very picturesque, admirably suiting the Spanish style of beauty.

> "For, as you know, the Spanish women banish
> Bright hues when out of doors, and yet, while wave
> Around them (what I hope will never vanish)
> The basquina and the mantilla, they
> Seem at the same time mystical and gay."

Wine is always on the table in the houses, and the visitor is generally offered some.

We notice a number of sewing machines in the cottages whilst walking through the town to visit the only confectioner it possesses. "Francisco el dulcero" is a well-known individual, quite an institution with the sweet-toothed inhabitants. He makes ices also, the ice being brought by the peasants from the ice cave in the Peak for half a dollar a horse-load.

There are doctors and doctors in these islands. One individual went to Spain knowing nothing, scarcely his A B C, and returned in four years a full-fledged doctor! It is impossible for a medical man to practise in these islands without having passed through the medical schools of Spain, no matter what certificates of proficiency from other nations he may possess. Many, however, add to their Spanish qualifications by obtaining certificates elsewhere, a few in England, but the greater number in France. These doctors are in consequence received with more confidence than those with purely Spanish certificates. There is a young doctor here who has qualified in London, and being of course able to

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speak English, it will be a great inducement to English people in delicate health to have him within reach. Curious stories are told of how political differences affect the choice of a medical attendant. A gentleman in Palma was ill—broke his leg, I believe—and rather than have the doctor of that place, who held different political opinions from those he supported, he sent to Orotava for a surgeon!

During the fiestas one of the chief amusements of the younger part of the population is riding. The men, on good horses—some of them very fine animals—heavily shod, so that they make a noise on the paved streets, ride through the town. The ladies look out of the windows to watch the capering of the steeds, for much "showing off" goes on, and the men occasionally exchange a few words as well as glances with the señoritas. Dancing in the evening generally finishes the day. The native dances in use in Tenerife are the "Malagueña," "Iza," "Folias," and "Sequidilla;" the two former are also the national songs from which we have so frequently suffered through imperfect rendering. Guitars vary in price from two to ten dollars (eight shillings to two pounds), so it is within the compass of most to buy one and twang out something which serves as an accompaniment.

Mr. Renshaw brought an accomplished pianist, a Spaniard, to see us in the evening, and he most kindly gave us the true dances, rendered with national feeling and spirit.

Numbers of people emigrate to America and the West Indies from these islands. It is not that they are over-populated, but, in the depressed state of trade, heavy taxation, and absence of industries, it is not possible for the people to make either fortunes or competencies. They are, as a rule, fortunate in the far west, and keep up a connection with their island home by letters. The Canary newspapers regularly publish letters from correspondents in the West Indies. Frequently they return with what is in this archipelago considered a fortune, and settle down in their old home. It is thus that in these islands one finds better and broader-minded men, who are throwing

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off the inertness that characterises the peninsula, and who, having travelled, have more advanced ideas. Owing to the presence of these Indianos—as those who make fortunes in America and the West Indies are called—the archipelago is ready to push forward were the opportunity only forthcoming. But governed as they are by Spain, through Spanish officials, their efforts are paralysed. Can we not sympathise with them? In a similar way our colonies have suffered, and alas! still suffer.

*October 28th, Sunday.*—A lovely morning, a blue sky, and bright sunshine greet us. The Peak has donned his winter mantle, and from the summit to where our view is intercepted by Tigayga is plentifully streaked with white, glistening snow. The temperature on the azotea in the sun at 9 a.m. was 88° F. (31·2 C.). Some say that the name of the island is derived from the wintry appearance of the Peak, *tener* meaning snow or white, and *yfe* mountain. Teide, or Teyde, as I mentioned before, is also supposed to come from *echeyde*, the Guanche word corresponding to our *hell*. This is extremely probable. *Ch* in Guanche seems to have been invariably converted into *t* in Spanish, as again in the name of the old king Chinerfe, or Tinerfe.

It would appear from all accounts that the natives of Tenerife, the Guanches proper, were the most civilised of all the ancient inhabitants of the islands. Azurara gives a short account of them in his time, as he has of the rest of the archipelago. He states that the Guanches "had plenty of wheat and vegetables and abundance of pigs, sheep, and goats, and were dressed in skins." They lived in huts and caves, and their principal occupation was war. "There were eight or nine tribes, each of which had two kings, one dead and one living, for they had the strange custom of keeping the dead king unburied till his successor died and took his place: the body was then thrown into a pit. They were strong and active men, and had their own wives, and lived more like men than some of the other

islanders. They believed in the existence of a God." Cadamosto, writing in 1455, after the conquest of some of the islands by Bethencourt, says of Tenerife that it was governed by nine chiefs, who became kings by force, not by inheritance. "Their weapons were stones and javelins, pointed with sharpened horn instead of iron, and sometimes the wood itself hardened by fire. . . . The inhabitants went naked, except some few, who wore goats' skins. They anointed their bodies with goat's fat, mixed with the juice of certain herbs, to harden their skins and defend them from cold, although the climate is mild. They also painted their bodies with the juice of herbs, green, red, and yellow, producing beautiful devices, and in this manner showed their individual character, much as civilised people do by their style of dress. They were wonderfully strong and active, could take enormous leaps, and throw with great strength and skill. They dwelt in caverns in the mountains. Their food was barley, goat's flesh, and milk, which was plentiful. They had some fruits, chiefly figs, and the climate was so warm, that they gathered in their harvest in March or April." The numerous fruits that are now found in the archipelago have, it is said, been introduced, chiefly by the Spaniards, since the conquest. Cadamosto continues, "They had no fixed religion, but some worshipped the sun, some the moon, and others the planets, with various forms of idolatry. The women were not taken in common among them, but each man might have as many wives as he liked. No maiden, however, was taken till she had passed a night with the chief, which was held a great honour." It would seem that the Christians of the already-conquered islands made raids upon the unconquered, carrying off men and women to send to Spain as slaves. If the Christians were captured, the natives did not kill them, but "thought it sufficient punishment to make them butcher their goats, and skin them, and cut them up, an occupation which they looked upon as the most degrading that a man could be put to. . . . Another of their customs was, that when one of their chiefs came into possession of his estate, someone among them should offer himself to die in honour of

the festival. On the day appointed they assembled in a deep valley, when, after certain ceremonies had been performed, the self-devoted victim of this hideous custom threw himself from a great height into the valley, and was dashed to pieces. The chief was held bound in gratitude to do the victim great honour, and to reward his family with ample gifts." I have been questioned in England about this custom, some thinking that it is still practised in the Canary Islands! Cadamosto got most of his information from hearsay, as he only visited Gomera and Hierro. Bethencourt's chroniclers naturally are brief as regards Tenerife, upon which they made no raids. They call it the island of Hell, or Tonerfis, and state that its inhabitants were the "hardiest race to be found in all these islands. They have never been run down or carried into servitude, like those of the other islands." It is from the MS. translated by Glas that we gain most information. He says that they were of middle stature, and that those living in the north of the island were fairer than those in the south. The king was treated with great reverence, homage being performed by prostration. They acknowledged one God, with several titles, which signified His omnipotence. Glas's MS. distinctly states that each man had one wife only, which contradicts Cadamosto, and agrees with Azurara. He adds further that "they had a custom among them that when a man by chance met a woman alone on the road, or in a solitary place, he was not to look at or speak to her, unless she first spoke to, or demanded ought of, him, but to turn out of the way. . . . The men wore cloaks of goats' skins, dressed and softened in butter; those of the women were longer, and reached down to their feet, with petticoats of the same stuff underneath. . . . They used a black, hard stone, sharpened and made fit for killing sheep, cutting and working timber, etc. These they called *tavones*." They learned warfare in the numerous tribal disputes they had about their flocks. The approach of an enemy was announced by "smoke or by whistling, which was repeated from one to another. This latter method is still in use amongst them, and may be heard at an



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almost incredible distance." Their ideas of nobility and its origin are interesting. "They believed that God created them of earth and water, and that he made as many women as men, giving them cattle and everything necessary for their subsistence, but that afterwards, they appearing to him to be too few, he created more; but to these last he gave nothing, and when they asked him for flocks of sheep and goats, he told them to go and serve the others, who would in return give them sustenance; from these, say they, are descended the *achicarnay*, or servants." The Guanches were said to be very cleanly, washing their hands and faces on rising and before and after eating. "After eating, they did not drink for the space of half an hour, as they imagined that drinking cold water immediately after eating warm victuals spoiled and hurt the teeth." For murder the criminal's estate was confiscated, and given to the relations of the victim. The murderer was banished, but not allowed to be injured, as "they never punished any person with death, saying that it belonged to God alone to take away that life which he gave," a sentiment that would not disgrace a modern civilised community. Another custom mentioned by Glas is that "when one person went to the house of another, he did not attempt to enter in, but sat on a stone at the door, and either whistled or sang till someone came out and desired him to walk in. Whoever observed not this ceremony, but entered into another person's house without being invited, was liable to punishment, as they reckoned it a very great affront." By all which it will be seen that the Guanches were not what we call uncivilised. They had regular laws, which were enforced, and their customs and habits cannot for one moment be called savage. The very fact that they embalmed their dead places them among the civilised communities of the world.

After service, as usual, at the vice-consulate, and luncheon, we went to La Paz to say good-bye to the Marqués and Marquesa de Candia, as we purpose turning our footsteps from Orotava the beautiful to-morrow. The Marqués is trying how sugar-canes will do at La Paz; they seem to thrive, and take

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kindly to the climate. The percentage of juice obtainable from the canes in the Canary Islands is greater than that of the West Indies, and the quality is also better, so that there is hope that growing this staple may prove a valuable industry in time. It certainly will be a boon to the *isleños*, who at present pay very highly for sugar, but whether it will repay the cost of exportation is a matter yet unproven. Regretfully we said good-bye to the kind Cologan family. The Marqués accompanied us to the further extremity of La Paz, as we wished to return by the cliffs and Martianez to the Puerto.

Bees are said to be so very destructive to fruit, that they are taken to the Cañadas as summer approaches, where they are hidden in the clefts of the rocks. I could not obtain any confirmation of their destruction of fruit, etc., being so marked, but the fact of their being carried to the Cañadas is true,—for the purpose, however, of obtaining the honey made from the retama flowers, which is considered the best and most delicious in the world. The honey in all the Canaries is good. It has, however, a peculiar flavour, especially that of Gran Canaria, the taste for which has to be acquired before one really enjoys it. It is dark in colour, and as different both in flavour and appearance from English garden honey as butter is from cheese.

We had some difficulty in hitting upon the exact spot at which to descend, having only before ascended to the plains of La Paz. Scrambling down a slope to what looked like a goat-track, we at last hit the path, half-way down the cliffs, which leads past Martianez to the Puerto. Growing abundantly, we found that delicate pale orange flower of the sea-loving plant *Spargularia media*. The walk round the headland is a lovely one. Above are the cliffs, and below the white, foaming sea, breaking round the black rocks. Looking down upon a piece of bared rock, jutting into the sea, at the foot of a little barranco, we are suddenly carried back to the Giant's Causeway in the north of Ireland by seeing laid out at our feet a similar causeway, not so perfect as Finn Macoul's pathway to Staffa, but still made of hexagon-shaped stones fitting into each other.

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Unfortunately we noticed this basaltic formation only at the end of our stay at Orotava, so it was not possible for us to go down and examine it closely, our time being now short.

*October 29th, Monday.*—Another glorious morning, the Peak, still splendid in his white robes, contrasting his perfect purity with the brown shoulder of Tigayga beneath. Our time was much occupied to-day with necessary packing. As we intended staying at Laguna a couple of days, we sent our heavy baggage to Santa Cruz by cart.

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# CHAPTER XXIV.

## *TACORONTE MUSEUM—LAGUNA LIBRARY—ALL SAINTS' DAY.*

A horse misused upon the road
Calls to Heaven for human blood.

WILLIAM BLAKE.

There are a few spots marked with white as we look back over the story of our lives—with me chiefly landscapes of wood and water or interviews with some superior man.—FROUDE.

*October 30th, Tuesday.*—We bade good-bye to all our friends at the Puerto last night, as we had to start early this morning by the diligence for Laguna. Wishing to visit Tacoronte and its museum on the way, Mrs. Branckar had kindly written to the present owner of the museum, Mr. le Brun, introducing us to him. We therefore started by the early diligence, intending to pick up the afternoon coach at Tacoronte and from thence to proceed to Laguna, which would give us a long day at Tacoronte. The Puerto coach started about 6 a.m., so, after some coffee, Mr. Turnbull escorted us up the hill to the carretera, where the coach was to be found, as it is not possible for it to jolt over the paved streets. We met Mr. Reid and his son at the coach, the latter bound for Laguna. I fear English readers, on hearing of a coach, will have visions of something very different from the reality. The vehicle in question was very old—coach-shaped, not like an omnibus. The door would not close on account of the wheel, which got in the way! There were five inside and a child, so we were relieved to hear that we had only to go as far as the

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junction, where we were to be transferred to the Villa coach, which we devoutly hoped might prove better. The brake was on all the time, although we were going uphill, because it *couldn't be taken off!* At the junction of the roads to the Villa and Puerto we got out of our "shandredhan." Here we found the Realejo coach, a sort of van with canvas sides, and a few minutes later the Villa coach appeared on the scenes. It was an old omnibus, and though capable of holding a good many, there were such a number of travellers that the Puerto vehicle had to come on likewise. We luckily succeeded in getting a couple of seats on the outside of the Villa omnibus. It was all very well, however, to obtain the seats, but it was quite another matter to take possession of them. The driver's seat was a long way up, and there was but a single step to enable one to mount. However, the feat was accomplished, and we thought with satisfaction that we were not packed inside with so many beings, human and—not. We are drawn by four horses and a mule, which are all different in colour. The leaders are a red bay horse and a light brown mule; the near horse is white, the off dark brown, and the middle one light brown. The harness consists to such a large extent of cord, that I doubt if we shall get to our journey's end. The driver has two whips, one long, the other short and heavy. The brake handle is like that associated with barrel-organs. We started at 7 a.m. from the junction. Close to it is a fine eucalyptus plantation, which may some day vie with the giants of Australia. A good many people are astir upon the roads. We meet some women with baskets, bound no doubt to the Villa or Puerto with their wares. Next we overtake a couple of soldiers going to Santa Cruz for drill. They wear blue jackets and red, baggy trousers; the jackets are caught in at the waist by leather belts, only a couple of inches of jacket appearing below. Next an itinerant dealer in cotton goods passes, also travelling betimes. The coach is grandiloquently called "Empresa de Omnibus de Tenerife." We arrived in half an hour at Santa Ursula, and passed down through an

avenue of untidy-looking tamarisks. Pigs, large and for the most part black, grunt along the roadside; they are lean, like the generality of the animals. Dogs, of all sorts and sizes and no breed, come out and bark at us as we pass, but a slash of the long whip sends them, cur-like, home again. We drive down a barranco spanned by a bridge, which might just as well have been put higher. Ascending the other side, the unfortunate horses, ill fed and worse treated, could scarcely pull up the twenty-two passengers and their luggage, and had to be urged beyond their powers by a man who ran alongside and, as well as the driver on the box, whipped them in a most brutal manner. The former deliberately chose out the sore places on the animals, particularly the mule, and whacked at them until they broke out afresh. It was sickening.

The cochineal cactus is now cut, and, lying on the ground, it looks still more ugly than when standing. The leaves are by law obliged to be buried in pits, for certain outbreaks of fever which occurred some years ago were attributed to the leaves having been left to rot.

We stopped at the Matanza fonda, where some of the passengers breakfasted, as it was now 8.40 a.m. We also changed horses, and as the unfortunate animals were taken out of harness, they literally staggered away, two making no attempt even to enter the yard, while the mule lay, or rather dropped, down upon its side, and made from habit a faint attempt at rolling, which ended in the poor brute groaning. Horsewhipping would be too good for the owners of the coaching service. Animals no more than man can work without food. It was obvious that these horses from the start were not prepared by good food for the strain upon their strength. The ostlers were two lads of about fifteen and sixteen years of age. We left Matanza again at 9.5 a.m., and got off soon after at a lane leading down to Tacoronte. The carretera does not go through the village, but is about half a mile above it. We soon found Mr. le Brun's house, and received a welcome from Mrs. le Brun and her daughters, her husband unfortunately not being

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at home.* After an ample breakfast we were taken to see the museum which is in the village of Tacoronte, a little distance from the house. It consists of a cottage of three rooms, opening out of each other, one of which is devoted to Guanche relics, another and larger room to Peruvian and old weapons with which the Spaniards conquered Tenerife, and the third contains fish, shells, etc., none of which belong to the island. Sebastian Casilda was the founder of the museum, and he left it to Mr. le Brun. He was never out of the island, and did little in the way of research himself, most of the articles having been brought to him by others, as it was known that he was anxious to procure curiosities. There are several mummies in the museum. One is of a Guanche man, not very perfect, five feet eight inches in length. Another is left encased in leather as it was found, pieces of leather about an inch wide tied and knotted round it, and the leather case tied at the top of the head as a sack's mouth would be fastened.

"Speak! for thou long enough hast acted dummy;
Thou hast a tongue, come, let us hear its tune;
Thou'rt standing on thy legs above ground, mummy!
Revisiting the glimpses of the moon.
Not like thin ghosts or disembodied creatures,
But with thy bones and flesh, and limbs and features."

Another mummy, of a woman, said to have been found half-way up the Peak, had the legs from the knees doubled back to the hips, and in that position measured three feet four inches. It is said that the mummies were chiefly preserved with dragon's blood. The incision for extracting the entrails was performed with a stone, or *tabona*, as it was in Egypt, both the Egyptian and Guanche stones being of basalt. Food was always placed beside the dead, another custom common to the Egyptians. Mummies have been found in Palma, Hierro, Tenerife, and Canaria, the latter chiefly in heaped-up tombs of stone, which Bory de St. Vincent calls pyramids, and tries thus to draw a still further analogy between the Guanches and Egyptians; but as

* I regret to say Mr. le Brun has since died.

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he had never seen these so-called "pyramids," not having been in Canaria, he has exaggerated their form and size to prove his conclusions. There is no doubt a similarity in the mode of embalming between the two nations, and Dr. Wild states that the mummy he saw in the museum at Santa Cruz was the same as those of the lowest class of Egyptians. There are seven mummies in all at Tacoronte. The left hand is placed beside the knee in some, as is done now to the dead by the natives in these islands. It is a pity that, as at present they can be so readily procured, there is not even one in the British Museum. I was shown a mummy there which I was told was Guanche, but it was only Peruvian. The figure was in a doubled-up position, sitting with the knees to the chin, as mummies have never been found in the Canary Islands. I vainly endeavoured, save of course among the archives in the library, to obtain information or see relics of this interesting and lost race in the British Museum.

Dragon's blood is like dark treacle in consistency, but after a time on exposure to the air it becomes dry and is easily crumbled. It is still an article of commerce. But other species of dragon trees and other shrubs common in Asia and America are now requisitioned for the "blood," which, although inferior in quality, can be sold so much cheaper that it has destroyed the market for the real article. The skins used by the Guanches were preserved in the dragon's blood. Skins were sewn with leather and fibre threads, and the work was on the whole fine and even, pieces being fitted into each other in a clever manner. A leather pouch we saw thus sewn round the edge. There were also dresses of goats' skins found in 1855. These were beautifully prepared, the natural colours being yellow, speckled, dark brown, and fawn, much the colours of the goats at the present day. A short stick with a crook, a long one with a knob, and a walking-stick found beside an old woman we also noted. Gofio mills of all sorts and sizes abound, and can readily be picked up over the islands. Mrs. le Brun most kindly suggested that we should remove outside

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anything that we wished to photograph, so we were enabled to pick out some jugs, plates, sticks, and other articles. There were curious jugs of leather, old Spanish relics, about twenty-one and a half inches high, an earthenware jug of Guanche make, and perfect, an earthenware bowl, black, and marked with horizontal lines, bearing this inscription by Don Sebastian: "Benahoare, nombre antigua de la Palma, antes del año 1490," showing that it comes from Palma. The label upon another, a little smaller, tells that it was found in Fuerteventura and belonged to the *majos* of that island, 1403 being added as the



GUANCHE GOFIO MILLS AND VESSELS, TACORONTE MUSEUM.

latest date when it could have been made. Some of the gofio mills have four holes for putting a stick into. As one hole got worn another was used. Some had high mouth-holes. A pestle and mortar of old Spanish make, a Guanche skull, spoon, and pounder were all interesting.

Leaving the little museum, we walked a short distance to the lower church of the two which Tacoronte boasts, and which is one of the oldest edifices in the island. The priest, who happened to be in the church, kindly showed us over. It is dedicated to Santa Catalina. There is a fine candelabra of Mexican silver, weighing seventy pounds, and a very beautiful font of white marble. The church has been newly paved with

stones sixteen inches square. The top of each of the holy water fonts is of solid stone. The first baptism in this church took place in 1604. The altar is entirely of silver. A table in the sacristy is made of an island wood called *barbonsana,* which has been worked very beautifully. There is a good picture of San Jeronimo in the church. Saying good-bye to the courteous priest, we walked up to the plaza, where there was an old monastery. The church of San Agustin is used for the people now, and the rest of the building is turned into a school and public rooms. There were only twelve monks originally in the place, and even these were not welcomed, says Viera, by the parishioners. The large square in front looks bare, although there are a few trees of good size. In the centre is a small circular fountain, and just now a number of girls and women are drawing water. Their barrels lie on the flat stone wall while one woman guides the water through a bamboo cane from the fountain's mouth into her barrel, the others waiting patiently around. We enter the church of San Agustin. The floor is of black and white marble, plentifully besprinkled with tallow from the droppings of the candles at the fiesta. The grease is not cleaned from one fiesta until the next in the following year! There is a good statuette of El Señor, also two marble figures of a knight and a monk, both kneeling, the founders of the monastery. There are two galleries on either side of the church, and the ceiling is white and arched. The most distinct recollection I now retain, however, of the church is that I suffered the remainder of the day from "church plagues," as I call the smaller enemies of cleanliness.

We returned with Mrs. le Brun to her house for dinner, of which she hospitably insisted on our partaking. She showed us four very old large wooden chairs, the seats of which were covered with stamped leather. The seats were not stuffed, and the backs and arms of the chairs were of wood only. Seeing a piano, I expressed my surprise, wondering how it was conveyed thither. Mrs. le Brun assured us it

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came safely and without jar on a camel from Santa Cruz! It was the only way, she said, as the lane from the carretera to the house and the Laguna streets were so bad, it would have been hopelessly damaged in a wheeled conveyance. Camels when on a journey carry about seven hundredweight. Passing through the garden, in which were bushes of heliotrope, Mrs. le Brun and her daughters kindly escorted us as far as the carretera, where we hoped to meet the coach. As it did not put in an appearance, we walked on a little way, until our friends were obliged to return home. Near Tacoronte, on a side road, is a cluster of straw houses with only low stone walls, exceedingly picturesque. One had taken fire a short time before, while there was a baby inside, which had fortunately been saved.

We saw a couple more soldiers going to Santa Cruz to report themselves, as they have to do on the first of each month. Every young unmarried man is liable to be drafted for service unless he has a mother depending upon him for support. Those on whom the lot falls are obliged to provide substitutes or to serve for four months in each year at Santa Cruz or such other places as may have a military force stationed in them. This system has had the worst effect on the peasantry of Tenerife. An ignorant young labourer, after carrying a musket for one-third of the year in so dissolute a town as Santa Cruz, returns to his fields initiated in all the vices and profligacy of a seaport, with little desire for his former occupations, but rather serving to corrupt his young associates, and producing by these means perhaps as great a degree of immorality in the most retired and unfrequented parts of the island as in its most populous places.

Emigration goes on extensively in proportion to the population. As it is not, however, permitted until a man has served in the army and has had special leave to go, numbers slip away without telling anyone. In 1883, 2,160 went to Cuba, and 1,248 to America. This official emigration of 3,408 individuals is, like many other statistics, very imperfect, and we

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are told that about double that number would be a much more correct figure.

The coach not coming, we walked on, as it was a pleasant evening and fairly cool. It soon became dark, but it is perfectly safe to travel late in these islands, lonely though the roads be. Whenever we neared a house dogs barked at us, but were generally promptly called by their owners. There was a good deal of traffic even at this late hour; we met a couple of carriages, two carts, and five or six pack-horses. Within fifteen minutes of Laguna the coach overtook us, when I got into it, but John preferred finishing his walk. We had left Tacoronte at five minutes to five, and reached Laguna at 7 p.m. We had determined this time to try the other fonda* Laguna boasts, the one at which we stayed previously being unpleasant because of its unsavoury odours. The only address we could obtain was that the landlady was known as "Comimela," which word could not be explained to us, yet whenever mentioned eliciting a smile from the person addressed. It was some joke about food, but we failed to fathom it. However, I got hold of a little boy as guide, and arrived at the fonda in question, where later John also found his way. The portmanteaus, which had come by the earlier coach, were also forthcoming. We started immediately to seek our friends Mr. and Mrs. Charles Smith, who had asked us to look them up in Laguna, and found them with some difficulty. Mr. Smith is a white-haired patriarch, with the vigour of youth still in his intellect. Although a distinguished wrangler, he is yet a thoroughly "all-round man," which mathematicians so rarely are. It was an intellectual treat, which we thoroughly enjoyed, to listen to his conversation on all subjects. He was an enthusiastic Peak-lover, as everyone is who has climbed Teide; and although he asserted that he would never ascend it again, he did so with that reserve of intonation which means, "I don't

* Since going to press, I learn that an excellent hotel has been started in Laguna, the Hotel de Aguere, so that no one need suffer as we did in that ancient capital.

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know that I won't." When leaving, we found Laguna justifying its character, for it was pouring rain, for which we were ill prepared. Umbrellas and wraps were kindly lent us, however; and we found our way back to the fonda amid "water, mud, and wind."

*October 31st, Wednesday.*—Our room in this fonda is on the ground floor. It is long and narrow, and overlooks a small patio. We feared everything last night, but found we slept in peace, there not being even the "lesser evils." This may be due to the weather, however, which is now chilly, comparatively speaking.

Seeing black-robed señoritas flitting along the streets this morning, we went out at 7 a.m., and entered the cathedral, where matins were being said in a side chapel. A few ladies in black and three men in blankets knelt on the stone floor. The door at the end of the cathedral opposite the high altar is opened twice for each canon. When he is installed, he is admitted into the church through this west door; and when he is dead, his body, having been brought in by another entrance, is carried out through it. Except on those two occasions, he never crosses that threshold. The custom is symbolic, doubtless owing its origin to the idea that a person once admitted a member of the chapter never leaves the cathedral.

Leaving the church, we encountered a man carrying a coffin on his shoulder. It looked old, with a clasp on the lid, which divided down the middle, and was hinged. A plain cross at the head was the sole ornament. It was no doubt the public-property coffin, in which the poor are taken to the cemetery, and thrown out of it into a common grave, the coffin being brought back and kept for use again. We next turned our steps to the *mercado* (market), which is in the Plaza Adelantado. In the market of a strange land one obtains more idea of the peasantry and their ways than it is otherwise possible for a stranger to get without an intimate knowledge of the country. Of course, as we had been so much among the peasants of the

interior, we were not by any means ignorant of them, but in each part of the island the natives are different.

The morning was boisterous, it was in fact a nasty, showery, windy day, and as we turned the corners of the streets gusts of wind met us and rendered walking unpleasant. Withered leaves were scattered over the ground in the plaza from the neighbouring trees, and mud and pools of water reigned supreme in the roadways leading out of the town. No, I don't think Laguna is a desirable winter residence. If anyone, however, should be tired of the perpetual sunshine of Orotava and long for rain and murky skies such as England possesses, he can obtain a semblance of the real article by a trip to Laguna in the winter months! On the other hand, as a summer resort Laguna is cool and pleasant, the temperature rarely exceeding 67° F. (19·5 C.). It is within easy drive of the mountains of Anaga and the woods of Las Mercedes and Agua Garcia, and has the advantage of being surrounded by level walks.

The market is pleasant and clean. Quantities of fish were for sale, and fruit of many kinds. Three oranges sold for two *quartos* (three and a half *quartos* equal about one penny), and other fruits and vegetables were equally cheap. Roast chestnuts were selling in the streets, so we invested in some to see how they were sold, and were given fourteen for one *quarto*. Twice we had to take shelter in doorways from heavy showers. In one street we met, to our astonishment, the young priest of Valverde, in Hierro, who was staying in Laguna for a time.

After almuerzo Mr. Smith called, and kindly took us to the Institute. This is the principal school for training the youth of the islands, to which is attached the Library. Permission to see the college or school was unobtainable, but we were allowed to enter the Library. We could not find out why we were not permitted to see any part of the college. Even after we suggested that only John should go, thinking a woman's presence might be an objection, he could neither obtain admittance, nor a reason for the refusal. Consequently we drew our

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own deductions, which no doubt others will do also. We are told that none of the better classes will send their sons here, owing to the bad tone of the place.

The chief interest to us lay in the Library, in which are to the present day books prohibited * by the Inquisition, and which, while carefully hunted out and burned in Europe, rested secure in Tenerife, and were no doubt quietly perused in secret by the monks! The books were gathered together and brought to this library from all the monasteries and convents when

* We noted among the prohibited books in the Library at Laguna—"The Art of Cookery," in imitation of Horace's "Art of Poetry" (London); "A Tale of a Tub, written for the Universal Improvement of Mankind" (Dublin: 1741); Blair's (Hugh) "Sermons" (London: 1812); "Conduite Scandaleuse du Clergé depuis les Premiers Siècles de l'Eglise" (Paris: 1793); Grant's (James) "Sermons" (London: 1775); "The Koran, commonly called the Alcoran of Mahommed, translated from the Original Arabic. With explanatory notes, taken from the most approved commentators. To which is prefixed a preliminary discourse by George Sale" (London: 1801); Mair (John): "Book-keeping Methodised" (Dublin: 1748); "Le Nouveau Testament en François" (Amsterdam: 1728); Puffendorf (Samuel): "An Introduction to the History of the Principal Kingdoms and States of Europe" (London: 1699); Portens (R. Reilly): "Lectures on the Gospel of St. Matthew" (London: 1802); Rousseau (J. J.): "Pensées" (Paris: 1807), and all Rousseau's works; Renan (Erneste): "Vida de Jesus" (Paris: 1866); Stearn's (Dr.) "Tour from London to Paris" (Dublin: 1791); Smith's (R. Sydney) "Sermons" (London: 1809); Stackhouse (Thomas): "A Compleat Body of Speculative and Practical Divinity" (London: 1760); "The Travels of Several Learned Missionaries of the Society of Jesus" (London: 1714); Voltaire: "La Henriade, Poëme" (Paris: 1801), and "Théâtre" (Neufchatel: 1773); Ward (Thomas): "England's Reformation, a Poem" (Dublin: 1814); "Life of James FitzJames, Duke of Berwick" (London: 1738); "Sixteen Sermons preached occasionally on Various Subjects by James Grant, LL.D." (London: 1725); "Complete Works of Flaxman" (published in Madrid 1860); Pope's works; "Collection of English Literature," edited by Washington Irving; Musgrave's "History of Rebellions in Ireland" (1801); Clarkson's "Slave Trade" (1808); "Church Authority Vindicated in a Sermon Preached at Putney May 5th, 1719. By Fr. Hare, D.D., Rector of Barnes." There is a note in Spanish on the flyleaf of this last work to this effect: "Entre varias piezas de doctrina heretica hay en esta colleccion unas whetas virtudes del agua de brea." I have chosen the above out of a number of books as being of more interest to English readers.

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these were suppressed and the monks banished. The librarian was most kind and courteous in giving us all the information in his power, but he had not been long in office, and the cataloguing of the books was so incomplete, all order in the arrangement neglected, and so many books omitted entirely, that it was difficult to ascertain anything accurately. Glas's history of the Canary Islands is in the Library, but is a prohibited work! This one can understand, for the outspoken sailor speaks very freely of the exactions of the clergy and some other matters connected with the Church of Rome that would not be palatable to devout Roman Catholics.

Why some of these works are prohibited is difficult to imagine, but one can easily understand the reason with regard to others. I have only of course picked out a few of the many. There is a volume* giving a complete list of the books formerly prohibited.

A well-preserved missal of the fourteenth or fifteenth century, with the hand illustrations beautifully executed and the colours fine and clear, is the finest manuscript in the Library. The oldest printed book is one published in 1476 of the Psalms in Latin, with initials in red and blue filled in by hand. It was printed at Rome. Another printed work, on natural history, has quaint line woodcuts of animals, snakes, etc. This was printed in 1536 at Argentoratum (? Strasburg).

In the "Conquista," by Don Juan Nuñez de la Peña, of Laguna, Thenerife (1676 : Madrid), I would just notice that Nuñez de la Peña, writing nearer the conquest than we are, spells Tenerife with an "h," which more nearly assimilates the spelling to the pronunciation of the Guanche word.

In 1836 there were 3,426 volumes in this library; in 1845, 4,602; and in 1882, 17,571. If, however, these numbers are taken from the books in the catalogue, they must be very imperfect. The library is situated in the top story of the old

* "Novus Librorum Prohibitorum et Expurgatorum Index pro Catholicis Hispaniarum Regnis Philippi IIII., Reg. Cath. An. 1632."



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monastery of the Augustines. It is about one hundred feet long and some twenty feet broad.

Leaving the library we called upon Mrs. Edwards, but found she had returned to Santa Cruz, and that Mr. Benjamin Renshaw had also gone. Later, however, after dining with our friends Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mr. Renshaw called, having returned, and brought us some welcome English newspapers.

Mr. Smith's house at Laguna is situated in the Plaza San Francisco, about which there is an amusing story. The authorities some time since determined to introduce bull fighting into the islands, and after much parade and ostentation, and proclamation far and near for weeks beforehand, preparations were made accordingly. The fight was to take place in this Plaza San Francisco, which is a spacious piece of ground used for exercising troops. Platforms were erected, and all the *élite* of the island were present under the presidency of the Governor. Matadors had been brought from Spain, an arena prepared, and nothing was lacking to add lustre to the pomp and ceremony of the performance. Crowds gathered; the bull, an island animal, was brought forth, but no inducement, no outrage to its person or feelings, would induce that bull to fight! In fact, it turned tail and fled. Great was the consternation of the promoters of the undertaking, but the bull did not mind. It was a Canary-bred animal, not a Spanish one, and it disdained to be degraded from the purposes for which Heaven intended it, to increase the brutal passions of mankind and make them lower than the beasts of earth. The intense rejoicing and covert amusement of those who were adverse to the bull-fight may be better imagined than described, when the brilliant pageant, with its flags, its gaily dressed people, and far-fetched matadors had to dissolve without their amusement. It is sad to think that the *noblesse* of Spain should still be given to such lowering and brutal entertainments. It is all very well to expect such things from the lower and uneducated masses, but that the educated and those who ought to be enlightened, that ladies should encourage such performances in cold blood is

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beyond belief. If there were any true sport in the arena, it might possibly appeal to the feelings, but as the unfortunate bull never receives quarter, and is forced to fight until he dies, or is killed by overpowering numbers, it is difficult to conceive how delicately nurtured women can countenance the fight. No doubt that in the past the Roman women attended worse pastimes (*sic*); but where is Rome now, where also is Spain as a power? The nation which countenances such performances must go down in the scale of civilisation and humanity. For the sake of the Canary Islands as a Province, and for the future credit of its people, they may be thankful that the bull-fight in the Plaza San Francisco was a fiasco, and the bull providentially wiser than his masters.

There are a great number of lunatics in the island, but fortunately they are mostly harmless, and are kept by their friends at home in confinement. Until lately there was no public asylum, but a wing is now being added to the hospital in Santa Cruz for their reception. Within the last decade, Mr. Smith told us, he himself saw a *large cage being made for a madman*. Heavens! is it the nineteenth century?

The lazaretto at Santa Cruz, which we were so anxious to avoid, justified our fears. On one occasion Mr. Smith had to endure its hardships, and he describes it as something too awful even to remember with equanimity,—a stone floor, no doors or windows, filthily dirty, and swarming with insects. It is said to be in a slightly better condition now.

We asked Mr. Smith for advice as to the best way of seeing the mountainous district to the north. He has travelled through part of it himself, and says that he considers it would be dangerous to attempt to go there now, since there has been so much rain. We were very unwilling to give up seeing the place, which we have reason to believe is the wildest and most beautiful part of the island, but others as well as Mr. Smith urged us not to go. We, however, would not have been deterred by anyone except Mr. Smith, for we knew he did not look upon trivial difficulties as insurmountable. He said that

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the paths which led round so many precipices would, owing to the nature of the soil, be slippery and dangerous, and so strongly urged us not to go, that reluctantly we yielded.

Some guavas which Mr. Smith made us partake of are about the size and shape of a small apple, pale yellow, or rather cream-coloured. The best way of eating them is to cut them in slices and cover with sugar. Some say they are delicious when swimming in sherry. Mangoes, which we also had in perfection, are like high-coloured peaches, with a huge stone in the centre; they are long-shaped, more like a pear, and with a flavour resembling the odour of turpentine.

The oil lamps at the corners of the streets are very clear, and lighted us back to the fonda.

*November 1st, Thursday.*—There was such a downpour of rain this morning that we did not venture out early, but sat in the sala awaiting breakfast and better spirits. The sounds when it is raining here are enough to drive one into melancholia. There are spouts from the roofs of all the houses to take the rain off the azoteas. These spouts, or gargoyles, jut out about four feet, just the width of the pathway. When it rains very heavily the stream of water is so great that it clears the pathway, falling upon the paved street, where it makes quite a respectable rivulet down the middle. But if there be the slightest abatement of the pressure of the water, it falls instead upon the pathway, when the foot-passengers have to betake themselves to the road to avoid a series of douche-baths. The street names,* in two cases at any rate, suggest the climate,—Agua, water, and Remojo, damp or soaking!

There are a number of men in town to-day in their curious short black trousers, slit at the knee, and leather gaiters. Damp, cold, and dismal outside, it is worse inside, the houses

* Others are Briones, briony; Rosada, rose colour; Falundo, foliage; Palma, palm; Caza, hunting; Carrera, main road or street; Herradore, blacksmith; Olivo, olive; Piteras, aloe; Nueva, new; Juan de Vera; Los Cruces, the crosses; Laurel; Los Pinos, pines; Alinos, aspen; Celia, a drink (made of wheat).

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being only prepared for summer weather. It clears up, however; so we take a walk, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Renshaw, round the town and its many churches. Laguna is, in fact, a city of priests and churches. We first ascended the tower of the Conception, from which there is a fine view of the hills grouped picturesquely to the north-west. There are no less than nine windmills to the south-west, betraying the windy nature of the neighbourhood. The carved work of the altar in the church, done by a man and his wife, is tumbling to pieces. The pulpit is in the same state, and was varnished a dozen years ago. A famous feature of the Church of the Conception is the picture of St. John, which at the time of the "black death," which devastated the island, was found one morning to be perspiring; the perspiration lasted forty days, when the plague ceased. This marvellous miracle, as it was accounted, is described very fully in a pamphlet* prepared for the celebration of the festival, which the faithful read and firmly believe.

The church being, like many others, poor and in want of repair, it has been decided to sell the *trona*, which is of silver, and for which three hundred dollars (sixty pounds) are asked. There is also a beautifully carved chest, with brass eagles on the lock, bearing the date 1752. We next went to the church of San Agustin, which is not now used, there being too many edifices for the population and their purses since the seat of government was moved from here to Santa Cruz. There are two side altars of wood, one of which has a marble slab with small figures. The chancel is painted in imitation of red-and-white marble. The roof of wood is better than that in the cathedral. The church of San Francisco, in the square of that name, is a small single-aisled building. There was a former and larger church of this name, but it was burnt. We ascended

* "Novena al Señor San Juan Apóstol y Evangelista. Por el milagroso sudor de su imágen en la iglesia parroquial de nuestra Señora de la Concepcion en la ciudad de San Christobal de la Laguna, Capital de la isla de Tenerife, en donde se venera" (Madrid: 1805).

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the tower, whence we could see the old walls of the first church, also those of the old monastery, now rebuilt and used as barracks. "Promises" are hung up in the church. There is an entrance gateway, from which, however, the gates have been removed. An air of poverty pervades the place. There is also a small church attached to the convent of Santa Clara, where there are about a dozen nuns. The church consists of a single aisle, at the west end of which is an iron grating, and some feet behind is another of wood, inside which the nuns sit.

Besides the regular monastic orders, now suppressed, there are several different religious associations, bearing the name of *cofradias*, or brotherhoods, composed only of laymen. Their duties merely consist in taking charge of the shrine or altar to which they are devoted, and accompanying the funerals of the members of their own fraternity. They raise subscriptions among themselves, and solicit public donations on the day of their annual "function," for defraying the expense of wax tapers and other necessaries for their respective shrines.

The brotherhood of the Gran Poder de Dios is composed of persons of the middle and upper classes of society. Their dress consists of a scarlet silk robe, called an *opa*, in shape like a carter's frock, worn over their ordinary habiliments. Their festival is held at rather a warm season, on the second Sunday in July, when they parade the streets bareheaded and with lighted tapers in their hands.

The parish priests in general have very limited incomes; they get the tithes and firstfruits, fees for baptisms, marriages, and burials, and for most of the numerous fiestas of different saints, processions, etc., at which they have to attend; as well as for such sermons as they are occasionally called upon to preach. The oratory of far the greater number of the preachers is very indifferent, as also are the subjects selected and their manner of treating them.

Mr. Francis Renshaw called in the afternoon, and later in the day Mr. Benjamin Renshaw and his nephew, to escort us

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to the cemetery. This being All Saints' Day, is one on which the dead are prayed for, much ceremony attending the services. It was a very wet night, unfortunately, and we got thoroughly soaked, from the spouts and rain overhead and the rivulets below. The streets, however, were pleasant compared with the awful road, or rather lane, between the town and the cemetery. We were in imminent danger of leaving our feet, or at least our shoes, in the sticky clay, and there were innumerable deep holes, filled with muddy water, into which we frequently stepped, getting wet over our ankles. This adventure was all very well for us, but we felt that Mr. Renshaw was indeed kind to accompany us to a scene he well knew, and which, considering the weather, could be only disagreeable to him. At the cemetery we found a great number of men, all in their blankets; lighted lamps were scattered everywhere, for it is the custom to burn lights on All Saints' night at the graves of the departed. When fine, the women attend, and place wreaths and crowns upon the graves, but to-night only men were present, the better classes sending their *medioneros*, stewards or men-servants, whose business it is to keep watch at the graves, fill the lamps with oil, and keep them burning. Whatever there may be on a fine night when the relatives of those dead are present and praying beside the tombs, there was no solemnity to-night. The effect of the lights was curious, the whole cemetery being lit with innumerable lamps, four, six, or eight on each tomb; some were suspended from the iron railings enclosing the burying-places, and others were laid upon the ground. As well as we could see by the light of the lamps, there seemed to be several handsome marble monuments. The rain continued pouring down in torrents, so we thought discretion the better part of valour, and returned to the fonda. We had, however, promised to go round to Mr. and Mrs. Smith's this evening, so changing our wet garments we started forth again. One willingly goes through some exertion for the sake of a homely chat with a well-educated, travelled English gentleman.

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# CHAPTER XXV.

## *LAGUNA—CABLE—NELSON'S FLAGS—MUSEUM AT SANTA CRUZ.*

Sorrow and ill weather come unasked for.—*Scotch Proverb.*

The vernal sun new life bestows
Even on the meanest flower that blows;
But vainly, vainly may he shine
Where Glory weeps o'er Nelson's shrine.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

*November 2nd, Friday.*—It is still raining, and so dismal that we feel quite in the dumps. Of course we have plenty of this weather at home, though I think it scarcely rains with such persistency, or it may be that there we and our houses are prepared for it. Carpetless rooms and stairs, window-shutters half closed, no fireplaces, no curtains, the rooms looking into inner courtyards, where if even the sun shone a gleam could not penetrate, is a state of affairs not conducive to cheerfulness, when the rain rattles down in large drops, and every water-spout makes the noise of a cascade, as the torrent shoots upon the stone pavement beneath. It is perfectly dreary.

"The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The dust still clings to the mouldering wall,
And at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary."

The weather, as we now see it, is what may be expected at

Laguna for the remainder of the winter. It is said that the climate of Laguna is better than it was—what must it have been?—at the expense of the rest of the island. This is chiefly due to the destruction of trees in other parts. The swamp or marsh, in winter a shallow lake, from which Laguna takes its name, is now entirely under cultivation, and eucalyptus trees are planted upon its surface to absorb the moisture. If, however, Laguna has only consecutive days of rain now instead of six months, as it had formerly, and if a portion of land has been reclaimed, a much greater surface has been lost through the absence of water. It were infinitely better that the plain of Aguere, surrounding Laguna, were a marsh if the rest of the island were left in its primitive luxuriance. There is an old adage descriptive of the climate of Laguna which is more severe upon it than anything I could say:—

"Tres meses de agua;
Tres meses de lodo;
Tres meses de viento;
Tres meses de todo."*

Friends kindly called to take leave of us this morning, as we are once more "moving on." If the climate of Laguna were only equal to the kindness of its "swallows," it would be a delightful spot in which to reside. Generally, however, while the swallows stay, the weather is good. Laguna is essentially a summer residence, and a most agreeable climate during the hot weather.

Mr. Benjamin Renshaw, like ourselves, was returning to the capital, so we went together in a covered carriage. The hackney vehicles here are, however, so exceedingly elderly, that I carefully enveloped myself in my mackintosh, and not without

* Which may be thus rendered:—

"Three months rain plies;
Three months mud lies;
Three months wind flies;
Three months again
Mud, wind, and rain."—P. D. O.

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reason, for the rain came in on both sides, and dripped from the top.

We left Laguna at 10.30, and after a drive of about fifty minutes reached Santa Cruz. On our way we passed the juncture where the road to Candelaria diverges.

A curious interest attaches to the town of Candelaria. When the Spaniards came to Tenerife, they found the Guanches held in great reverence an image which they kept in a cave near that place. Diego de Herrera, having in Lanzarote some Guanches who knew the hiding-place of the image, went in search of it, firmly believing that it was an image of the Virgin, and carried it off to Lanzarote. Here, however, no blessing appears to have attended its advent, for every morning, on the altar of the church at Rubicon, where it was placed, it was found with its face turned to the wall. Panic-struck, Herrera resolved to return it to Tenerife, which accordingly he did. The Guanches had not apparently missed the figure, which would lead one to suppose that they did not worship it. Or, to give the version of the Spaniards on the affair, the Guanches said that an angel representing the image was always present in the cave until the figure was returned! When, on Herrera bringing it back, however, and sending word to them that he had it on his ship, they ascertained their loss, they besought him to return it to them, which he did. He, however, gained by the transaction, for the Guanches, instead of being angry and resenting the theft, only thought of its restoration, and were so full of gratitude to Herrera, that some months later they allowed his son, Sancho Herrera, to build a fort for commerce at Añaza.

The image was said to have been first found in a very miraculous manner, and lengthy are the descriptions of it and its miraculous power. Reduced to common-sense, they amount to this: that the image, three feet in height, was probably the figure-head of a ship washed ashore. As the Guanches seem to have been quite ignorant of the art of modelling or sculpturing figures, this human-looking yet inanimate object was to

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them a cause rather of fear than of any other feeling. The back of the figure contained holes, which would still further confirm its nautical origin. It would appear to have been found on the beach towards the end of the fourteenth century, about 1390, by some shepherds. It was put into a cave, and there kept until its theft by Herrera. When the Spaniards had conquered Tenerife, a chapel was built for its reception, from which, by order of Charles V., it was transferred to the care of the Dominican friars, who built a monastery near the spot where it was found. Although sometimes it was removed on various excuses, it always found its own way back to the monastery, with bedraggled skirts! Much money came in consequence to the friars, and presents enriched the monastery. It is stated that in 1812, the daughter of wealthy parents being ill, her weight in silver was promised to the monastery on her restoration to health. She got well, but the friars waited to claim the fulfilment of the promise until she had attained her normal weight! So well did the monastery thrive, that a new one had to be built towards the end of the eighteenth century, the old one proving too small. Among other miraculous events, nocturnal processions, "every year on the Eve of the Purification of Our Lady," at which no mortals were present, are said to have been held on the beach, which in the morning was strewed with grease from the candles! It is curious that the lights were not supernatural as well as their bearers! Glas states that he "heard some Canary seamen declare that when they were returning from the Spanish West Indies, and in imminent danger of perishing in a hard gale of wind, they saw Our Lady of Candelaria in the night-time in the height of the storm, assisting them to reef and furl the sails, etc. And, moreover, they assured me that when they came home to Tenerife they were told that in the morning after the very night in which they were so miraculously assisted by the Virgin she was seen in the church of Candelaria with her clothes and hair wet with the spray of the sea that came upon her while employed in that friendly office." If the figure be

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considered as not of earthly carving, I fear, from the descriptions of those who have seen it, we cannot form a high estimate of the angels as sculptors. Two festivals in its honour were held on February 2nd and August 15th, upon which occasions those known to be descended from Guanches had places of honour and carried the image. The departure of the image was in accordance with its arrival. During the frightful storms, accompanied by rain, which devastated the island from the 6th to the 9th of November, 1826, when two hundred and twenty-five houses, an equal number of people, and nearly a thousand head of cattle were destroyed, the battery and convent of Candelaria, containing the image, not being built on secure foundations, were washed into the sea, the eighteen friars who occupied the building flying and leaving the image to its fate.

When Diego de Herrera came to Tenerife in 1464 he took thence a youth who, on being taught the Roman Catholic religion, became a devout worshipper of the Virgin. This Guanche, called after baptism Anthony, on a later occasion when Herrera was cruising among the islands, being apparently home-sick, made his escape. He immediately informed his compatriots that the image they had been so long reverencing ignorantly was in reality the Virgin Mary. Hence, no doubt, arose the tradition that before the conquest the Guanches were said to have worshipped the Virgin.

Our first endeavour on arriving at Santa Cruz was to obtain some missing letters, but in this we were unsuccessful. We lost several letters during our stay in the archipelago, and one or two we sent never reached their destination. This, we hear, is a usual occurrence. Any letter that is particular requires to be registered, although it may not contain valuables, if one wishes to be absolutely certain of its safe arrival.

All day the military band has been playing on the pier, and a crowd waiting patiently, notwithstanding that it rains at intervals. This demonstration is on account of the arrival of the steamers that are going to lay the cable. It is almost impos-

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sible to convey to English minds the intensity of feeling here with reference to the cable. It must be remembered in the first instance that these islands have always been systematically snubbed by the Peninsular Government. But little notice has been taken of them by Spain except to extract taxes from the unfortunate people. Very few roads or harbours have been made, and up to the present there has been no cable. Notwithstanding that these islands are situated thus alone, as it were, they have yet shown energy, although forgotten by mankind. The Guanche and Irish blood, and later the English and Scotch mercantile enterprises, have had a good effect. Notwithstanding their disadvantages, the communication with the world by means of vessels, touching chiefly at Santa Cruz de Tenerife and Las Palmas, is considerable,* and is on the increase.

Up till now all telegrams have had to be sent by post to Madeira and thence wired. If the number of ships calling has been numerous without a cable, there will of course be many more when direct communication is thus established, and at a reasonable rate too, with the world. To understand the feelings of the community, it must be further remembered that the nation is a southern one, with warm southern blood. Enthusiastic to a degree with "vivas," they can be equally violent with denunciations. The shocking rivalry between two sister islands has run very high in the matter of the cable. It has always been a sore point with Gran Canaria that Las Palmas is not the capital. This, as everybody knows, is not really a matter of much importance. Take the celebrated instance of Washington, which is not by any means the most important town in the United States. As Santa Cruz is the capital of the Province of the Canarias, the captain-general and civil governor reside here. Being thus the headquarters of the Government, the cable was ordered to be laid direct from Cadiz to Santa Cruz. The Canarios, however, thought, or wished at any rate, that the cable should go to Las Palmas.

* See Appendix.

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The struggle between the two islands as to which shall be the greater similarly appears in every matter. When the *Dacia* and *International*, two steamers belonging to the Submarine Cable Company, came out from Cadiz sounding, they went to Canaria first, and stayed two or three days. While there the anxiety of the inhabitants of Tenerife was to English people almost ludicrous. Everyone in this island was certain there was a hitch in the laying of the cable, and that the Company would be *bribed* to lay it to Las Palmas rather than to Santa Cruz! The utter absurdity and impossibility of Englishmen being capable of taking such a bribe did not occur to them, of course. Every Spaniard, from the highest to the lowest, is capable of doing anything for money, and they only judged us by themselves. When I say "every Spaniard" can be bribed, it must be taken in the same limited sense in which one says that "no Englishman" is capable of being bribed. There are exceptions to every rule. When the steamers did actually arrive at the capital, the rejoicings were great. Rockets were let off, bands played, and "vivas" were shouted. When the head officials of the Cable Company came ashore, they were greeted by the military band playing "God Save the Queen," and escorted to the hotel by the Santa Cruz officials and a crowd of the inhabitants, after which more rockets were let off, and "vivas" burst forth from every voice. An amusing incident occurred early in the day, however. The first boat to come ashore was one with the soiled linen. The band, seeing the boat arriving from the cable ships, concluded the principals, the Messrs. Gray, were coming, and struck up "God Save the Queen," much to the amusement of the sailors!

Later, when the cable was actually laid, and Santa Cruz made its headquarters, a three days' fiesta was held, at which some 40,000 people besides the regular residents of the capital were said to have been present. The arrangements for this festival were issued in a programme, a part of which I translate, as it may show the style in which such documents are here written,

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and at any rate will be interesting to look back upon.* The language of the programme is somewhat grandiloquent, but the practical carrying out of the items was by no means so magnificent as the description would convey—at least to English readers.

The afternoon was close, and we felt lazy, so we wandered up to the Plaza del Principe, above the church of San Francisco. Here there are seats under the shadow of the trees, and one is soothed and lulled by the dreamy plash of a fountain in the midst.

After we returned to the hotel, and whilst I was busily writing, Mr. Matthew Gray came in, and very kindly carried us off on board the *Dacia* for dinner. We were glad of the opportunity

* Extracts from the general programme of the festivities by the municipality, civil and military corporations, and the scientific, literary, and artistic societies of Santa Cruz de Tenerife, to celebrate the inauguration of the

*Submarine Cable.*

Day of inauguration. On receipt of the first message sent from Cadiz, the cable will be blessed by the Most Illustrious Bishop of the Diocese, assisted by the Venerable Dean, and the four dignitaries of Holy Church. This solemn act terminated, a printing press, temporarily erected in the church, will reproduce, accompanied by the music of the organ and bells, copies of the telegram, which will be profusely distributed amongst the crowd.

7 *p.m.* A grand procession will parade the principal streets of the town, bearing various illuminated figures and lanterns, with inscriptions of the names of those persons who have discovered and perfected the science of electricity.

*Second Day.*

8 *a.m.* General bell-ringing, and two military bands playing in the principal streets.

10 *a.m.* High Mass in cathedral, followed by sermon, to thank the Almighty for the boon conferred on these islands, followed by Te Deum.

*Noon.* Loaves of bread distributed to the poor.

4 *p.m.* Grand regatta in the bay.

7 *p.m.* Military bands playing in the plaza.

8 *p.m.* Promenade.

10 *p.m.* Fireworks. Ball.

The third and fourth days much the same; bread given to poor, bands, fireworks, and each concluding with a ball.

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of seeing a cable ship, as it is not every day, in England or elsewhere, that one gets the chance. Before boarding the *Dacia*, however, we rowed over to see a fine new steamer, just out from Plymouth on her trial trip. She has done well, having accomplished the journey in four days. The *Tongariro* is over 4,000 tons, and is commodious as well as fast.*

The cable in the *Dacia* is coiled amidships round a large cage cylinder, in what might be considered the hold. The shore end of the cable is two or three inches thick, the deep sea part is only seven-eighths of an inch. From the hold the cable runs out between nuts, the pressure of which can be increased or diminished at will, so as to prevent it running out too fast. It then passes over and under various wheels, and over a compensating balance, with weights to shunt on and off, until it finally runs out astern, port of the rudder. On the starboard side of the rudder is the sounding gear. The wire for this, only the thickness of piano wire, is rolled round wheels, which are kept in tubs of a weak solution of caustic soda. One wheel we saw had 2,000 fathoms on it, but frequently there will be as much as 5,000 fathoms. There is also aft a small wheel for steering by steam and starting and stopping the engines in the engine-room, so that the whole management of the vessel, while the cable is being laid, can be controlled from this spot,—which arrangements are, of course, invaluable, as the important part of cable-laying is that the cable should run out smoothly. If, therefore, a hitch occurs, the machinery or cable can be stopped instantaneously, without any message by word of mouth. After dinner we studied the charts by the aid of the arc light, on deck. The soundings are of the greatest interest, and especially those of a coral reef, found at a depth of only forty-nine fathoms. Living coral was found at a depth of five hundred and thirty fathoms. Two cabins on deck were of great interest, one with telegraphic instruments, Sir W. Thomson's galvanometer being the principal; and the other with the scientific results of the expedition, the

* This is one of the boats now touching regularly at Tenerife, of the Shaw, Savill, and Albion line.

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dredgings from the bottom of the sea of coral and other objects. The incandescent light is used below, and the saloon was remarkably free from heat and smell. There were about thirty gentlemen at dinner, the staff on board, and I was the only lady present. Later on, before coming ashore, we enjoyed some music very much.

*November 3rd, Saturday.*—Don A. de Aguilar called, and after lunch he took us to see the market, theatre, and barracks. The vegetable market, a good-sized building, is in the interior of the town. It seems a pity that, with so many vessels calling, some arrangement for shipping fruit to England cannot be made. The theatre is large, and, I hear, acoustically excellent. At present it looks rather dreary, for there being no company here, the interior is perfectly bare. This is owing to a custom which prevails of the boxes being taken for the season, for which from fifty to sixty dollars each is paid. The box-owner sends his own furniture, curtains for the door,—none are used in front,—carpet, and chairs. The boxes are so well arranged that eight or ten people can sit comfortably in them, and all see. The bottom of the building is entirely stalls, which cost one shilling a night. Added to these prices must always be the entrance money, which is a peseta (tenpence) for each person, whether he have a season ticket, a box, or not. The theatre accommodates nine hundred people. The stage is large and runs far back; the stock scenery is, of course, very poor, the companies usually bringing their own. Refreshments of the ordinary kind are supplied, but light suppers of eggs or other simple fare can also be obtained. The decoration is white and gold. From the theatre we passed in a few minutes to the eastern end of the town. Crossing the barranco, and leaving the hospital on our right, we soon came to the barracks. Here the captain of the guard gave us permission to see everything, and another guard officer kindly escorted us round the barrack square. Every detail is exactly the same as in the Peninsular army, save that the soldiers are natives only of these islands, out of which they are not obliged to serve. The officers

belong to the army generally. There is only a battalion of infantry and another of artillery, four hundred and five strong each. The Remington rifle is used. There is a school for the men, which they must attend as they can find time when off duty. The object best worth seeing is the view from the further side of the barrack square, its low white walls contrasting against the background of fine irregularly jagged peaks forming the northern part of the island.

Education is not compulsory in the islands. In Tenerife there are 121 schools, and 7,789 pupils.

The alcaldes are appointed by the king, which means the government. The corporation, or *ayuntamiento*, who are elected by the people, are supposed to have their interests looked after by the alcalde. The office is held for five years, and there is no remuneration for the services performed. There is one alcalde and a lieutenant or assistant alcalde to every four thousand of the inhabitants in a city or town. As we have seen in our travels, the alcaldes are not, in the country places at any rate, men of education. They are generally well-to-do, but whether they were so before being made alcaldes or since is doubtful.

There are nine newspapers * in Tenerife, eight of which are published in Santa Cruz. Three of these are republican, and two monarchical, the rest being special. The leading paper in the archipelago is a republican one, *El Memorandum*. It favoured us with many notices, and kept people informed of our whereabouts. To this publicity we owe much of the attention paid to us in country places, curiosity having been aroused about us and our wanderings. It was of assistance to us, inasmuch as, learning we were intent on seeing every thing and place, there was no endeavour made to dissuade us from travelling anywhere. The only opinion expressed as we reached each island was delight at seeing us and fear lest we should never have gone to it, and that this particular island was to have been left out in the cold. We had, however, announced firmly and with emphasis that we meant, if no untoward event occurred, to

* See Appendix.

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visit and see for ourselves the condition of *each* of the seven inhabited islands in the Canary Archipelago. No one therefore in any of the islands made the slightest attempt by speech or action to deter us from effecting our set purpose. We had been informed that each island in turn would try to prevent us going to the others, but whether our attitude prevented this, or whether the inhabitants did not care to say ill of each other to us, I do not know. We went to the islands quite unprejudiced in favour of one more than another, though being conscious of the jealousies among them, we were the better able to sift our evidence and information and extract the wheat from the chaff. Writing after our travels there, it amuses one to think how Tenerifians were certain we came predisposed to Gran Canaria, and how Canarios were equally certain that, as we had visited Tenerife first, we had no room in our minds to appreciate Canaria or its people. As we had never had any communication with the islands before our visit to them and knew nothing of them or their inhabitants through personal friends, we were quite unbiassed in our opinions. Our letters of introduction were all procured through mutual friends of those who gave them to us, so that on leaving England no one person more than another influenced our opinions. This explanation, I feel, is necessary, as island feeling runs so high, in order that interested action may not be imputed to anyone.

There were a number of officers and gentlemen from the cable vessels ashore for dinner at the hotel to-night, and a sorry dinner we had. This hotel is the only English one * in Santa Cruz, so the proprietor has, most unfortunately, a monopoly. He charges two dollars a day, which, although a high price here, would not be considered too much if the hotel were fairly good. The attendance is very bad, and the food often indifferent. Last night we had soup and fish, pigs' feet and brains, and rissoles, and then, to our astonishment and

* The International, which has been since started by English people, is in the premises lately occupied by Camacho, who has removed to another house.

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consternation, came the pudding! The joint, we were told, was "forgotten." But this forgetfulness is a frequent occurrence, we hear. There was only one dish of pudding, too, to go round among twenty hungry men. An omelet was imperatively ordered, of which we each had a small portion. This treatment is really monstrous, and yet these unfortunate gentlemen were each expected to pay three shillings and sixpence for dinner. Another cause of complaint is that the food is all cold by the time it is served, which is solely due to the bad attendance. This was not an isolated case of forgetfulness, as those who live here can readily testify. Some more gentlemen from the cable vessels came ashore after dinner, when we had music and went to bed hungry.

Mr. Gray, who was also ashore, most kindly gave me tracings of the banks found by the ships, and especially of the Dacia bank, which runs to within forty-nine fathoms of the surface. The Coral Patch found, and of which specimens were brought to the surface, disposes once and for ever of the theory that coral lives only at a certain shallow depth, for living coral was found at a depth of 530 fathoms.

The Coral Patch was discovered in an interesting, and to those on board in an exciting, manner. The lead recorded a depth of 2,400 fathoms in a regular and unsuspicious manner, and the vessel went another fifty miles to westward, intending then to turn. This last sounding was being made at 4 a.m., when all who were not immediately concerned were sleeping peacefully. To the utter astonishment of those engaged on deck, however, the bottom was next struck at 485 fathoms. Thinking that a mistake must have been made, the lead was again lowered, but with the same result. The news spread, and the excitement brought the sleepers on deck. Sounding was of course continued, with the result that the shoalest water was found to be 435 fathoms to a depth of 600. This rise or tableland extends for a distance east and west of six miles and north and south of three and a half miles. The sides fall away abruptly to about 850 fathoms in depth, and are continued in

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a comparatively gentle slope until they reach 2,000 fathoms. Probably from 800 fathoms upwards the bank is entirely coral, living white coral being brought up from 530 fathoms. The adepts who made the soundings and examined the contents of the dredges have no doubt that this embryo coral island is steadily growing upwards and gradually diminishing the depth of water over it.*

*November 4th, Sunday.*—During the night we had thunder and such a pelting storm of rain, that I was awakened. It cleared only about twelve noon, when we went to see Nelson's flags. We had a letter from Mr. Edwards to the *beneficiado*, who was fortunately at home now, so the flags were taken down out of their glass cases for our inspection.† Ordinarily

* Banks found by the steamship *Dacia* :—

*Coral Patch.*—435 fathoms. Latitude, 34° 57′ 00″. North latitude, three miles. Deepest, 800 fathoms. Longitude, 11° 57′ 00″. West longitude, four miles. Deepest living coral found at 530 fathoms. October 12th, 1883.

*Dacia Bank.*—49 fathoms. Latitude, 31° 12′ 30″. North latitude, nine miles. Deepest, 100 fathoms. Longitude, 13° 39′ 00″. West longitude, ten miles. October 20th, 1883.

† There are two flags ; the larger is fourteen feet nine and a half inches long by seven feet wide at the pole. The pole to which it is attached is eight feet seven and a half inches long and four and a half inches in circumference. Round the bottom it is considerably worm-eaten. There is no border to the flag, and the blue is paler than that used now. It may, of course, be faded by time. The centre is a red cross edged all round with white, and a white St. Andrew's cross, the groundwork being blue.

The other flag is smaller. It is seven feet seven inches long by five feet two inches wide. The pole of this is sound, and is seven feet seven and a half inches long, including an iron or steel spear head ten inches in length. The circumference of the pole at the base is four and three-quarter inches. The wood goes into the iron point, and a flange of iron runs into the wood. There is also a hole for a nail. The colours in this flag and the crosses are exactly the same as the other. But in addition this bears the name EMERALD upon it. The letters, which have "seriffs," are painted and shaded. They are seven inches high. The name is painted on separate stuff and sewn on afterwards. As the bunting was not long enough for the word, a piece had to be added on which the D was put. The flag had seen some service, for the blue bunting is darned in places with white cotton.

they are kept in two long boxes, somewhat like elongated eight-day clocks *minus* the face, but as these are very high up on the opposite walls of a side chapel, where there are no windows and very little light, it is utterly impossible to get even a faint glimpse of their outlines. The reason for these precautions is that English people coming here used to cut off pieces of the flags to carry away, and with everybody handling them they were rapidly becoming destroyed. Now they are under lock and key, which is only right. It would surely be better, however, to have them placed where the daylight could fall upon them for the benefit of those travellers who are not fortunate enough to be able to inspect them closer. On the 25th of July, the anniversary of the day upon which they fell into the hands of the Spaniards, the flags are taken down and placed on a side altar for the whole day. Generally there is an allusion to their having been "taken" in the sermon, and how fortunate it was that the English did not conquer the island. Privately, however, many isleños think it is a great pity Nelson did not succeed. The 25th of July is also St. James's Day, the patron saint of Spain, so of course the coincidence makes the festival still greater, and the defeat of the English more portentous. Upon the same day the Spanish colours are carried through the streets in procession, and placed on the altar during mass, after which they are taken back as they were brought.

The warfare between France and Spain, which had been the result of the French revolution, was practically ended for a time by the offensive and defensive alliance concluded at St. Ildefonso between these powers. It will be remembered that its chief aim was to injure England and British commerce. A little later, in 1796-7, the French, to whom Holland and Spain were now subsidiary, determined on an invasion of England. It was then during the reign of George III., in February, 1797, that the celebrated engagement off St. Vincent between the Spaniards and English, ending in the rout of the former, ensued; and it was in the

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following July that Nelson, with a small squadron, made the attempt on Santa Cruz de Tenerife. A report having reached him that the Viceroy of Mexico with treasure ships had put into Santa Cruz, Nelson determined to attempt a landing. He knew well the difficulties of wind and tide, and that nature and the elements were against him. Everything combined to render the undertaking unsuccessful. Only four ships —three frigates and a cutter—with their seamen and marines, went upon the expedition, no troops being embarked. The attack was meant to be a midnight surprise; but, owing to opposing tide and wind, the frigates were still a mile from shore at daybreak, so were seen by the inhabitants. It was two days after this that the disastrous landing was made, calms and currents being against the invaders. Meanwhile the islanders, being forewarned, were forearmed. The heights, citadel, forts, and houses bristled with men and firearms. The entire landing force, consisting of about nine hundred men, were to land on the mole and make for the square, after which the mode of proceeding was to be settled as circumstances might determine. The English were not discovered until within half gun-shot of the landing-place, when with a hurrah the boats loosed from each other. The Spaniards rang alarm bells, and thirty or forty cannon, besides musketry, opened fire from one end of the town to the other. Unfortunately, however, owing to the intense darkness, "most of the boats missed the mole, and went on shore through a raging surf, which stove all to the left of it." Four or five boats which found the mole stormed and carried it, spiking the guns, although defended by four or five hundred men; so there would have been little chance for the town had all the boats landed safely. The citadel and houses at the head of the mole kept up such a heavy fire that the assailants could not advance. Just when stepping out of the boat, Nelson received a shot through his right elbow, which incapacitated him from further fighting. As he fell, however, he caught his sword in his left hand, determined not to lose it. The ball struck the upper wall of the

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mole, and the crack that it made in one of the stones can be seen to the present day.

Meanwhile most of the boats attempted to land beneath the batteries. Captain Waller, of the *Emerald*, and two or three others succeeded, but many of the boats were stove in and filled with water, and some could not effect a landing at all. Anyone who knows the shores of these islands, and the surf which surrounds them upon the calmest day in summer, to say nothing of when there is the least wind or sea on, can readily understand the impossibility, almost, of effecting a safe landing. It is from this point in the story that the English and Spanish accounts of the facts differ. "A few men" were collected, and notwithstanding that the scaling ladders were lost, and the ammunition wet, messengers were sent to the citadel to summon it to surrender: these men, an English sergeant and two Spaniards, never returned. Captains Hood and Miller, who had landed on the south-west, now joined Captain Waller, and at daybreak they found their numbers all told to be about three hundred and forty. Taking some ammunition from their prisoners, they proceeded to the citadel. Finding, however, that every street was commanded by field pieces, and that several thousand Spaniards and a hundred French were under arms; that he and his handful of men were without provisions, with powder wet, and, the boats being lost, communication with the ships impossible, Trowbridge, with the audacity of an Englishman, sent Captain Hood with a flag of truce to the Governor to demand, on pain of his burning the town, that he and his troops should re-embark, *with all their arms of every kind*, and take their own boats, if they were saved, or be provided with such others as might be wanting. In return he guaranteed that the squadron should not molest any of the Canary Islands. Prisoners on both sides were to be given up. The Governor replied that the English ought to surrender as prisoners of war; to which Hood replied that he was instructed to say that, if the terms were not accepted in five minutes, Captain Trowbridge would fire the town, and

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attack the Spaniards at the point of the bayonet. So the three hundred and forty English effectually threatened the "several thousand Spaniards and a hundred French," and did depart scot-free, with all the glories of an honourable retreat. Now comes the part which is worthy to be recorded in all chronicles of the Canary Islands. The Governor, Don Juan Antonio Gutierrez, ordered our wounded to be received into the hospitals, and all the English to be supplied with the best provisions that could be procured, also allowing our ships to send ashore for victuals. He gave each man "a loaf of bread and a pint of wine" before parting. Nelson and he interchanged presents, the former actually offering to carry the news of his own defeat to Spain. Two hundred and fifty English were drowned, killed, and wounded. One incident is worthy of record. "Don Bernardo Collagon," an Irish ancestor, no doubt, of the present Marqués de Candia, Don Tomas Colahan, "stripped himself of his shirt to make bandages for one of those Englishmen, against whom, not an hour before, he had been engaged in battle."

Though this episode in history is generally interesting, several points are particularly noticeable. First, the Guanche-like trust and confidence reposed in the word of an enemy that they would not return to the attack, and the also Guanche-like hospitality which despatched that enemy provisioned to their ships. The whole affair reminds one of a similar event in Guanche history, when the natives of Canaria treated the Spaniards in like manner, but were betrayed. To the honour of England, however, be it said that her sons did not forfeit the trust reposed in them. The next point is that the English departed with all their arms, and that there is no mention whatever of standards or flags. It is unnecessary to point out that, as we did not capitulate, neither did we part with any of the honours of war. The simple fact undoubtedly is that the flags in Santa Cruz were picked up from the wrecked boats, and were washed ashore probably some time after the English had left the islands altogether. As trophies of an attack and

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defence memorable in the Island's chronicle, these flags are interesting to both English and isleños; but looked upon in the light of standards wrung from hands unable to keep them, they are worthless.

A letter written by Nelson's secretary to the Governor of Santa Cruz, and signed by Nelson himself the day after the engagement, is remarkable for being the first in which he signed his name with his left hand. It must have been signed an hour or two after the arm was amputated; it is dated July 25th, 1796, a mistake in the hurry of battle, for the year was really 1797. The letter was preserved in Santa Cruz, but has since been removed, by order of the Spanish Government, to the Naval Museum at Madrid. Mr. Edwards told us he saw it when it was here. That government, also, on one occasion sent for the flags, but the inhabitants of Santa Cruz refused to allow them to be removed, and the Spanish gun-boats, sent to bring them, had to return empty-handed. The flags were actually on board, when the Governor, fearing a riot, had to order them back to the town. It is not to be wondered at that the Spaniards conveniently forget their defeats, and note only the occasion when the English were repulsed at Santa Cruz; but it is rather curious that in what has been written in English on the Canary Islands no record of Blake's famous success in that bay is found. Admiral Blake, in 1657, pursued a Spanish fleet of sixteen ships, until he came upon them in the Bay of Santa Cruz on April 20th, which was said to be then "defended by a strong castle and seven forts." He sailed with a favourable wind into the bay, and after resisting him for four hours, the Spaniards yielded, and abandoned their ships, which were set on fire. A wind, as favourable to their exit as their entry, carried the victors safely to sea again, leaving the Spaniards astonished at the audacity and temerity of the English.

In the afternoon we took a stroll round and through the town, and to call at the British Vice-Consulate. Seeing some samples of cochineal ready for export, Mr. Hamilton kindly gave me a sample bag of each. Cochineal was introduced in

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1825 from Mexico, whence it was brought on cacti. No one took the trouble to preserve the insects, except a priest at Laguna, who later gave insects and plants to a garden in Santa Cruz. An officer, Don Santiago de la Cruz, transferred them from there to the south of Tenerife, and to Fuerteventura, meeting with great opposition to their reproduction and cultivation. It was only about 1845 that, as an export, cochineal assumed importance.

The evening was beautiful, and the mountains to the north looked very majestic against the sky. The half-light of the hour before sunset suits their jagged outlines better than the warm rays of the noontide sun. Canaria was also in sight on the opposite side, its contour as clear as if the island were only a mile or two distant.

*November 5th, Monday.*—To-day the scene is changed. What a contrast Guy Fawkes's day is here so far as the weather is concerned, for we have a cloudless sky and brilliant sunshine. The thermometer in the shade at 3 p.m. was 70° F. (21·2 C.). This morning we went to Ghirlanda's, the agent for the Spanish steamers, to get our tickets for Canaria. The mail from Cadiz comes twice a month, so we are fortunate in just catching it; the fare also is less than half that on the English steamers, and the boats are very good. Certainly, every endeavour is at present made by the English companies to make the communications among the islands as difficult as possible. We next purchased a thermometer. It was very unfortunate that our excellent English instrument was broken on the Peak.

At 1 p.m. we went to see the museum, having at last succeeded in getting it opened. Señor Don Juan Bethencourt Alfonso kindly showed us over it. He is a descendant of the first conqueror, and deservedly proud of his lineage. The museum is in a long passage and a small room in the school next the church of San Francisco. In the passage are arranged the Guanche relics. The most interesting feature is perhaps several hundred skulls, as from that number one can

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get a fair estimate of the general type. The sockets of the eyes are wider from top to bottom than is usual, the cheek-bones are not too high or broad; the teeth in all, old and young, are in remarkably good condition, none apparently being decayed; and the head is well shaped, especially at the back, the type being that of a moral people. Poles for jumping, gofio mills, skins for clothing, and a few very much broken mummies formed the rest of the collection, except a large mass of composition chiefly of dragon's blood and ground stone, with which the dead were embalmed. The larger room is devoted to some chemical and physical apparatus for teaching the students, and a few stuffed birds. One of these, called here the *tabobo*,* about the size of a blackbird, speckled and reddish brown, with a crest like a cockatoo, is a very pretty bird, which we saw later in the north of Lanzarote. The same bird is known in Cornwall under the name Hoopoe.

During the afternoon the boatman came to view our luggage previous to taking it on board. The tariff here is extraordinary, namely a *peseta* (tenpence) for each package that cannot be carried in the hand. This becomes quite a tax when one has a number of boxes or portmanteaus neither very large nor very small. We did not bring large boxes with us, on account of travelling from island to island, thinking that small pieces of luggage would be more convenient in getting in and out of boats; in which surmise we were correct.

After dinner, about 9 p.m., we left to go on board the Spanish steamer, and were escorted to the boat by a number of the English at present in Santa Cruz. It was with a feeling of real regret that we said good-bye to this island, where we had received much kindness.

We had a state cabin on deck, containing four berths, all to ourselves, so had a quiet night's rest, notwithstanding a good deal of rolling.

Four of the seven islands comprising the Garden of the Hesperides we have now seen—Tenerife, Palma, Gomera, and

* *Upupa epops*. *Abubilla* vulgar.

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Hierro; each beautiful with an individuality of its own, and each rich in wild and magnificent scenery. There the aspects of nature are most varied. There in the forest glades beneath the majestic pines, or amid the umbrageous laurels and heaths, or buried in the depths of the sublime gorges, seclusion and repose may be enjoyed. There the climate is health-giving and restorative, nearly every variety of temperature being obtainable. In truth—

> . . . "it is a goodly sight to see
> What Heaven hath done for this delicious land!
> What fruits of fragrance blush on every tree!
> What goodly prospects o'er the hills expand!"

END OF VOLUME I.

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