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The History of Nicolas Pedrosa, and His Escape from the Inquisition in Madrid. A Tale.

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THE
HISTORY
OF
NICOLAS PEDROSA,
AND
HIS ESCAPE FROM
THE
INQUISITION IN MADRID.
A TALE.



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T H E

H I S T O R Y

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O B

N I C O L A S P E D R O S A.

NICOLAS Pedrosa, a-busy little being, who followed the trades of shaver, surgeon, and man-midwife, in the town of Madrid, mounted his mule at the door of his shop in the Plazuela de los Affligidos, and pushed through the gate of San Bernardino, being called to a patient in the neighbouring village of Foncarral, upon a pressing occasion. Every body knows that the ladies in Spain in certain cases do not give long warning to practitioners of a certain description, and no body knew it better than Nicolas, who was resolved not to lose an inch of his way, nor of his mule's best speed by the way, if cudgelling could beat it out of her. It was plain to Nicolas's conviction as plain could be, that his road laid straight forward to the little convent in front; the mule was of opinion, that the turning on the left down the hill towards the Prado was the road of all roads most familiar and agreeable to herself, and accordingly began to dispute the point of topography with Nicolas, by fixing her fore feet resolutely in the ground, dipping her head at the same time between them, and launching heels and crupper furiously into the air, in the way of argument. Little Pedrosa, who was armed at heel with one maffy silver spur of stout, though ancient workmanship, resolutely applied the rusty rowel to the shoulder

shoulder of his beast, driving it with all the goodwill in the world to the very butt, and at the same time adroitly tucking his blue cloth capa under his right arm, and flinging the skirt over the left shoulder *en cavalier*, began to lay about him with a stout ashen sapling upon the ears, pole, and cheeks of the recreant mule. The fire now flashed from a pair of Andalusian eyes, as black as charcoal and not less inflammable, and taking the segara from his mouth, with which he had vainly hoped to have regaled his nostrils in a sharp winter's evening by the way, raised such a thundering troop of angels, saints, and martyrs, from St. Michael downwards, not forgetting his own namesake Saint Nicolas de Tolentino by the way, that if curses could have made the mule to go, the dispute would have been soon ended; but not a saint could make her stir any other ways than upwards and downwards at a stand. A small troop of mendicant friars were at this moment conducting the host to a dying man.—“Nicolas Pedrosa,” says an old friar, “be patient with your beast, and spare your blasphemies; remember Balaam.”—“Ah, father,” replied Pedrosa, “Balaam cudgelled his beast till she spoke, so will I mine till she roars.”—Fie, fie, “profane fellow,” cries another of the fraternity. “Go about your work, friend,” quoth Nicolas, “and let me go about mine; I warrant it is the more pressing of the two; your patient is going out of the world, mine is coming into it.” “Hear him,” cries a third, “hear the vile wretch, how he blasphemeth the body of God.”—And then the troop passed slowly on to the tinkling of the bell.

A man must know nothing of a mule's ears, who does not know what a passion they have for the tinkling of a bell, and no sooner had the jingling

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ling chords vibrated in the sympathetic organs of Pedrofa's beast, than bolting forward with a sudden spring, she ran roaring into the throng of friars, trampling on some, and shouldering others at a most profane rate; when Nicolas availing himself of the impetus, and perhaps not able to controul it, broke away, and was out of sight in a moment. "All the devils in hell blow fire into thy tail, thou beast of Babylon," muttered Nicolas to himself as he scampered along, never once looking behind him, or stopping to apologize for the mischief he had done to the bare feet and shirtless ribs of the holy brotherhood.

Whether Nicolas saved his distance, as likewise, if he did, whether it was a male or female Castilian he ushered into the world, we shall not just now enquire, contented to await his return in the first of the morning next day, when he had no sooner dismounted at his shop and delivered his mule to a sturdy Arragonefe wench, when Don Ignacio de Santos Aparicio, alguazil mayor of the supreme and general inquisition, put an order into his hand, signed and sealed by the inquisidor general, for the conveyance of his body to the Casa, whose formidable door presents itself in the street adjoining to the square, in which Nicolas's brasen-basin hung forth the emblem of his trade.

The poor little fellow, trembling in every joint, and with a face as yellow as saffron, dropt a knee to the altar, which fronts the entrance, and crossed himself most devoutly; as soon as he had ascended the first flight of stairs, a porter habited in black opened the tremendous barricade, and Nicolas with horror heard the grating of the heavy bolts that shut him in. He was led through passages and vaults and melancholy cells, till he was delivered into the dungeon, where he was finally
left

left to his solitary meditations. Hapless being! what a scene of horror.—Nicolas felt all the terrors of his condition, but being an Andalusian, and like his countrymen, of a lively imagination, he began to turn over all the resources of his invention for some happy fetch, if any such might occur, for helping him out of the dismal limbo he was in: He was not long to seek for the cause of his misfortune; his adventure with the barefooted friars was a ready solution of all difficulties of that nature, had there been any: there was however another thing, which might have troubled a stouter heart than Nicolas's—He was a Jew.—This of a certain would have been a staggering item in a poor devil's confession, but then it was a secret to all the world but Nicolas, and Nicolas's conscience did not just then urge him to reveal it. He now began to overhaul the inventory of his personals about him, and with some satisfaction counted three little medals of the blessed virgin, two Agnus Deis, a saint Nicolas de Tolentino, and a formidable string of beads all pendant from his neck and within his shirt; in his pockets he had a paper of dried figs, a small bundle of segaras, a case of lancets, squirt and forceps, and two old razors in a leathern envelope; these he had delivered one by one to the alguazil who first arrested him,—“and let him make the most of them,” said he to himself, “they can never prove me an Israelite by a case of razors.”—Upon a closer rummage, however, he discovered in a secret pocket a letter, which the alguazil had overlooked, and which his patient Donna Leonora de Casafonda had given him in charge to deliver as directed—“Well, well,” cried he, “let it pass; there can be no mystery in this harmless scrawl; a letter of advice to some friend or relation. I'll not break

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“break the seal; let the fathers read it, if they
“like, ’twill prove the truth of my deposition, and
“help out my excuse for the hurry of my errand,
“and the unfortunate adventure of my damned
“refractory mule.”—And now no sooner had the
recollection of the wayward mule crossed the brain
of poor Nicolas Pedrosa, than he began to blast
her at a furious rate—“The scratches and the scab
“to boot confound thy scurvy hide,” quoth he,
“thou ais-begotten bastard, whom Noah never let
“into his ark! The vengeance take thee for an un-
“created barren beast of promiscuous generation!
“What devil’s crotchet got into thy capricious
“noddie, that thou should’st fall in love with that
“Nazaritish bell, and run bellowing like Lucifer
“into the midst of those barefooted vermin, who
“are more malicious and more greedy than the lo-
“custs of Egypt? Oh! that I had the art of Simon
“Magus, to conjure you into this dungeon in my
“stead; but I warrant thou art chewing thy bar-
“ley straw without any pity for thy wretched mas-
“ter, whom thy jade’s tricks have delivered bodi-
“ly to the tormentors, to be sport for these uncir-
“cumcised sons of Dagon.” And now the cell
door opened, when a savage figure entered, carry-
ing a huge parcel of clanking fetters, with a col-
lar of iron, which he put round the neck of poor
Pedrosa, telling him with a truly diabolical grin,
whilst he was riveting it on, that it was a proper
cravat for the throat of a blasphemer.—“Jesu Ma-
ria,” quoth Pedrosa, “is all this fallen upon me
“for only cudgelling a restive mule!” “Aye,” cri-
ed the demon, “and this is only a taste of what is
“to come,” at the same time slipping his pincers
from the screw he was forcing to the head, he
caught a piece of flesh in the forceps, and wrench-
ed it out of his cheek, laughing at poor Nicolas,
whilst

whilst he roared aloud with the pain, telling him it was a just reward for the torture he had put him to a while ago, when he tugged at a tooth, till he broke it in his jaw. "Ah, for the love of heaven," cried Pedrosa, have more pity on me; for the sake of St. Nicolas de Tolentino, my holy patron, be not so unmerciful to a poor barber-surgeon, and I will shave your worship's beard for nothing as long as I have life." One of the messengers of the auditory came in, and bade the fellow strike off the prisoner's fetters, for that the holy fathers were in council, and demanded him for examination. "This is something extraordinary," quoth the tormentor, "I should not have expected it this twelvemonth to come." Pedrosa's fetters were struck off; some brandy was applied to staunch the bleeding of his cheeks; his hands and face were washed, and a short jacket of coarse ticking thrown over him, and the messenger with an assistant taking him each under an arm, led him into a spacious chamber, where, at the head of a long table sat his excellency the Inquisidor General with six of his assessors, three on each side the chair of state. The alguazil mayor, a secretary and two notaries with other officers of the holy council, were attending in their places.

The prisoner was placed behind a bar at the foot of the table between the messengers who brought him in, and having made his obeisance to the awful presence in the most supplicating manner, he was called upon, according to the usual form of questions, by one of the junior judges to declare his name, parentage, profession, age, place of abode, and to answer various interrogatories of the like trifling nature. His excellency the Inquisidor General now opened his reverend lips, and in a solemn tone of voice, that penetrated to the heart of the

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the poor trembling prisoner, interrogated him as follows—

“Nicolas Pedrosa, we have listened to the account you give of yourself, your business and connections, now tell us for what offence or offences, you are here standing a prisoner before us: Examine your own heart and speak the truth from your conscience, without prevarication or disguise.” “May it please your excellency,” replied Pedrosa, “with all due submission to your holiness and this reverend assembly, my most equitable judges, I conceive I stand here before you for no worse a crime, than that of cudgelling a refractory mule; an animal so restive in its nature, (under correction of your holiness be it spoken) that though I were blest with the forbearance of holy Job, (for like him too I am married, and my patience hath been exercised by a wife,) yet could I not forbear to smite my beast for her obstinacy, and the rather because I was summoned in the way of my profession, as I have already made known to your most merciful ears, upon a certain crying occasion, which would not admit of a moment’s delay.”

“Recollect yourself, Nicolas,” said his excellency the Inquisitor General, “was there nothing else you did, save smiting your beast?”

“I take saint Nicolas de Tolentino to witness,” replied he, “that I know of no other crime for which I can be responsible at this righteous tribunal, save smiting my unruly beast.”

“Take notice bretheren,” exclaimed the Inquisitor, “this unholy wretch holds trampling over friars to be no crime.”

“Pardon me, holy father,” replied Nicolas, “I hold it for the worst of crimes, and therefore willingly surrender my refractory mule to be dealt

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“dealt with as you see fit, and if you impale her
“alive it will not be more than she deserves.”

“Your wits are too nimble, Nicolas,” cried the
judge; “have a care they do not run away with
“your discretion: recollect the blasphemies you
“uttered in the hearing of those pious people.”

“I humbly pray your excellency,” answered the
prisoner, “to recollect that anger is a short mad-
“ness, and I hope allowances will be made by
“your holy council for words spoke in haste to a
“rebellious mule: The prophet Balaam was thrown
“off his guard with a simple ass, and what is an
“ass compared to a mule? If your excellency had
“seen the lovely creature that was screaming in a-
“gony till I came to her relief, and how fine a boy
“I ushered into the world, which would have been
“lost but for my assistance, I am sure I should not
“be condemned for a few hasty words spoken in
“passion.”

“Sirrah!” cried one of the puisny judges, “ref-
“pect the decency of the court.”

“Produce the contents of this fellow’s pockets
“before the court,” said the president, “lay them
“on the table.”

“Monster,” resumed the afore said puisny judge
taking up the forceps, “what is the use of this
“diabolical machine?”

“Please your reverence,” replied Pedrosa, “*ap-
“tum est ad extrahendos foetus.*”—“Unnatural
“wretch,” again exclaimed the judge, “you have
“murdered the mother.”

“The Mother of God forbid,” exclaimed Pe-
drosa, “I believe I have a proof in my pocket, that
“will acquit me of that charge:” and so saying,
he tendered the letter we have before made men-
tion of: The secretary took it, and by command
of the court read as follows;

Senor

Senor Don Manuel de Herrera,

When this letter, which I send by Nicolas Pedrosa, shall reach your hands, you shall know that I am safely delivered of a lovely boy after a dangerous labour, in consideration of which, I pray you to pay to the said Nicolas Pedrosa the sum of twenty gold pistoles, which sum his excellency——

“Hold”, cries the inquisidor general, starting hastily from his seat, and snatching away the letter, “there is more in this than meets the eye: break up the court; I must take an examination of this prisoner in private.”

As soon as the room was cleared, the inquisidor general beckoning to the prisoner to follow him, retired into a private closet, where throwing himself carelessly into an arm chair, he turned a gracious countenance upon the poor affrighted accoucheur, and bidding him sit down upon a low stool by his side, thus accosted him: “Take heart, senior Pedrosa, your imprisonment is not likely to be very tedious, for I have a commission you must execute without loss of time: you have too much consideration for yourself to betray a trust, the violation of which must involve you in inevitable ruin, and can in no degree attain my character, which is far enough beyond the reach of malice; be attentive, therefore to my orders; execute them punctually, and keep my secret as you tender your own life: dost thou know the name and condition of the lady whom thou hast delivered?” Nicolas assured him he did not, and his excellency proceeded as follows:——“Then I tell thee, Nicolas, it is the illustrious Donna Leonora de Casafonda; her husband is the president of Quito, and daily expected with the next arrivals from the South-Seas; now, though measures have been taken for detaining him at the
“port,

“ port, wherever he shall land, till he shall receive
 “ further orders, yet you must be sensible. Donna
 “ Leonora’s situation is somewhat delicate: it will
 “ be your business to take the speediest measures
 “ for her recovery; but as it seems she has had a
 “ dangerous and painful labour, this may be a
 “ work of more time than could be wished, unless
 “ some medicines more efficacious than common
 “ are administred: Art thou acquainted with any
 “ such, friend Nicolas?”—“ So please your excel-
 “ lency,” quoth Nicolas, “ my processes have been
 “ tolerably successful; I have bandages and catap-
 “ lasms, with oils and conserves; that I have no
 “ cause to complain of; they will restore nature to
 “ its proper state in all decent time.”—“ Thou
 “ talkest like a fool, friend Nicolas,” said the In-
 “ quisidor, interrupting him; “ What tellest thou me
 “ of thy swathings and swaddlings? quick work
 “ must be wrought by quick medicines: Hast thou
 “ none such in thy botica? I’ll answer for it thou
 “ hast not; therefore look you, firrah, here is a
 “ little vial compounded by a famous chymist; see
 “ that you mix it in the next apozem you admini-
 “ ster to Donna Leonora; it is the most capital se-
 “ dative in nature; give her the whole of it, and
 “ let her husband return when he will, depend up-
 “ on it, he will make no discoveries from her.”—
 “ Humph!” quoth Nicolas within himself, “ Well
 “ said Inquisidor!” He took the phial with all pos-
 “ sible respect, and was not wanting in professions of
 “ the most inviolable fidelity and secrecy.—“ No
 “ more words, friend Nicolas,” quoth the Inqui-
 “ sidor, “ upon that score; I do not believe thee one
 “ jot the more for all thy promises, my depend-
 “ ence is on thy fears, and not thy faith; I fancy
 “ thou hast seen enough of this place not to be
 “ willing to return to it once for all.”—Having so
 said

said, he rang a bell, and ordered Nicolas to be forthwith liberated, bidding the messenger return his clothes instantly to him with all that belonged to him, and having slipped a purse into his hand well filled with doubloons, he bade him be gone about his business, and not see his face again till he had executed his commands.

Nicolas bolted out of the porch without taking leave of the altar, and never checked his speed till he found himself fairly housed under shelter of his own beloved brass basin.—“Aha!” quoth Nicolas, my lord inquisitor, I see the king is not likely to gain a subject more by your intrigues: A pretty job you have set me about; and so, when I have put the poor lady to rest with your damnable sedative, my tongue must be stopt next to prevent its babbling; But I’ll shew you I was not born in Andalusia for nothing.” Nicolas now opened a secret drawer, and took out a few pieces of money, which in fact was his whole stock of cash in the world; he loaded and primed his pistols, and carefully lodged them in the housers of his saddle, he buckled to his side his trusty spada, and hastened to caparison his mule. “Ah, thou imp of the old one,” quoth he as he entered the stable, “art not ashamed to look me in the face? But come, hussy, thou owest me a good turn methinks, stand by me this once, and be friends for ever! thou art in good case, and if thou wilt put thy best foot foremost, like a faithful beast, thou shalt not want for barley by the way.” The bargain was soon struck between Nicolas and his mule, he mounted her in the happy moment and pointing his course towards the bridge of Toledo, which proudly strides with half a dozen lofty arches over a stream scarce three feet wide, he found himself as compleatly in a desert in half a mile’s riding,

riding, as if he had been dropt in the center of Arabia petræa. As Nicolas's journey was not a tour of-curiosity, he did not amuse himself with a peep at Toledo, or Talavera, or even Merida by the way; for the same reason he took a *circumbendibus* round the frontier town of Badajoz; and crossing a little brook refreshed his mule with the last draught of Spanish water, and instantly congratulated himself upon entering the territory of Portugal. "Brava!" quoth he, patting the neck of his mule, "thou shalt have a supper this night of the best sieve meat Estremadura can furnish: We are now in a country where the scattered flock of Israel fold thick and fare well." He now began to chaunt the song of Solomon, and gently ambled on in the joy of his heart.

When Nicolas at length reached the city of Lisbon, he hugged himself in his good fortune; still he recollected that the inquisition has long arms, and he was yet in a place of no perfect security. Our adventurer had in early life acted as assistant surgeon in a Spanish frigate bound to Buenos Ayres, and being captured by a British man of war and carried into Jamaica, had very quietly passed some years in that place as journeyman apothecary, in which time he had acquired a tolerable acquaintance with the English language: no sooner then did he discover the British ensign flying on the poop of an English frigate then lying in the Tagus than he eagerly caught the opportunity of paying a visit to the surgeon, and finding he was in want of a mate, offered himself, and was entered in that capacity for a cruize against the French and Spaniards, with whom Great Britain was then at war. In this secure asylum Nicolas enjoyed the first happy moments he had experienced for a long time past, and being a lively good-humoured little fellow,

low,

low, and one that touched the guitar, and sung seguidillas with a tolerable grace, he soon recommended himself to his shipmates, and grew in favour with every body on board, from the captain to the cook's mate.

When they were out upon their cruize, hovering on the Spanish coast, it occurred to Nicolas, that the Inquisidor General at Madrid had told him of the expected arrival of the President of Quito; and having imparted this to one of the lieutenants, he reported it to the captain, and, as the intelligence seemed of importance, he availed himself of it, by hawling into the tract of the homeward bound galleons, and great was the joy, when at the break of the morning, the man at the mast-head announced a square-rigged vessel in view. The ardour of a chase now set all hands to work, and a few hours brought them near enough to discern that she was a Spanish frigate, and seemingly from a long voyage. Little Pedrofa, as alert as the rest, stripped himself for his work, and repaired to his post in the cock-pit, whilst the thunder of the guns rolled incessantly overhead: three cheers from the whole crew at length announced the moment of victory, and a few more minutes ascertained the good news that the prize was a frigate richly laden from the South Seas with the Governor of Quito and his suite on board.

Pedrofa was now called upon deck, and sent on board the prize, as interpreter to the first lieutenant, who was to take possession of her. He found every thing in confusion, a deck covered with the slain, and the whole crew in consternation at an event they were in no degree prepared for, not having received any intimation of a war. He found the officers in general, and the passengers without exception, under the most horrid impressions of the
English

English, and expecting to be plundered, and perhaps butchered, without mercy. Don Manuel de Cafafonda, the Governor, whose countenance bespoke a constitution far gone in a decline, had thrown himself on a sofa in the last state of despair, and given way to an effusion of tears; when the lieutenant entered the cabin, he rose trembling from his couch, and with the most supplicating action presented to him his sword, and with it a casket, which he carried in his other hand. As he tendered these spoils to his conqueror, whether thro' weakness, or of his own will, he made a motion of bending his knee: the generous Briton shocked at the unmanly overture, caught him suddenly with both hands, and turning to Pedrosa, said aloud, —“ Convince this gentleman he has fallen into the hands of an honourable enemy.” —“ Is it possible!” cried Don Manuel and lifting up his streaming eyes to the countenance of the British officer, saw humanity, valour, and generous pity, so strongly characterized in his youthful features, that the conviction was irresistible. “ Will he not accept my sword?” cried the Spaniard. “ He desires you to wear it, till he has the honour of presenting you to his captain.” —“ Ah! then he has a captain,” exclaimed Manuel; “ his superior will be of another way of thinking; tell him, this casket contains my jewels; they are valuable; let him present them as a lawful prize, which will enrich the captor; his superior will not hesitate to take them from me” —“ If they are your Excellency's private property,” replied Pedrosa, “ I am ordered to assure you, that if your ship was loaded with jewels, no British officer in the service of his king will take them at your hands; the ship and effects of his Catholic Majesty are the only prize of the captors; the personals of the passengers

gers are inviolate."——"Generous nation!" exclaimed Don Manuel, "how greatly have I wronged thee!"——The boats of the British frigate now came along-side, and part of the crew were shifted out of the prize, taking their trunks and clothes along with them, in which they were very cordially assisted by their conquerors. The barge soon after came a-board, with an officer in the stern-sheets, and the crew in their white shirts and velvet caps, to escort the governor and the ship's captain on board the frigate, which lay with her sails to the mast awaiting their arrival: the accommodation ladder was slung over the side, and manned for the prisoners, who were received on the gangway by the second lieutenant, whilst perfect silence, and the strictest discipline reigned in the ship, where all were under the decks, and no inquisitive curious eyes were suffered to wound the feelings of the conquered, even with a glance. In the door of his cabin stood the captain, who received them with that modest complaisance, which does not revolt the unfortunate by an overstrained politeness; he was a man of high birth and elegant manners, with a heart as benevolent as it was brave: Such an address, set off with a person finely formed, and perfectly engaging, could not fail to impress the prisoners with the most favourable ideas, and as Don Manuel spoke French fluently, he could converse with the British captain without the help of an interpreter. As he expressed an impatient desire of being admitted to his parole, that he might revisit friends and connections, from which he had been long separated, he was overjoyed to hear that the English ship would carry her prize into Lisbon; and that he would there be set on shore, and permitted to make the best of his way from thence to Madrid. He talked of his wife
with

with all the ardour of the most impassioned lover, and apologized for his tears by imputing them to the agony of his mind and the infirmity of his health, under the dread of being longer separated from an object so dear to his heart, and on whom he doated with the fondest affection. The generous captor indulged him in these conversations, and, being a husband himself, knew how to allow for all the tenderness of his sensations. "Ah, Sir," cried Don Manuel, "would to heaven it were in my power to have the honour of presenting my beloved Leonora to you on our landing at Lisbon—Perhaps," added he, turning to Pedrosa, who at that moment entered the cabin, "this gentleman, whom I take to be a Spaniard, may have heard the name of Donna Leonora de Cafafonda: if he has been at Madrid, it is possible he may have seen her; should that be the case, he can testify to her external charms; I alone can witness to the exquisite perfection of her mind."—"Senor Don Manuel," replied Pedrosa, "I have seen Donna Leonora, and your Excellency is warranted in all you can say in her praise; she is of incomparable beauty." These words threw the uxorious Spaniard into raptures; his eyes sparkled with delight; the blood rushed into his imaciated cheeks, and every feature glowed with unutterable joy; he pressed Pedrosa with a variety of rapid enquiries, all which he evaded by pleading ignorance, saying, that he had only had a casual glance of her as she passed along the Prado. The embarrassment, however, which accompanied these answers did not escape the English Captain, who shortly after, drawing Pedrosa aside into the surgeon's cabin, was by him made acquainted with the melancholy situation of that unfortunate lady, and every particular of the story as before related; nay, the very

vial

vial was produced with its contents, as put into the hands of Pedrosa by the Inquisidor.

“Can there be such villainy in man?” cried the British captain, when Pedrosa had concluded his detail; “Alas! my heart bleeds for this unhappy husband: assuredly that monster has destroyed Leonora; as for thee, Pedrosa, whilst the British flag flies over thy head, neither Spain, nor Portugal, nor Inquisitors nor devils, shall annoy thee under its protection: but if thou ever venturest over the side of this ship, and rashly settest one foot upon Catholic soil, when we arrive at Lisbon, thou art a lost man.”——“I were worse than a madman,” replied Nicolas, should I attempt it.”——“Keep close in this asylum, then,” resumed the captain, “and fear nothing; had it been our fate to have been captured by the Spaniards, what would have become of thee?”——“In the worst of extremities,” replied Nicolas, “I should have applied to the inquisidor’s vial; but I confess I have no fears of that sort; a ship so commanded and so manned, is in little danger of being carried into a Spanish port.”——“I hope not,” said the captain; “and I promise thee thou shalt take thy chance in her, so long as she is afloat under my command; and if we live to conduct her to England, thou shalt have thy proper share of prize-money, which if the galleon break up according to her entries, will be something towards enabling thee to shift; and if thou art as diligent in thy duty as I am persuaded thou wilt be, whilst I live thou shalt never want a seaman’s friend.”——At these cheering words, little Nicolas threw himself at the feet of his generous preserver, and with streaming eyes poured out his thanks from a heart animated with joy and gratitude.——The captain raising him by
the

the hand, forbade him, as he prized his friendship, ever to address him in that posture any more; “Thank me if you will,” added he, “but thank me as one man should another; let no knees bend in this ship but to the name of God.—But now,” continued he, “let us turn our thoughts to the situation of our unhappy Casafonda, we are now drawing near to Lisbon, where he will look to be liberated on his parole.”—“By no means let him venture into Spain,” said Pedrosa; “I am well assured there are orders to arrest him in every port or frontier town, where he may present himself.”—“I can well believe it,” replied the captain; “his piteous case will require further deliberation; in the mean time let nothing transpire on your part and keep yourself out of his sight as carefully as you can.”—This said, the captain left the cabin, and both parties repaired to their several occupations.

As soon as the frigate and her prize cast anchor in the Tagus, Don Manuel de Casafonda impatiently reminded our captain of his promised parole. The painful moment was now come, when an explanation of some sort became unavoidable. The generous Englishman, with a countenance expressive of the tenderest pity, took the Spaniard’s hand in his, and seating him on a couch beside him, ordered the centinel to keep the cabin private, and delivered himself as follows.—

“Senor don Manuel, I must now impart to you an anxiety which I laboured under on your account—I have strong reasons to suspect you have enemies in your own country, who are upon the watch to arrest you on your landing; when I have told you this, I expect you will repose such trust in my honour and the sincerity of my regard for you, as not to demand a further explanation
“ nation

“nation of the particulars on which my intelligence is founded.” “Heaven and Earth!” cried the astonished Spaniard, “who can be those enemies I have to fear, and what can I have done to deserve them?”—“So far I will open myself to you,” answered the captain, “as to point out the principal to you, the inquisidor general.”—“The best friend I have in Spain,” exclaimed the governor; “my sworn protector, the patron of my fortune: He my enemy! impossible.”—“Well, Sir,” replied the captain, “if my advice does not meet belief, I must so far exert my authority for your sake, as to make this ship your prison, till I have waited on our minister at Lisbon, and made the inquiries necessary for your safety: suspend your judgment upon the seeming harshness of this measure till I return to you again:” and at the same time rising from his seat, he gave orders for the barge, and leaving strict injunctions with the first lieutenant not to allow of the governor’s quitting the frigate, he put off for the shore, and left the melancholy Spaniard buried in profound and silent meditation.

The emissaries of the inquisition having at last traced Pedrosa to Lisbon, and there gained intelligence of his having entered on board the frigate, our captain had no sooner turned into the porch of the hotel at Buenos-Ayres, than he was accosted by a messenger of state with a requisition from the prime minister’s office for the surrender of one Nicolas Pedrosa, a subject of Spain, and a criminal, who had escaped out of the prison of the Inquisition in Madrid, where he stood charged of high crimes and misdemeanors.—As soon as this requisition was explained to our worthy captain, without condescending to a word in reply he called for pen and ink, and writing a short order to the

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the officer commanding on board, instantly dispatched the midshipman, who attended him, to the barge with directions to make the best of his way back to the frigate and deliver it to the lieutenant: Then turning to the messenger, he said to him in a resolute tone—"That Spaniard is now borne on my books, and before you shall take him out of the service of my King, you must sink his ship."—Not waiting for a reply he immediately proceeded, without stop, to the house of the British Minister at the further end of the city: Here he found Pedrofa's intelligence, with regard to the Governor of Quito, expressly verified, for the order had come down even to Lisbon, upon the chance of the Spanish frigate's taking shelter in that port. To this Minister he related the horrid tale, which Pedrofa had delivered to him, and with his concurrence it was determined to forward letters into Spain, which Don Manuel should be advised to write to his lady and friends at Madrid and to wait their answer before any further discoveries were imparted to him respecting the blacker circumstances of the case: in the meantime, it was resolved to keep the prisoner safe in his asylum.

The generous captain lost no time in returning to his frigate, where he immediately imparted to Don Manuel the intelligence he had obtained at the British Minister's—"This indeed," cried the afflicted Spaniard, "is a stroke I was in no respect prepared for; I had fondly persuaded myself there was not in the whole empire of Spain a more friendly heart than that of the Inquisitor's; to my beloved Leonora he had ever shewn the tenderness of a paternal affection from her very childhood; by him our hands were joined; his lips pronounced the nuptial benediction, and
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“ through his favour I was promoted to my go-
 “ vernment: Grant, Heaven, no misfortune hath
 “ befallen my Leonora! surely she cannot have of-
 “ fended him and forfeited his favour.” “ As I
 “ know him not,” replied the captain, “ I can
 “ form no judgment of his motives, but this I
 “ know, that if a man’s heart is capable of cruel-
 “ ty, the fittest school to learn it in, must be the
 “ Inquisition.” The proposal was now suggested
 of sending letters into Spain, and the Governor
 retired to his desk for the purpose of writing them;
 in the afternoon of the same day the Minister paid
 a visit to the Captain, and receiving a packet from
 the hands of Don Manuel, promised to get it for-
 warded by a safe conveyance according to direction.

In due course of time this fatal letter from Leo-
 nora opened all the horrible transaction to the
 wretched husband:—

“ The guilty hand of an expiring wife, under
 “ the agonizing operation of a mortal poison, tra-
 “ ces these few trembling lines to an injured
 “ wretched husband. If thou hast any pity for
 “ my parting spirit, fly the ruin that awaits thee
 “ and avoid this scene of villainy and horror.
 “ When I tell thee I have born a child to the mon-
 “ ster, whose poison runs in my veins, thou wilt
 “ abhor thy faithless Leonora; had I strength to
 “ relate to thee the subtle machinations, which be-
 “ trayed me to disgrace, thou would’st pity and
 “ perhaps forgive me. Oh agony! can I write his
 “ name?—The Inquisitor is my murderer—My
 “ pen falls from my hand—Farewel for ever.”

Had a shot passed through the heart of Don
 Manuel, it could not more effectually have stopt
 its motions, than the perusal of this fatal writing.
 He dropped lifeless on the couch, and but for the
 care and assistance of the Captain and Pedrosa in
 that

that posture he had probably expired. Grief like his will not to be described by words, for to words it gave no utterance; 'twas suffocating silent woe.

Let us drop the curtain over this melancholy pause in our narration, and attend upon the mournful widower now landing upon English ground, and conveyed by his humane and generous preserver to the house of a noble Earl, the father of our amiable captain, and a man by his virtues still more conspicuous than by his rank. Here amidst the gentle sollicitudes of a benevolent family, in one of the most enchanting spots on earth, in a climate most salubrious and restorative to a constitution exhausted by heat and a heart near broken with sorrow, the reviving spirits of the unfortunate Don Manuel gave the first symptoms of a possible recovery. At the period of a few tranquilizing weeks here passed in the bosom of humanity, letters came to hand from the British Minister at Lisbon, in answer to a memorial, that I should have stated to have been drawn up by the friendly captain before his departure from that port, with a detail of facts deposed and sworn to by Nicolas Pedrosa, which memorial, with the documents attached to it, was forwarded to the Spanish Court by special express from the Portuguese premier. By these letters it appeared that the high dignity of the person impeached by this statement of facts had not been sufficient to screen him from a very serious and complete investigation; in the course of which facts had been so clearly brought home to him by the confession of his several agents, and the testimony of the deceased Leonora's attendants, together with her own written declarations, whilst the poison was in operation, that though no public sentence had been executed upon the criminal, it was generally understood he was either no longer

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er in existence, or in a situation never to be heard of any more, till roused by the awakening trumpet he shall be summoned to his tremendous last account. As for the unhappy widower, it was fully signified to him from authority, that his return to Spain, whether upon exchange or parole, would be no longer opposed, nor had he any thing to apprehend on the part of government, when he should there arrive. The same was signified in fewer words to the exculpated Pedrosa.

Whether Don Manuel de Casafonda will in time to come avail himself of these overtures time alone can prove: As for little Nicolas, whose prize money has set him up in a comfortable little shop in Duke's place, where he breathes the veins and cleanses the bowels of his Israelitish brethren in a land of freedom and toleration, his merry heart is at rest, save only when with fire in his eyes and vengeance on his tongue, he anathematizes the Inquisition, and struts into the synagogue every sabbath with as bold a step and as erect a look, as if he was himself High Priest of the Temple going to perform sacrifice upon the re-assembling of the scattered tribes.

F I N I S.

G L A S G O W,

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