

brimmed hats fluttering behind them. For hours they sped thus, over the uneven ground, their horses being well accustomed to this mode of speedy travelling, as indeed are all the horses of Spain, excepting, of course, those belonging to the carriers. Leaving the mountains of Jaen to the right, they passed through Andujar and Bailen, and at the close of the first day they reached Carolina, a small town on the skirts of the Morena, occupied by German colonists. Here they remained for the night at a small posada, preferring to go through the Dispensa Perros which was two leagues distant, before the morning sun was risen, thus eluding the robbers they would be sure to meet were the journey performed by night, as the banditti would, at that early hour, be sleeping. The plan worked admirably: they entered La Mancha through the pass, where they expected to have some encounter with the bands of bloody Orejita or Palillos, without adventure of any kind. They indeed heard cries and a shrill whistle occasionally in the heavy brushwood, but saw no one. Broad purple plains were now to be passed, reminding one forcibly of the great prairies we have passed over in the far west of America, before they arrived at Aranjuez. Stopping here for the night, at a German posada, they arrived at Madrid on the following day, having been three days on the road since leaving Cordova. Gomez proceeded at once to the residence of a friend, where their horses were taken care of; but as it was a holiday, his friend had already gone to the amphitheatre to be present at the national amusement.

It was now past mid-day: Don Pedro de Elverez (for such was the name of his friend) would not return to his home until the *corrida* would be over. But our cavalier was essentially Spanish, with strong Spanish tastes and passions, and he had never in his life passed the amphitheatre when the gaily-coloured bulletins announced the "*Plaza de Torros*" for the day, without joining the immense crowd, with eyes thirsting for the performance.

Don Gomez left his faithful follower at Don Pedro's residence, the gypsy held a marked dislike to the "Sese amusement," and making his way down the broad Calle d'Alcalá, he crossed the Pra'o and in a few minutes came to the white colossal and circular building. He had taken a ticket procured on the previous day at the little *kiosco* from the wife of Don Pedro, and had now only to present it and pass in.

This was an undertaking of some magnitude, for the space in front of the amphitheatre was crowded with vehicles of all descriptions, all in inextricable confusion; but he forgot all this when he at last stood on the second row of the first tier of the arcaded gallery. Don Gomez was accustomed to this amusement, as we have previously stated, and he looked first from the Queen's balcony down to the glittering sands of the arena, and his eyes wandered over the assembled thousands, the women with their great fans, the men with their great Chinese-like hats, with a certain familiarity which a long acquaintance with the barbarous *Funcion* alone could beget.

The band, consisting of trumpets, drums, and fifes, had just wound up a piece

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