

Chap. 2

The Gitanos of Madrid, those of Granada and of other towns in Spain.

In Madrid the Gitanos chiefly reside in the neighbourhood of the "mercado", or the place where horses & other animals are sold, in two narrow and dirty lanes called the Calle de la Comadre and the Callejon de Lavapies. It is said that at the beginning of last century Madrid abounded with these people who by their lawless behaviour and dissolute lives gave occasion to great scandal; their numbers of that time were ~~estimated~~ ^{estimated} the case ^{their numbers} must have considerably diminished since that period, as I should think it difficult to find any time to collect fifty throughout Madrid. They are moreover continually going and coming ~~and it is only during the winter months that they make any considerable stay.~~ These Gitanos seem for the most part to be either Galicians or of Galician origin, as they in general either speak or understand the dialect of that province and whilst speaking their own peculiar jargon the Gitanos are in

The habit of making use of many calumnious words
and terms.

The manner of life of the hateros of Madrid differs in
no material respect from that of their brethren in other
places; the men every market day are to be seen on
the steps of the mercado, generally with some miserable
animal for example a foundling mule, or galley burrico
by means of which they seldom fail of gaining a dollar
or two either by sale or exchange; it must not however
be supposed that they content themselves with such paltry
earnings; provided they have any valuable animal which
is not unfrequently the case they invariably keep such at
home every in the stall, conducting business the chapman
thinks they find any, and concluding the bargain with the
greatest secrecy; their reasons for this conduct are
manifest; in the first place a deadly feud exists between
the hateros and the chalanes, or jockeys of Spanish
blood, by whom the former are not unfrequently
evicted from the fair by force of palos or cudgels
verifying the old adage that two of a trade are
sure to quarrel; the chalanes in this instance are

to a certain extent countenance, by law, for though by the
edict of Carlos the third the gitanos were in ~~these~~ respects
placed upon an equality with the rest of the Spaniards, they
were still forbidden to obtain their livelihood by the
traffic of markets and fairs.

Another reason for the secrecy that they practise in these
cases is the fact that animals of this description are generally
obtained by dishonest means and would probably be recognized
~~where they publicly appeared for sale. The practice, concealing~~
~~was necessary, especially when stolen ~~is inseparable from~~~~
~~they have upon the horses and mules~~
~~of their life, it is an intricate ~~part~~ from which the~~
~~of their will never be reclaimed save the Almighty work~~
~~a miracle in his favour and by softening his heart make him~~
~~a new man, the terror of human laws as has been~~
~~proved in a thousand instances being utterly insufficient~~
~~to restrain him; in the prisons of Madrid either in~~
~~that of the Saladero or Dela Corte there are~~
~~never less than a dozen gitanos, men who for~~
~~stolen horses or mules being found in their possession~~
~~whenever themselves or their companions have ~~stolen~~~~
~~spirited away from the neighbouring villages or~~
~~sometimes from a considerable distance; I say~~

shunted away, for so well do they take their measures
also watch their opportunity that they are seldom or
never taken in the fact.

The Maravichian Gypsy women are indefatigable in
the pursuit of prey prowling about the town and
the suburbs from morning till night in every corner
of all descriptions from the highest to the lowest, holding
parties and attempting to play off various kinds of Gypsy
tricks from which they derive a much greater profit ^{more numerous} and of
which ~~we~~ I shall presently have occasion to mention ~~particular~~
~~cases~~. I have already been said that the Gypsy women
in general ~~that the Gypsy women in general~~ are far more
amiable than the men, whose ~~jobs are~~
~~more~~ ^{more} ~~of the~~ ^{of the} ~~poorer~~ ^{poorer} ~~and the~~ ^{and the} ~~household~~ ^{household}
noting capable of strongly captivating the imagination
not so what regards the female, and those of Murcia
such as those in Spain in those qualities on which a
good ^{country} ~~cultivator~~ the boldness ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~subtlety~~ ^{subtlety} of some
of these women are truly wonderful and their self
possession is so great that they pass unharmed through dangers
which would be fatal to others ~~educated~~ ^{educated} in a school
life there was hard than Gypsy life in Spain.

From Madrid let us proceed to Andalusia casting a
curious glance on the Gitanos of that country, ~~the~~
~~very~~ ~~kind~~ ~~of~~ ~~habermans~~ found them very numerous
at Granada which in the Gitano language is termed
Chiligrana, their general condition in this place is truly miserable
and wretched in wretchedness the state of the Gitanos
of Andalusia; ~~it must not however be forgotten that~~
Granada itself is the poorest city in Spain the greatest part
of the population, which exceeds sixty thousand, passing their
days in beggary and wretchedness and the Gitanos share in
the general distress. many of them reside in caves scooped
in the sides of the rocks which lead to the higher
regions of the Alpujarras, on a sort of which stands
Granada. ~~Many~~ a common occupation of the Gitanos
of Granada is working in iron, and it is not infrequent
~~that you find~~ these caves tenanted by Gityo smiths
and their families, who ply the hammer and forge
in the bowels of the earth, ~~it is a spectacle~~ at
the mouth of the cave especially at night ~~that~~ they
~~present~~ afford a picturesque spectacle, gathered round
the fire their bronzed and naked bodies illuminated
by the flame appear like figures of demon

which the cave with its flinty roof and blackness and uneven roof blackens by the charcoal vapours which hover about it in flocks, seems to offer no inadequate representation of Gaby's purgatory. Working in iron was an occupation strictly forbidden to the Gitanos in by the ancient laws, on what account does not exactly appear, though perhaps the trade of the smith was considered as ~~too~~ much akin to that of the chalm to be permitted to ~~them~~. The Gypsy smith of Granada is still a chalm, even as his brother in England is a jockey and tinker alternately.

Which speaks of the Gitanos of Granada we cannot ~~say more in science~~ ~~of a tragedy which occurs in~~ this town amongst the ~~Gitanos~~ some fifteen years ago and the details of which there is scarcely a Gypsy in Spain from Catalonia to Lubonadura but can repeat. The allusion is to the murder of Pindamonas by Pepe Lonce. Both these individuals were Gitanos; the latter was a celebrated contrabandista of whom many remarkable tales are told. On one occasion having committed some enormous crime he fled over to Barbary and thence to Morocco and was employed by the Moorish Emperor in his wars in company with

The other renegade Spaniards whose grand depot or presidio
is the town ~~or~~ village of ~~in~~ in the Kingdom of Foz.
After the lapse of some years, when his coming was nearly
forgotten, he returns to Granada where he follows his old
occupation of Contrabandista and Chalán. Pindamonas
was another ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~age~~ ~~at~~ ~~Granada~~
as the most respectable of ~~the~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~age~~ ~~at~~ ~~Granada~~
amongst whom he possessed considerable influence. Between
this man and Pepe Conde there existed a jealousy, especially
on the part of ~~Pepe Conde~~ ^{the latter} who being a man of proud
unbending spirit could not well brook a superior
amongst his own people. At chance one day that
Pindamonas and other ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~same~~ ~~age~~ ~~at~~ ~~Granada~~
Conde were in a coffeehouse, after they had all partaken
of some refreshment they called for the reckoning.
The amount of which Pindamonas undertakes to discharge.
It will be necessary here to observe that on such
occasions in Spain it is considered as a species of privilege
to be allowed to pay, which is an honor generally
claimed by the principal man of the party. Pepe Conde
did not fail to take umbrage at the attempt of
Pindamonas which he considered as an insult

assumption of superiority put in his own claim; but
Dongachon's insides, and at last flung down the money
on the table, whereupon Pepe Loude instantly
unclasped one of those horrible Manchurian knives
which are generally carried by the contrabandistas
and with a frightful gash opened the abdomen
of Pundamoua who presently expired.

After this exploit Pepe Loude for some time was not seen for
some time; the case however in which he had been in the
habit of robbing was watched, as a belief was entertained
that some or other he would return to it in the hope of
being able to remove some of the property contained
in it; this belief was well founded; early one morning
he was observed to enter it and a band of robbers
was instantly dispatched to seize him; this circumstance
is alluded to in a gypsy stanza:

Thy Pepe Loude, seek the hill,
To flee to thy only charge,
With bayonets fixed, thy blood to spill,
See, soldiers pour advantage.

Just before the soldiers could grope at the case
Pepe Loude had discovered their approach

and fly, endeavouring to make his escape amongst the
rocks and barranca of the Alpizar. The soldiers
instantly pursue and the chase continues a considerable
time, the Gypsy was ^{at length} summoned to
surrender himself, but refusing the soldiers at last
fire six or four balls into the head of the Gypsy
containing ~~the~~ and murder.

Once at Madrid I receive a letter from the
elder son of Pindamonas, dated from the prison of
the Calabozo; in this letter the writer who it appears
was in disgrace for stealing a pair of mules craves
my charitable assistance and advice, and possibly
in the hope of securing my favour ~~forwards~~ some
uncouth lines commemorative of the death of his
relation, ~~and~~ ^{and} commending them.

The death of Pindamonas felt all the world with pain
At the coffeehouse's portal by Pepe he was slain -

The faubourg of Triana in Seville has from
time immemorial been ~~celebrated~~ ^{celebrated} as a favourite
residence of the Gypsies, and here at the present
day they are to be found in greater numbers
than in any other town in Spain; this faubourg

is indeed ^{chiefly} principally inhabited by desperate characters
as besides the gitanos the principal part of the
gobber-population of Seville is here congregated;
perhaps there is no part even of Naples where
crime so much abounds, and the law is as little respected
as at Triana. The character of whose grammar
was so graphically delineated two centuries
ago a half back by Cervantes in one of the
most amusing of his tales - In the midst lanes
of this suburb, amidst dilapidated walls and ruined
convents, exists the grand colony of Spanish gitanos
here they may be seen picking the hammer, here
may be seen hammering the fetlocks of horses, or shearing
the backs of mules and burros with their carbas,
and from hence they emerge to ply the same trade
in the town, or to operate as barcos, or to
buy sell or exchange animals in the mercado, and
the women to sell the babe through the streets, even
as in other parts of Spain, generally attended by
one or two fawning bachelors in their gowns or by
their sides, whilst others with baskets

+ Miconete and Corbachillo

and shifting pans proceed to the delightful banks
of the San Pedro, by the golden tower, where
at a meeting on the ground are smoking their charcoal,
they roast the chestnuts, which when well prepared
are the favourite bonne bouche of the dwellers, which
not a few in league with the Contrabandistas go
from door to door offering for sale prohibited
foods bought from the English salt hydrator;
such is the life at Seville, such it is in
the capital of Andalusia.

~~It is the general belief of the Spaniards at other provinces~~
~~that in Andalusia the language customs habits~~
~~and manners peculiar to their race are first preserved~~
This opinion, ^{which} probably originates from the fact of
their being found in greater numbers in this province
than in any other, ~~but some instances not certainly not more~~
~~will allow me to judge I am obliged to entertain~~
an opinion ^{somewhat different} ~~entirely opposite~~, for though
the Andalusian dialect retains their primitive
language as regards to a certain extent, I have not
seen ^{in general} ~~seen~~ other provinces in this quarter, where
+ The great River, or Guadalquivir.

~~The gitanos are by no means so numerous, indeed~~
~~it is not plain that their number has increased~~
~~at all favourably in this respect; and they have been~~
~~so little that they would have done by ^{with this} ~~all~~~~
~~councils with their set with ~~greater benefit~~~~
~~any thing in return that no where is there a greater~~
~~lack of union than amongst the gitanos of Seville~~
~~and in no place is that gross form of hypocrisy~~
~~seen which engages the people to uphold each other~~
~~in time of need by observing them at Seville what~~
~~at Cordoba is done at the instance of private~~
~~leagues ^{from Seville} which secretly contains a dozen gitanos~~
~~families & pay them very ~~small~~ ^{small} wages ~~as~~~~
~~probably ^{much} keep them aloof from the society~~
~~of the Seville and ^{in a} ~~greater~~ ^{degree} ~~as~~~~
~~very generally with them the obscurity of their~~
~~condition.~~

~~As a proof of the strong sense of union which~~
~~exists amongst the Cordobese gitanos~~
~~relate a circumstance which occurred ^{at Cordoba} ~~in that~~~~
~~place a year or two before I first visited it.~~
~~One of the poorest of the gitanos ~~murders~~~~

a Spaniard with the fatal Manchegan knife, for
this crime the ~~very~~ ~~strong~~ ~~brave~~ ~~and~~ ~~young~~ ~~judicious~~
bloodshedder in Spain is not looked upon with much
abhorrence, and the life of the culprit is seldom
~~taken from him~~, provided he can offer a bribe sufficient
to induce the Notary Public to report favourably upon
his case. but in this instance money was of no avail,
the murderer's individual left behind him powerful friends
and connections who were determined that justice should
take its course, it was in vain that his brethren
sought out their influence with the authorities in his
behalf, and such influence was not slight. it was
in vain that they offered extravagant sums that the
punishment of death might be commuted to eternal
slavery in the dreary provinces of Cuba; I was
credibly informed that one of the richest hacendados
of the ^{island} name of Trujillo, offered for his own
share of the ransom the sum of five thousand
crowns, whilst there was not an individual
but who contributed according ^{to his means} - a might amount
and the hacendado was executed in the plaza.
The day before the execution, the hacendado's

proceeding that the fate of their brother was sealed, one
day all quiet Cordoba shutting up their houses
and carrying with them their horses, their mules, their
burros, their wives and families, and the greater part
of their household furniture. No one knew whether
they swayed their course, nor where they again see
in Cordoba for some months, when they again
suddenly made their appearance; a few however were
returned; so great was the horror of the tyfanas
at what had occurred that they were in the
habit of saying that the place was cursed for evermore
and when I shew them these were many among
them, who on no account would enter the Plaza, which
has witnessed the disgraceful end of their unfortunate
brother.

I shall long remember these Cordobese tyfanas by
whom I was very well received, but always on
the supposition that I was one of their own race; they
say that they never admit strangers to their houses
save at their marriage festivals when they fling
their doors open to all; and save occasionally
people of influence and distinction, who

wishes to hear their songs and converse with their
women, but they inform me at the same time that
these they invariably receive, and merely made use
of as instruments to serve their own purposes. As
for my ^{part} I was admitted ^{without expense} to their ~~most~~ private
meetings and was made a participator of their
^{through our public courts some remarkable scenes occurred}
most secret thoughts; one night more than twenty
of us, men and women, were assembled in a long
low room on the ground floor, in a dark alley or
court in the old gloomy town of Cordova; ^{the gitanos} ^{after}
they had discussed several rocky plans, ^{and had}
settled some private bargains amongst themselves,
we all gathered round a large brazier of flaming
charcoal and began conversing ^{sober} ^{das} ^{los} ^{de}
Egypto, when I proposed that as we had no
better means of amusing ourselves we should endeavour
to turn into the Calo language some piece of Quotation
that we might see whether this language, the gradual
decay of which I had frequently heard them lament, was
capable of expressing any other matters than those which
relates to horses ~~and~~ ^{and} ^{my} ^{gypsy} ^{travels}:
it was in this cautious manner that I first introduced

to draw the attention of these singular people to
matters of eternal importance) and ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~question~~ ^{question} was
received with acclamation, and we forthwith proceeded
to the translation of The Book of the Cross, a first ^{reads} ~~reads~~
this noble confession in Spanish in the usual manner
and without pausing this noble confession, and then
repeats it again sentence by sentence, by ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~same~~ ^{same} ~~person~~ ^{person} ~~as~~ ^{as} ~~before~~ ^{before}
translating as I proceeded. They ~~displayed~~ ^{exhibited} the greatest
eagerness and interest in their unwearied occupations,
and frequently broke into loud disputes as to the
best renderings, many being offered at the same time;
In the mean ^{while} ~~time~~ I wrote down from their dictation
and after the conclusion of the entire piece I read out
the translation, the result of the united wisdom
of the assembly, for all changes. Whereupon they
all raised a shout of exultation, and appeared
not a little proud of the composition.

London has a large fair celebrated for its studs,
the best being those in the whole of Spain being
in the studs of the large breed proprietors in the
neighbourhood. These animals are of unequal beauty
in this way, their colour is in general a glossy black,
their manes bushy and silky, and of a great

length whilst their tails trail upon the ground, and
from a ~~very~~ forest of waving hair; they are invariably
broad chested and proud in their manners and their
mountpoint ^{is remarkable} which is considered their chief ornament
~~is remarkable~~; the Spaniards consider these horses as
the ^{genuine} descendants of the steeds of the Moorish
conquerors of Spain. ~~These~~ ^{the} terrific cavalry who did
the waters of the Guadalquivir with the flood of the Goths:
This ^{however} is a great error, no two animals can be more
unlike than the Moorish and Andalusian horse, the
first especially when of his own kind, far from handsome
and ~~the~~ many and kind of a ready wily quality, instead
of exhibiting the rich glories and grace of the Andalusian.
The Moorish horse ^(we speak of those of high rank) is a savage furious creature whom
it is frequently necessary to chain, indefatigable in the
course and never resting but on ^{its} legs, whilst the
Andalusian is gentle and docile and will follow its
keepers like a dog, and though of great swiftness for a
short distance, soon blown up fatigued and when resting
reposing will cast itself on its side like a human ^{being}. These
beautiful animals, which are a mixture of many
breeds, but principally of the Norman, are nurtured
with the greatest care and delicacy and their

which wants no ailments attend it - nothing is more
frequent of remark in Spanish grooming than the care exhibited
in clipping and trimming various parts of the horse where the
growth of hair is considered as prejudicial to the perfect
health and cleanliness of the animal; particular attention
being always paid to that part of the foot which lies
between the fetlock and the hoof to guard against
the entry that ambitious spiders which is the seed
of the Spanish groy - on which account the services
of a skilful Equilador are continually in requisition

The Equilador when proceeding to the service of his
~~master~~ ^{copious} generally carries under his arm a small box
which contain principally of various pairs of ropes and
two short sticks tied together with whips and the use
and calls quabillos by means of which the lower
lip of the horse should be proove restive in dispute
and the animal yields to speedy subjection. In the
garb of the Equilador is stuck the large large
syrong called in Spanish byras and in the
English tongue Caches with which he forms path
obstacles. He operates upon the backs and
back of mules or burros which are

incurably decays quite bare, that if the animals are
galled either by their harness or the loads which they carry,
the wounds may be left liable to fester and be more
easy to cure. Whilst engaged with horses he confines
himself to the feet as care. The esquiadores in
the Ibero castles and in those provinces where the gypsies
~~do not~~ do not abound, one for the most part
but in the others and especially in Andalusia they are
of the gypsy race. The gypsies are wonderfully expert
in the use of the cauter which they handle in a manner
practised no where but in their own with this method
the poorer class principally obtain their bread. In one
of their complete allusion is made to this occupation
in the following manner

I'll cure tomorrow bread to earn

For hunger to work me from

Of all I meet I'll ask in town

If they be no heads to trim.

Sometimes whilst cleaning the foot of a horse, exactly
small cups are necessary for the purpose of
removing long solitary hairs for as Spanish
grooms will tell you that a horse's foot behind

ought to be kept as clean and smooth as the hand of
a Senora, such scissors can only be procured at Madrid.
My ~~own~~ two pair of this kind is a Cordovan
Gypsy, from whom I have ^{procured} ~~received~~ much attention while
in that city, was the occasion of my receiving a
singular epistle from another ^{whom I generally expect to see} which I shall insert as being
As an original ^{Gypsy} composition and in some points not
a little characteristic of the people of whom I am now writing.

Cordova 20th day of January 18th 57

~~Dear~~
Dear Don Jose

After saluting you and hoping that you are well I proceed
to tell you that the two pair of scissors arrived at this town
of Cordova with him whom you sent them by, but unfor-
tunately they were given to another Gypsy whom you
neither knew nor spoke to nor saw in your life, for it
chanced that he who brought them was a friend of mine
and he told me that he had brought two pair of
scissors which an Englishman had given him for the
Gipsies, whereupon I understanding it was yourself
not only says to him, ~~then~~ those scissors are for
me, ~~when he told me~~ ^{tho' however} that he had already given

Meane to another, ^{and he} who is a hyspy who was not given in Cordova
during the time you were. Nevertheless Don Jorge I am very
grateful for you thus remembering me although I do not
decide your present ^{and} in order that you may know who I
am my name is Antonio Salazar. The very first who
spoke to you in Cordova in the posada where you
were; a man spoke with the small pox, and you told
me to come and see you next day at eleven and I went, ^{and}
we conversed ^{together} alone. Therefore I should wish you to do me
the favour to send me skins for tanning beasts, good
skins, ^{and you} for such would be a very great favour and I
should be ever grateful, for here in Cordova there are none
or if there be they are good for nothing; for ~~Don~~ Don Jorge
you remember I told you that I was an Equitador by trade, and
only by that I got bread for my babes. Don Don Jorge.
If you do send me the skins for tanning, ^{from} write to
the one direct to the ally Dela Cordiga number 20
to Antonio Salazar in Cordova. This is what I have to
tell you, and do you ever command me your honest servant
who kisses your hand and is eager to serve you
Antonio Salazar.

First Couplet.
That I may clip and trim the beasts a pair of each as good
of sort; I fear my hickley babes will perish all of want.

Second Couplet.
If thou a pair of Carpan grant, that I my babes may fear
less pray to the Almighty God that thee he ever spare.

It is by no means my intention to describe the
exact state and condition of the Gypsies in every
town and province of Spain where they are to be found, perhaps
indeed it will be considered that I have already been
more circumstantial and particular than the case requires.
The other ~~provinces~~ ^{provinces} which they inhabit are principally
those of Catalonia, Murcia and Valencia, and they
are likewise to be met with in the Basque Province
where they are called Egiptians or Egiptians. What I
next propose to occupy myself with are some general
~~observations on~~ ^{observations on} ~~the habits and~~ ^{the habits and}
the physical and moral state of the Gypsies throughout
Spain, and of the position which they hold in
society.