

POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN
WITH CHINA.

As the time is rapidly approaching when the charter of the East India Company will become extinct, we feel strongly the necessity of calling the attention of our countrymen to those preparations that may be necessary for supporting their claims against the renewal of the destructive monopoly, so long, and so unjustly, vested in that body. In pursuance of this duty, we have submitted, from time to time, certain facts, in the pages of 'The Oriental Herald,' which the public would do well to keep closely in view; and, at present, we propose to lay before our readers certain statements with regard to our commerce with the eastern world, grounded on practical knowledge and experience, more particularly on the trade with China.

The empire of China *proper* is supposed to comprise the most valuable division of the habitable globe, equally removed from the scorching heats of the equator as from the chilling cold of an arctic latitude. To these important local advantages are supposed to be united a fertile soil, a healthy climate, and an industrious population, flourishing under the firm but mild sway of a paternal government. This fine picture we believe, however, to be too highly coloured. Many of the advantages and the blessings ascribed to China are extremely problematical. Indeed, it is a question whether many of the accounts which we read of its climate, its wealth, and population, are not the exaggerations of certain sanguine minds, solicitous to invest with great honour and importance that particular portion of the globe to which their own labours are almost exclusively confined; and we suspect that the mild and paternal government of which they boast is, in practice, almost the worst species of tyranny and despotism, which at present exists on the face of the earth.

The various and imperfect statements that have been offered on the population of China, and the slender materials possessed for forming an accurate opinion on this topic, will lead us to touch, with great caution, so uncertain and unsatisfactory a subject. In proportion to our credulity, we may take it at fifty millions, or 333,000,000, and find equal authority for the support of either opinion. Seeing, however, that the most prejudiced writers in favour of that country betray the character of its partial barrenness, its impervious forests, its sterile tracts of inaccessible mountains, its extensive morasses, swamps, and lakes, its outskirts unpeopled, unknown, and unenlightened by the cultivation of any intercourse with other countries; and, above all, when we consider the whole of it to be oppressed by the iron hand of a despotic government,—all this, we say, presents

to us the idea of a population in a crude, undigested state, labouring under infinite disadvantages both moral and physical, and less in the aggregate than is generally believed. It is in estimating the extent of surface that we shall be able to form the truest estimate of the population of any country, wherein no satisfactory census has ever been known; and, although we have some difficulty on this point, as regards China, yet we know that we are safe in taking it at one million two hundred thousand square miles. In Europe, the average calculation gives, we believe, about fifty-four souls to the square mile; and this, we are inclined to think, applied to China, would prove a more accurate datum than that offered by Lord Macartney. Nevertheless, supposing a certain degree of deference due to the opinions of the authorities that are generally quoted respecting China, and reckoning its population at nearly one hundred souls to the square mile, this would give, in round numbers, about one hundred millions for the whole; an estimate, be it observed, considerably lower than that popularly assumed.

In inquiring into the anomalous character of our connexion with this mysterious country, with the view of ascertaining how far it can be improved, we shall proceed on the premises of climate, population, and government, which we have just laid down; and we shall, for these alone, be able to show that the subject altogether possesses an interest and importance to Great Britain which will justify our going into considerable length in this first attempt to give a correct view of a singular people, and of a foreign policy equally singular, inasmuch as it is the policy, not of the aboriginal inhabitants of China, but of the Tartar conquerors of that country; a people, who, at the same time that they have repulsed with disdain all political connexion with those who have visited their shores, have yet, with singular artifice, contrived the growth of an enormous commerce,—a commerce which they not only affect to despise, but treat those by whom it is fostered and carried on with contempt and insult,—a commerce that has not only thriven, but apparently acquired fresh vigour, while opposed to difficulties and vexatious restrictions, which, in any other country of the world that we know of, would immediately bring on its utter annihilation.

The commerce of China has increased to such an extent as unquestionably to identify itself, not only with the revenues of Great Britain, but with the feelings and domestic comforts of the whole of our population. Tea, the chief article of export from China, has become an essential and indispensable necessary of life among all classes in this country. It is now in such general, such individual, indiscriminate use, that the want of it would, in all probability, be considered one of the most serious dispensations with which the nation could be visited. The want of it, as the Duke of Wellington said the other day on a question different from this, to be sure, as not being a question

of creature-comforts, would introduce a degree of rancour into every parish of this kingdom which we should not wish to be responsible for! And yet, so uncertain is the tenure by which we enjoy this blessing, that it is liable to be overturned and lost in a moment, by accident or caprice; nay, we may safely say, that it almost wholly depends on trifling points of etiquette, the slightest neglect or violation of which would be considered good ground, by one of the parties, for interrupting and destroying the commercial relations of the most populous nation in the world. It is no little reproach to Great Britain that a staple article of its commerce should be bound by a tie so slight. It is by a conduct disreputable to our national character and dignified station among the nations of the earth, that a rupture with an insulting, cold, and comparatively barbarous power, has been so often avoided. How many instances are there on record of ruptures and wars originating in causes of far less consequence than the degrading concessions, the cold treatment of our countrymen, and the utter contempt in which they are held by the celestial monarch and his satellites!

Under the influence of these opinions, it is no wonder that there exists at present, throughout this country, an eager desire to have our commercial relations with China placed on a firm and steady basis. We have to thank the East India Company for our present estranged condition with that division of the world; and they ought to be used as instruments by which to restore us to our original state. To all conversant with the earlier history of Chinese commerce, it is well known, that, at one time, we possessed in these latitudes the freedom of trading to a great number of the ports; while now, the trade, even of the Company, is confined to one port, and only one! We have been told, that the East India Company had been *driven* from all the other places of resort in China. This remains to be proved; but, whether the Company had been driven from them, or voluntarily abandoned them, we cannot help regretting that such places had not been left open to British enterprise. There are other merchants in Great Britain besides those who compose the East India Company. But how, it may be asked, have the Company contrived to fix themselves in Canton, while they pretend to say, 'that they were driven from it, and have voluntarily abandoned every other port.' On investigation, certain latent causes present themselves for this cunning pretence, this extraordinary token of policy, on which it is not our present purpose to enlarge. It is enough to say, in the mean time, that its effect has been a mortifying feeling of inferiority and degradation, besides the loss of many commercial advantages which it will prove difficult for us to recover.

All the arguments that have of late years been used to the effect of abolishing the monopoly of the East India Company, and ex-

tending our commercial relations over the islands of the Indian Archipelago, apply with tenfold force to China. For, however wanting the Chinese may be, and actually are, in those liberal views of policy that belong to more civilised nations, yet they are a people having those tastes for the luxuries of life, and the splendour of rich and expensive apparel, which are common to the western world. The climate of China requires a far greater portion of warm and strong clothing, the peculiar manufacture of this country, than all the other nations open to British commerce beyond the Cape, put together. And here again, we cannot help noticing, that, to supply the wants of one hundred millions of people, spread over 1,200,000 square miles, only *one port* is open to British manufactures! We know that the Russians have a trade in the north confined also to one place, namely, Kiatka. This Russian traffic consists chiefly in skins and furs; but it is of importance to observe, that they also possess a partial trade to the same place in woollens. It is remarkable, but nevertheless true, that the Russians actually send to Kiatka British woollens, under the incalculable expense of land-carriage over nearly six thousand miles, and yet have found it a species of commerce well worth pursuing. How great, then, would be the advantage to the British merchant, the British manufacturer, to have the liberty of sending goods to that quarter, commanding, as he can do, the cheapest and most expeditious means of conveyance.

It will not fail to occur to the reader, that the portion of British goods that are thus consumed must be very inconsiderable; for the trade is confined to one port on the part of the British, and another on the part of the Russians. Whether the imports at Canton are cut off from the supply of Pekin, whether they reach only the more affluent cities of the South, or scarcely reach beyond the province of Canton, is a question upon which no very satisfactory information can be gathered. One thing, however, is very certain, and that is, having but one port open, goods must be conveyed to all other parts of the empire, burdened with an enormous expense of land-carriage, and other charges incidental in passing from one province to another, besides the various profits of the dealers upon the different changes the commodities must undergo in passing from the seller to the buyer. Such a system, indeed, amounts to a prohibition; and the presumption is, that our goods are almost entirely cut off from the use of the great body of the people. Of this we are satisfied, when we compare the trifling supply of woollens with the demand that would naturally exist among a population so vast, that, of all countries in the world, China is the most united to us by a reciprocity of wants. Besides those to which we have alluded, how many more would be created by a freer, an unrestricted intercourse? We repeat, that the climate of China peculiarly befits it for the consumption of British woollens; and our demand for tea more than replies

to this. The increasing demand for raw silk in England is answered by an increasing demand for our cotton manufactures in China. We repeat, that, although the body of the Chinese nation cannot be considered in any other light than as one degree from semi-barbarism, yet they are susceptible of infinite improvement, requiring only some external impulse to put many dormant powers into useful action, powers at this time lying inert from an untried policy on the one side, and an exclusive monopoly on the other.

These observations apply to *China proper*; but then, there is also the kingdom of Corea, and the long line of coast bounding Chinese Tartary, northward to the Daourian mountains. Compared with China, these countries are commonly looked upon as entitled to little notice; but they certainly deserve no inconsiderable degree of attention from the merchants of this country. In a commercial point of view, they merit equal notice with those isles to which our attention has been so repeatedly directed, and particularly by the able and intelligent author of 'The Indian Archipelago.' The whole population of Chinese Tartary presents a people with whom it would be highly desirable for this country to establish commercial relations; for here, independently of our knowledge of their wants, it is but natural to suppose, that they would prefer the comfortable manufactures of this country, to their own rude dress of skins, as soon as they became acquainted with them. Here, however, we are still kept at bay, by the singular and anomalous character of our commercial relations with *China*; and, knowing of what importance it would prove to have our commerce extended through all these desirable channels of communication, we shall, after having taken a summary view of their civil, military, and naval character, suggest such remedies, by negotiation or otherwise, as the circumstances of our present condition, with regard to them, may seem to demand.

The Civil Character of the Chinese.

In the preceding pages we have endeavoured to point out the mistaken notions that generally exist with regard to the population and capabilities of China, and the wretched system of policy that has so long, and so unjustly, deprived this country of a less restricted trade with a people so peculiarly fitted, in respect of their wants and climate, for reciprocal relations with us, in a commercial point of view. The object we have next in view, is a further investigation of these points, and to lay before the public certain sketches of the civil, military, and naval character of the Chinese, with the view of leading to those preliminary measures that may be necessary, whether by negotiation or otherwise, for the purpose of improving these relations. Before proceeding to the discussion of these last mentioned topics, however, we may be permitted to avail ourselves of several well-digested statements, that have recently been communicated through the medium of the public press, and

then proceed to the subject-matter of our original and practical observations.

Briefly, then, to recapitulate the crying grievance to which the British public is subjected by the monopoly of the East India Company, we have to point out that no less a sum than 8,000,000*l.* yearly is paid, in charges and government taxes, for the purchase of the article of tea, an article that has become a necessary of life with almost every class of society; and that, while the Dutch and the Americans afford to sell this necessary commodity at forty-eight per cent. advance on the prime cost in China, we pay, in this country, three times the amount which the Company purchase it for at Canton. The Liverpool Association contend, in a Report recently put forth by them on this subject, which was given in our last Number, that the Company have forfeited their contract by this grasping and inordinate thirst after gain, inasmuch as it is in express contravention of the conditions on which the charter was granted. For there it is provided, 'that the Company shall, with the view to keep the price of tea in this country upon an equality with the price thereof in other neighbouring countries of Europe, import such quantities from any part of Europe as may be necessary for this purpose; and that, if the Company shall, at any time, neglect to keep this market supplied with a sufficient quantity of tea, at reasonable prices, to answer the consumption of Great Britain, it shall be the duty of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury to grant licenses to any other persons whatsoever to import teas on the same conditions and for the same purposes.' We all know, at the same time, that the price of tea, in this country, has not been kept on an equality with its price in other kingdoms, that, therefore, the East India Company have not fulfilled the conditions of their contract, yet, still, that no licenses have been granted to other merchants to interfere with their monopoly. The *wholesale* price of tea, in fact, is made up, in this country, in the following iniquitous proportions: one fourth paid as prime cost at, and freight from, China; one fourth levied by the Company for their own especial benefit; and the remaining half, of a tax paid to Government; this last tax being an *ad valorem* duty, always rising in exact proportion to the price demanded by the Company. The possession of the trade with China has, consequently, become more firmly fixed in foreigners; and, if the knowledge of these unquestioned and unquestionable facts does not stir up and spread a conviction of the downright mismanagement of the tea trade, all argument on the subject may, indeed, be abandoned.

With these preliminary observations, we proceed to inquire what sort of people, in the Chinese, we have to deal with, in a civil point of view; and, in speaking first of their civil character, we must premise that, under every circumstance, we consider this question particularly interesting; and that, while we claim a due share of

indulgence, on account of the obscurity in which it is involved, obliged, as we are, to doubt and inquire at every step, we shall treat this subject very cautiously. We have been so long habituated to contemplate imposing pictures of the Chinese power, resources, and population, that it is with difficulty we can divest ourselves of a certain mysterious awe in investigating their condition in a civil character. But, like all other mysteries, the illusion vanishes, as the subject becomes a little better examined; and we have good grounds for knowing that much, if not the greater part, of the information generally received, with respect to the Chinese, is very far removed from the truth.

The body of the Chinese nation, in every grade, and under every circumstance, partake of the peculiar and despotic character of their head. Closeness, despotism, and ignorance, are the distinguishing characteristics, not of the monarch alone, but of every individual in his dominions. At the same time, the greatest contradictions exist in the dispositions of the inferior classes. They are passive and haughty; insolent and submissive; insufferably rude to strangers, and servilely abject to authorities; presenting to the foreigner a pompous port of independence and courage, which is looked upon as something very formidable, while, in reality, they are so pusillanimous that they are objects of utter contempt. All this proceeds from their abject state of subjection to a system of methodical mystery and despotism, and a strong inculcation of pride and contempt, by the higher power, for every thing that is foreign. They have an Emperor arrogantly pretending to soar above every created being, in power and benevolence; descending, with a sort of meanness, to an examination of all the circumstances of the lowest of his subjects; having his pride gratified by the admission of all the high attributes which he may choose to claim, while he flatters the prejudices of his dependants, by encouraging them to think that they are the only great nation on the face of the earth; that, compared with them, all others are utterly despicable; and, indeed, only suffered to put a foot upon the imperial dominions, from the pure benevolence of his Celestial Majesty. Few have any notion how carefully principles, such as these, are inculcated; they are laid down as state maxims, with far greater care than any other maxim of government. The whole system is like a stage trick, where all parties have a mutual interest in being deceived.

The population of China consists of two classes: the executive, who oppress with all the despotic sway of their sole head, the Emperor, with whom they are identified; and the people, who obey implicitly, with a degree of passiveness and submission altogether inconsistent with the character of a free and enlightened people. This power on the one hand, and passive obedience on the other, have been confirmed by long usage; and the natural consequences are the dispositions and conduct which we have just set forth.

Notwithstanding the beautiful picture placed before us, by the early Missionaries, of the purity and perfection of the Chinese Government, it will sooner or later be found that we are giving the true estimate of their civil condition. The early Missionaries, of whom we speak, were pleased with the prospects which fertile China held up to their professional labours, as well as to their more avaricious aspirations. They have been discovered, in their descriptions, to have exceeded all moderate bounds, extolling and exaggerating the natural capabilities of the country, as well as the system of government. By their accounts, China possessed an admirable code of municipal law, securing the power, the riches, and the subordination of a vast population. But we now begin to know, that that which they asserted to be all power and virtue, is merely tyranny and weakness.

'Giving honour to whom honour is due,' we must first, of course, speak of the higher orders in China, before proceeding to the mass of the population. They are called, by the missionaries, '*les lettrés*.' They form but a small part of the population; but their influence extends through the most minute branches of the Government. So cunningly have they devised their system, that the joint interests of the governors and the governed, the links by which the large body who obey, are bound to the small body who control, are so firmly cemented that, in place of one despot, China has innumerable tyrants. The object, the undivided object of despotism, is the annihilation of universal power, rule, and opinion; the exaltation of the individual from whom alone such a disposition or power can proceed; and, excepting in the case of China, the history of every despotic Government, of every tyrant, is uniform. In China, there is an exception to all others, inasmuch as the Celestial Empire is totally without a noble, or an hereditary nobility; but yet a power of despotism exists, which is not only multiplied in the people, but is adapted, at the same time, to give stability to the throne. This proceeds from the management of '*les lettrés*,' or, in common parlance, the mandarins, who have ever insinuated themselves so deeply into the secret thoughts of the Emperor, and into the details of all the transactions of the people, that no manifestations of internal commotion, or of outward threat, can possibly escape their observation or control.

We have been told that, in China, a candidate for a Government office may rise from an obscure state, pass through the various gradations of society, and become a mandarin at last,—just as we, in this country, pretend to get on in the army or navy. We are told that the beginning—the fountain-head, is open to all; to the poor as well as the rich. But, on this topic, we have only one observation to make, and, in making it, we regret to say that it does not apply to China alone. The mandarins are the sole judges of their own conduct,—the sole judges of those who are admitted into

their own fraternity; and they, consequently, confine the election of aspirants to this high distinction to their own offspring. And, if an unfortunate Chinese, who may have happened to acquire wealth by commerce or industry, may wish to advance his son to the rank of a mandarin, which he would naturally be desirous to do, protecting him, as it does, from all those vexations, restrictions, and tyrannies which all those out of this favoured class are subjected to, he is able to effect his object only by lavishing the greatest portion of the wealth which he had previously acquired. It is truly bewildering to contemplate what an influence self-interest, bribery, and corruption have commanded over any and every individual, in any and every country we have ever heard of from the beginning of time. Thus, a mandarin and his descendants become fixed in the high office, without any hereditary claim. Those who have been once admitted to the office, become part and parcel of the Government, and are divided from the people. They at once become objects of power and of fear; and we now know, notwithstanding all those representations, or rather misrepresentations, that have been made, namely, that the son of a mandarin must descend to the rank from whence his forefathers arose, and ascend by the same gradation, that it is individual patronage that creates the mandarin; and that this, and this alone, is the cause of the perpetuity of that system of presumption, ignorance, and despotism that has existed in China from time immemorial. The missionaries, in their writings, no doubt lay down a high-sounding and imposing principle of government and advancement, as existing among the Chinese, namely, that all the offices of Government are open to the meanest of the people, and that there is no hereditary nobility. If it were really so, it would be all well; but it is no such thing. Advancement in China proceeds on the precise grounds which we have pointed out. No sooner does a Chinese become a mandarin, than he rides his high horse, cuts his fellows, and heart and hand proceeds to support the proceedings of that arbitrary Government under which his ancestors have flourished, and joins in the rule of the Celestial Empire with an imposing but compromising spirit of pomp, pride, and ignorance, highly becoming 'the wisdom of his ancestors.'

Between the mandarins and the low classes among the Chinese, there is no intermediate body. The Chinese are simply divided into the active and the passive. It will be enough to say of the second class, that they are wholly passive. Indeed, where a Government is composed of the materials we have just described, nothing better can be expected. The lower orders are kept in a state of the most profound ignorance; they tremble under a system, of which, for want of external communication with any other civilised country, they have no divided opinion; and they subscribe to forms of government, and local customs, the violations of which are, by edict, denounced as more serious offences than the violation of any moral

or sacred order of things. Nothing more truly ridiculous can be conceived than the contrast between the self-importance and insolence of the lower classes of the Chinese towards strangers, and their obsequiousness to their mandarins, and all the inferior officers of Government. While they carry a high-headed and contemptuous deportment towards Europeans, their servility and genuflections to their own powers render them, beyond all measure, mean and despicable; and they submit to the exercise of the whip, or bamboo, of the all-powerful mandarin, without any apparent sense of degradation.

The whole machinery of the Chinese Government is placed on this abject and submissive state of the mass of the population, supported by the cautious conduct of the mandarins and the other Government officers, in preventing all intercourse with foreigners. They are well aware, perhaps, that a ready communication between the Chinese, and the people of any civilized or enlightened country, would shake the throne of the Celestial Empire to its very foundation. They have, however, managed it otherwise, and have wielded their power so effectually that, for age after age, the people have been kept in profound ignorance, and the empire has existed, from age to age, without any extraordinary revolution, for the aggrandisement of a few, and the especial exaltation of the individual who holds, for the time, the reins of government, to the entire exclusion of the universal good that might flow from a more liberal order of things. Robbers have mounted the throne of China, and pirates have established themselves in many of the provinces. Still they have all yielded, at last, to the guidance and control of the mandarins; and even the Tartar conquerors of China, either from necessity or choice, have united a Tartar and a Chinese in all the principal appointments, and adopted the whole of the ancient internal economy of the country.

In closing this notice of the civil order of things, it is only necessary to add, that the Chinese are cowardly to a proverb. It has been proved more than once, that no sooner does the Celestial Empire sustain any external shock, than its strength and faculties become totally paralysed. It is altogether unfit to repel a foreign force; and even an internal commotion, if so managed as to evade the surveillance of the superior powers, carries every thing before it, and, in some instances, has defied the power of the Government for years together. The consideration of the military and naval power of the Chinese must, however, be reserved for another Number.

SONG OF THE YOUNG GREEK.

THE stranger came down on our father-land
 Like the rush of the mountain flood ;
 Our people have perish'd beneath his brand,
 Our soil hath grown fat with their blood.
 He hath trampled our vineyards under foot,
 We have lived 'neath the scowl of his scorn,
 And our beautiful maids, all helpless and mute,
 To the stranger's rude arms have been borne.

A curse on dissension's rankling power,
 That hath made them an easy spoil !
 And blotted from time be the evil hour,
 When they fell 'neath the stranger's guile !
 And a curse on the spirit of craven dread,
 That hath wed them to the chain ;
 And the lust of gold, that hath greedily fed
 On their valour—a deep, damning stain !

Yet many there are that inly sleep
 O'er the glories of days that are fled ;
 Their slumbering wrath will not always sleep,
 Their fire, though subdued, is not dead !
 I'll seek their banner, and forth I'll go
 To crush the stranger's pride ;
 I care not the joys of youth to know,
 The sword shall be my bride.

Yet I'm lured not by ambition's dream,
 That can make the coward brave ;
 Nor by glory's bright and dazzling gleam ;
 But I will not live a slave.
 How I long to smite the turban'd crest !
 In freedom I'll draw my breath ;
 Should the tented field prove my place of rest,
 Then 'twill meet me there in death.

No funeral pomp shall mark my end ;
 For I boast not a mighty name,
 But an arm and a soul that will not bend
 Till death shall their energy tame.
 Then beauteous my country will seem to me,
 As from vision her fair features glide ;
 And, rejoicing in what she yet may be,
 I will welcome death as my bride !

THE COLOMBIAN FREEBOOTER.

FROM the plains of Ocumare, to the Plaza-mayor in Caraccas, and for some hundred miles around, the peasants, priests, and poltroons, speak with reverential awe of the renowned Ciceneros; but his achievements are not celebrated by them alone: his name resounds throughout the land that gave him birth, and even military chieftains have been known to tremble when recording his many daring exploits. The young lisp his name, while their little features betray the fear that entwines their youthful hearts; and the aged echo it again, as their fingers rapidly traverse their distorted visages, and their feeble tongues implore the protection of their favourite saints.

Ciceneros is a man of colour, of a commanding mien and haughty demeanour. His age may be reckoned twice twenty years, and he is the sole individual of his complexion that ever enjoyed the special patronage of Spain's proud representatives, who conferred upon him the honour of a General's commission. During the revolutionary struggle, Ciceneros was the most inveterate foe the patriots could number among their enemies; vindictive in his disposition, irritable in temper, and incensed at what he deemed the perfidy of his countrymen, he swore eternal vengeance on Colombia's revolted children!

'Talk not to me of republics, (he was heard to say,) I can read; and the only book deserving credence is the Bible, which has taught me to comprehend, that kings have governed since this world was populated; and Holy Writ inspires the belief, that our God made that a covenant with his then virtuous people. Ere many years shall have flown, I hope (as I trust in heavenly bliss) to behold once more the stately banner of glorious Spain triumphantly display its celestial hues to the agonising eyes of its forsaken, but undismayed, partisans. Such is the creed of this brave and once magnanimous man. When tyranny was trampled underfoot, and the tree of liberty implanted on the fertile shores of smiling Venezuela, Ciceneros took refuge in the almost impenetrable forests which adorn that ethereal portion of the globe, and with him some forty long-tried heroes coalesced, and fled the haunts of newly-created politicians, whom they despised and hated for their treachery towards their lawful sovereign and master. Many months had rolled away since the voluntary banishment of this deluded man; and his name and crimes were scarcely remembered by the multitude, until his wanton cruelties again spread terror and confusion throughout the mourning land wherein he trespassed: even the threshold of the credulous slave, who bemoaned the vicissitude that had burst his chains, but to incrust them with some weightier substance, was not exempt from the incursions of this terrible foe.

His own colour he respects; but there is no hope of mercy to the unfortunate *white* who haply treads the mazes of his sacred seclusion, unless he can boast of Spanish blood: him will he sacrifice on the instant, and exult in the sanguinary deed, which his butchers perform with alacrity and savage delight.

These marauders range the country at pleasure, spreading dismay wherever their contaminating footsteps impress the pure earth; and thus the peaceful inhabitants of some thinly-peopled hamlet are driven from their lowly cots, whilst the unwelcome intruders regale themselves with such fare as the humble possessors could call their own, but this was all the poor villagers had to give. Dire necessity alone instigated Ciceneros to the commission of these venial offences; and pardonable are they, since absolute hunger urged him to the crime.

Ciceneros himself has often, in disguise, patrolled the streets of the most populated towns, mixing with the throng, and listening with unfeigned delight to the extravagant fictions of the multitude. These surreptitious excursions were usually performed under cover of the night; but the bandit seldom returned to his retreat without a few pieces, which, by his persuasive eloquence, he extorted from the unsuspecting passenger, and never failed to admonish the unlucky wight to beware of Ciceneros!

His alarming and increasing depredations chilled the souls of many Colombian heroes, and created a consternation more terrific, to the imbecile minds of those ennobled creatures, than all the horrors of a civil war, so great was the dread of this far-famed bandit.

The piercing eye of the sagacious freebooter penetrated the impending danger, as the magistracy had long determined on his utter annihilation; and he once more betook himself to his wonted haven, where he would sojourn for weeks together, subsisting upon esculents and the wild inhabitants of the majestic forests through which he wandered. In this rude habitation, he was one morning surprised by the appearance of some of his men, who led into his presence a person, who they assured their chief had been detected prowling within the precincts of the rustic encampment; and, 'Look, my master,' said the foremost of the savage horde, 'his face is whiter than a well-bleached skull.' 'Aha!' exclaimed Ciceneros, whilst his eyes glistened with brutal exultation, 'an Englishman, by St. Peter! Welcome, generous gentleman! A thousand times welcome to these rural shades! Can you accommodate yourself, *Senor*, with a seat on the warm soil of Colombia?' The stranger spoke not; he mis-trusted his reception, as he too well knew the implacable hatred Ciceneros entertained towards the English, and he therefore considered himself a lost man. 'You hesitate, *Senor*,' said the bandit; 'I am not now versed in stupid compliments; 'tis

true, my furniture is somewhat rustic, and, mayhap, thy lily countenance dislikes these sable faces here! To-morrow, ere the glorious sun shall have shed his lustre o'er these verdant boughs, thou diest! I hate thee and thy race! Know this truth, thou cursed English cur! had thy heretical countrymen denied their aid to these puny white-faced Americans, my country, Spain, would still have held her rightful sway over these domains; and I, the outcast, persecuted Ciceneros, should have had fewer crimes to swell the catalogue of my infirmities. What, ho! Antonio, convey this English dog to the inner cave, and guard him strictly, as thou lovest thy life!

'Captain,' said the trembling stranger, 'I pray you act not thus; listen to me, I beseech you. For God's sake, Senor, grant me but a hearing, and I will convince you that I am deserving your clemency.' 'Tush, tush!' replied Ciceneros, 'thou knowest me not! Thy doom is sealed; and, before this hour to-morrow, by the holy Saint Peter, thy lily carcase shall serve to feast the ravenous brutes that seek our purer blood! Take him hence, Antonio, and hear me, boy, remember thy own head is in jeopardy!

The unfortunate stranger was speedily conveyed to his gloomy abode; but the dreadful emotions which tore his perturbed breast robbed him of the balm of sleep, and morning only dawned to blast his aching eyes with a sight of his ruthless murderers, who were ranged before the guarded cavern, restless with impatience for their devoted victim.

The discharge of a musket announced the presence of Ciceneros, who was arrayed in the costume of a Spanish General. 'A happy day this, my friends; bring forth the prisoner, 'tis growing late, and we are men of our word, you know.' The dejected stranger appeared before the merciless crew; his bright blue eyes glanced hastily around, and a smile of ineffable contempt played about his mouth, as he calmly surveyed the ragged wretches whose dastardly souls were thirsting for the blood of an innocent man. 'Sir Englishman,' said their leader, 'you have yet some few minutes to inhale the morning's refreshing air! I command silence,' continued Ciceneros. The confused murmurs of dissonant voices, which had previously drowned the melodious notes of the richly-plumaged songsters that there abounded, ceased, as if by magical influence, and the hardened bandit addressed the assembled gang in nearly these words:

'My friends, brothers, and fellow-sufferers! listen to your Chief! The solemn compact by which we bound ourselves to destroy every foe to our country, when the hereditary owners of this soil were driven from its shores, must still haunt your memories! The present is the occasion that shall serve to knit more firmly the adjuration which we breathed to each other on the sacred cross!

You now behold one of that nation whom we most detest ! one of that people who joined the banners of revolted America, for the gain of lucre ! one of those miscreants, without whose powerful arm our white-faced countrymen would still have bent the supple knee to their rightful lord. Comrades, and companions in misfortunes ! remember, that we, at least, are Spaniards ! Our fathers drew their breath in Spanish Europe, and we have been fostered in their bosoms. Our loyalty makes us free ; and, whilst Heaven grants us life, we live but to serve our legitimate sovereign ! Comrades ! our hatred of these English is boundless ; and, since one hath fallen within our grasp, his northern blood shall glut our longing appetites !

The savage orator was here interrupted by the loud *vivas* of his impassioned admirers, whose discordant shouts aroused the unfortunate stranger to a sense of his awful situation. With astonishing fortitude, which few men can command in a moment so eminently dangerous, the stranger haughtily demanded to be told the reason of this unjust proceeding !

‘ Hold, sir Englishman !’ replied Ciceneros, with a contemptuous smile, ‘ thy nation’s pride shall here avail thee nothing. What ! thou who dost talk our language, and hast ears of thine own, and withal, pretend an ignorance ! I’ll tell thee once again, since *reasoning* pleaseth thee so much, our deadly hatred towards thee, and all thy execrable race, dooms thee to die by the hand of an enraged and loyal Spaniard ; but this is waste of breath. Serjeant Hernandez ! make fast this proud Englishman to yonder youthful pine ; it has strength enough to hold the sturdy miscreant.’

Subservient to the wishes of his commander, the willing serjeant obeyed the mandate ; and the unfortunate stranger was firmly bound to the tender tree. A dead silence ensued. The silvery tones of the celestial songsters lost their wonted sweetness, and their mournful notes seemed to deprecate the nefarious deed, while their huge companions croaked responses to the funeral sounds.

Four men were ordered to place themselves within as many yards of the innocent victim. The fatal weapons were presented, and Ciceneros was prepared to give the concerted signal, when a loud shouting suddenly arrested the murderous hand. ‘ Hark !’ cried the bandit, ‘ what noise is that ? From whence does it proceed ? To arms ! to arms ! my boys. We are betrayed ; but our lives shall be dearly bought !’ The shouting increased. All was confusion and conjecture ; the sounds approached ; and they could distinctly hear the words, ‘ *Viva el Ingles ! Viva el Ingles ! Long live the Englishman ! Long live the Englishman !*’

‘ What can this mean ?’ said the robber ; but, ere a reply could be given, two men were descried bearing an elderly female. The instant she beheld Ciceneros, she gave a piercing shriek, and bounded

from the shoulders of her bearers with the velocity of a tigress. She knelt at the feet of the chief, whose knees she embraced with fervour, whilst tears of joy ran plenteously down her furrowed cheeks. 'Ah! my good master, I have escaped! I have escaped the wretches!'

'How did you effect your escape, my good Pepa?' asked Ciceneros with much anxiety. 'An Englishman, Sir, an Englishman freed me from their claws!'

'Are you positive, Pepa, that your liberator was an Englishman?' inquired Ciceneros somewhat doubtingly.

'O, yes! yes! yes!' said Pepa; I shall never forget *el rubio Ingles*, (meaning the light-haired Englishman.) God bless his dear heart! They were just going to murder me! I must pray for him, my master, though he be a heretic!'

'Release the prisoner instantly,' cried the bandit; and the stranger stood before his stern foe with a lighter heart than had ever throbbled within his agitated breast.

'Sir Englishman,' said the marauder, taking the stranger by the hand, whilst his iron features were momentarily lighted by a benignant smile that flashed across his sullen visage, 'look at this woman! Give thanks to her for thy preservation; it is to her, and not to us, that thou owest thy life. This woman, stranger, is the mother of four of my bravest companions in misfortune, and whose hearts were never known to sorrow, till their aged parent here was torn from them by our dastardly enemies, and condemned to die by the hand of a revolted royalist. She is beholden to one of thy nation for her few remaining days. Our joy at her miraculous deliverance is great. We cheerfully remit the sentence which our solemn oaths had pronounced upon you. Stranger, thou art free! but divulge not what thou hast here beheld: or, by the saint whom I revere, thou wilt rue thy rashness!'

The stranger promised to obey the injunction. He saluted the generous robber, and joyfully bade a lasting farewell to the erratic tribe.

Many are the years that have witnessed the charms of nature since these marauders first infested the paths of the peaceful, and numbers of the ferocious band have expiated their offences at the shrine of justice; but the undaunted Ciceneros, to this day, pursues his task of infamy, feared by all and loved by none.

THE ARAB'S LAMENT FOR HIS STEED.

Now thy labours are o'er,
 And the dark grave hath found thee—
 I shall see thee no more,
 The cold earth is around thee:

The Arab's Lament for his Steed.

Thou art fallen at length ;
 No more shall I find thee,
 In the pride of thy strength,
 Fling the desert behind thee.

Oft have I been borne,
 Through the wilderness rushing,
 O'er my foemen in scorn,
 In their impotence crushing
 The hosts that assail'd ;—
 Though in agony straining,
 Thy strength has prevail'd—
 The sharp spear disdain'g.

Oft I think on the time,
 When I view'd with delight
 Thy high summer prime
 Of beauty and might ;
 When away, far and wide,
 Thou hast gallantly bounded,
 And the snort of thy pride
 Through the desert resounded :

And I heave the deep sigh,
 For from me have departed
 The hopes bright and high
 Of the young and light-hearted.
 All quench'd in the fire
 That once burn'd in my blood,
 As we drove in our ire
 Through the field or the flood.

When my spirit hath sunk
 Neath sore wasting toil—
 When with agony drunk,
 I have reel'd o'er the soil,
 Whose looks of mute anguish
 Have made my lone heart bleed,
 And forbid me to languish ?—
 They were thine, O my lov'd steed !

But thy strength is no more,
 And thy beauty is fled,
 And thy swift course is o'er—
 Thou, my lov'd steed, art dead !
 And a sign there is not,
 To the by-passer telling,
 Where is the sad spot
 Of thy last lonely dwelling.



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