MISCELLANY.

Intry-Mintry.

Willie and Bess, Georgie and May—
Once, as these children were hard at play,
An old man, hoary and tottering, came
And watched them playing their pretty game.
He seemed to wonder, while standing there,
What the meaning thereof could be—
Ahs, but the old man yearned to share
Of the little children's innocent glee
As they circled around with laugh and shout
And told this rhyme at counting out:
"Intry-mintry, cutrey corn,
Apple seed and apple thorn;
Wire, brier, limber, lock,
Twelve geese in a flock;
Some flew east, some flew west,
Some flew over the cuckoo's nest:"

Willie and Bess, Georgie and May—
Ah, the mirth of that summer day!
'Twas Father Time who had come to share
The innocent joy of those children there;
He learned betimes the game they played
And into their sports with them went he—
How could the children have been afraid,
Since little they recked who he might be,
They laughed to hear old Father Time
Mumbling that curious nonsense rhyme
Of "Intry-mintry, cutrey corn,
Apple seed and apple thorn;
Wire, brier, limber, lock,
Twelve geese in a flock;
Some flew east, some flew west,
Some flew over the cuckoo's nest:"

Willie and Bess, Georgie and May,
And the joy of summer—where are they?
The grim old man still standeth near
Crooning the song of a far-off year;
And into the winter I come alone,
Cheered by that mournful requiem,
Soothed by the dolorous monotone
That shall count me off as it counted them—
The solemn voice of old Father Time
Chanting the homely nursery rhyme
He learned of the children a summer morn
When, with "apple seed and apple thorn,"
Life was full of the dulcet cheer
That bringeth the grace of heaven anear—
The sound of the little ones hard at play—
Willie and Bessie, Georgie and May.

Eugene Field.

AN ESCAPADE IN CORDOVA.

It was plainly evident that he belonged to the better class of Spaniards and not to "the people." You could see that in his finely chiseled features, and in the way his clothes, though slightly the worse for wear, fitted his graceful, slender figure. You saw it also in his winning mouth, full of white teeth, shaded by a dark mustache with just curl enough to suggest the Don Juan—ready for fan, slipper or blade. And yet with all this there was a certain air of sadness about him that enlisted your sympathy at sight.

The swarthy landlady who peered through the lattice blinds had never seen him before, and expressed, rather pointedly, I thought, the hope that she never would again. The picador who during the bull fights occupied a room on the floor above mine charged down upon him very much as he would on a wounded bull, and returned to me, waiting behind the half-open door, with a shrug of his broad shoulders, a lifting of his eyebrows, and the single word, "Nada!" ("Good-for-nothing").

Still the silent young man continued to occupy my sidewalk, to bow with his hat to the ground, and to follow me with his eyes around the corner of the narrow street that led to the Moorish mosque.

Then a break occurred in the daily program. I had forgotten my brush case, and ran back into the house, leaving my white umbrella and trap on the doorstep. When I emerged again into the blinding sunlight, they had disappeared. I instinctively sought out my silent young man. He was standing in his customary place, hat off, my trap in one hand, the umbrella under his arm.

"My friend, you have my trap."

"Yes, señor."

"Why?"

"It is too heavy for the painter. Let me carry it."

His voice was so gentle, his face so honest, his manner so courteous, his desire to serve me so apparent, that I surrendered the brush case at once; had it been filled with doubloons I would have done the same.

"What is your name?"

"Manuel."

"Why are you always here?"

"To wait upon you."

"For what?"

"To keep from starving."

"Have you had no breakfast?"

"No; nor supper."

Below the mosque there runs a crooked street lined with balconies hooded with awnings shading tropical plants, and now and then a pretty senorita. At the end of this street is an arcade flanking the old bull ring. Through one of its arches you enter the best café in Cordova.

To see a hungry man eat has always been to me one of the most delightful of all the expositions of the laws of want and supply, to assist in equalizing these laws most exquisite of pleasures. I exhausted my resources on Manuel.

He had a cup of coffee as big as a soup bowl. He had an omelet crammed full of garlic. He had a pile of waffles smothered in sugar. He had chicken livers broiled in peppers and little round radishes, and, last of all, a flagon of San Vicente. All these he ate and drank with the air and manners of a gentleman, smoking a cigarette through the entire repast, as is the custom, and talking to me of his life—his people at home, his year at the military school at Toledo, of the unfortunate scrape which ended in his dismissal, of the anger of his father, of the beauty and devotion of the girl who caused it all, and of his coming to Cordova to be near her. Who does not recollect his own shortcomings in the hot, foolish days of his youth? I could see it all; hardly twenty, straight as an arrow, lithe as a whip, eyes like coals of fire, cheeks like a rose, and his veins packed full of blood at fever heat.

He had watched me painting in the plaza the week before and had followed me to my lodgings, hoping I would employ him to carry my trap, but had been too proud or too timid to ask for it until chance threw it in his way. He would be glad to carry it now all day to pay for his breakfast.

Manuel was a prize. He would supply the only thing I lacked in this most charming of Spanish cities—a boon companion with nothing to do. I made a bargain with him on the spot—so many pesetas per week, with three meals a day, he to occupy the other side of the table.

It was delightful to see him when the terms were concluded. His face lighted up and his big brown eyes danced. Now he could hold his head up. His father perhaps was right, but what could he do? Florita was so lovely! Some day I should see her; but not now; I would not understand. His father by and by would relent and send for him. Then he would take my hand and place it in his father's and say, "Here is the good painter who saved my life and Florita's."

We ransacked Cordova from end to end: into the mosque at twilight, sitting in the shadows of the forest of marble columns stretching away on every side; up into the tower where the pigeons roost; across the old Roman bridge; along the dusty highways on the outskirts of the old city, crowded with market people; through the streets at night, listening to the tinkling of guitars and watching the muffled figures under the balconies, and the half-opened lattices with the little hands waving handkerchiefs or dropping roses; everywhere and anywhere; in every nook and crack and cranny of this once famous home of the hidalgo, the cavalier, and the inamorata with the eyes of a gazelle and the heart of fire.

One subject, however, by common silent consent was tabooed—the whereabouts of the sweetheart who had made him an exile. I knew that she was young, graceful as a doe, seductive as an houri, and beautiful beyond compare. I knew that she loved Manuel wildly, that he idolized her, and would starve rather than desert her. I knew also that she lived within a stone's throw of the café; for Manuel would leave me at breakfast to kiss her good morning, and at mid-day to kiss her again, and at sundown to kiss her once more good night, and would return each time within ten minutes. I knew also, of course, that her name was Florita. All this the young fellow told me over and over again, with his face flushed and his eyes aflame; but I knew nothing more.

One night of each week was always Manuel's. Any part of any other night, or all of it, for that matter, was mine, and he was at my service for sight-seeing or prowling; but Saturday was Florita's.

Except on festival nights, Saturday, of all nights in the week, is the gayest in all the Spanish cities, for then the cafés are in full blast, filled not only with the city people, but with the country folk who come to market on that day. These cafés have raised platforms, are edged by a row of footlights, and hold half a dozen chairs for as many male and female dancers. Here you see on gala nights the most bewitching of all the sights of Spain—the Spanish dances.

On this particular Saturday night Manuel had taken himself off as usual, and I was left to follow my own free will alone. So I strolled into the garden of the mosque, sat me down on one of the stone seats under the orange trees, and watched the women fill their water jars at the old Moorish well, listening meanwhile to the chatter of their gossip. When it grew quite dark I passed out through the Puerta del Perdon, turned to the right and wandered on aimlessly down a narrow street leading to the river. Soon I heard the click of castanets and the thrum of guitars; there was a dance somewhere. Pushing aside a swinging door, I entered a small café. The room was low-ceiled, apparently without windows, and the air stifling with cigarettes. The customary stage occupied one corner of the interior, which was crowded to the very walls with water carriers, cargadors, gipsies, hucksters, and the young bloods of the town. They were cheering wildly a black-eyed señorita who had just finished her dance, and who was again at the footlights bowing her acknowledgments. She made a pretty picture in her short yellow skirts trimmed with black, her high comb and her black lace mantilla, her bare arms waving gracefully. I found a seat near the door, called for a bottle of San Vicente, and lighted a cigarette. At the adjoining table sat a group of young fellows drinking Aguardiente. It is a villainous liquor, and more than a thimbleful sets a man's brain on fire. They were measuring theirs in tumblers. When at a second recall the girl again refused to dance, the manager explaining that she was very tired, the young caballeros began pounding the table with their glasses, shouting out in angry tones, "La señorita! la señorita!" When for the third time the tired girl advanced to the platform's edge and bowed her regrets, one of the group sprang forward, leaped upon a table, and with an oath dashed the contents of his glass over her bare shoulders. A frightened shriek cut the air, and the next instant a heavy carafe filled with wine grazed my head, struck the ruffian full in the face and tumbled him headlong to the floor.

Instantly the place was in an uproar. Half a dozen men sprang past me, one waving an ugly knife, made a rush for the table in my rear, and threw themselves on a young fellow who had thrown the carafe and who now stood with his back to me swinging its mate over his head like a flail. Then came a crash, another Spaniard sprawled on the floor, and a flying figure dashed past and bounded over the footlights. As he plunged through the curtain in the rear I caught sight of his face. It was Manuel!

Grasping the situation, I sprang through the door reaching the sidewalk just as the police forced their way past me into the scattering throng. A few sharp orders, a crash of breaking glass, a rattling of carbines on the floor, and the tumult was over.

Humiliated at Manuel's deception, and yet anxious for his safety, I hid myself in the shadow near a street lamp with my eye on the swinging door, and waited. The first man thrust out was the ruffian who had emptied his glass over the dancer. His arms were pinioned behind his back, his head still bloody from the effects of Manuel's carafe. Then came a villainous-looking cutthroat with a gash across his cheek, followed by three others, one of whom was the manager.

The mob surrounded the group, the prisoners in front. I crouched close until they disappeared in a body up the street, then crossed over and swung back the door. The place was empty. A man in his shirt sleeves was putting out the lights.

"There has been a row?" I said.

"Unquestionably."

"And some arrests?"

"Yes, señor."

"Did they get them all?"

"All but one."

"Where is he?"

The man stopped, grinned the width of his face, and, thrusting up his thumb, waved it meaningly over his left shoulder.

Manuel had escaped.

For half the night I brooded over the unfaithfulness of human nature. Here was my hero telling lies to me about his Florita, spending his Saturday nights in a low café engaged in vulgar brawls, and all over a dancer. I began to consider and doubt. Was there any such fair creature at all as Florita? Was there any implacable father? Had Manuel ever been a student? Was it not all a prearranged scheme to bleed me day by day, and, awaiting a chance, rob me, or worse? A man who could escape unhurt, surrounded as he had been, was no ordinary man. Perhaps he was simply a decoy for one of the numerous bands of brigands still infesting the mountains; and I remembered with a shudder the forefinger of the Englishman forwarded to his friends in a paper box as a sort of sight draft on his entire bank account. I began to bless myself that mere accident had warned me in time. I would pick up no more impecunious tramps, my heart and pocket-book wide open.

When the day broke, and the cheery sun that Manuel always loved streamed in my windows, the situation seemed to improve. I thought of his open, honest face, of his extreme kindness and gratitude, of the many delightful hours we had spent together. Perhaps, after all, it was not Manuel. I saw his face only for a moment, and these Spaniards are so much alike, all so dark and swarthy. He would surely come in an hour, and we would have our coffee together. I dragged a chair out on the balcony and sat down, watching anxiously the turn of the street where I had so often caught sight of him waving his hand.

At eight o'clock I gave him up. It was true; the face was Manuel's and he dared not show himself now for fear of arrest. Then a new thought cheered me. Perhaps, after all, he was waiting at the café, or, it being Sunday, was late, and I would meet him on the way. I ran downstairs into the sunlight and stopped at the corner near the church, scanning the street up and down. There was no one I knew except the old bare-headed beggar with the withered arm. Manuel often gave him alms. He bowed as I passed, stood up, and put on his hat.

Near the café at the bottom of the hill stands a half-ruined archway. It can be reached by two streets running parallel and within a stone's throw of each other. As I passed under it the beggar, to my astonishment, started up as if from the ground. He had followed me.

"You are the painter, señor?"

"Yes."

"And Manuel's friend?"

"Certainly; where is he?"

He glanced cautiously about, and took a scrap of paper from inside the band of his hat. It bore this inscription:

"I am in trouble; follow the beggar."

The old man looked at me fixedly, turned sharply, and retraced his steps through the arch. My decision was instantaneous; I would find Manuel at all hazards.

The way led across the plaza of the bull ring, through the market, up the hill past the little mosque—now the church of Santa Maria, the one with the red marble altar—and so out into the suburbs of the city, the beggar keeping straight ahead and never looking behind. At the end of a narrow lane dividing two rows of old Moorish houses the mendicant tarried long enough for me to come nearer, glanced at me meaningly, and then disappeared in a crack in the wall. I followed, and found myself in a square patio, overgrown with weeds, half choked by the ruins of a fountain, and surrounded by a balcony supported by marble columns. This balcony was reached by a stone staircase. The beggar crossed the overgrown tangle, mounted the steps, swung back a heavy green door with Moorish hinges, and waited for me to pass in. I drew back. The folly, if not the danger, of the whole proceeding began to dawn upon me.

"I will go no further; where is the man who sent you?"

The beggar placed his fingers to his lips and pointed behind him.

At the same instant a blind opened cautiously on the floor above, and Manuel's face, pale as a ghost, peered through the slats. The beggar entered, closed the heavy door carefully, felt his way along a dark corridor, and knocked twice. A shriveled-up old woman with a bent back thrust out her head, mumbled something to the beggar, and led me to an opening in the opposite wall. Manuel sprang out and seized my hand.

"I knew you would come. Oh, such a scrape! The police searched for us half the night. But for old Bonta, the beggar here, and his wife we would have been caught. It would kill my father if anything should happen now. See, here is his letter saying we can come home! Oh, I am so grateful to you! You see it was this way. It was Florita's night, and I—"

My heart turned sick within me. Florita's night! If the poor girl only knew.

"Don't say another word, Manuel; you are in a scrape, and I will help you out, but don't lie about it to me of all men. If you love the dancer, all right; breaking a carafe over a fellow's head in a café, and all for a pair of ankles, may be—"

"Lie to you, señor!" said Manuel, flushing angrily, and with a certain dignity I had not seen in him before; "I could never lie to you. You do not know."

"I do know."

"Then Bonta has told you?" and he looked toward the beggar.

"Bonta has not opened his lips. I saw it all with my own eyes, and you may thank your lucky stars that you were not sliced full of holes. What would Florita say?"

"Florita? Ah, I see!" said Manuel, springing forward, pushing open the door, and calling out: "Florita! Are you there? Come quick!"

A hurried step in the adjoining room, and a young girl came running in.

It was the dancer!

"What could I do, señor? What would you do if your own wife had been so insulted? See how lovely she is!" And he kissed her on both cheeks.

What would I have done? What would you have done, my friend, with that startled shriek in your ears, and that frightened face appealing to you, her great eyes wet with tears, her white arms held out to you?

My hair is not quite so brown as it was, and the blood no longer surges through my veins. I am cooler and calmer, and even phlegmatic at times; and yet had Florita been mine, I would have broken a carafe over every head in Cordova.

While he was calming her fears, kissing her cheeks and patting her hands, the whole story came out. Day after day he had hoped that his father would relent. One word from him, and then I need never have known how the dainty feet of his pretty young wife had helped them both to live. This is why he had kept it from me.

That night a painter, with a pretty Spanish cousin, and a servant carrying his coat and traps, occupied a first-class carriage for Toledo. The painter left the train at the first station out of Cordova, shouldered his trap and coat himself, and took the night express back to his lonely lodgings. The servant and the señorita went on alone. When the train reached Toledo an old Spaniard with white head and mustache pushed his way through the crowd, took the servant in his arms and kissed the pretty cousin on both cheeks.

Then a high-springed old coach swallowed them up.

F. Hopkinson Smith in October Century.

Good Advice from Two Different Sources.

"Wait on the Lord and keep His way, and He shall exalt thee to inherit the land."

"Watch your hat and overcoat; the proprietor is not responsible for them."

These are the inscriptions on two placards that hang near each other on the walls of a Chestnut street lunch house.

Philadelphia Record.

Elderly but well-preserved widow (in business)—"This is an employment agency, is it not?" Manager—"It is, ma'am. What can I do for you?" "I want a bright, active, capable young man for a typewriter.—*Chicago Tribune.*

Charlie—"What makes the old cat howl so?" Walter—"I guess you would make a noise if you was full of fiddlestrings inside."

New York Herald.

"Mr. Pednash," said the fair young creature, "it is plainly evident to me that you are greatly agitated over something this evening. Will you not," she added, earnestly, "disclose to me the secret of this strange, mysterious influence which seems to surround you?" "Since you ask me," said the man, nervously changing chairs, "I will tell you all. The fact is, at this moment I have on a brand-new suit of camel's hair underclothing."