

she would be terrified, and plead for mercy; but that woman was a demon. 'For the last time, Carmen,' I cried, 'will you remain with me?'

"No! no! no!" she said, stamping her foot, and drawing from her finger a ring that I had given her, she threw it into the brushwood.

"I stabbed her twice. It was Garcia's knife that I had taken after his death, having then broken my own. At the second blow she fell without even a sigh. I can yet see her large black eyes looking fixedly in mine; then they became dim and slowly closed. For a full hour I remained overwhelmed near her dead body. Then I remembered that Carmen had often expressed a wish to be buried in a wood, I dug a grave with my knife, and there I placed her. I searched some time for her ring, finding it at last, which, with a little cross, I placed by her in the grave—perhaps I was wrong. I then mounted my horse, galloped to Cordova, and at the first guard-house made myself known. I said that I had killed Carmen, but would not say where her body rests. The guilt lies with the *Calé* who trained her to this life. The hermit was a holy man; he prayed for her, he offered mass for the repose of her soul. Poor child!"

CHAPTER IV.

GYPSIES AND GYPSY CHARACTER.

Spain is one of the countries in which are to be found to-day the greater number of those nomads dispersed throughout Europe, and known under the name of *Bohemians*, *Gitanos*, *Gypsies*, *Zigeuner*, etc. The larger part dwell, or rather lead a wandering life in the provinces of the south and east, in Andalusia, in Estramadura in the Kingdom of Mercia, and there are many in Catalonia. These last often cross into France. They are met at all our fairs towards the south. The men usually follow the trade of horse-dealers, horse-doctor and mule-cropper, to which they add the calling of mending kettles and copper vessels, not to speak of smuggling and other illicit dealings. The women tell fortunes, beg and sell all manner of drugs, harmless or not. The physical characteristics of the Bohemians are more easy to distinguish than to describe, and once seeing an individual of this race he would be recognized among a thousand men of other nations. By physiognomy and expression especially, they stand apart from the people who dwell in the same country; their skin also is very swarthy, whence the name of *Calé*, the blacks, by which they often designate themselves.* Their eyes, quite oblique, well opened, very black, are shaded by long, thick lashes. Their look can only be compared with that of a fallow-deer: audacity and timidity are equally expressed by their eyes, which reveal the character of the nation—crafty, bold, but like Panurge, *naturally fearing blows*.

The men for the most part are tall, slender, agile, and I do not remember to have seen one burdened with flesh. In Germany the gypsy women are often very pretty, but beauty is exceedingly rare among the gitanas of Spain. While young they may be considered pleasing *laidereux* (ugly creatures), but with maternity they become repulsive. Their want of cleanliness is incredible, and any one who has not seen the hair of a gypsy matron can with difficulty form an idea of it, even in recalling the roughest, most greasy and dusty mane. In some large Andalusian towns certain gypsy girls, more attractive than the others, bestow greater care on their person, and these dance for money, dances greatly resembling those prohibited in our public carnival balls.

Mr. Barrow, an English missionary, the author of two interesting works on the Spanish gypsies, whom he had undertaken to convert at the expense of the Bible Society, asserts that it is a thing unheard of for a gitana to have a love-affair with a man foreign to her race. There is, I think, much exaggeration in the praise he accords to their virtue. It is very certain that the gitanas manifest an extraordinary devotion to their husbands; there is no danger, no privation, that they will not brave to help them in their need. One of the names that the gypsies give themselves—*Romé*, or husbands—appears to attest the respect or the race for the marriage state. Generally, it may be said that their chief virtue is patriotism, if so one may term the fidelity shown in their relations with those of the same origin with themselves, their eagerness to help each other, the inviolable secrecy they maintain in compromising difficulties. But it may be said that similar honesty is observed in all mysterious associations, or that are without the pale of the law.

Some months ago I visited a horde of gypsies established in the Vosges. In the hut of an old woman, the senior of her tribe, was a gypsy not related to her family, who had been attacked with mortal illness. This man had left a hospital, where he was well-nursed, to go and die among his compatriots. For thirteen weeks he had been bedridden in the hut of his hosts, and much better treated than the sons and sons-in-law who lived with them. There was a good bed of straw and moss, with tolerably white sheets, while the rest of the family, numbering thirteen persons, slept on planks three feet long. So much for their hospitality. The same woman, so humane to her guest, said to me in his presence: *Singo, singo, homte hi mulo*—Shortly, shortly, he must die. After all, the life of these people is so wretched, that death has no terrors for them.

A remarkable trait in the gypsy character is their indifference on the subject of religion; not that they are skeptics or free-thinkers—far from it. They have made no profession of atheism, and the religion of the country they inhabit is theirs, but they change it for that of the next nation amid which they may dwell. The superstitions which, among untutored races, replace religious sentiments, are equally foreign to them. Superstitions usually exist least among people who the most often live on the credulity of others; nevertheless I have remarked, among the Spanish gypsies, a singular horror of touching a corpse; there are few of them who would consent for money to carry a dead body to the cemetery.

I have said that the greater number of the gypsy women engage in fortune-telling, in which they succeed very well; but a large source of profit to them is the sale of charms and love-philters. They not only make use of toads' feet, whereby to rivet fickle hearts, and the powder of a magnet to make one's self beloved, but at need they have recourse to incantations that summon the devil to their assistance. Notwithstanding their squalor and the species of aversion

that they inspire, the gypsies enjoy a certain consideration among unenlightened people, of which they are very vain. They feel themselves to be a superior race in intelligence, and cordially despise the nations that give them hospitality. "The Gentiles are so stupid," said a Bohemian of the Vosges to me, "that there is no merit in tricking them. The other day a peasant-woman in the street called me, and I entered her house. Her stove was smoking, and she asked me for a charm to make it burn. First I made her give me a good bit of bacon, then I began to mutter some words in *rommani*. You are a fool, I said; you were born a fool, and a fool you will die. When near the door, I said to her in good German: The infallible means of preventing your stove from smoking, is not to make any fire in it; and then I took flight."

The history of the gypsies is still a problem. It is known, indeed, that their first bands, by no means numerous, showed themselves in the east of Europe towards the beginning of the fifteenth century; but we can say neither whence they come, nor why they came to Europe; and, what is more extraordinary, we are ignorant how, in so short a time, they multiplied so prodigiously in countries very remote from each other.

The gypsies themselves have preserved no tradition as to their origin, and if the greater number among them speak of Egypt as their primogenial country, it is that they have adopted a fable very anciently spread abroad respecting them. Orientalists who have studied the gypsy language believe that they are originally from India. In fact, it appears that a large number of roots and many grammatical forms of *rommani* are found in idioms derived from the Sanscrit; and one may comprehend that in their extended peregrinations the gypsies have adopted many foreign words.

In all the *rommani* dialects one meets with a quantity of Greek words. At the present day they have nearly as many dialects as there exist hordes of their race separated from each other. They speak the language of the country they inhabit more easily than their own idiom, which they chiefly use for the purpose of speaking freely in the presence of strangers. The original tongue everywhere, although in different degrees, has notably changed through contact with the more cultivated languages which these nomads have been constrained to use. German on the one hand, Spanish on the other, have so fundamentally modified the *rommani* that it would be possible for a gypsy of the Black Forest to converse with one of his Andalusian brethren, although the exchange of a few phrases would suffice to show that they both spoke a dialect derived from the same idiom. Some words of frequent use are common to all dialects; thus, in the vocabularies that I have seen, *pani*, means water; *manio*, bread; *más*, meat; *lon*, salt. The German dialect appears to be more pure than the Spanish, having preserved a number of primitive grammatical forms, while the Gitanos have adopted those of the Castilian.

Nevertheless, certain words are an exception, proving the former community of language. The preterites of the German dialect are formed by adding *ium* to the imperative that is always the root of the verb. The verbs in the Spanish *rommani* are all conjugated on the model of the Castilian verbs of the first conjugation. From the infinitive *jamar*, to eat, should come *jamé*, I have eaten; from *lillar*, to take, *lillé*, I have taken; but these old Bohemians say by way of exception, *jayon lillon*. I do not know any other verbs that have preserved this ancient form. While thus displaying my slender knowledge of the *rommani* tongue, I ought to notice some words of French *argot* that our thieves have borrowed from the gypsies.

The "Mysteries of Paris" have taught good society that *chourin* means knife. It is pure *rommani*; *tchouri* is one of the words common to all gypsy dialects. M. Vidocq calls a horse *grés*, which is again a Bohemian word, *gras gre, graste, gris*. Add to this the word *romamichel*, which in Parisian *argot* denotes Bohemians. It is the corruption of *rommané tchave*, Bohemian lads. But an etymology of which I am proud is that of *frimousse*, countenance, face, a word that all scholars employed in my time. Observe, in the first place, that Oudin, in his curious dictionary of 1640, wrote *firlimonse*. Now *firla, fila* in *rommani*, means face, and *mui* has the same signification, being precisely *os* of the Latins. The combination *firlamui* was immediately accepted by a Bohemian purist, and I believe it to be consonant with the genius of the language. This is quite sufficient to give to the readers of "CARMEN" a favourable estimate of my studies in *Rommani*. I will conclude with this gypsy proverb that comes *apropos*: *En retudi panda nasti abela macha*. Into the closed mouth no fly enters.

THE END.

A LOVER'S SONG.

I would not live without thy love
For aught on land or sea;
I could not live without thy love—
Be true, then, love, to me.
Be coy, be cold, be cruel, too,
Or aught but false, my queen;
No plaint my joyous lips will make,
So thou art true, I ween.
How dark, how drear this world would be,
If thou wert lost, my own;
No charm for me, then, there could be
In quest, or gage, or crown.
Nor pensive moon, nor great glad sun
Could cheer my hapless heart.
Be true, then, love; assure me, naught,
But Death, shall make us part.
Be true, and then this life will be
A race, or joust, in fine,
In which the victor's strength and prize
Will evermore be mine.
Be true, for then our lives will be
One deep surpassing dream,
In which all chance, all toil, all time,
One sparkling cup will seem.

—Ex.

* The German gypsies, although understanding perfectly the word *Calé*, do not like the appellation. They call themselves *Romane tchavé*.