

fruitful valley in which it was embosomed, and the ocean which bathed its shores, supplied ample means of subsistence to a considerable population. But the cupidity of the Spaniards, after the Conquest, was not slow in despoiling the place of its glories; and the site of its proud towers and temples, in less than half a century after the fatal period, was to be traced only by the huge mass of ruins that encumbered the ground.²⁰

The Spaniards were nearly mad with joy, says an old writer, at receiving these brilliant tidings of the Peruvian city. All their fond dreams were now to be realized, and they had at length reached the realm which had so long flitted in visionary splendor before them. Pizarro expressed his gratitude to Heaven for having crowned his labors with so glorious a result; but he bitterly lamented the hard fate which, by depriving him of his followers, denied him, at such a moment, the means of availing himself of his success. Yet he had no cause for lamentation; and the devout Catholic saw in this very circumstance a providential interposition which prevented the attempt at conquest, while such attempts would have been premature. Peru was not yet torn asunder by the dissensions of rival candidates for the throne; and, united and strong under the sceptre of a warlike monarch, she might well have bid defiance to all the forces that Pizarro could muster. "It was manifestly the work of Heaven," exclaims a devout son of the Church, "that the natives of the country should have received him in so kind and loving a spirit, as best fitted to facilitate the conquest; for it was the Lord's hand which led him and his followers to this remote region for the extension of the holy faith, and for the salvation of souls."²¹

²⁰ Cieza de Leon, who crossed this part of the country in 1548, mentions the wanton manner in which the hand of the Conqueror had fallen on the Indian edifices, which lay in ruin, even at that early period. *Cronica*, cap. 67.

²¹ "I si le recibiesen con amor, hiciese su Mrd. lo que mas con-

Having now collected all the information essential to his object, Pizarro, after taking leave of the natives of Tumbes, and promising a speedy return, weighed anchor, and again turned his prow towards the south. Still keeping as near as possible to the coast, that no place of importance might escape his observation, he passed Cape Blanco, and, after sailing about a degree and a half, made the port of Payta. The inhabitants, who had notice of his approach, came out in their balsas to get sight of the wonderful strangers, bringing with them stores of fruits, fish, and vegetables, with the same hospitable spirit shown by their countrymen at Tumbes.

After staying here a short time, and interchanging presents of trifling value with the natives, Pizarro continued his cruise; and, sailing by the sandy plains of Sechura for an extent of near a hundred miles, he doubled the Punta de Aguja, and swept down the coast as it fell off towards the east, still carried forward by light and somewhat variable breezes. The weather now became unfavorable, and the voyagers encountered a succession of heavy gales, which drove them some distance out to sea, and tossed them about for many days. But they did not lose sight of the mighty ranges of the Andes, which, as they proceeded towards the south, were still seen, at nearly the same distance from the shore, rolling onwards, peak after peak, with their stupendous surges of ice, like some vast ocean, that had been suddenly arrested and frozen up in the midst of its wild and tumultuous career. With this landmark always in view, the navigator had little need of star or compass to guide his bark on her course.

As soon as the tempest had subsided, Pizarro stood in again for the continent, touching at the principal points as he coasted along. Everywhere he was received with

veniente la pareciese al efecto de su conquista: porque tenia entendido, que el haverlos traído Dios era para que su santa fé se dilatase i aquellas almas se salvarasen." Naharro, *Relacion Sumaria*, MS.

the same spirit of generous hospitality; the natives coming out in their balsas to welcome him, laden with their little cargoes of fruits and vegetables, of all the luscious varieties that grow in the *tierra caliente*. All were eager to have a glimpse of the strangers, the "Children of the Sun," as the Spaniards began already to be called, from their fair complexions, brilliant armor, and the thunderbolts which they bore in their hands.²² The most favorable reports, too, had preceded them, of the urbanity and gentleness of their manners, thus unlocking the hearts of the simple natives, and disposing them to confidence and kindness. The iron-hearted soldier had not yet disclosed the darker side of his character. He was too weak to do so. The hour of Conquest had not yet come.

In every place Pizarro received the same accounts of a powerful monarch who ruled over the land, and held his court on the mountain plains of the interior, where his capital was depicted as blazing with gold and silver, and displaying all the profusion of an Oriental satrap. The Spaniards, except at Tumbez, seem to have met with little of the precious metals among the natives on the coast. More than one writer asserts that they did not covet them, or, at least, by Pizarro's orders, affected not to do so. He would not have them betray their appetite for gold, and actually refused gifts when they were proffered!²³ It is more probable that they saw little display of wealth, except in the embellishments of the temples and other sacred buildings, which they did not dare to violate. The precious metals, reserved for the uses of religion and

²² "Que resplandecian como el Sol. Llamabanles hijos del Sol por esto." Montesinos, *Annales*, MS., año 1528.

²³ Pizarro wished the natives to understand, says Father Naharro, that their good alone, and not the love of gold, had led him to their distant land! "Sin haver querido recibir el oro, plata i perlas que les ofrecieron, á fin de que conociesen no era codicia, sino deseo de su bien el que les habia traído de tan lejas tierras á las suyas." *Relacion Sumaria*, MS.

for persons of high degree, were not likely to abound in the remote towns and hamlets on the coast.

Yet the Spaniards met with sufficient evidence of general civilization and power to convince them that there was much foundation for the reports of the natives. Repeatedly they saw structures of stone and plaster, and occasionally showing architectural skill in the execution, if not elegance of design. Wherever they cast anchor, they beheld green patches of cultivated country redeemed from the sterility of nature, and blooming with the variegated vegetation of the tropics; while a refined system of irrigation, by means of aqueducts and canals, seemed to be spread like a network over the surface of the country, making even the desert to blossom as the rose. At many places where they landed they saw the great road of the Incas which traversed the sea-coast, often, indeed, lost in the volatile sands, where no road could be maintained, but rising into a broad and substantial causeway, as it emerged on a firmer soil. Such a provision for internal communication was in itself no slight monument of power and civilization.

Still beating to the south, Pizarro passed the site of the future flourishing city of Truxillo, founded by himself some years later, and pressed on till he rode off the port of Santa. It stood on the banks of a broad and beautiful stream; but the surrounding country was so exceedingly arid that it was frequently selected as a burial-place by the Peruvians, who found the soil most favorable for the preservation of their mummies. So numerous, indeed, were the Indian *guacas*, that the place might rather be called the abode of the dead than of the living.²⁴

²⁴ "Lo que mas me admiro, quando passe por este valle, fue ver la muchedumbre que tienen de sepolturas: y que por todas las sierras y secadales en los altos del valle: ay numero grande de apartados, hechos a su usança, todo cubiertas de huessos de muertos. De manera que lo que ay en este valle mas que ver, es las sepolturas de los muertos, y los campos que labraron siendo vivos." Cieza de Leon, *Cronica*, cap. 70.

Having reached this point, about the ninth degree of southern latitude, Pizarro's followers besought him not to prosecute the voyage farther. Enough and more than enough had been done, they said, to prove the existence and actual position of the great Indian empire of which they had so long been in search. Yet, with their slender force, they had no power to profit by the discovery. All that remained, therefore, was to return and report the success of their enterprise to the governor at Panamá. Pizarro acquiesced in the reasonableness of this demand. He had now penetrated nine degrees farther than any former navigator in these southern seas, and, instead of the blight which, up to this hour, had seemed to hang over his fortunes, he could now return in triumph to his countrymen. Without hesitation, therefore, he prepared to retrace his course, and stood again towards the north.

On his way, he touched at several places where he had before landed. At one of these, called by the Spaniards Santa Cruz, he had been invited on shore by an Indian woman of rank, and had promised to visit her on his return. No sooner did his vessel cast anchor off the village where she lived, than she came on board, followed by a numerous train of attendants. Pizarro received her with every mark of respect, and on her departure presented her with some trinkets which had a real value in the eyes of an Indian princess. She urged the Spanish commander and his companions to return the visit, engaging to send a number of hostages on board, as security for their good treatment. Pizarro assured her that the frank confidence she had shown towards them proved that this was unnecessary. Yet, no sooner did he put off in his boat, the following day, to go on shore, than several of the principal persons in the place came alongside of the ship to be received as hostages during the absence of the Spaniards,—a singular proof of consideration for the sensitive apprehensions of her guests.

Pizarro found that preparations had been made for his reception in a style of simple hospitality that evinced some degree of taste. Arbors were formed of luxuriant and wide-spreading branches, interwoven with fragrant flowers and shrubs that diffused a delicious perfume through the air. A banquet was provided, teeming with viands prepared in the style of the Peruvian cookery, and with fruits and vegetables of tempting hue and luscious to the taste, though their names and nature were unknown to the Spaniards. After the collation was ended, the guests were entertained with music and dancing by a troop of young men and maidens simply attired, who exhibited in their favorite national amusement all the agility and grace which the supple limbs of the Peruvian Indians so well qualified them to display. Before his departure, Pizarro stated to his kind host the motives of his visit to the country, in the same manner as he had done on other occasions, and he concluded by unfurling the royal banner of Castile, which he had brought on shore, requesting her and her attendants to raise it in token of their allegiance to his sovereign. This they did with great good-humor, laughing all the while, says the chronicler, and making it clear that they had a very imperfect conception of the serious nature of the ceremony. Pizarro was contented with this outward display of loyalty, and returned to his vessel well satisfied with the entertainment he had received, and meditating, it may be, on the best mode of repaying it, hereafter, by the subjugation and conversion of the country.

The Spanish commander did not omit to touch also at Tumbez, on his homeward voyage. Here some of his followers, won by the comfortable aspect of the place and the manners of the people, intimated a wish to remain, conceiving, no doubt, that it would be better to live where they would be persons of consequence than to return to an obscure condition in the community of Panamá. One of

these men was Alonso de Molina, the same who had first gone on shore at this place, and been captivated by the charms of the Indian beauties. Pizarro complied with their wishes, thinking it would not be amiss to find, on his return, some of his own followers who would be instructed in the language and usages of the natives. He was also allowed to carry back in his vessel two or three Peruvians, for the similar purpose of instructing them in the Castilian. One of them, a youth named by the Spaniards Felipillo, plays a part of some importance in the history of subsequent events.

On leaving Tumbez, the adventurers steered directly for Panamá, touching only, on their way, at the ill-fated island of Gorgona to take on board their two companions who were left there too ill to proceed with them. One had died, and, receiving the other, Pizarro and his gallant little band continued their voyage; and, after an absence of at least eighteen months, found themselves once more safely riding at anchor in the harbor of Panamá.²⁵

The sensation caused by their arrival was great, as might have been expected. For there were few, even among the most sanguine of their friends, who did not imagine that they had long since paid for their temerity, and fallen victims to the climate or the natives, or miserably perished in a watery grave. Their joy was proportionately great, therefore, as they saw the wanderers now returned, not only in health and safety, but with certain tidings of the fair countries which had so long eluded their grasp. It was a moment of proud satisfaction to the three associates, who, in spite of obloquy, derision, and every impediment which the distrust of friends or the coldness of government could throw in their way, had persevered in their great enterprise

²⁵ Conq. i Pob. del Piru, MS.—Montesinos, Annales, MS., año 1528.—Naharro, Relacion Sumaria, MS.—Pedro Pizarro, Descub. y Conq., MS.—Herrera, Hist. General, dec. 4, lib. 2, cap. 6, 7.—Relacion del Primer. Descub., MS.

until they had established the truth of what had been so generally denounced as a chimera. It is the misfortune of those daring spirits who conceive an idea too vast for their own generation to comprehend, or, at least, to attempt to carry out, that they pass for visionary dreamers. Such had been the fate of Luque and his associates. The existence of a rich Indian empire at the south, which, in their minds, dwelling long on the same idea and alive to all the arguments in its favor, had risen to the certainty of conviction, had been derided by the rest of their countrymen as a mere *mirage* of the fancy, which, on nearer approach, would melt into air; while the projectors, who staked their fortunes on the adventure, were denounced as madmen. But their hour of triumph, their slow and hard-earned triumph, had now arrived.

Yet the governor, Pedro de los Rios, did not seem, even at this moment, to be possessed with a conviction of the magnitude of the discovery,—or, perhaps, he was discouraged by its very magnitude. When the associates, now with more confidence, applied to him for patronage in an undertaking too vast for their individual resources, he coldly replied, “He had no desire to build up other states at the expense of his own; nor would he be led to throw away more lives than had already been sacrificed by the cheap display of gold and silver toys and a few Indian sheep!”²⁶

Sorely disheartened by this repulse from the only quarter whence effectual aid could be expected, the confederates, without funds, and with credit nearly exhausted by their past efforts, were perplexed in the extreme. Yet to stop now,—what was it but to abandon the rich mine which

²⁶ “No entendia de despoblar su Governacion, para que se fuesen à poblar nuevas Tierras, muriendo en tal demanda mas Gente de la que havia muerto, cebando à los Hombres con la muestra de las Ovejas, Oro, i Plata, que havian traído.” Herrera, Hist. General, dec. 4, lib. 3, cap. 1.

their own industry and perseverance had laid open, for others to work at pleasure? In this extremity the fruitful mind of Luque suggested the only expedient by which they could hope for success. This was to apply to the Crown itself. No one was so much interested in the result of the expedition. It was for the government, indeed, that discoveries were to be made, that the country was to be conquered. The government alone was competent to provide the requisite means, and was likely to take a much broader and more liberal view of the matter than a petty colonial officer.

But who was there qualified to take charge of this delicate mission? Luque was chained by his professional duties to Panamá; and his associates, unlettered soldiers, were much better fitted for the business of the camp than of the court. Almagro, blunt, though somewhat swelling and ostentatious in his address, with a diminutive stature and a countenance naturally plain, now much disfigured by the loss of an eye, was not so well qualified for the mission as his companion in arms, who, possessing a good person and altogether a commanding presence, was plausible, and, with all his defects of education, could, where deeply interested, be even eloquent in discourse. The ecclesiastic, however, suggested that the negotiation should be committed to the Licentiate Corral, a respectable functionary, then about to return on some public business to the mother country. But to this Almagro strongly objected. No one, he said, could conduct the affair so well as the party interested in it. He had a high opinion of Pizarro's prudence, his discernment of character, and his cool, deliberate policy.²⁷ He knew enough of his comrade to have confidence that his presence of mind would not desert him, even in the new, and therefore embarrassing, circumstances

²⁷ "E por pura importunacion de Almagro cupole á Pizarro, porque siempre Almagro le tubo respeto, é deseó honrarle." Oviedo, *Hist. de las Indias*, MS., Parte 3, lib. 8, cap. 1.

in which he would be placed at court. No one, he said, could tell the story of their adventures with such effect, as the man who had been the chief actor in them. No one could so well paint the unparalleled sufferings and sacrifices which they had encountered; no other could tell so forcibly what had been done, what yet remained to do, and what assistance would be necessary to carry it into execution. He concluded, with characteristic frankness, by strongly urging his confederate to undertake the mission.

Pizarro felt the force of Almagro's reasoning, and, though with undisguised reluctance, acquiesced in a measure which was less to his taste than an expedition to the wilderness. But Luque came into the arrangement with more difficulty. "God grant, my children," exclaimed the ecclesiastic, "that one of you may not defraud the other of his blessing!"²⁸ Pizarro engaged to consult the interests of his associates equally with his own. But Luque, it is clear, did not trust Pizarro.

There was some difficulty in raising the funds necessary for putting the envoy in condition to make a suitable appearance at court; so low had the credit of the confederates fallen, and so little confidence was yet placed in the result of their splendid discoveries. Fifteen hundred ducats were at length raised; and Pizarro, in the spring of 1528, bade adieu to Panamá, accompanied by Pedro de Candia.²⁹ He took with him, also, some of the natives, as well as two or three llamas, various nice fabrics of cloth, with many ornaments and vases of gold and silver, as specimens of the civilization of the country, and vouchers for his wonderful story.

²⁸ "Plegue á Dios, Hijos, que no as hurteis la bendicion el uno al otro, que yo todavia holgaria, que á lo menos fuerades entrambos." Herrera, *Hist. General*, dec. 4, lib. 3, cap. 1.

²⁹ "Juntaronle mil y quinientos pesos de oro, que dió de buena voluntad Dⁿ Fernando de Luque." Montesinos, *Annales*, MS., año 1528.

Of all the writers on ancient Peruvian history, no one has acquired so wide celebrity, or been so largely referred to by later compilers, as the Inca Garcilasso de la Vega. He was born at Cuzco, in 1540; and was a *mestizo*, that is, of mixed descent, his father being European, and his mother Indian. His father, Garcilasso de la Vega, was one of that illustrious family whose achievements, both in arms and letters, shed such lustre over the proudest period of the Castilian annals. He came to Peru, in the suite of Pedro de Alvarado, soon after the country had been gained by Pizarro. Garcilasso attached himself to the fortunes of this chief, and, after his death, to those of his brother Gonzalo,—remaining constant to the latter, through his rebellion, up to the hour of his rout at Xaquixaguana, when Garcilasso took the same course with most of his faction, and passed over to the enemy. But this demonstration of loyalty, though it saved his life, was too late to redeem his credit with the victorious party; and the obloquy which he incurred by his share in the rebellion threw a cloud over his subsequent fortunes, and even over those of his son, as it appears, in after years.

The historian's mother was of the Peruvian blood royal. She was niece of Huayna Capac, and granddaughter of the renowned Tupac Inca Yupanqui. Garcilasso, while he betrays obvious satisfaction that the blood of the civilized European flows in his veins, shows himself not a little proud of his descent from the royal dynasty of Peru; and this he intimated by combining with his patronymic the distinguishing title of the Peruvian princes,—subscribing himself always Garcilasso Inca de la Vega.

His early years were passed in his native land, where he was reared in the Roman Catholic faith, and received the benefit of as good an education as could be obtained amidst the incessant din of arms and civil commotion. In 1560, when twenty years of age, he left America, and from that time took up his residence in Spain. Here he entered the military service, and held a captain's commission in the war against the Moriscos, and, afterwards, under Don John of Austria. Though he acquitted himself honorably in his adventurous career, he does not seem to have been satisfied with the manner in which his services were requited by the government. The old reproach of the father's disloyalty still clung to the son, and Garcilasso assures us that this circumstance defeated all his efforts to recover the large inheritance of landed property belonging to his mother, which had escheated to the Crown. "Such were the prejudices against me," said he, "that I could not urge my ancient claims or expectations; and I left the army so poor and so much in

debt, that I did not care to show myself again at court; but was obliged to withdraw into an obscure solitude, where I lead a tranquil life for the brief space that remains to me, no longer deluded by the world or its vanities."

The scene of this obscure retreat was not, however, as the reader might imagine from this tone of philosophic resignation, in the depths of some rural wilderness, but in Cordova, once the gay capital of Moslem science, and still the busy haunt of men. Here our philosopher occupied himself with literary labors, the more sweet and soothing to his wounded spirit, that they tended to illustrate the faded glories of his native land, and exhibit them in their primitive splendor to the eyes of his adopted countrymen. "And I have no reason to regret," he says in his Preface to his account of Florida, "that Fortune has not smiled on me, since this circumstance has opened a literary career which, I trust, will secure to me a wider and more enduring fame than could flow from any worldly prosperity."

In 1609, he gave to the world the First Part of his great work, the *Commentarios Reales*, devoted to the history of the country under the Incas; and in 1616, a few months before his death, he finished the Second Part, embracing the story of the Conquest, which was published at Cordova the following year. The chronicler, who thus closed his labors with his life, died at the ripe old age of seventy-six. He left a considerable sum for the purchase of masses for his soul, showing that the complaints of his poverty are not to be taken literally. His remains were interred in the cathedral church of Cordova, in a chapel which bears the name of Garcilasso; and an inscription was placed on his monument, intimating the high respect in which the historian was held both for his moral worth and his literary attainments.

The First Part of the *Commentarios Reales* is occupied, as already noticed, with the ancient history of the country, presenting a complete picture of its civilization under the Incas,—far more complete than has been given by any other writer. Garcilasso's mother was but ten years old at the time of her cousin Atahualpa's accession, or rather usurpation, as it is called by the party of Cuzco. She had the good fortune to escape the massacre which, according to the chronicler, befell most of her kindred, and with her brother continued to reside in their ancient capital after the Conquest. Their conversations naturally turned to the good old times of the Inca rule, which, colored by their fond regrets, may be presumed to have lost nothing as seen through the magnifying medium of the past.

The young Garcilasso listened greedily to the stories which recounted the magnificence and prowess of his royal ancestors, and though he made no use of them at the time, they sunk deep into his memory, to be treasured up for a future occasion. When he prepared, after the lapse of many years, in his retirement at Cordova, to compose the history of his country, he wrote to his old companions and school-fellows, of the Inca family, to obtain fuller information than he could get in Spain on various matters of historical interest. He had witnessed in his youth the ancient ceremonies and usages of his countrymen, understood the science of their quipus, and mastered many of their primitive traditions. With the assistance he now obtained from his Peruvian kindred, he acquired a familiarity with the history of the great Inca race, and of their national institutions, to an extent that no person could have possessed, unless educated in the midst of them, speaking the same language, and with the same Indian blood flowing in his veins. Garcilasso, in short, was the representative of the conquered race; and we might expect to find the lights and shadows of the picture disposed under his pencil, so as to produce an effect very different from that which they had hitherto exhibited under the hands of the Conquerors.

Such, to a certain extent, is the fact; and this circumstance affords a means of comparison which would alone render his works of great value in arriving at just historic conclusions. But Garcilasso wrote late in life, after the story had been often told by Castilian writers. He naturally deferred much to men, some of whom enjoyed high credit on the score both of their scholarship and their social position. His object, he professes, was not so much to add any thing new of his own, as to correct their errors and the misconceptions into which they had been brought by their ignorance of the Indian languages and the usages of his people. He does, in fact, however, go far beyond this; and the stores of information which he has collected have made his work a large repository, whence later laborers in the same field have drawn copious materials. He writes from the fullness of his heart, and illuminates every topic that he touches with a variety and richness of illustration, that leave little to be desired by the most importunate curiosity. The difference between reading his Commentaries and the accounts of European writers is the difference that exists between reading a work in the original and in a bald translation. Garcilasso's writings are an emanation from the Indian mind.

Yet his Commentaries are open to a grave objection,—and one naturally suggested by his position. Addressing himself to the cul-

tivated European, he was most desirous to display the ancient glories of his people, and still more of the Inca race, in their most imposing form. This, doubtless, was the great spur to his literary labors, for which previous education, however good for the evil time on which he was cast, had far from qualified him. Garcilasso, therefore, wrote to effect a particular object. He stood forth as counsel for his unfortunate countrymen, pleading the cause of that degraded race before the tribunal of posterity. The exaggerated tone of panegyric consequent on this becomes apparent in every page of his work. He pictures forth a state of society, such as an Utopian philosopher would hardly venture to depict. His royal ancestors became the types of every imaginary excellence, and the golden age is revived for a nation, which, while the war of proselytism is raging on its borders, enjoys within all the blessings of tranquillity and peace. Even the material splendors of the monarchy, sufficiently great in this land of gold, become heightened, under the glowing imagination of the Inca chronicler, into the gorgeous illusions of a fairy tale.

Yet there is truth at the bottom of his wildest conceptions, and it would be unfair to the Indian historian to suppose that he did not himself believe most of the magic marvels which he describes. There is no credulity like that of a Christian convert,—one newly converted to the faith. From long dwelling in the darkness of paganism, his eyes, when first opened to the light of truth, have not acquired the power of discriminating the just proportions of objects, of distinguishing between the real and the imaginary. Garcilasso was not a convert, indeed, for he was bred from infancy in the Roman Catholic faith. But he was surrounded by converts and neophytes,—by those of his own blood, who, after practising all their lives the rites of paganism, were now first admitted into the Christian fold. He listened to the teachings of the missionary, learned from him to give implicit credit to the marvellous legends of the Saints, and the no less marvellous accounts of his own victories in his spiritual warfare for the propagation of the faith. Thus early accustomed to such large drafts on his credulity, his reason lost its heavenly power of distinguishing truth from error, and he became so familiar with the miraculous, that the miraculous was no longer a miracle.

Yet, while large deductions are to be made on this account from the chronicler's reports, there is always a germ of truth which it is not difficult to detect, and even to disengage from the fanciful covering which envelopes it; and after every allowance for the exaggerations of national vanity, we shall find an abundance of genuine in-

formation in respect to the antiquities of his country, for which we shall look in vain in any European writer.

Garcilasso's work is the reflection of the age in which he lived. It is addressed to the imagination, more than to sober reason. We are dazzled by the gorgeous spectacle it perpetually exhibits, and delighted by the variety of amusing details and animated gossip sprinkled over its pages. The story of the action is perpetually varied by discussions on topics illustrating its progress, so as to break up the monotony of the narrative, and afford an agreeable relief to the reader. This is true of the First Part of his great work. In the Second there was no longer room for such discussion. But he has supplied the place by garrulous reminiscences, personal anecdotes, incidental adventures, and a host of trivial details,—trivial in the eyes of the pedant,—which historians have been too willing to discard, as below the dignity of history. We have the actors in this great drama in their private dress, become acquainted with their personal habits, listen to their familiar sayings, and, in short, gather up those minutiae which in the aggregate make up so much of life, and not less of character.

It is this confusion of the great and little, thus artlessly blended together, that constitutes one of the charms of the old romantic chronicle,—not the less true that, in this respect, it approaches nearer to the usual tone of romance. It is in such writings that we may look to find the form and pressure of the age. The worm-eaten state-papers, official correspondence, public records, are all serviceable, indispensable, to history. They are the framework on which it is to repose; the skeleton of facts which gives it its strength and proportions. But they are as worthless as the dry bones of the skeleton, unless clothed with the beautiful form and garb of humanity, and instinct with the spirit of the age.—Our debt is large to the antiquarian, who with conscientious precision lays broad and deep the foundations of historic truth; and no less to the philosophic annalist who exhibits man in the dress of public life,—man in masquerade; but our gratitude must surely not be withheld from those, who, like Garcilasso de la Vega, and many a romancer of the Middle Ages, have held up the mirror—distorted though it may somewhat be—to the interior of life, reflecting every object, the great and the mean, the beautiful and the deformed, with their natural prominence and their vivacity of coloring, to the eye of the spectator. As a work of art, such a production may be thought to be below criticism. But, although it defy the rules of art in its composition, it does not necessarily violate the principles of taste; for it conforms in its spirit to

the spirit of the age in which it was written. And the critic, who coldly condemns it on the severe principles of art, will find a charm in its very simplicity, that will make him recur again and again to its pages, while more correct and classical compositions are laid aside and forgotten.

I cannot dismiss this notice of Garcilasso, though already long protracted, without some allusion to the English translation of his Commentaries. It appeared in James the Second's reign, and is the work of Sir Paul Rycaut, Knight. It was printed at London, in 1688, in folio, with considerable pretension in its outward dress, well garnished with wood-cuts, and a frontispiece displaying the gaunt and rather sardonic features, not of the author, but his translator. The version keeps pace with the march of the original, corresponding precisely in books and chapters, and seldom, though sometimes, using the freedom, so common in these ancient versions, of abridgment and omission. Where it does depart from the original, it is rather from ignorance than intention. Indeed, as far as the plea of ignorance will avail him, the worthy knight may urge it stoutly in his defence. No one who reads the book will doubt his limited acquaintance with his own tongue, and no one who compares it with the original will deny his ignorance of the Castilian. It contains as many blunders as paragraphs, and most of them such as might shame a schoolboy. Yet such are the rude charms of the original, that this ruder version of it has found considerable favor with readers; and Sir Paul Rycaut's translation, old as it is, may still be met with in many a private, as well as public library.