

## Chapter Thirteen

### THE PEASANTS ARE KINGS



I STAYED but a few days in London and then went on to Paris, a gloomy, gloomy city because so many people were garbed in black. Jaures had been shot. The capital had already been moved to Bordeaux and suspicion and hysteria were in the air. When I went within easy driving distance of Paris for lunch or dinner, I could see the barbed-wire entanglements and gaps where the trees had been taken down for better visibility.

I renewed what contacts I could. But everybody was too busy now with the War to think of such a subject as family limitation, which to the French had never been anything to get excited about because they were too used to it. Furthermore, the other side of the question was now presenting itself. They were beginning to ask, "If we had a larger population, could we not have held the Germans back?"

Again I saw Victor Dave. He was literally starving to death, supported only by friendly gifts of a few francs here or there which he always accepted with laughter, what difference did it make to him whether he lived a few days longer? I never saw greater gallantry than was manifested by his smile and the shrug of his shoulders as he sauntered to work with two pieces of dry bread in his pocket.

The libraries were shut. Paris was no place for me, but I could see something of Spain, and Portet was waiting for me there. After the customary passport argument and some surprise at the cost of the sleeping-car arrangements I left for the South. It was four o'clock in

the morning as the express pulled into Cerbere, the station on the border, where the French viewed all passengers with caution and mistrust

"Cerbere!" shouted the guard, and, "Passports!" shouted an inspector following on his heels. Mine was not quite right. The train moved out leaving me and my baggage desolate on the platform. In the course of several interviews with various officials I made out that my passport lacked a particular signature, and Perpignan was the nearest town where it could be secured.

I paced up and down the tiny station watching for the train back. As usual, peasants were asleep in the waiting room, some on the floor, others sitting on bags and parcels. We were so close under the shadow of the Pyrenees that they almost seemed to be toppling over us.

From the train window I looked out on the beauty of dawn and the rising sun, a scene of such magnificence that it repaid me in pleasure for all the trouble. To one side was the far stretch of the Mediterranean, as magic a blue as I had ever imagined it. To the other were the majestic, rugged mountains with snow-capped peaks and bases covered with pink, flowering apricots. Little villages of white houses and red-tile roofs nestled in the valleys and serpentine roads coiled up the hillsides, where thousands of acres of grape vines, trim and well cared-for, bespoke the wine country.

From Perpignan I telegraphed Portet, "Live or die, sink or swim, survive or perish, I'll be in Barcelona tomorrow," and boarded the train once more with a light heart and my papers, three of them.

Already in the minute second-class compartment were a large, middle-aged woman whose sweet face was framed in a black mantilla, a small gray-haired man, evidently her husband, and a younger one of about twenty-five. It would have been crowded enough as it was, but they had brought with them packages and bundles that filled the space to the roof. However, they squeezed out enough room for me to curl myself up and go to sleep.

I awakened with a start, hearing again the fateful word, "Passports!" and found the agent examining those of my fellow passengers. I opened the bag where I had always carried my credentials, but they were not there. The officer stood waiting. "I have my pa-

pers all signed," I said, "but I cannot find them Go on to the others and when you come back I'll have them "

Since he could not understand English my speech had little effect, he continued to wait I began turning things out—letters, books, pamphlets of all kinds and descriptions, groping through every bag, in and out of every package My traveling companions gazed on the commotion sympathetically and drew their legs aside so I could look under the seat

At this point another uniform approached and the two consulted together Then one of them blew a whistle and at its loud and shrill summons five men came running The biggest of them threw wide the compartment door, to indicate I must get off They were jabbering at me in French and Spanish, I was talking English All of us were going as fast as we could First I jumped up and expostulated, then sat down and waved my hands saying, "Go away "

Finally there appeared a young Spanish student who could speak English He conveyed to me that the train was already late on my account, I must get off so the other passengers could catch the Barcelona Express

I would not be bothered any more "So do I want to catch it," I exclaimed "Why don't they move on? I have a passport and I'll find it in a few minutes I've paid for my ticket to Port Bou and I'm not going back You can stop the train here for a week if you want to—I shan't budge!"

The gendarmes were standing expectantly on the platform below The interpreter shrugged his shoulders, "She'll do as she says She's an American woman and she'll never come down You might as well move on "

Nevertheless, the big fellow with the long black cape resolutely seized one bag after another and handed them out Underneath the last one were disclosed the missing papers Straightway everybody was wreathed in smiles The bags were restored and the agents apologized, thanked me profusely, and departed

The passengers shook hands with me all around

Just before we reached Port Bou one of them peered out the window, rippled off some words to the others in Catalan The whole compartment was as though electrified In a few seconds parcels were

being torn apart and boxes ripped open. The Señora removed her mantilla and placed a smart new hat on her head, then crowned that with another, and another, and another, until finally she was wearing four. Yards of beautiful and exquisite lace went inside her bodice. She took off her outer skirt and swathed her hips in lengths of cloth. The men stuffed their pockets and the lining of their coats. At last there were only a few rolls of braid left. The younger one lifted his trousers, wound them round and round his legs and tucked the ends in his garters. Then through the window went crumpled paper, boxes, string. Finally, as the train was slowing up they put on light-buff, linen dusters. My eyes popped out of my head to see these simple people suddenly transformed into stylish stouts returning from Paris.

The two men nonchalantly smoked cigars as though nothing out of the way were going on while the customs officials went through their bags. Everybody concerned knew they were merchants smuggling goods, but even the authorities regarded it as legitimate for them to bring in as much as they could carry on their persons. As they left the shed where my belongings were still being scrambled over, they glanced commiseratingly at me and glowered indignation at the officials that a lady should be so served.

I had expected to find in Barcelona street-corner Carmens with hibiscus blossoms in their hair, wandering guitarists and singers. But the only music that passed my window oozed out mechanically from two-wheeled, highly-ornamented hurdy-gurdies. Nevertheless, the city was full of color. Strange little wagons with canvas covers, looking as though they were part of a caravan, rattled over the cobbles. There was something gorgeously elegant about the members of the *Guardia Civil*, grandly mounted on Arabian horses, their mustachios fiercely bristling, their uniforms ablaze with scarlet and yellow topped off with black patent leather hats. The red Phrygian caps of the porters seemed almost too realistic a reminder of revolution. The workers still wore their crimson-fringed sashes, their blue French blouses, and white rope-soled shoes. The men, as a rule, were of slight frame, but conveyed an impression of strength like steel rods, the women, invariably black-clad except for the very young, were fat and waddling.

Numberless bells were constantly ringing in numberless churches. Everywhere, like crows, were priests in long swinging robes, shovel hats, and dirty bare toes sticking through their sandals. On the corners of the central streets I saw them occupying the booths of the professional correspondents who for ten cents read and answered letters for the illiterate.

Although Barcelona, capital of the separatist province of Catalonia, was the progressive, industrial center of Spain, it was not darkened by a *mêlée* of belching chimneys. The hundreds of factories were kept out of sight, each one isolated in the fields, leaving the city free from traffic, smoke, and the whirl of machinery. The palms in the squares and parks were lovely, but set side by side with the new was the startling antiquity of the old town, congested and melancholy.

Overlooking the sea at the end of the Rambla, decorated along its length with flower stalls and trees, loud with birds, stood a tall column bearing the statue of Columbus. Around the base were scenes portraying various incidents of the voyage to America, each represented by small images cast in bronze, all beautiful to the last detail. But the effect was greatly spoiled because nearly every one remaining had a leg, arm, foot, or even head gone. After looking at this for some time and pondering over the wherefore, I concluded that figures so strongly made and set had not easily been removed, and decided it must have something to do with the Spanish-American War. When I asked my Spanish friends whether I had guessed correctly, their only explanation was that ruffians had doubtless done it for sport.

However, after I had left the country I received verification of my supposition. The monument had been stoned in '98, but no Spaniard would ever have admitted this fact to any American, it might hurt the feelings of the visitor even to mention the unpleasantness.

I began to study Spanish with a teacher, but I was not nearly far enough advanced to be able to get anywhere in my investigations. Unfortunately also, although men thronged the cafes in droves, they kept their wives in semi-Oriental seclusion and even mentally imposed their deep-rooted ideas of the isolation of women on foreigners. I could not violate this custom by going about alone, because I

was a guest As a result Portet, who was a busy man himself, provided me with a succession of male escorts

Towards the end of a certain afternoon, tired and footsore, I was sitting with one of these accommodating gentlemen at a sidewalk table sipping an aperitif—a delicious French vermouth supplemented by olives stuffed with anchovies Bootblacks were making their customary rounds of the patrons, and the men were having their shoes cleaned Since I had been walking about a great deal, mine were appearing rather scuffed, and I stretched my feet out

My companion looked at me appealingly "I beg of you, Señora, not here "

"Why not?"

But the boy had already brought his little shoe rest, begun spitting on my oxford and rubbing with energy and enthusiasm Embarrassed, my escort rose and moved away, but, interested in the boy's novel methods, I kept my eyes on my shoes and was unaware of anything out of the ordinary

As soon as he had finished I glanced up There must have been twenty-five men gathered in front of the cafe, all looking fixedly and intently at this unusual spectacle When I opened my purse to pay the boy, he doffed his cap with the most gracious gesture "Señora, this is my pleasure "

The crowd outside applauded loudly and I felt my face growing hot Not until they had drifted off did my protector return, wan and pale and extremely agitated "You see what you've done, you see? It will be the joke of Spain! You are the friend of Professor Portet! It is a reflection on him and on his family! You cannot do these things!"

I realized then that I had to be more circumspect

Portet, who after all was Ferrer's successor, was watched wherever he went by the secret service, and soon pointed out that I too had a shadow—the man who sat constantly at the little, round, marble-topped table across from my hotel He said I should always have this individual or one of his mates with me They were on eight-hour duty, and if I were to go in for any night life I would have three separate ones over the twenty-four hours

These government agents were to give a regular report of whom

I was with and where I went, and, in a sense, they also looked after me, although Portet was never without a revolver in his pocket. In Spain a breath of dampness, and pop—open went the umbrellas all over the place. Once on the way to a benefit for the Belgians Portet and I were waiting for the tram when a spatter of rain came up. His spy rushed to hold an umbrella over him while mine ran after my hat which the wind had saucily blown off my head. Or, if I were taking a train alone, my daytime attendant, having already been in conference with the hotel proprietor, would appear at the ticket office and explain to the clerk where I wanted to go. Had he spoken English I would have doubtless enjoyed his conversation, but Portet warned me it was beneath my dignity even to nod good morning to such a creature.

The frequent friendly attentions of our spies could not draw a word of approval from Portet, though on one occasion they performed a real service. Stopping en route at the American Express Company to get some money, we set out to see a part of the old city new to me. Only a few blocks from the banks and modern shops were center pumps from which women were carrying the water to their homes in tall earthen jugs, in just the same primitive manner as centuries ago. The houses in the red-light district were approached by outside stairways along which were niches enclosing receptacles for holy water, and into these the patrons dipped their fingers religiously, crossed themselves, and entered.

While we were walking through one of the narrow streets, high-walled on either side, suddenly and without reason I felt alarmed, and at the same moment Portet put his hand in his pocket. I glanced behind to find our two familiar guarding shadows gone, I sensed danger ahead, but I, too, tried to act as though everything were all right, as though there were nothing to worry about. We strolled in the same leisurely way to the corner. There in a flash down another street we caught a quick glimpse of struggling figures in the distance. In a moment they disappeared.

We proceeded to our destination—a little café fronting the Mediterranean. As we sat admiring it, I was startled by the sight of our two spies approaching, one of them holding a long, jagged-edged knife. I could not understand his excited words, but his pantomime

was so graphically descriptive of a life-and-death struggle that my flesh began to creep and shivers ran up and down my backbone. He paused, bowed, and held out the knife, obviously offering it to me.

Portet, looking very incensed, pulled out his revolver, showed it to the man, and ordered him off. When both had retired, abashed, Portet translated briefly, "He says he has saved your life—that robbers saw you get money at the American Express this morning, and that he knew they were going to attack you. He followed and grabbed the knife away from them. I told him this was unnecessary. The thieves would have got as good as they gave! I can take care of you."

I thought I ought at least to have given the man a reward, but not Portet, the revolutionary, who was furious at the presumption. He was always angry at them. When he came to lunch with me Palm Sunday, the hotel proprietor leaned over the table confidentially and said, "The government agent wishes to speak to you."

Portet shouted, "If he comes near, I'll shoot him! The hound, the worm, the dog! How dare he?"

"Can't we find out what he wants?" I suggested.

The proprietor returned, "Nothing, Señor, except to ask whether you and the Señora are attending the bullfight this afternoon. His time is up at four o'clock, but if you are going to the *plaza de toros*, he will be glad to stay on duty another eight hours."

We went, he came right along and saw the spectacle at government expense.

The cement-like benches of the large amphitheater were crowded to full capacity. The people were gesticulating, chattering volubly as though awaiting something unusual or something good eagerly anticipated. Overhead the monotonous, gray sky seemed like a huge tent, it was so regular and colorless, but every little while a patch of blue appeared. The disposition of the onlookers changed with the same unexpectedness from gladness and joy almost instantaneously into impatience or wrath, at one moment they clapped and praised the matador, at the next they insulted and vilified him.

Most of my Spanish friends hoped I would like a bullfight, although Portet, who thought it barbaric, told me it would probably shock me, every foreigner who saw one simply shut his eyes in horror when some poor old skeleton horse was so gored that its intes-

tines fell out and then were pushed back for its re-entry into the arena. If I were going to be conspicuous by showing my feelings, the populace might turn upon me, and, jokingly, he suggested following the example of Alfonso XIII, who had given his English bride a pair of opera glasses with perfectly black lenses because she was so open and frank at displaying her emotions. She had stood and stared blankly at them all the time, and thus got through her first bullfight.

I promised to be careful, and watched with the naked eye.

The bull came out snorting with passion and vigor, glaring around the arena with a great noble sweep of his head. Suddenly he saw a color he did not like, something inimical. He lunged towards it, and then a medieval-looking figure danced before him with a cape to confuse him. He forgot his original enemy and rushed at the red thing. Another gyrating figure distracted his attention and angered him to wheel towards the new adversary, make another plunge, and again be met by a flash of color.

Over and over and over again this happened. The poor bull's vitality was finally worn down, not from direct combat, but because of the many bewildering forces that were there to destroy him—the fluttering capes, the kaleidoscopic shapes, the swift-thrown banderillas, and the gleaming lances of the picadors. Then, when he was bleeding and utterly spent, the hero stepped out with a sword to kill him. He was dragged out, sombreros whirled into the arena, shrieks and shouts arose, the band played, a great victory had been achieved.

Within no time, even before another bull appeared, vendors came along with baskets of hot sandwiches made from the barbecued meat of the one just killed.

Not a single word would Portet let me say until we were entirely out of hearing, you could talk freely in Spain against the Church or the priests, but this sacred institution must not be criticized. Passing through my mind was the thought that a bullfight was symbolic of the struggle of the working classes. Strikes, picketing, jails exhausted their energy until they too charged blindly this way and that, always missing the main issue.

Many of my holidays were spent more happily than this. I never tired of the wooded mountains which sheltered Barcelona, most of

them having some religious significance Portet and I went up the funicular to the top of Tibidabo, the exceeding high place where the devil tempted Jesus, showing him in a moment of time the world spread out before him

Another glorious spring day we twisted up the thirty miles of road to Montserrat, the mountain riven in two at the Crucifixion It was the quaintest sight to one coming from a land of subways and elevators to watch the donkeys laden with packs on their backs of vegetables, eggs, and butter, and to see their owners straggling beside up and down the hills, masters of at least themselves if not of their donkeys The breeze blew more chill as we ascended the final slope to the huge monastery at the top Afterwards night fell, and the moon shone over the huge boulders of towering rocks, and the whispering wind swung from mass to mass and echoed back again whence it came It was an evening of enchantment

On making other sorties into the country I perceived an innate intelligence in the most ignorant peasant The average one could not tell the names of the simplest plants or flowers, but one look from the eye, one tone of the voice, was comprehended in a flash Even the gypsy children in the outskirts of Barcelona, with their little dirty feet and tattered clothing, who danced weird dances and flattered strangers for pennies, had a natural brightness beyond belief

But this intelligence was not being directed, and one reason was inherent in the rebellious nature of the Catalan, he would have preferred no system of government at all if that had been possible, for he was restless and tumultuous under restraint

When I saw children leading the blind about the streets day after day, I asked, "Don't they have to be in school? Isn't education made compulsory by the Government?"

I was laughed at "If the Government sent our children to school, we would know it was the wrong sort of school"

Parents who could afford it, however, were willing enough to have them go to Ferrer's schools Two thirds of the Spanish people had not been able to read or write before his time The teacher, who worked constantly all the year round, averaged about sixteen dollars a month "He is hungrier than a schoolmaster" was a household axiom

Since Ferrer's first school had opened fourteen years previously, some forty-six had begun to operate, and, in addition, most towns of any size had at least one rationalist school which was maintained by the workers and also used Ferrer's texts. The groundwork was then being laid for the children of yesterday to become the leaders in today's fight. The pupils I saw at near-by Sabadella, at Granada, and at Seville, were being taught the processes of life from the cell up, and their instructors were really trying to give them a scientific instead of a theological attitude.

Because of the long mental and physical isolation imposed upon them by the Church, which controlled all education, five thousand towns and villages could be reached only by trails and tracks. The Church had objected to having roads built because, once transportation were made more accessible, women could more easily leave their homes in the country and go to the city where evil awaited them—their morals were being safeguarded by cowpaths.

Most of Spain was a gaunt, denuded, tragic country with vast, desolate steppes and red, impoverished soil which gave the feeling it had been soaked in human blood for centuries. Certainly the spilling of blood had been a matter of indifference in Spanish history. In a sense the whole people were lawless, hostile to rulers. Every child knew the evils of *El Caciquismo*. Some Spaniard has said, "Democracy, Republicanism, or Socialism have in reality little to do in our country, for we do not willingly accept either king, president, priest, or prophet."

The worker in Catalonia had small faith in government, no matter what the brand, and kept straight to the one issue—revolution through economic action, chiefly the general strike. He did not look upon the Government as a vague, mysterious something for the deeds or blunders of which no one could be blamed, he demanded that those in authority should give accounting for the results of their authority. He never forgot a wrong, and usually those responsible paid the bill. I sometimes thought his "attempts" were carried out more from a spirit of revenge and individual hatred than as a social protest.

At the head of the Rambla was a great square, the Plaza de la Constitucion, and there each day from five to six the populace took

its airing Thousands of feet had so worn the pavement that it needed replacement One noon the square was torn up Nobody could walk there for twenty-four hours, the workmen were busy, ropes were placed across both ends of the promenade, and a huge sign was erected, "No trespassing allowed By Order of the Government "

Loiterers gathered to look at the proclamation They began talking, their gestures growing more and more vehement, until finally they pulled down the ropes and deliberately trod on the fresh concrete They were not going to be forbidden by the Government! The entire job had to be done over again, and I noticed the next night six mounted police were guarding all four sides But nobody seemed to give either incident the slightest attention

Catalans were a race of individualists, each a law unto himself Their most marked characteristics were independence and personal dignity Even Pepet, the waiter at my hotel, knew how to use his freedom Sometimes he calmly left the dining room and went down the street for a shave while we were having our soup He eventually returned for the following course, happy and clean, his absence un-reproved

Whenever the conversation of the guests interested him, Pepet entered in quite as naturally as though he were sitting and being served instead of serving In any other country this would have been resented as insolence, but here every courtesy and respect was shown to him just as he showed it to others If you said you were going to go by a certain tram to a certain place to be there at three in the afternoon, he interrupted, "Pardon me, Señora, you do not need to be there until four-thirty, and it is much better to go by this other route "

Like the rest I said, "Right, Pepet, we shall take your advice "

With the expulsion of the Jews from Spain vanished the driving force for commercial initiative, a quality, fortunately or unfortunately, greatly lacking in the country Perez Galdos said

The capital defect of the Spaniards of your time is that you live exclusively the life of words, and the language is so beautiful that the delight in the sweet sound of it woos you to sleep You speak too much You lavish without stint a wealth of phrases to conceal the poverty of your actions

I did not believe this entirely true, but without doubt the Spanish had a maddening habit of procrastination. It was "Si, Si, Señora, assuredly, certainly," all gracious promising—and then nothing happening. To an American this was especially aggravating, because he was always in a constant hurry, he expected to see and know the whole of Spain in a month. But the Spaniard was not to be rushed. When asked what time it was, he might reply, "Perhaps four hours more of the sun."

This defiance of clocks and the absence of strain and bustle pleased me personally. A story was told of a Spaniard going to seek his fortune in South America. After finding a position to his satisfaction he worked three hours and then suddenly asked for his pay. When his employer requested the cause of his abrupt leave-taking, he exclaimed angrily, "Do you think I'm going to spend all my life working for you?"

Don Quixote truly represented the Spanish temperament. The strong enthusiasm which was shown for a project and the still stronger imagination which not only saw the matter begun but also finished, was Spanish to the last degree. The knight of La Mancha thought nothing of invading cities and fighting giants, but it ended in thinking about it. "I consider all that already done."

Spanish character, so paradoxical, so attractive, and often so difficult to understand, fascinated me. I could exhaust myself in adjectives—fickle, impetuous, rich-souled, ascetic, passionate, realistic, individualistic. Courtesy and ceremony were second nature to the Catalans of Barcelona, supposed to be the most dangerous and lawless city in Europe, where thousands of anarchists gathered and plotted and where bombs were thrown wrapped up in flowers.

I remember how on the suburban trams going high into the mountains, sellers of hot and cold omelets ran up and down the station platforms. Anybody who bought one, before eating it himself, offered it to all the passengers in the car, even though they might be carrying their own lunches.

To accept, however, was a shocking breach of good form. The offerer protested that you must take it, and you had to think fast for a plausible excuse. "My friends are waiting for me to dine with

them," or "I've just had something at the last station " You must never, never, never accept

Havelock used to tell of a grave error he had once made when traveling in Spain When he had admired a piece of jewelry, the lady to whom it belonged had removed it promptly and thrust it upon him, saying, "I am honored to give it to you " She had been so insistent that, though thoroughly uncomfortable, he had taken it — the very worst thing he could have done Soon it disappeared from his effects, but what was his surprise on his next encounter with the lady to find her wearing it again with no sign of discomposure Her servants had been so indignant that one of them had immediately stolen it back

Spanish men were not only courteous to women but also to each other, having no hesitancy at showing their regard and affection Even the beggars addressed each other in the most high-flown phrases, "Your Highness," or "Your Grace " One might ask, "Where is Your Excellency to sleep tonight?"

"Under the bridge, My Lord "

They lacked that poverty-in-the-soul look that existed in the same class in other countries Assuming the condition of one tattered and ragged specimen to be temporary, I questioned him, "What do you do ordinarily?"

"I saunter, I idle, I loaf "

"But what work do you do?"

He drew himself up with the utmost hauteur, and said proudly, "I do not work I am a beggar "

Doing business with the Spaniards required a knowledge of finesse quite foreign to the average American I, for example, saw a basket in a shop window which I felt I really must have My escort and I went into the store Since the proprietor did not speak English, all I could do was gaze longingly, take it in my hand, and ask my companion, "How much do you suppose this is?" He made no answer, but pointed to something else on the wall, and we left without learning the price I thought he was a terribly stupid person

The next day I passed the same place with Portet, and I begged, "Oh, do come in and ask how much that basket is I want to buy it "

He smiled at me indulgently "You know in our country we cannot just go into places and find out prices This man is a craftsman We will talk to him "

The proprietor and his wife shook hands with us and brought the best wine from the cellar Then the former said, "The Señora was here yesterday Tell us about her "

"She comes from North America," answered Portet

"Tell us about North America "

After forty minutes of this, during which I kept one eye on the wicker container but was unable to divert the conversation to it, we said, "*Hasta la vista*," and bowed our way out

A week later Portet and I, following the lodestone of my particular basket, sought the shop once more Relations had now been established, and we were entitled to ask about it But we still could not demand outright, "How much does it cost?" We must say, "This basket must be worth so and so," making the figure higher than it should be

"Oh, no, no, no, no" the proprietor protested "It is not worth that My humble hands fashioned it It is hardly worth anything "

He endeavored to make me accept it for nothing I had to refuse and once more try to make him take more than its value Never was there such a juggling before we finally arrived at the exact amount of pesetas

On my departure from the country I had to break through a similar punctilio I spent about seven weeks in Barcelona and was never presented with a hotel bill—none for lodging, for laundry, for meals, or for extras such as coffee The day was coming when I must go back to France, and I did not want too much Spanish money with me—just enough to take me to the border From there I had already purchased my tickets for England

Each time I mentioned *cuenta* to the proprietor, bowing and turning up his palms he answered, "Sí, Sí, Señora," until finally, on my last morning, I marched resolutely up to the desk and said, "I shall miss my train if I have to go to the American Express to get more money You really must tell me how much I owe "

He went upstairs I waited Finally he descended, his hair stand-

ing on end He threw the reckoning down on the table with a most vindictive look I glanced at it The total was very low, it could barely have covered the cost of the food

"I have been humiliated!" he exclaimed dramatically

"Whatever is the matter?" I questioned

"We are living in the most hellish country on earth!"

"Why, what's happened?"

"A lady comes all the way from North America She visits us, she stays here, we like her, and I must present her with this sordid bill!"

Some day when the fighting is over I shall return again to Spain