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PICTURESQUE SPAIN.*

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A BIT FROM A BALCONY, MADRID.

It is marvellous, considering the part which Spain has played in the history of the world, that so little is known of it by the people of other lands. The Pyrenees have as effectually separated it from the rest of Europe as if it belonged to another continent. Though a land of adventure and romance, full of historic and poetic and legendary associations, until recently it was a land of "terra-incognita"—a mys-

*The admirable engravings which accompany this article are reproduced from the drawings of that accomplished Canadian artist, Mr. G. A. Reid, R.C.A. They are the result of a recent art tour of Mr. and Mrs. Reid through Spain.

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terious realm untravelled by the crowd, and seldom trodden even by the all-wandering foot of the all-pervading Briton.

This, no doubt, was in part explained, so far as Englishmen are concerned, by the remark made by one of themselves, over fifty years ago: "The beefsteak and the teakettle which infallibly mark the progress of John Bull, and have been introduced even into Greece and the Holy Land, are yet unknown in the *ventas* and *pasados* of the peninsula." This state of things is, however, gradually passing away.

"Africa begins with the Pyrenees," says a French proverb; and certainly in crossing that mountain barrier one seems to have entered another continent rather than another country. Everything has a strange, half-oriental look. The blazing summer sun, the broad and arid plains, the dried-up river-beds, and sterile and verdureless mountains, have all a strikingly African appearance. Indeed, it has been said that geologically Spain is an extension of the Sahara. The hedges of cactus and prickly pears, narrow streets, and flat-roofed, windowless Moorish houses, heighten the illusion. In the country is heard the creaking of the Moorish water-wheel, and in the hotels servants are summoned, as in the tales of the Arabian Nights, by the clapping of hands.

The claim of this country to a