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## RECENT GLIMPSSES OF SPAIN.

BY M. BETHAM-EDWARDS.



SPANISH DILIGENCE.

"Barcelona, shrine of courtesy, harbour of the wayfarer, shelter of the poor, cradle of the brave, champion of the outraged, nurse of friendship, unique in position, unique in beauty!"

Such was the eulogium bestowed upon Barcelona by the great Cervantes, several hundred years ago, an eulogium warranted by a stranger's experience in our own day. The matchless site of the second city of Spain, and its luxuriant surroundings, awaken enthusiasm as of old, whilst even the briefest possible sojourn suffices to make us feel at home.

Few European capitals can boast of finer public monuments, few indeed possess such a promenade as its famous Rambla. The Ram-

bla may be regarded as an epitome, not only of the entire city, but of all Spain. A dozen brilliant or moving spectacles meet the eye in a day, whilst the normal aspect is one of unimaginable picturesquequeness and variety. The dark-eyed flower-girls with their rich floral displays; the country folks still adhering to the costume of Catalonia—the men sandalled and white-hosed; for headgear, slouch caps or crimson, scarlet, or peach-coloured felt, the women with gorgeous silk kerchiefs pinned under the chin—the Asturian nursemaids in poppy-red skirts barred with black, and dainty gold and lace caps; the ladies fanning themselves as they go, in November, with black lace mantillas over their