

with a small black skull-cap, a stooping figure, and a great gold cross, which, I concluded, represented the holy man; something in black, with a very long veil descending from the back of her head, being as evidently the niece.

A few formal introductions were gone through in clever pantomime, dinner was announced, and the company paired off in all stateliness, while the host, seizing my arm, led me across the room, and in a few words presented me to the fair widow, who courtesied, and accepted my arm, and away we marched in that solemn procession by which people endeavor to thaw the ice of first acquaintance.

"Your first visit to Ireland, I believe, Señhora?" said I, in Spanish, wishing to say something as we walked along.

"Yes, Señor, and yours also, I understand?" replied she.

"Not exactly," muttered I, taken too suddenly to recover myself; "when I was a boy, a mere child —" I here by accident employed a Mexican word almost synonymous with the French "gamin." She started, and said eagerly, "How! you have been in Mexico?"

"Yes, Señhora, I have passed some years in that country."

"I am a Mexican," cried she, delightedly. "Tell me, where have you travelled, and whom did you know there?"

"I have travelled a good deal, but scarcely knew any one," replied I. "At Guajuaquilla —"

"Oh, were you there? My own neighborhood, — my home," exclaimed she, fervidly.

"Then probably you know Don Estaban Olares," said I.

"My own father!"

I turned round; our eyes met; it was just at the very entrance of the dinner-room, where a blaze of light was shed on everything, and there upon my arm — her hand trembling, her cheek colorless, and her eyes swimming in tears — was Donna Maria! Neither of us spoke, neither of us could speak! — and while her eyes wandered from my face to the several decorations I wore upon my breast, and I watched with agonizing intensity the look of terror she threw down the table towards the place where her uncle was seated, I