Gatherings from Spain

Ford Richard
Title: Gatherings from Spain

Author: Ford Richard

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GATHERINGS FROM SPAIN.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF THE HANDBOOK OF SPAIN;

CHIEFLY SELECTED FROM THAT WORK, WITH

MUCH NEW MATTER.

NEW EDITION.

LONDON:

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1851.
TO THE

HONOURABLE MRS. FORD,

These pages, which she has been so good as to peruse and approve of, are dedicated, in the hopes that other fair readers may follow her example,

By her very affectionate

Husband and Servant,

RICHARD FORD.
PREFACE.

Many ladies, some of whom even contemplate a visit to Spain, having condescended to signify to the publisher their regrets, that the Handbook was printed in a form, which rendered its perusal irksome, and also to express a wish that the type had been larger, the Author, to whom this distinguished compliment was communicated, has hastened to submit to their indulgence a few extracts and selections, which may throw some light on the character of a country and people, always of the highest interest, and particularly so at this moment, when their independence is once more threatened by a crafty and aggressive neighbour.

In preparing these compilations for the press much new matter has been added, to supply the place of portions omitted; for, in order to lighten the narrative, the Author has removed much lumber of learning, and has not scrupled occasionally to throw Strabo, and even Saint Isidore himself, overboard. Progress is the order of the day in Spain, and its advance is the more rapid, as she was so much in arrear of other nations. Transition is the present condition of the country, where yesterday is effaced by to-morrow. There the relentless march of European intellect is crushing many a native wild flower, which, having no value save colour and sweetness, must be rooted up before cotton-mills are con-
structed and bread stuffs substituted; many a trait of nationality in manners and costume is already effaced; monks are gone, and mantillas are going, alas! going.

In the changes that have recently taken place, many descriptions of ways and things now presented to the public will soon become almost matters of history and antiquarian interest. The passages here reprinted will be omitted in the forthcoming new edition of the Handbook, to which these pages may form a companion; but their chief object has been to offer a few hours' amusement, and may be of instruction, to those who remain at home; and should the humble attempt meet with the approbation of fair readers, the author will bear, with more than Spanish resignation, whatever animadversions bearded critics may be pleased to inflict on this or on the other side of the water.
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