

CINQ ANNÉES DE SÉJOUR  
AUX ILES CANARIES

PAR

LE DOCTEUR R. VERNEAU

CHARGÉ DE MISSIONS SCIENTIFIQUES.

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OUVRAGE ILLUSTRÉ DE 42 GRAVURES, 4 PLANCHES ET 1 CARTE

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# TWO YEARS IN THE CANARIES

An Account of Travel by Coach, Foot  
and Beast, in the Canary Islands,  
with the object of circulating  
the Scriptures in the  
Spanish Tongue

BY  
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ALLAIN MANESSON MALLET: *Description de l'Univers contenant les differents systemes du Monde*. Paris, 1685. Págs. 113-117.

*De la ville de Canarie*

"Cetté ville est bastie dans la partie Orientale de l'Isle, dont elle porte le nom, sur le penchant, & au pied d'une petite Montagne, que vient insensiblement se terminer à la Mer.

Elle est assez bien peuplée à cause de la frequentation des voyageurs qui la viennent d'ordinaire reconnoistre, quand ils vont aux Indes Orientales, ou aux Occidentales.

Elle est honorée d'un Siege Episcopal, & de quelques Convents de Religieux de Saint François & autres Ordres.

L'Evesque de *Canarie* est Suffragant de l'Archevesque de *Seville* en Espagne".

*Les voyages de sieur Le Maire aux Isles Canaries, Cap-Verd, Senegal et Gambie*. Paris, 1695. Págs. 22-24.

"Le mouillage est tres-bon en ce lieu-là, pourvû qu'on ne s'approche pas trop près de la Ville, dont des rochers cachez sous l'eau rendent l'accès dangereux. Elle est défenduë d'un Château situé sur une montagne, de l'insulte qu'elle pourroit recevoir des Vaisseaux qui voudroient l'attaquer. Elle est peuplée de douze mille Insulaires tresbraves, & capables de repousser quiconque oseroit les insulter. Nôtre Barque mouilla à dix-huit brasses d'eau devant la Ville.

Son enceinte est d'environ une lieuë de tour. La plûpart des maisons y sont assez *bien bâties*, mais basses, n'ayant que *deux étages*. Elles sont *toutes en terrasse par dessus*, de sorte que le toit n'en paroissant point, on diroit que ce sont des maisons brûlées. Pendant le jour on ne voit presque personne dans les ruës.

Quoique l'Evêque, le Gouverneur, & les gens de qualité fassent leur residence à *Teneriffe*, c'est cependant dans cette Capitale qu'est le Siege Episcopal, le Tribunal de l'Inquisition, & le Souverain Conseil, qui est comme le Parlement des sept Isles. On y voit quatre Maisons Religieuses, sçavoir une de *Dominicains*, & une de *Franciscains*, les deux autres sont de *Bernardines*, & de *Recolletes*".

GEORGE GLAS: *A Description of the Canary Islands*. Londres, 1764. Pág. 227.

Traducción española por Constantino Aznar de Acevedo: *Descripción de las Islas Canarias 1764*. La Laguna, 1976.

"The landing-place is in the very bight or bottom of the bay, where the water is generally so smooth, that a boat may lie broadside to the shore, without danger. At this landing-place stands a hermitage, or chapel, dedicated

to St. Catherine, and a castle, mounted with a few guns, but of no strength. From thence along shore to the eastward, at the distance of a league, is the city of Palmas, the capital of the island: between which, and the above-mentioned castle are two other forts, mounted with guns, these have no garrisons, except a few invalids. At the other end of the city is another castle called St. Pedro. None of all these are of any strength.

Shipping that discharge their cargoes at Palmas, generally in good weather anchor within half a mile of the town, for the quicker dispatch; but that places is not a good road. *The city of Palmas* is of no strength to oppose an attack; but it is large, and contains several fine buildings, partie larly the cathedral of St. Anne, with many churches, convents of Friars of all orders, and nunneries. The private houses here are in general good, being all built of stone. The city is divided into two parts, which have a communication with each other by a bridge, thrown over a small stream of water. The number of inhabitants in Palmas I guess to be about six thousand”.

«El viajero universal o noticia del mundo antiguo y nuevo». Madrid, 1797. Tomo XI. Págs. 209-211.

“La ciudad del Real de las Palmas, capital de esta isla, está situada al Oriente, corriendo por la orilla del mar Norte á Sur: divídela el río Giniguada en dos grandes barrios, *Triana y la Vegueta*. Por el Poniente tiene dos riscos elevados, pero queda en un llano la poblacion que se compone de 9435 personas. Comunicanse los dos barrios por un puente de madera: en el barrio de la Vegueta que mira al Sur está la Catedral, la Audiencia, casas de Concejo, Inquisicion, Palacio Episcopal, Conventos de Santo Domingo, San Agustín, Monjas Recoletas Bernardas, Colegio que fue de los Jesuitas, Hospital de San Martín con la cuna de expósitos. Tiene buenas calles y caserío; una buena plaza con una fuente en medio. La Catedral tiene tres naves de largo, y quatro de cruzado con seis columnas góticas que la sustentan; su arquitectura es toda gótica, y pudiera competir con las mejores, si estuviera acabada. Entre sus muchas alajas sobresale una lámpara de quinientos marcos de plata, hecha en Génova, que costó quarenta y ocho mil reales de plata. El Cabildo Eclesiástico se compone de ocho Dignidades, diez y seis Canónigos, doce Racioneros con voto, ocho Capellanes Reales, y Capilla de música. Contigua á la Catedral, y á sus espaldas está la iglesia del Sagrario que sirve de Parroquia, y es la única de la ciudad: sirvenla dos Curas por nombramiento del Cabildo y aprobacion del Obispo.

La Real Audiencia se compone de un Regente, tres Oidores y un Fiscal con los correspondientes Ministros. La ciudad tiene veinte y quatro Regidores perpetuos, y un Corregidor que es Capitan á guerra, con quien parte la jurisdiccion un Teniente Letrado. El Tribunal de la Santa Inquisicion consta regularmente de dos ó tres Inquisidores que nombran en las villas y lugares mayores, Comisarios, Familiares, &c. El Tribunal de la Cruzada se forma de tres individuos del Cabildo Eclesiástico, que tienen Comisarios en los pueblos mas principales.

El barrio de Triana que está al Norte, goza de un sitio mas llano y de calles mas espaciodas, bien que las casas son pequeñas, baxas, y todas con azoteas. En él estan los conventos de San Francisco, Monjas de San Bernardo

y Santa Clara, con el hospital de San Lazaro: el convento de San Francisco mantiene mas de cincuenta Religiosos que enseñan las ciencias escolásticas; el convento de Santa Clara que está sujeto á ellos, tendrá unas setenta Monjas, y otras tantas el convento de San Bernardo. El hospital de San Lazaro dentro de los muros, pero separado de la ciudad, sirve para los enfermos elefanciacos ó dañados que abundan en las islas. Dentro de la ciudad hay once ermitas, sin contar las que hay sobre los cerros inmediatos. En estos riscos que dominan á la ciudad, hay gran número de cuevas y casillas de tierra habitadas por gente pobre.

El temperamento de esta ciudad es muy benigno, y tan igual, que casi no se nota diferencia del verano al invierno, bien que la primavera suele ser opaca por los vientos que llaman *brisas pardas*, los cuales acarrean nublados. El territorio es muy ameno en huertas y jardines que gozan de un abundante riego; y se hallan aquí excelentes frutas, carnes, pescados, aves, &c. Tiene paseos amenos: los habitantes son sociables y atentos; pero se nota falta de comercio, de industria, y de buen gusto en artes y ciencias”.

*Voyages et aventures des émigrés français*. París, an VII de la République. Págs. 171-172.

“Cette île qui est la plus considérable de toutes, a pour capitale, *Ciudad de Palma*, la *ville des Palmes*. Cette ville qui peut avoir une lieue de circuit, est située au sud-quart-sud-ouest de l’île, et à une lieue et demie de la rade. Le mouillage est très-bon, pourvu qu’on ne s’approche pas trop de la ville, dont des rochers cachés sous l’eau rendent l’accès dangereux. Elle est défendue par un château situé sur une montagne; elle est peuplée de douze mille insulaires, riches, braves, et disposés à repousser ceux qui voudraient les attaquer. La plupart des maisons y sont assez bien bâties, mais basses, n’ayant que deux étages. Sa cathédrale est magnifique, les offices et les dignités y sont en grand nombre. C’est dans cette île que siège le tribunal de l’inquisition, et le souverain conseil des sept îles. On y compte quatre couvens. On y trouve encore quelques bourgs, tels que *Galder*, *Tirachana*: son port le plus fréquenté se nomme *la Luz*”.

J. G. B. M. BORY DE SAINT-VINCENT: *Essais sur les Iles Fortunées et l’Antique Atlantide, ou précis de la Histoire générale de l’Archipel des Canaries*. París, 1804. Págs. 207-208.

“La *Ciudad de las Palmas*, dont le port s’appelle *de la Luz*, fait tout le commerce de Canarie: c’est dans cette ville que fut transporté le siège épiscopal de *Rubicon*, après la conquête, et il y est toujours resté, tandis que le gouverneur des Iles est venu fixer sa demeure à Sainte-Croix de Ténériffe. Le revenu du diocèse s’élève à 240,000 liv., selon Macartnay. Ce voyageur dit que le prélat passe pour très-strict sur l’observation des pratiques religieuses; mais il est faux que cette rigidité aille au point de ridicule qu’il veut le faire croire.

La *Ciudad de las Palmas* peut avoir neuf mille quatre cent trente-sept

habitans; elle est séparée en deux parties par un ruisseau sur lequel était un pont de bois; elle est assez jolie, mais pleine de couvents. C'est la résidence du tribunal de l'inquisition, et d'un grand Alcalde".

ANDRÉ-PIERRE LEDRU: *Voyage aux Iles de Ténériffe, la Trinité, Saint-Thomas et Porto-Ricco*. Paris, 1810. Pág. 38.

"La population de Canarie était, en 1678, de 20,468 habitans; en 1733, de 50,710; en 1742, de 33,864; en 1768, de 41,082; et en 1790, de 50,000. On en compte 9,440 dans la capitale nommée *Palmas*, siège de l'évêché, de l'audience supérieure, d'un grand alcade, et du tribunal de l'inquisition. Cette ville a un port dont le mouillage est bon; mais des rochers cachés sous l'eau en rendent l'accès dangereux".

LEOPOLD VON BUCH: *Description physique des Iles Canaries*. Paris, 1836. Págs. 14-15.

"A Palmas croit voir dans les premières maisons et dans les premières rues une ville comme Tunis ou Alger. On descend le long de la continuation de l'aride montagne de Saint-Antoine. Les maisons sont creusées dans le tuf de cette montagne et on ne les reconnaît qu'à des trous de différentes grandeurs, qui forment les portes et les fenêtres. Viennent ensuite de petits cubes avec une seule ouverture qui est la porte; enfin les maisons s'élèvent, mais elles restent toujours entièrement plates dans le haut et sans toit. Même à Sainte-Croix nous avons encore vue des toits et tout au plus pardessus un large balcon ou une loggia. Mais à Las Palmas rien ne brise les lignes horizontales des bâtimens, qui paraissent comme attachées sur les blanches et arides collines auxquelles elles sont adossées et dont on ne saurait les distinguer. Des palmiers s'élèvent de tous côtés ainsi que beaucoup d'autres arbres qui ne rapellent rien des formes européennes; le tamarin y croît en grande abondance, ainsi que le *Carica Papaya*; mais ce sont toujours des Espagnols, et non des Orientaux, qui circulent dans les rues.

Las Palmas est une ville considérable. Elle est plus grande que l'Orotava et que Sainte Croix et presque aussi grande que Laguna. Elle contient 8,096 habitans. Elle est séparée comme Sévilla en deux parties inégales par le fort ruisseau de Guinequada. La plus petite, nommée la Vegueta contient la grande et belle cathédrale gothique, le palais de Justice, le palais de l'évêque et par suite toutes les maisons des chanoines, des chapitres et des grands propriétaires de l'île. Il n'est donc pas étonnant, qu'on y rencontre beaucoup plus de robes noires et de chap caux en forme de toit, qui sont portés par des prêtres, que dans l'autre partie de la ville la Triana. Dans celle-ci sont rassemblés les marchands, les artisans et tous ceux, qui doivent travailler pour gagner leur vie. Comme des îles, s'élèvent du milieu de cette masse de maisons, deux couvents de religieuses et un couvent de Franciscains, et sur la hauteur, tout-à-fait isolé, on voit le chateau del Rey, réuni par une longue muraille avec le petit chateau de Casa Mata, qui lui même se rattache de la même manière au chateau de Sainte-Anne sur le bord de la mer".

P. B. WEBB y S. BERTHELOT: *Histoire Naturelle des Iles Canaries*,  
tomo I, parte 2.<sup>a</sup> (*Miscellanées Canariennes*). Paris, 1839. Págs.  
200-208.

«A peine débarqués sur la plage de *la Isleta*, nous nous disposions à chercher un gîte en attendant des bêtes de charge pour faire transporter nos effets, lorsqu'on vint nous offrir à déjeuner de la part d'une dame canarienne que nous ne connaissions ni l'un ni l'autre. *Doña Maria Candelaria*, qui nous faisait cette invitation, résidait alors dans le voisinage pour jouir de l'air de la mer: vieille fille de joviale humeur, elle conservait encore, malgré ses soixante ans, toute la vivacité de la jeunesse. Toujours levée avant l'aurore, et cherchant des distractions sur cette plage où nous abordâmes, elle avait aperçu notre barque se dirigeant dans la baie. De la maison qu'elle habitait à quelques pas du rivage, elle nous vit sauter à terre avec tout l'attirail de campagne. Notre tournure étrangère, nos armes de chasse, nos ustensiles de pêche, les grands coffres qui renfermaient nos collections excitèrent sa curiosité: elle envoya aussitôt aux informations et fit jaser un passager qui nous avait connus à Fortaventure; aussi, lorsque nous nous acheminâmes vers sa demeure pour nous rendre à son invitation, *Doña Maria* savait déjà toute notre histoire; nos caravanes dans les îles voisines, la bourrasque de la nuit, les motifs de notre arrivée et les projets que nous méditions encore. «Vous devez être bien fatigués de la tourmente, nous dit-elle, veuillez accepter ces restaurants, et surtout point de façon, car vous ne trouverez rien autre chose le long de cette côte. En vous faisant servir à déjeuner, je ne devance que de quelques instans l'hospitalité que vous auriez été forcés de me demander plus tard, car la ville est à une lieue d'ici et les chameaux que doivent transporter vos effets n'arriveront pas avant une heure». Nous acceptâmes ce repas offert de si bon coeur: *Doña Maria* prit place à nos côtés, la conversation s'engagea aussitôt avec la plus grande confiance, et avant de quitter la table nous avions déjà conquis son affection. «J'aime les étrangers, nous disait-elle; je me suis postée sur cette plage pour arrêter tous ceux qui arrivent et leur être utile au besoin. Les deux tiers de ma vie ont été employés à ramasser des piastres; aujourd'hui, je dépense en distraction mon temps et ma fortune. Cette existence indépendante m'a semblé préférable à la société d'un mari. Je campe un peu partout, tantôt dans la campagne, tantôt sur le bord de la mer». En effet, *Doña Maria* vivait en nomade, changeant de demeure à volonté; son esprit, sa gaîté et la franchise de ses manières lui avaient fait de nombreux amis; aussi sa recommandation nous fut-elle très-utile lorsque nous parcourûmes l'île. Mais il ne s'agit encore que de notre première entrevue; n'anticipons pas.

Les chameaux venaient d'arriver et nous prîmes congé de notre aimable hôtesse en la remerciant mille fois de son bon accueil. «Les gens accoutumés à courir le monde, nous dit-elle en riant, ne sont pas difficiles sur le gîte qui leur est offert. Mais à propos, nous n'avons dans notre cité de *las Palmas* qu'une méchante auberge... je connais la maîtresse de ce logis, et j'espère qu'à ma prière elle vous traitera de son mieux. *Tio Pedro!* ajouta-t-elle en s'adressant à notre chamelier, venez prendre le billet que je vais écrire pendant que ces messieurs font charger leur bagage. Vous les conduirez à l'endroit que je vous désignerai». *Tio Pedro* obéit; et un quart-d'heure après nous étions en route.

Tandis que nous cheminions le long de l'isthme qui joint *la Isleta* à la grande Canarie, je réfléchissais sur notre bonne fortune. Il y avait quelque chose de providentiel dans les événemens qui s'étaient succédé depuis notre départ de *Tarajal*: une barque, chargée comme l'arche du déluge, s'aventurant au milieu d'une nuit orageuse, une tourmente à faire crier merci, et pourtant nous étions débarqués sains et saufs sur la plage hospitalière. Deux heures s'étaient à peine écoulées depuis notre arrivée à terre et déjà nous avions rencontré une amie. Nous venions de franchir la porte de Sainte-Anne et pénétrions dans une ville populeuse, bien bâtie, ornée de maisons élégantes et d'édifices somptueux. Tout cela me semblait un enchantement. Les voyages maritimes peuvent seuls produire ces brusques transitions dans les scènes de la vie, ce passage subit d'une périlleuse existence au solide bien-être, car la confiance qu'inspire la terre s'accroît encore au souvenir des dangers de la mer. La veille, dans cette baie où notre barque s'était abritée un instant, nous avions eu sous les yeux l'image du désert, maintenant c'était le spectacle de la civilisation. Un calme plat avait succédé à la bourrasque, le ciel brillait d'un vif azur, et nous traversions la ville des Palmiers qu'éclairait déjà un soleil radieux, lorsque notre guide s'arrêta devant une maison qu'il nous désigna comme l'endroit où nous devons loger. Une jeune personne fort avenante reçut la lettre de *Doña Maria*, et après en avoir pris lecture: «La maîtresse du logis est à la campagne pour quelques jours, nous dit-elle, mais je suis chargée pendant son absence de recevoir les étrangers. Vous ne pouviez, messieurs, vous présenter ici avec une meilleure recommandation; *Doña Maria* sera satisfaite». Puis, après ce premier début, elle nous invita à passer au salon et nous signala nos chambres à coucher, que nous trouvâmes fort propres et meublées avec élégance. La maison nous parut très-confortable; la salle à manger surtout était d'une propreté rare dans une auberge. Nous nous informâmes des heures des repas afin de régler notre temps. «On prendra vos ordres, nous répondit l'aimable introductrice, nous n'avons pas d'autres voyageurs. — A merveille! dans ce cas, puisque nous ne gênons personne, nous reprendrons les usages de la mère-patrie: déjeuner à onze heures et dîner à six. — Ce sera selon vos désirs». On ne pouvait y mettre plus de complaisance: elle était si bonne, *Patrocinita*.

Il y avait trois jours que nous étions installés dans notre nouveau domicile, usant largement des commodités du logis, lorsque le chamelier qui nous avait conduits et que nous rencontrâmes dans la rue vint détruire nos illusions. Ce brave homme nous annonça la prochaine arrivée de *Doña Maria*. «Elle »décampe ce soir, nous dit-il; les pêcheurs du port en sont bien fâchés, car »elle ne marchande pas et fait acheter tout ce qu'il y a de mieux. Ce sont »des cadeaux pour ses amis, et vous en recevez la meilleure part. — Comment, »cette excellente marée que tu nous apportes, c'est *Doña Maria* qui nous »l'envoie? — Et sans doute, il est bien juste que sa maison soit pourvue la »première. — Sa maison! Nous ne sommes donc pas à l'auberge? — Bah! »à l'auberge, il n'en existe pas dans la ville. Vos seigneuries sont chez *Doña Maria*». Nous ne revenions pas de notre étonnement; la plaisanterie était délicate; mais pourtant, une fois désabusés sur le gîte que notre gracieuse hôtesse nous avait procuré par surprise, nous devions chercher à nous loger ailleurs. Notre position devenait fort embarrassante, et nous retournâmes au logis pour nous concerter sur le parti qu'il nous restait à prendre. Nouvelle surprise! *Doña Maria* venait d'arriver. Elle nous aborda d'un air riant:



«Eh bien! mes amis, comment vous trouvez-vous ici, nous dit-elle? Vous »traite-t-on convenablement, l'auberge fait-elle pour vous? *Patrocinita*, en »l'absence de sa maîtresse, a-t-elle rempli son devoir? — Oui, madame, nous »ne pouvions trouver un meilleur gîte et surtout plus de prévenance et »d'attention; vous avez été au-delà de nos désirs, et votre demoiselle de »compagnie a parfaitement joué son rôle». A cette réponse inattendue *Doña Maria* se pinça les lèvres: «Allons, je le vois bien, on m'a vendue... quelque »indiscret... quelque jaloux peut-être; mais vous me pardonnerez ma petite »ruse, ajouta-t-elle en minaurant. Attirer chez soi deux hommes à leur insu, »j'en conviens, c'est très-hardi pour une vieille fille. N'allez pas ébruiter cette »affaire, au moins; vous me perdriez; c'est comme un rapt... le corrégidor »s'en formaliserait». Puis, partant d'un grand éclat de rire: «Oh! c'est im- »payable l'idée que j'ai eue là, continua-t-elle. Eh bien donc, vous êtes sérieux, »vous me boudez... Auriez-vous le projet de me quitter si vite? Me feriez- »vous l'affronta d'aller accepter l'hospitalité d'un autre, car dans ce pays vous »n'avez que cette ressource. Il faut donc rester ici, puisque vous vous y »trouvez bien. Vous le voyez, ma maison est assez vaste pour nous contenir »tous; vous ne me gênez en rien. Agissez donc sans façon. *Patrocinita* aura »soin de votre ménage; vous vous entendrez avec elle et je vous laisserai »entièrement libres. Allons, vous acceptez, n'est-ce pas? Tout est dit, c'est »affaire conclue». Comment résister à une offre aussi obligeante: la maison nous allait si bien! *Doña Maria* nous avait gâtes... nous acceptâmes, et bien nous en fut. Je ne saurais assez faire l'éloge de cette excellente femme: pendant les trois mois que nous passâmes dans l'île, elle eut pour nous les soins d'une mère: l'intérêt qu'elle nous témoigna, la bonté de son cœur, sa franche amitié, ses attentions si délicates et si désintéressées, nous retremperent à toutes les affections qui font le charme de la vie.

Nos projets d'excursions dans l'intérieur de l'île restèrent ajournés jusqu'à nouvel ordre: la *Ciudad de las Palmas*, comme capitales de la grande Canarie, méritait d'être visitée en détail; sa population s'élève à près de douze mille âmes. Un beau pont de pierre, qu'on a construit sur le ravin de Giniguada, unit les deux faubourgs; d'une part, celui de *Triana*, que le commerce vivifie; de l'autre, *la Vegueta*, où priment le haut clergé, la magistrature et l'autorité militaire. Parmi les édifices qui décorent cette partie de la cité, on en remarque un d'un aspect triste et sévère: les laves noires qu'on a employées à sa construction jettent sur ses murailles une teinte lugubre. C'est là que siégeait autrefois l'inquisition. Le redoutable tribunal s'était logé à côté du collège, sans doute pour surveiller l'enseignement et le diriger à son gré. En 1820, lorsque le système constitutionnel vint renverser les vieilles institutions, à la première nouvelle de l'événement, les étudiants montèrent au clocher de la chapelle qui domine la cour du Saint-Office et sonnèrent le glas des morts. C'était au milieu de la nuit: les habitants du quartier de la *Vegueta*, réveillés en sursaut aux coups redoublés du sinistre tocsin, croient qu'un incendie les menace et accourent vers le lieu qui donne l'alarme. «Ce n'est rien, leur crient des fenêtres du clocher les malins jeunes gens, »calmez votre effroi et réjouissez vous; la voisine est morte! Nous sonnons »pour son enterrement. Vive la constitution!».

La cathédrale est un monument digne de sa renommée: l'architecture extérieure ressemble beaucoup à celle de l'église de Saint-Sulpice de Paris; son aspects est pas moins imposant. On a remplacé l'ancienne façade par

une autre de nouvelle construction, d'après les dessins de Don Diego Eduardo, architecte canarien du plus grand mérite; elle a près de cent quatre-vingts pieds de développement. Le corps de l'édifice date de 1500: l'intérieur, d'un beau gothique, offre trois grandes nefs en longueur et quatre transversales, avec onze chapelles dans les alentours. Des groupes de colonnes du plus bel effet soutiennent la voûte; le chœur, le ôme, le maître-autel, la chaire, tout est magnifique et grandiose dans cette cathédrale. Parmi les riches ornemens qui la décorent, on remarque une lampe d'argent du poids de cinq cents marcs.

Le poète Cayrasco, mort en 1610, repose dans la chapelle de Sainte-Catherine, qu'il fit bâtir à ses frais: on lit sur son tombeau l'épithaphe suivante:

*Lyricen et vates toto celebratus in orbe  
Hic jacet inclusus, nomine ad astra volans.*

Le chanoine Viera est enseveli au-dessous du maître autel, dans les caveaux du panthéon des grands dignitaires de la cathédrale. J'ai déjà cité bien des fois cet illustre Isleño, non moins recommandable par son ardent patriotisme que par la variété de ses connaissances et la solidité de son jugement.

J'aimais à parcourir de nouveau cette vaste cathédrale que j'avais visitée cinq ans auparavant dans une première excursion à Canaria. La cérémonie de la bénédiction des Palmes que j'y avais vu célébrer ne s'était pas effacée de mon souvenir. L'intérieur du temple présentait l'aspect le plus pittoresque: le sol était jonché de verdure; des branches de lauriers d'Inde et de genêts, mêlées à d'autres plantes aromatiques, exhalaient les plus suaves parfums. Les Canariennes étalaient ce jour-là toute leur parure. Que de doux regards on saisissait sous leurs élégantes mantilles! Les éventails d'or vibraient dans leurs mains avec une rapidité merveilleuse; ce jeu varié et soutenu était toujours accompagné de gracieux sourires: on eût dit un essaim d'oisillons de paradis, aux ailes diaprées, voltigeant sous un ciel de feu. C'était un ravissant tableau de belles femmes et de belles fleurs au milieu d'une illumination éclatante et d'une atmosphère embaumée. Les palmes, qu'on agitait de toute part, produisaient un frémissement harmonieux: portés en grande pompe aux accords de la musique et des chants sacrés, ces superbes rameaux donnaient à la fête l'apparence d'un triomphe.

Le faubourg de la Vegueta contient plusieurs autres édifices remarquables: trois monastères, un hôpital et l'ancien collège de jésuites. Le tribunal de l'Audience royale et les prisons font face à la cathédrale, et non loin de là, sur la place que décore une fontaine publique, s'élève le palais épiscopal fondé en 1578 par l'évêque Don Christoval de la Vela, et réédifié trente ans après l'invasion des Hollandais par un de ses plus illustres successeurs, Don Christoval de la Cámara".

CH. PH. DE KERHALLET: *Madere, les Iles Salvages et les Iles Canaries*. Edición de 1868. París. Págs. 77 y 80-81.

*"Baie de Palmas, port de la Luz.* — La rade de Palmas se divise en quatre parties: le port de la Luz qui est l'espace compris entre la pointe sur laquelle est le fort de la Luz et celle où l'on voit le fort Santa Catalina;

près et à l'E. du fort de la Luz, on voit le lazaret, puis le village de la Luz, sur la côte Nord du port. Sous la pointe Sud, où gît la maison des douaniers, en ruine, il y a quelques rochers. Un bon chemin conduit maintenant de la Luz à Palmas.

*La ville de Palmas*, qui renferme 14,360 habitants, est bâtie sur les bords d'un ravin délicieux, le Guinigada, qui porte dans la baie les eaux des hautes terres; simple ruisseau dans la belle saison, il devient quelquefois un torrent redoutable dans celle des pluies; aussi l'a-t-on, pour prévenir les inondations en hiver, contenu au moyen de hautes murailles; ce ravin divise la ville en deux parties réunies par un beau pont de trois arches et large de 18 mètres. On reconnaît de loin Palmas à ses murailles blanches, puis à la citadelle nommée Plateforme et située à la partie Nord sur la colline San Francisco. Ce fort est une défense du fort del Rey qui est un peu plus loin sur une esplanade de la même montagne.

Palmas est bâtie sur la plage même, et, du large, elle semble sortir des eaux. Elle est entourée de campagnes fertiles, qui donnent trois récoltes par an, et d'une vallée plantée en palmiers et arbres fruitiers. On y trouve un théâtre, un marché, deux hôpitaux, dont un pour les malades atteints d'éléphantiasis, maladie très-commune dans l'île. Palmas a été la capitale des îles Canaries de 1483 à 1833, époque où elle a été remplacée par Sainte-Croix.

*Ressources.* — On trouve à Palmas, et à très-bon marché, des vivres frais, des légumes, des fruits de toute espèce, de l'eau de très-bonne qualité, dont il existe sur le môle un dépôt permanent appartenant à une compagnie particulière; elle est de là amenée par un conduit à l'extrémité du môle où on peut la faire facilement avec les embarcations. On y trouve aussi des vins au moins égaux sinon supérieurs à ceux de Ténérife, où, du reste, vu le peu de relations qui existent à Palmas d'ordinaire, ils sont transportés par le cabotage ainsi que le poisson salé. On construit des navires de 30 à 400 tonneaux à Palmas. Les matériaux sont fournis par l'île même. Lobo dit qu'on en a construit 123 de 1819 à 1859, et qu'en 1859, il est entré à Palmas 164 navires jaugeant ensemble 24,324 tonneaux".

THOMAS DEBARY: *Notes of a residence in the Canary Islands, the south of Spain, and Algiers; illustrative of the state of religion in those countries.* Londres, 1851. Págs. 81-92.

"At two o'clock the following morning, we anchored off the Isleta, and at daylight, on ascending the deck, I found a somewhat dreary prospect. The Isleta is so called not because it is actually an island, but because it seems as if it ought to be one; it is joined to the main land by what is little better than a sand bank. Along which we had to plough our way to the principal city of the island; «Las Palmas».

The appearance of the city is peculiar as you enter it; the houses are low, flat-topped, and with such enormous gurgails to carry off the rain, that the street has more the appearance of a fort, bristling with cannon, than any thing else. The poor part of the population live in houses cut from the sandstone hill that overhangs the city.

The town of Las Palmas has a population of about 10,000; it is built on either side of a ravine which divides it, in the bottom of which flows a narrow stream, spanned by rather an elegant bridge, built by a former bishop of the place. On looking up the ravine from the bridge, you see many palm trees, and the whole prospect is crowned by the pale blue Pexos ridge of mountains which are 6500 feet high. The valley itself is exceedingly fertile, and is so well irrigated, that it produces two crops of Indian corn in the year besides a crop of potatoes.

The town is well built, and there remain many of the original houses built by the first conquerors and settlers in the island. The chief building is the cathedral of St. Anne. It is important enough to have called for particular notice in a European country. The style is Romanesque. It has two towers and a centre cupola. The interior, however, that which recommends it to one's notice, on account of the very lofty and spiral character of the piers. It is said that the architect was an Irish priest, and that he selected a species of pumice stone for the purpose of building the roof; but the workmen employed on the building considered the piers so unequal to bear an ordinary roof upon them, that they threw down their tools and refused to work, whereupon the Irish priest took a chair and set himself underneath where they were at work, that his own head might suffer, if the columns should prove unequal to bear the roof he was going to place upon them. The windows are of stained glass, but without any design in them. When Canary was the only see in the province, it was a very wealthy one, and even now it bears the character of being one of those lucrative banishments where men who are afterwards to be preferred to the great cathedrals of Spain, are not unseldom sent to scrape together a little money.

The most important edifice after the cathedral is built upon the site of the suppressed convent of Santa Clara, and comprises a reading-room, coffee-room, ball-room, and theatre: into this club-house, as it is, our consul introduced me, where I found plenty of French and Spanish papers, but very few books. A library of modern books I should think was a thing quite unknown in Spain.

On the north side of this building is the Alemada, laid out with some pretensions, and thronged every evening with the ladies of the place, and the cock-fighting gentlemen of the two islands.

The valley in which the town is built separates a little higher up, into two narrower ones affording exceedingly pretty walks and rides. To the south of the town between the high land and the sea, stretches a tract of fertile well irrigated land about a mile in breadth. The method adopted in irrigating is said to be of Moorish origin, and from its antiquity I should think it probably was. The furrows are ploughed in semicircles, so as to lead into each other; the top furrow is called the «madre», or mother, and the water being turned into this, runs through all the others in the piece of ground which is under cultivation.

The climate of Las Palmas is quite different from that of Santa Cruz. Regularly about ten o'clock, although the sky has been clear before, a sea-cloud comes up from the East, and tempers the rays of the sun with moisture, so that geraniums and succulent plants generally will flourish here, which will not at Santa Cruz. The number of rainy days at Las Palmas greatly exceeds the number of Santa Cruz, and even that of Funchal in

Madeira. Thus, the number of rainy days in Santa Cruz is under forty, at Las Palmas under eighty, at Madeira about seventy, and at Fuertaventura, as I have been told, it hardly ever rains at all. All this variety of climate is produced by the accidental position of these islands with respect to the ordinary course of the «trade winds».

It was the season of Lent during my stay at Las Palmas; the town was accordingly kept alive by matters of ecclesiastical interest, as well as by the approaching struggle between the «gallos Ingleses» of the two islands of Tenerife and Gran Canaria. The bishop had been newly appointed to the see, and had just arrived from the Spanish peninsula, evidently with no very high opinion of the state of his diocese, or the acquirements of the people he had come to live amongst. However, the Canarians have some very fair collegiate establishments, and are a lively and intelligent people; and he used to address them, as they complained, in too puerile terms; and in their turn they laughed at him for his pronunciation, because he was by birth a Catalonian. This was, it must be admitted, as if Irishmen should laugh at a Scotchman for his pronunciation of English; but it is likewise a lesson to those preachers who are fond of condescending to the understanding of their congregations, and in order to do so frequently say very trifling things; however, the bishop's zeal was praiseworthy, and much needed by these islanders. One day an English trader came and said to me, «The bishop has been preaching and giving the people a considerable trimming, telling them they might take example even by the heretical English, who, though not in the Catholic faith, surpassed the Spaniards in piety».

The bishop with some justice preached against cock-fighting on Sundays in Lent. Every evening he preached, making the circuit of the churches with his chaplain, whom they called «el misionario», and who always occupied the pulpit immediately after the bishop. He was a more eloquent and impassioned man than the bishop, and preached more according to the prescribed rules of Spanish preaching; for the Spanish preacher receives minute directions upon things we never think about.

He is instructed in his whole carriage in the pulpit; for instance, he is told how he should hold his body: it should be upright, but not so much so, or so immoveably, as to give it the appearance of being stuck up. The chest should be slightly inclined forward, especially when the preacher apostrophises the people. «Nunca volverá la espalda al sacramento», the back or shoulder should never be turned to the sacrament; since that is the same as if a preacher should turn his back on the Deity. Neither should he rest his elbows on the cushion of the pulpit, nor turn himself from this side to that «con demasiada viveza», —in too great a hurry, but with ease and dignity. His head ought to be «erguida pero sin orgullo», —erect, but without hauteur; and turn on its axis «lento y suave», —softly and sweetly. His eyes are to look down on the congregation with modesty, and not to be fixed at one point, but to wander «indistintamente sobre todo el auditorio», —without distinguishing individuals over the whole congregation. The eyebrows are never to be raised completely to the roots of the hair; «ni la una ni la otra», —nor by any accident one without the other. A smile should never appear on his lips, albeit «la alegría de los santos» —the joy of the saints, is not to be concealed when occasion calls for it.

The bishop sometimes preached from the balcony of his palace; a purple

cloth was thrown over the rails, and his crozier fixed in one corner. It was both amusing and instructive to me to observe the contending principles at work, and to be a wholly impartial spectator of what I know to be going on in every part of the world, —«the Church and the world». The world coldly criticising the efforts of the Church. The bishop strove to arouse the apathetic; he gave out that the processions were to be in full force the ensuing Passion Week. But how did my friends generally regard it? they used to stroll into church of an evening for a few minutes, and then come out, pronounce him a Catalonian, and begin to talk of their cock-fights.

I determined to pay the suppressed convent of the Augustines, in which these exhibitions were held, the visit, and see the sort of company that frequented them. I am not one of those Protestants who could rejoice to see a convent perverted to these uses, and it was not without repugnance on this score as well as others that I directed my footsteps on the place. When I entered the ancient cloisters, the silence was as profound as in those days when the building was in the occupation of men under religious vows; not that it was empty, but on the contrary, very full. In the «patio», or quadrangle, tiers of seats were raised up round a sort of large cage, and these seats were crowded with attentive spectators; in the upper corridors or cloisters I noticed some of the clergy and principal civil and military officers of the place. I mounted up here just in time to see the conclusion of one of the fights; the two unfortunate birds were scarcely able to peck at each other any longer; one just contrived to drive the other a few paces on, and then both stood still, as inanimate as if they had been stuffed, excepting that pools of blood began to form under the respective birds. This was a signal for the backers to enter the cage, smooth the feathers, and try and stimulate their fighting propensities. The poor spent creatures made one or two more fluttering efforts at contention, and then fell back lifeless. When I noticed their feathers quivering, I felt disgusted, but directly a new and lively couple were thrown into the cage, and began to strut round and crow for the combat, the interest revived, so it was time to leave this demoralising exhibition.

The convent of the Augustines was doomed to a double profanation; for, a week after this, an awning was spread over the patio, and the American horses were exhibiting.

I well remember this circumstance, because I made acquaintance with the mate of the American bark in rather a singular manner; the first Sunday that I was in the island, I found there were too many prejudices to be overcome, to assemble the few English people, who had banished themselves here, for purposes of worship; I therefore, as a thing most in accordance with my feelings, entered the cathedral; and after gazing with wonder for some time at the gigantic representation of St. Christoval, the ferryman, bearing the infant Jesus on his shoulders, a figure found in most Spanish cathedrals, I passed into the cloisters. The solitude of a cloister is, to a church lover, the most agreeable one can imagine. Be he where he may in Christendom, he may, in imagination, be speedily transported to the cloisters of some favourite church in his own country. Nothing could be more agreeable than these cloisters. The delicious atmosphere, the splashing of water in the middle fountain, and the train of agreeable associations summoned to one's mind by the character of the building: but my reverie did not last

long; the sacristan made his appearance, and bade me depart; somewhat chagrined, I returned to the Fonda to read the offices.

As I entered the principal room or Sala, I saw, through an open door, a hot bath emitting steam, and the head of a man hanging over the side of it; his features bespoke an utter absence of moral culture; seeing me, he addressed me in English, and when I asked him who he was he replied, «The mate of the American bark». I could not help remarking what a miserable existence he was leading; and asking him if he knew this was Sunday, he said, «No; Sundays and other days were all the same to him». I then expressed my wonder how this extraordinary speculation could pay”.

ELIZABETH MURRAY: *Sixteen years of an artist's life in Morocco, Spain, and the Canary Islands*. Londres, 1859. Volumen II, págs. 170-181.

“La Real Ciudad de las Palmas, the capital of Grand Canary, is rather a gloomy and uninteresting city. It has a ruined appearance, and the atmosphere is so heavy in its close and narrow streets that the visitor can with difficulty resist the influence of the melancholy feelings which such a place is calculated to inspire. The town is pretty extensive, but very silent, with little animation in its almost deserted streets. The houses are flatroofed, looking as if the top-floor had fallen off. The appearance of most of them is very mean, but here and there a more lofty and handsome one, with some pretensions even to architectural decoration, stands up in solitary importance. Some of the old public buildings and houses look imposing enough, compared with the pigmy structures by which they are surrounded; and a few of the streets have considerable pretensions to beauty, but they are so interspersed with ruined houses and heaps of building-materials, that they look as if they had only recently suffered from a severe earthquake.

One thing, however, may fairly be said in favour of this ancient town. Its inhabitants are exceedingly kind and agreeable to strangers, —at least, such was our experience. All whom we had the pleasure of meeting we found so courteous and hospitable, that we became reconciled even to the dilapidation of which we had so often occasion to be witnesses. As too much ceremony would be a great drawback in these sultry climates, we always were happy to meet persons who could receive us without formality, and whose free and easy kindness soon made us feel as comfortable as in our own home. Another tropical pleasure is that of being thoroughly idle. When the sun is parching the earth with a degree of heat of which the untravelled inhabitants of England, fortunately, have no conception, one dearly loves to dawdle about in his own way, to stand, or sit, or sleep, or wake, as he pleases. On these sultry days, the very camels even, with that strange zig-zag movement which is peculiar to them, move about unheeded, going slow or fast, or not going at all, at their own pleasure. The very donkeys may take liberties with you, receiving no admonitory rebuke from the heavy stick that hangs idly in your hand. People lie asleep in their houses during the heat of the day, for there is little astir until the cool breath of evening is felt, when the Señoritas begin to move, and having

arranged their light toilet, appear in all their bloom and beauty on the Alameda. The Spanish gentlemen are there too; but they, having lighted their cigars, are conversing with the cock-fighting gentleman who has come over from Teneriffe to provide them with an opportunity of witnessing their favourite sport. Bull-fighting was never more popular in Spain than cock-fighting is in the Grand Canary.

Some distance beyond the Alameda, there is a very beautiful view of Las Palmas as it stands on the ravine on both sides of which its streets are erected. There is something peculiarly foreign in the aspect of the town, viewed from this position. In winter, a mountain stream flows down the ravine, which is spanned by a very elegant bridge built by one of its former bishops. The houses, which in this direction are some of the best in the town, are beautifully interspersed with orange and palm trees. Crowds of women come to wash in the stream which flows down the Barranco. On one side of the ravine the Cathedral of St. Anne is erected. Though unfinished, it is a remarkably fine, and even noblelooking, building. On the other side may be observed an amphitheatre of caves, some of which, doubtless, once afforded refuge to the aborigines, while others are the work of more recent times. The poorer part of the inhabitants, who, like their Guanche predecessors, are still a semi-troglodite race, inhabit these not very choice abodes. In the distance the blue range of the Pexas Mountains may be observed crowning the landscape. Altogether, the view is at once unique and charming.

The great lion of Las Palmas is its cathedral, of which the inhabitants may well be proud. In the glorious days of Isabella the Catholic, when the genius of Spain was attaining to its greatest ascendancy, the Spanish architect, Don Diego Montande, laid the foundations of this magnificent church. It was fortunately built and consecrated before a taste had arisen for a style of architecture that was inconsistent with the canons and requirements of Christian art. The architect, Montande, is said to have received only forty maravedis daily for his work, a sum equal to about ninepence, English money, in the eighteenth century. However, the bishopric being possessed of immense revenues, the Bishop and Chapter determined to reconstruct and finish the cathedral. Although, therefore, the first architect deserves all the honour for having designed so magnificent a building, it was principally erected by an architect who, though a native of Laguna in Teneriffe, yet claimed British origin. His name was Don Diego Nicholas Eduardo, the descendant of a family which, in company with many others in similar circumstances, came from Ireland at the time of the rebellion in that country, and took refuge in the Canary Islands. To this day, in these islands and in Spain, there is many a Murphy, O'Donnell, and Callaghan, names which clearly show whence they have sprung, although the nationality of the individuals bearing them is now changed. It is said that Eduardo built the roof of the cathedral of so light a pumice that the workmen, considering it unsafe, refused to continue the work. The only way in which he could inspire them with confidence was by sitting under the roof himself, while they were engaged in working at the building. By this means their courage was restored and the work progressed.

The church, as it now stands, is composed of a nave with double aisles, the side aisles forming chapels. The piers also are very lofty and elegant,



partaking in some measure of the form of the palm-tree. They are thus quite characteristic of the city in which the cathedral is built. This fact suggests a question well worthy of some consideration. Why should not the indigenous flora of this, or of any other country, be adapted to the architecture of its edifices? The Egyptians availed themselves of their own lotus. The Greeks learned a lesson from their native acanthus. The natives of Palestine obtained suggestions from the pomegranate and lily. And in the case of these islands, what could be more appropriate to the ornamentation of the houses in the Canaries than their own stately and massive banana and vigorous aloe, to which a contrast, at once so striking and beautiful, could be obtained in the elegant fern or the euphorbia? Would not the introduction of forms suggested by these trees, plants, and flowers, while introducing something original, with greater variety, into architecture, be at the same time more consistent than the perpetual use of the Greek honeysuckle or other classical decorations, without regard to the character and traditions of the people or the natural features of the place?

The sacristy of the cathedral has a very remarkable stone floor. It is shown to visitors as a perfect marvel, and seems completely to puzzle the priest who exhibits it. It is a square of some five-and-twenty feet, and, as there is no support but the side walls (for he takes the visitor down into the chamber beneath to look), the supposed wonder that requires to be explained in the manner in which it is supported. The celebrated English engineer, Mr. Stephenson, happened to be one of our party on the occasion of this visit to the cathedral. As what was such a mystery to the priest was none to him, he excited the great surprise of the former by explaining to him on paper the principle on which the floor was built, namely, that, being in the form of an arch, it required only the outer walls, which were very thick, to support it. The worthy padre did not appear quite to relish the idea of so simple an explanation of what had all his life been such a marvel to him, and it is doubtful whether any reason or argument would have satisfied him of its correctness.

Altogether, the interior of the cathedral is very grand. Its appearance would be much more imposing, if it were not for the coro, which destroys the general effect by cutting up the nave. From the style of its architecture, also, it appears to be quite out of keeping with the other parts of the building. The lectern, or reading-desk, is said to be a relic from old St. Paul's cathedral.

In the Capilla Mayor a very massive silver lamp is suspended. It is made of filigree silver, the workmanship of Genoese artists, and is said to have been presented to the church by Cardinal Zimenes in 1690. The altar and credence-table are very magnificent, being formed of beaten silver. The former is decorated with three large salvers, besides the immense paschal candle, nearly a foot in diameter, and about fifteen feet in height, which is placed on the northern side. A fine canopy of rich crimson velvet adorns the high altar.

In accordance with the religious policy of the times, Pope Clement VI, in 1344, took advantage of all the discoveries that were then made to propagate the Roman Catholic faith. He accordingly claimed spiritual dominion over the Canary Islands. The Norman cavalier, John de Betancourt, who undertook the conquest of Canary, had two chaplains with him, John le Verrier

and Peter Bontier, who were very zealous in the extension of their faith. Their success in the conversion of the Guanches almost equalled their unwearied zeal. In the year 1404, they built a church in the island of Lanzarote, naming it the Church of San Marcial. By a bull of Pope Benedict XIII, it was converted into a cathedral see, suffragan of Seville. Fo Mendo de Viednia, after some contention, was recognized by the Council of Constance, and is generally considered the first bishop of the see of San Marcial in Lanzarote. Subsequently, in 1435, a bull was obtained from Eugenius IV, authorising the translation of the see to Grand Canary, as being a place of greater importance. In November, 1485, eight years after the complete subjugation of the island, this translation was effected, the then newly-erected cathedral being at the same time dedicated to St. Anne.

The present church was built in the year 1500. It was commenced during the episcopate of F. Diego de Moros, dean of Santiago, and third bishop of Las Palmas, one of the most violent opponents of Luther and the doctrines of the Reformation. The first sacred offices were celebrated in it on the eve of Corpus Christi, 1570. It is supposed not to occupy the same site as the first church.

The Inquisition was established in the Canary Islands soon after the conquest, a circumstance to which we may attribute, at least in part, the loss of the Guanche language, the natives not daring to speak it in public, from the fear of being misunderstood, or of exciting the suspicion of their conquerors. The memory of their old traditions and their ancient customs disappeared with their language. As Grand Canary was the head-quarters of the Inquisition, the *auto-da-fe* is said to have been perpetrated there.

In addition to the cathedral, there are other handsome buildings in the city of Las Palmas. Immediately in front of it is the Ayuntamiento, or Town-hall, which forms a handsome ornament to the square. We are aware that it has been sneeringly declared to be an exact facsimile of Day and Martin's establishment in Holborn, while it is really a fine building, and looks extremely well.

There is an excellent college for the education of young men. Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, and the other branches of science are taught in it, lecture-rooms being devoted to each of these departments of instruction. The building also contains a model-room and library. There is a dining-room in which the students take their meals, and a separate bath and dressing-room for each. For exercise there is a fine terrace-walk close upon the sea, and a garden well filled with the shrubs and evergreens of the island. Books are kept, recording the name, conduct, and progress of each student, which are always open to the inspection of the public. The plan of the institution is exceedingly liberal, the object in view, apparently, being that families whose limited means preclude them from sending their sons to Europe to complete their education, should have the opportunity of obtaining sound, practical, and useful instruction for them at home. Great order is maintained in the establishment, the discipline of which is very strict. Many of the pupils, in after life, have afforded good evidence of the excellent system of training to which they were subjected in the early years of their life.

The church and convent of the Jesuits is near this college. The inmates were banished from Teneriffe during the religious and political commotions which extended from Spain even to these small and remote islands, but were

subsequently permitted to return. Las Palmas also possesses a theatre and casino for the amusement of the people, which, with the alameda, form interesting and attractive places of resort to the inhabitants.

The aspect of the country around Las Palmas, and indeed in the whole island of Grand Canary, differs in some material points from that of Teneriffe. In consequence of the much greater quantity of rain that falls annually in the former island, everything looks verdant and refreshing, and vegetation of all kinds is remarkably abundant. It suffers under one great disadvantage, however, Grand Canary being said not to be nearly so salubrious as Teneriffe. In 1851, when it was visited by cholera, the island was completely decimated. This fatal disease is said to have been first introduced by a ship from Habana, which arrived with foul linen on board, a supposition confirmed by the fact that it broke out in the quarter where the clothes were washed. The same vessel, however, is stated to have previously landed a passenger in quarantine at Santa Cruz, where no evil results followed.

The road leading out of the town winds for some distance along the edge of a very deep ravine. The prospect is exceedingly pleasing and cheerful, presenting a continuous bird's-eye view of gentlemen's country-houses, every inch of ground being carefully cultivated. There are innumerable gardens, variegated with blossoming flowers of all colours and kinds. Productive vineyards are seen over the whole face of the country, and there are many dense groves and thickets in which, even at midday, one may find shelter from the overpowering rays of the sun".

CHAS. W. THOMAS: *Adventures and observations on the west coast of Africa and its islands*. Nueva York, 1860. Págs. 343-350.

"The city of Las Palmas, formerly the capital of the Canary Islands, and now the residence of the Royal Council, is situated on the southern side of the island, on a plain of a mile in width and about three miles in length. On this plain, and to the west of the city, stand many venerable palms which are said to have been of their present height when these islands were colonized, and are therefore at least 1,500 years old. From them the city derived its name, Las Palmas being literally «the palm trees». From the anchorage, the city presents a pretty, rather than an imposing, appearance. The substantial, square-roofed houses, are generally painted in some brilliant color, and here and there an ornamented dome, or graceful spire, gives an air of taste to the picture.

Early on the morning following our arrival, I joined Dr. C. in a visit to the shore; knowing that, with his many other inestimable qualities and accomplishments, his thorough command of the Spanish language would make him a valuable guide. We found our way to the *English Hotel* —so called, perhaps, because the servants don't understand a word of that language— were admitted through a massive door into an open court, around which the house stands in pure Moorish, or Spanish, style— which you please— were conducted to the second story, which alone is inhabitable in such buildings, led into a dark room, and, when the heavy doors and window-shutters grated their welcome to the light of day, found ourselves surrounded with pictures

illustrating the adventures of Don Quixote. We felt at home at once! asked the butler if he was not a lineal descendant of the immortal shadow — told him we made the acquaintance of his relative in our boyhood, and hoped that by 4 o'clock, he would give us a dinner worthy of the friends of the family. He grinned and bowed, and we returned to the street for a lion hunt.

The city, which is built with some respect to system, is divided in the centre by a river bed, now dry, which is inclosed by walls of solid masonry, and spanned by a stone bridge, the balustrades of which are ornamented by well cut marble statues of several of the heathen deities. Near the river is the fruit market; and here we loitered for a while, feasting our eyes on the greatest variety of fruits and vegetables that we ever beheld in a market-place. The pumpkins, several of which we failed to lift on account of their weight, squashes, melons, and other fruits of the genus *cucurbita*, surpassed any fancy pictures we had ever drawn of tropical luxuriance. We speak of this as a tropical climate, for although it is not included in that zone which geographers call tropical, its climate and animal and vegetable productions entitle it to that classification.

Let the reader imagine a small triangular court, lined with stalls, in which are heaps of such pumpkins as we have described, overhung by festoons of smooth rose-colored onions, and bunches of honey dropping bananas fifty pounds in weight; crowd the doors and shelves with baskets of apples and limes, oranges and plums, dates and mulberries, figs and melons; and, among these, pack mammoth specimens of the common culinary vegetables of America, making room for walnuts, almonds and chestnuts, and ornament the whole with bunches of gorgeous flowers, and he will have a fair idea of the market of Las Palmas in summer.

But little in the way of architecture is to be expected in western Africa or any of its islands; yet, the cathedral of St. Anne, though still unfinished after a hundred years of building, is a large and beautiful edifice; in that style which, in its pointed and uplifting arches, is full of beauty, and symbolically appropriate to a temple of worship. The gothic style is speedily regaining favor in Europe, and finds admiration in America, and the time is not distant when it will be generally imitated in church architecture.

The arched and tastefully ornamented roof is supported within by the rows of columns which divide the interior into three aisles, of which the central one has a tessellated marble floor, while those on each side are ornamented with private altars, statuettes and oil paintings. Of these, two, representing the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord, are valuable imitations of Murillo. The choir — a room on the floor, itself quite a large chapel — occupies one end of the central aisle, and the chancel, containing the grand altar, which is covered with a plating of solid silver, the other. The lamp which goes not out, suspended before the altar, is also solid silver, handsomely chased, and weighs five hundred pounds. We were shown into the sacristy and allowed to take the furniture of the altar and the vestments of the priests in our heretical hands. Several of the crucifixes are of solid gold, and the chalice also is gold, set with costly diamonds. The vestures of the higher clergy are the richest fabrications of the kind that we have ever seen; one of them, made of white brocade silk, profusely trimmed with a fringe of pure gold — the robe of a bishop — cost over five thousand dollars. The

garments alone are estimated at one hundred thousand dollars; the interest of which would support and educate the poor children of the island.

From here we descended into a catacomb, dark and damp, which occupies the space under the chancel, and has already several occupants, including two or three bishops. The roof of this apartment is composed of large square stones and stands, without arch or pillar, by being closely tongued and grooved together, and fastened with a strong cement. It is a piece of masonry worthy of any country.

Going through the public square, as we left the cathedral, we passed the venerable-looking bishop of these islands, dressed in a red cloak, black knee-breeches, scarlet hose and silver-buckled shoes. He was accompanied by a number of Jesuit priests, who were dressed in long black gowns, wearing the long stove-pipe hat, which here designates that order. We gave the amiable old man a military salute as we passed him, which he returned with the unusual compliment, lifting his cocked hat, and the stovepipes flying up in imitation, revealed a number of closely-shaven pates.

A well-dressed and well-served dinner awaited us at the hotel, but one certainly more suitable to the stomach of a Don Quixote than to that of an American. The odor of garlic met us at the door to check the ardor of appetite. Garlic in the soup, garlic in the fish sauce, garlic in the gravy, *fricassée à la garlic*, the bread, and even the dessert, tasted of garlic, and for days after, the miserable scent followed us, as insensible to hints as a poor relation. After dinner, we were visited by a couple of gentlemen, who came to offer us, in common with the officers of the ship, the freedom of the club-room of the city, and to escort us to such places as we desired to visit. We placed ourselves at their disposal, walked through the most pleasant parts of the city, and visited the foundling hospital and female college.

In the hospital there are over one hundred children between the ages of a few days and fourteen years, mostly females. They are here taught needle-work, reading, and weaving, and furnished with food and clothing until they are old enough to make a living for themselves.

The institution is directed and maintained by the Sisters of Charity, who continue a kindly watchfulness over their wards for years after they leave it. Of the number of children there under six months old, two only were in good health — this, not for the want of medical attention or good nursing, but because the majority of them are born with those diseases which are the heritage of abandonments. The lady, acting as matron of the establishment, informed us that of those brought there in infancy, but about ten *per centum* reached the second year. The children partook of the evening meal—consisting chiefly of bread and a light broth—while we were there; and as we were leaving, they were chanting, mechanically and with husky, sorrowful notes, their hymn of thanksgiving. Between those we left in the upper rooms in the various stages of emaciation, and *in articulo mortis*, and those singing in the court below, we were struck with a common resemblance in expression of features. Sadness marked every face. Early led into the mystery of sorrow, strangers to the voice of affection and the caresses of maternal love, they are growing prematurely old, knowing not the meaning of father, or sister, or home; the affection and joyfulness of childhood are withering in the bud; and with many, the pale cheek shows that the fair flowers are dead. Will

Spring ever visit the gardens of these hearts? has this cold world a breath of love, or a gleam of sunshine, to call these dead heart-flowers to life?  
No, not for all — not for most of them!

*So much the rather thou, celestial light,  
Shine inward!*

At the female college, the young ladies, natives of the islands, treated us to some superior music. We were shown through the dormitories and recitation-rooms, and everywhere order and taste were manifest. The course of instruction is similar to that pursued in our own female colleges, but differing advantageously in this, that languages take the place of mathematics, and painting is carried beyond the region of daubing in colors to the highly useful accomplishment of sketching from nature.

It was now night; so we joined our messmates at the club-room, where we spent a pleasant hour receiving hospitalities from the gentlemen of the city. After refreshments, the president of the club offered a toast, «To the friendly relations existing between the Canary Islands and the United States — may they exist forever!» This was answered by our accomplished first-lieutenant, W. A. Bartlett, in excellent Spanish; both toasts were followed by rounds of applause. A second was offered, «To the Jamestown and her officers», which was appropriately responded to by Lieutenant Commanding, J. F. Armstrong, who was followed by «three times three».

Having thus contributed something toward strengthening the bonds of peace existing between our nations — we say this with a good deal of self-complacency, reader — we walked to a brilliantly-lighted square near by, where a military band was discoursing artistic music, and the ladies of the city were promenading. The ladies were beautiful, and walked exquisitely; but we beg to be excused from going into the usual ecstasies of admiration over Spanish female beauty. True, their carriage is admirable, their black eyes soft and beautiful, but too languid, and lacklustre, and are wanting in intellectual vivacity; and the faces of the Spanish *señoritas* will not compare favorably with those of the young blonds and brunettes of America.

Here, as in Spain and the Havanas, young people of opposite sexes do not walk together in public, unless they are *affiancés*, and then, they are accompanied by the mother of the lady, or a prudent relative. The reason offered for this usage is, that the sexes have more respect for each other when kept far apart; but the true reason, is the suspicion of parents, who are often conscious of not having set a proper example before their children.

We are satisfied that the degree of intimacy allowed in the *good* circles of American society we exclude *upper tens*, *parvenus*, and the imitators of the defects of foreign society now so numerous in our cities — contributes to the self-dependence and happiness of both sexes. The unhappy marriages which, statisticians tell us, abound in Spanish countries, may, in part at least, be traced to the incongeniality which must so often result, where the parties know nothing of each other's personal qualities previously to marriage; and also to the want of confidence in a virtue which has never been left to stand in its own strength. We agree with the vicar of Wakefield, that «a virtue which requires to be always watched, is not worth having».

On the day following our excursion, we remained aboard, and on Wednesday visited the young but promising male college of this city, and the

cochineal fields in the suburbs, of which cultivation we shall speak under the head of Tenerife. On Thursday, our officers were engaged to dine with Madam Mendoza Tate, a South Carolinian by birth, who is married to a wealthy gentleman of this island; but a violent storm came up at noon, so that we were compelled to put to sea, and returned no more to Grand Canary”.

JULES LECLERQ: *Voyage aux Iles Fortunées*. Paris, 1880. Págs. 216-222.

“En montant sur le pont, j’ai été ravi du coup d’oeil pittoresque que présente la ville des Palmes, vue du large: elle est bâtie en amphithéâtre sur une colline, et rappelle Lisbonne. Une bande de nuages couvrait le paysage environnant, mais à l’arrière-plan les cimes lointaines de l’île se détachaient sur le ciel bleu, éclairées par les premiers feux du soleil. La ville des Palmes se présente de loin beaucoup mieux que Sainte-Croix.

Notre bateau devait s’arrêter ici une journée entière: c’était assez pour se faire une idée de la ville. Débarquer aux Palmes n’est pas chose aisée: la houle secouait notre chaloupe comme un fétu de paille, et il fallut manoeuvrer l’aviron pendant une grande demi-heure. Il est rare que la mer ne soit pas agitée devant les Palmes, dont la rade est absolument découverte; aussi les navires d’Europe préfèrent-ils relâcher à Sainte-Croix, que offre un mouillage plus sûr. A une lieue des Palmes se trouve un petit port mieux abrité, qui a nom *Puerto de la Luz*: c’est là que les navires se réfugient en cas de mauvais temps.

J’ai été frappé du caractère oriental des Palmes: on se croirait plutôt dans une ville arabe que dans une ville espagnole: l’aspect des habitations, les ruelles irrégulières et montueuses, le type même des habitants, tout rappelle le voisinage du Maroc. Ici, comme chez les Maures, les maisons sont généralement sans étage; elles se terminent en terrasses et sont blanches comme la neige. La grande rue a seule un caractère européen: c’est la rue des affaires; elle est plus animée et plus belle que la grande rue de Sainte-Croix, et l’on sent tout de suite que c’est aux Palmes que se concentre l’activité industrielle et commerciale des Canaries.

Un ravin divise la ville en deux quartiers, que réunit un beau pont en pierre orné de statues. Ce pont traverse une rivière sans eau, pleine de galets, et au beau milieu de la rivière, j’ai vu des champs de maïs. Voilà une rivière qui se respecte encore moins que le Manzanarès! Du haut du pont, la vue s’égare sur de luxuriants jardins plantés de palmiers et sur les maisons du faubourg qui se hissent les unes au-dessus des autres, suspendues aux flancs des montagnes. Dans le lointain on aperçoit le *Sancillo*, point culminant de l’île, atteignant une altitude de 7.000 pieds au-dessus du niveau de la mer.

J’ai couru tout d’abord au marché, où j’ai passé en revue les fruits du pays, raisins, pastèques, régimes de bananes, figues d’Inde, etc. La poissonnerie, située tout à côté, est une charmante création qu’on ne trouverait dans aucune ville de France. J’ai pu observer là le costume des femmes du peuple: elles se coiffent d’un voile d’étoffe eblanche qui n’est pas moins gracieux que la mantille. Leur type est plus franchement mauresque que celui des Ténériennes: il y a quelque chose d’africain dans les éclairs de leurs regards; elles

ont une belle démarche, grâce à leur habitude de porter des amphores sur la tête, à la mode arabe. Dans chacune des îles de l'archipel on trouve des types différents et une manière différente de se vêtir.

La cathédrale des Palmes est le plus beau monument religieux des Canaries: elle peut supporter la comparaison avec les plus somptueuses basiliques de l'Espagne. La façade, inachevée, est d'un style classique d'une grande pureté. L'intérieur, du seizième siècle, offre un gothique très original. De légers piliers accouplés, sans chapiteaux, s'élancent vers la voûte, où ils se divisent en une infinité de nervures d'une délicatesse et d'une grâce charmantes. Suivant la mode espagnole, le chœur occupe le milieu de l'église. On m'a fait remarquer une lampe d'argent d'une grande valeur donnée, dit-on, par le cardinal Ximènes. Dans une chapelle repose le poète canarien Cairasco de Figueroa, né en 1535, mort en 1610: il écrivit un poème sur les antiquités canariennes, et Cervantès lui rendit hommage comme à un grand poète. Sous le maître-autel se trouve le tombeau de l'historien Viera.

La ville des Palmes est la plus considérable de l'archipel canarien: elle compte une population de 15.000 âmes. Bien que le capitaine général réside à Sainte-Croix, la ville des Palmes, qui fut autrefois le chef-lieu de cette province d'Espagne, a conservé tous les autres privilèges d'une capitale: elle est le siège de l'évêché et de la cour d'appel (*real audiencia*). Le palais de justice est installé dans un ancien couvent: un magistrat de l'*audiencia*, ancien juge à Séville, a voulu lui-même me montrer les différentes salles d'audience; suivant la mode espagnole, il y règne un luxe inusité chez nous: les juges, vêtus d'un riche costume de velours noir garni de dentelles, siègent sous un dais en velours rouge orné du portrait du roi Alphonse. La cour d'appel des Palmes compte un président, un président de chambre, quatre magistrats, un procureur du roi (*fiscal*), un substitut (*teniente fiscal*), un secrétaire, un rapporteur (*relator*) et deux greffiers. L'*audiencia* est saisie en ce moment du procès de deux meurtriers accusés d'avoir assassiné un Anglais à Ténériffe, en rase campagne, dans le but de s'approprier une somme de soixante mille francs dont il était porteur. Les deux individus ont été récemment condamnés à la peine capitale par le juge de première instance avec lequel je dinai journellement à Orotava, et il n'est pas douteux que la sentence ne soit confirmée en appel. Cet assassinat fait d'autant plus de bruit que les crimes sont extrêmement rares aux Canaries.

La ville des Palmes possède une ravissante *alameda*: elle est ombragée de lauriers de l'Inde, de palmiers de Cuba, et d'autres arbres qui se cultivent dans nos serres d'Europe. Je n'ai rien vu de plus joli que cette promenade publique. Sur une petite place voisine s'élève une charmante fontaine surmontée du buste du poète Cairasco.

En quittant l'*alameda*, j'ai gravi les ruelles tortueuses du faubourg, où grouille une population à demi nue, et suis arrivé à la forteresse, d'où l'on domine toute la ville. N'était la cathédrale, dont les tours rappellent celles de Zurich, on croirait voir une blanche cité mauresque, avec ses maisons cubiques d'une éblouissante blancheur, ses terrasses, ses patios. Les palmiers qui surgissent de tous côtés complètent l'illusion: c'est à eux que la ville doit son nom.

La métropole canarienne occupe une vaste étendue: les maisons sont disséminées çà et là, sans cohésion, et les champs de cochenille font invasion jusqu'au milieu des habitations. Rien n'est plus pittoresque que le panorama



de cette cité bâtie entre la mer et les montagnes, dans une vallée délicieuse; le flamboyant soleil des tropiques donne à ses blanches maisons un éclat éblouissant qui contraste avec le bleu profond de l'Océan. Au nord-est surgit l'îlot volcanique de l'Isleta, qu'un étroit isthme de sable rattache à l'île mère. A l'opposite s'ouvre une gracieuse perspective sur une vallée intérieure, où une multitude de palmiers déploient leur feuillage aérien. A l'ouest, la ville est dominée par les hautes falaises criblées d'une infinité de cavernes qu'habite toute une population de Troglodytes. Ces excavations datent des Guanches, qui y avaient élu domicile.

Après midi, j'ai fait une excursion en voiture au port de la Luz, en compagnie d'un négociant marseillais établi aux Palmes. Nous avons suivi la route tracée à travers le sable de l'isthme qui relie l'Isleta à la Grande Canarie. Le pic de Ténériffe, qu'on ne peut voir des Palmes, à cause des montagnes intermédiaires, est parfaitement visible de l'isthme. Grâce à l'extrême transparence de l'air, le Pic semble ne se trouver qu'à une portée de fusil, bien qu'il soit en réalité à plus de quinze lieues de distance, et sa cime, l'une des plus élevées de notre hémisphère, s'abaisse par la distance au point de ne paraître pas plus haute que la barrière de l'Étoile.

Nous nous sommes arrêtés aux sources minérales de Santa-Catalina, où l'on a établi récemment une maison de bains. Ces eaux ont été analysées par des médecins parisiens. Elles sont riches en chlorure de sodium et s'emploient avec succès dans les affections scrofuleuses, rhumatismales et goutteuses, et dans celles des voies digestives. Située à une centaine de mètres de la mer, Santa-Catalina est la seule source minérale connue où l'on puisse combiner avec les bains de mer le traitement intérieur. Il serait indispensable d'organiser l'établissement de telle sorte que cette double action thérapeutique pût être mise à profit. Malheureusement les installations actuelles laissent fort à désirer".

OLIVIA M. STONE: *Tenerife and its six satellites or The Canary Islands Past and Present*. Londres, 1887. Volumen II, págs. 2-11.

"We came ashore to the Puerto de la Luz, as the landing is considered safer there. When vessels stay a couple of days, they prefer this anchorage, as there is more shelter. By this means we saw the commencement of the proposed Harbour of Refuge, and had a pleasant drive over the isthmus to the town of Las Palmas. The Isleta, adjoining Canaria on the north-east, is a miniature island of Gran Canaria. The same forces, on a smaller scale, have been at work there, as in the larger island. It is formed by craters. One conical hill in the shape of a peak, with a small portion of sloping land around its base, faces us as we lie in the roadstead. No doubt at one time it was an island, for it is now joined to Canaria only by an isthmus entirely composed of sand. On the western side of this isthmus of Guanarteme, there is at the present moment a bar, some distance from the isthmus, but running parallel with it, showing that the sand is still accumulating. Only small boats can enter there. It is somewhat like, though on a small scale, the isthmus at Auckland, which divides the Hauraki gulf from the Manakau, the latter corresponding to Confital Bay. The New Zealand isthmus is, however, seven miles wide, whilst that of Guanarteme is but a mile. From the Isleta to Las

Palmas the coast line makes a grand sweep. In the centre of the curve, where it is greatest, the new harbour is being made. From La Luz the town of Las Palmas looks large and rather imposing as it lies along the coast, for the most part on almost level ground, gradually ascending behind the town until stopped by a precipitous rock. Nothing apparently grows on the isthmus, which is entirely composed of light, drab-coloured dune sand, except tamarisk bushes, scraggy as usual.

On the western side, next the town, a bluff of basaltic-looking rock, rising abruptly out of the sand, no doubt formerly out of the sea, is good evidence of the formation of the isthmus. Two old forts, those of La Luz and Santa Catalina, one on the Isleta and one on the main island, are only worthy of note on account of their age, for they are very small.

The road is excellent the whole way to the town, a distance of about three miles. As we cross the neck of land, we pass on the left mineral baths, and on the right the land begins to show signs of cultivation; palm groves appear, with a large, well-built house in their midst. Soon each side of the road is lined by houses, these presently forming a continuous street, through which we passed into the town.

Along this street it was curious to note the braziers, not because they are new, but because their surroundings are altered. Instead of old houses and broken pavements, we have here even rows of new houses, a regular, flagged pathway, and a macadamised road. It seems an anomaly to have a little black brazier standing on the edge of the public pavement, and a woman crouching over it fanning the charcoal with a palm fan.

We passed through almost the entire town, and by a bridge crossed over the barranco, in which was a little water, before reaching our destination, the Fonda Europa, kept by Don Ramon Lopez. There was no English hotel \* in Las Palmas when we arrived, but before we left one had been started by a Mr. and Mrs. Quiney (English people) in a part of the town near the mole. The Fonda Europa is a large house, in which an English merchant formerly dwelt. It is high, as are most of the houses in Las Palmas. We seem to have left Europe in Tenerife, and reached Africa in Gran Canaria, so different do the houses appear. All are flat-roofed. I could not see a single peaked one in the entire town, and the Moresque appearance is completed by the domes of the cathedral, which are decidedly Moorish. Las Palmas is a finer-looking town than Santa Cruz. The streets are broader, the houses newer and generally larger, but it lacks the picturesqueness that crooked, narrow streets, with overhanging eaves, give to its rival, and, owing to the distance of the background of mountains, has not that bold and majestic scenery in its vicinity that lends a charm to Santa Cruz. Both towns are unfortunate in being placed in barren situations, but both might be much improved could a liberal water supply be secured. Las Palmas, besides being the chief commercial town of the island, is also the residence of the bishop and clergy; it is, in fact, Laguna and Santa Cruz rolled into one. It was owing to this, I suppose, that the moment we left the hotel we were besieged by beggars, who were most persistent and annoying.

After some coffee and bread-and-butter and the usual fight with the men

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\* I hear lately that on some fifty acres of land near Santa Catalina a hotel and fincas are going to be built.

about their charges for luggage, which to us is annoying, but which they look upon as part of the daily business, we sauntered forth. The cathedral, we knew, from seeing its domes, must be in our immediate vicinity. Turning to the left on leaving the hotel, we walked to the end of the street Balcones, where there is a picturesque old fountain, at which the inhabitants obtain water. Some girls had long bamboos, which they placed at the dribble of water at the tap, several feet above their barrels. Very picturesque they looked in their coloured head kerchiefs, out of which peered sunburnt faces as they leaned in unconscious grace against the grey stones.

The exterior of the cathedral of San Cristobal in very massive, though the edifice is not finished yet. Two towers, dome-shaped, rise on either side of the main entrance. Between them is the foundation of a tower which is no doubt intended to rise above the others and complete the building, when sufficient money is forthcoming. The church is at one end of the plaza, the town-hall and museum at the other; the fine open space shows off the cathedral well. Part of the church is old, dating back to about 1500. Its foundations were laid in the days of Isabella the Catholic by Don Diego Montande, who was the first architect. He was paid for his services the magnificent sum of ninepence a day! It was really erected, however, by Don Diego Nicolas Eduardo, of Irish descent, who, it is stated, built the roof of so light a stone, that the workmen refused to work, whereupon he sat beneath it to encourage them. The interior, Gothic in style, is lofty, with fluted and well-proportioned pillars. The ceiling is a light stone-work tracery; whitewash in between, covering we know not what, is no improvement. The ceiling reminds one a little of that of Bath Abbey. The chancel is hung all round with crimson and gold cloth, and looks simple and in good taste. A massive silver candelabra, the work of Genoese artists, presented by Cardinal Ximenes in 1690, hangs before the altar, on which are silver candlesticks. A funeral service is going on, a black-and-gold sarcophagus being placed at the foot of the altar. There is a lantern dome, so the church is not very dark. There is a lantern dome, so the church is not very dark. There are aisles at either side, containing many chapels. The grandeur of the interior is, however, spoiled by a heavy piece of masonry in the middle of the nave, in which the organ and choir are placed. There are two holy water fountains, supported by turbaned dwarfs, and two pulpits, one on either side. The windows have small circular, coloured glass panes; the colouring is not good, the effect on one's sense of the artistic being painful. There is yellow at the top, then blue, then magenta, and green at the bottom. We will hope these are only temporary, until some good Churchmen present stained glass windows. We saw the cathedral frequently, and later we were shown the vestments.

It was breakfast-time at the fonda, so we returned there. Having a letter of introduction to Dr. Chil, and finding he lived next door, we sent the letter in to him, which he promptly answered in person, introducing himself to us. Señor Don Gregorio Chil is a fine, hale elderly man, with white hair, and upright as a soldier. He is one of the historians\* of the island, and is more given to literature than to his profession. He studied medicine in Paris, however, and practises a little; but he is a thorough student. He is the founder and careful, tender nurse of the young museum, not long started,

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\* *Estudios Históricos, Climatológicos, y Patológicos de las Islas Canarias* (1879).

and is interested in everything connected with the past of these islands. His freedom of thought has rendered him obnoxious to the clergy here, and, although, I believe, not exactly excommunicated for holding Darwinian opinions, he is more or less at variance with the Church. He had to be married elsewhere, in France or Spain — I forget which — owing to the feeling against him.

Again setting out, we called on Mr. James Miller, our viceconsul, to whom we had letters of introduction. We then called on Señor Don Agustin Millares, another historian, who is also a novelist. Canaria is rich in writers. Don Agustin took us into his well-filled library, and kindly gave us two of his works — his «History of the Islands», which is going through the press, and his «History of the Inquisition in the Islands».\* For this latter work Don Agustin has been excommunicated; so I fear what he says on the subject must be true. It must keep the «Holy Catholic Church» out here busy excommunicating all its thoughtful and learned men. Several of those who had been excommunicated told us that the religious sentence passed upon them did not trouble them. After it had been pronounced they found that they were just as well in body, and as for their souls, they considered they were at least just as good Catholics as, if not better than, they were before. Many of the undoubtedly «faithful» told us that they held those excommunicated for holding advanced scientific opinions and liberality of thought in just as high esteem as before they were excommunicated. So we gathered that out here the thunder of the Church of Rome has lost much, if not all, of its ancient power. We had a number of letters of introduction to the people of Las Palmas, and delivered many of them. One was to a gentleman of the mercantile house of Ripoche, Señor Don Nestor de la Torre, who most kindly called on us and accompanied us to several places.

Dr. Chil took us to see the museum in the town-hall. There is a hall inside this building for municipal purposes, decorated in florid style in pale mauve and white, the floor tiled. The museum is at the top of the building, and is situated in a long, narrow room or gallery. Here is the first printing-press used in the island at the end of the eighteenth century. Bits of iron and balls, found in the old walls of a castle when pulled down, are also here. But to us the Guanche remains were the most interesting. These people, however, were Antiguos Canarios, not Guanches, a name that belonged only to the inhabitants of Tenerife, as I have before mentioned. A jar of butter found in Fuerteventura, and smelling strongly still of goat's milk, is a curious relic. It is not every day one sees butter at least five hundred years old. There are a number of small earthenware, seal-like devices in triangles and squares of various shapes, whose use is unknown. Amongst the mummies was that of a woman, with curly brown hair and rather projecting teeth. The stitching on the skins is as fine as «top-sewing». Whole cases full of skulls occupied one side of the room, while specimens of the pelvis lay together in a heap under the windows, and of the femur in another heap, and of the humerus in another place. One femur shown us was that of a large man, about the size of a big Englishman. Another femur had been fractured, and, being badly set, had shortened. There was also a skull with short reddish hair on the skin. Later we photographed some of the curiosities, but just now we

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\* *Historia de la Inquisición en las Islas Canarias* (1874).

had not time to do so, having to make arrangements for starting into the interior.

It takes much time and many inquiries to learn what is the best mode of seeing this island, as to go round the coast would not by any means be the most satisfactory way. The heart of the island is the part we particularly wish to see. As it is getting late in the year, we think it advisable to take the highest parts first, before the snow comes to render mountain-travelling impossible. We finally decided to make two separate excursions, the first to be by way of Arucas, Guia, Agaete, and Aldea to Artenara and Tejeda, in the centre of the island, and back to Las Palmas by Teror; on the second to go by San Mateo to the Roque del Saucillo and the Pico de las Nieves, in mid-island, returning by Tirajana, Aguimes, and Telde. By this means we should see the most interesting parts of the island. The southern portion is barren and lava-strewn, like the south of Tenerife; still, if time permitted, we hoped to visit it a well. It was now November 6th, and we wished to get back to England for Christmas, so we reckoned upon giving three weeks to Gran Canaria and a week to Fuerteventura and Lanzarote, going by steamer from the latter island to the coast of Africa and Cadiz, taking a peep at Morocco and Gibraltar and a run home through Spain. How our intentions were frustrated remains to be seen.

*November 7th, Wednesday.*—There is a patio of course to this fonda, situated at one side of which is the comedor, a long, narrow room, with one table down its length, capable of accommodating about forty people. An open verandah goes round the other three sides, and the comedor is really only the fourth side enclosed. The centre is filled with trees and shrubs, grouped round a fountain, which rarely plays. A pantain droops its long leaves in the middle, and in the corners are a couple of young dragon trees. There are also palms, geraniums, eucalypti, and papyri, while creepers twine round the pillars to the floor above, making the spot green and pleasant to the eye. The rest of the ground floor is divided into bedrooms, chiefly occupied by residents at the hotel. A broad staircase leads to the next floor, upon which are situated the sala and more bedrooms. There are two bedrooms on each side of the sala, opening into it; these are kept, as a rule, for English visitors, and we had the larger one. There is no outlook from the windows, but this matters little in a climate where it is possible to be always in the open air. The bedrooms opening off the verandah which runs round the house, upstairs as well a down, are all dark, having only borrowed light. The doors open on the verandahs, and the bedrooms, having no outer walls, cannot of course have windows. This is not considered a disadvantage by Spaniards, who like darkened rooms; but we English prefer windows. The temperature this morning at eight o'clock in the shade of the patio was 53.6° F. (12° C.). The food here is very good, and the wine supplied with the meals a light, pleasant kind of Burgundy. Although breakfast is served at ten o'clock, and is not our idea of that meal, as it consists of meats only and wine, it is possible to get a comfortable English breakfast, as Don Ramon quite understands the ways of English people. It is made properly; but we had some of our own, which I used to give to Pedro, the head waiter, to make for us. The butter was very good, and there was always a plentiful supply. As we did not require such a substantial meal as the Spaniards, Don Ramon kindly gave us our breakfast when we liked, and had eggs or fish, ham or omelets, chops or steaks, cooked

for us specially. Although we were only a couple of days in Las Palmas at this date, we spent more time here later, when we got into our own ways and hours. Nothing could exceed the courtesy of Don Ramon and his household. It must be remembered, too, that we only paid so much a day, and no extras were charged. We had luncheon too, and when more English stayed in the hotel, dinner was served later for their and our benefit. I had tea always brought to my room after dinner, and although it was my own tea and biscuits, still we frequently had Don Ramon's bread, butter, and honey, not only for ourselves, but for other English people. Considering all things, and even supposing provisions to be cheap, I think the charge of six shillings a day was very moderate and reasonable. The only real fault we had to find was with the attendance. There were but two waiters and two chambermaids, and sometimes only one, Maria, a jolly, fat negress; so when the house was full our bedrooms would be neglected until late in the afternoon.

Las Palmas is divided into two parts by the Barranco Guinguada. The northern part is called Triana, and the southern Vegueta. The former is the commercial part; in it are situated the large shops, the mole, and the barracks. The other district, where we are, is devoted to the clergy, the magistracy, the prison (which used to be the headquarters of the Inquisition), the college, and melancholy. We seldom meet people in the streets here; what bustle there is goes on at the other end. Las Palmas is not so lively nor full of interest as Santa Cruz, owing to the anchorage for vessels being so far from the town".

CHARLES EDUARDES: *Rides and studies in the Canary Islands*. London, 1888. Págs. 348-349.

"It is rather by accident than design that I am able to say anything about the interior of this island. Spring was merging into summer, and the ophthalmic glare of the white houses of Las Palmas daily made me long for a homeward-bound ship. One morning, however, I found myself affot for the day at the ridiculous hour of half-past four. It was in this wise. I had incautiously permitted the hotel manager to let the second bed in my double-bedded room to a gentleman, who was not expected to appear until late in the night. My companion proved to be the chief engineer of a Spanish steamer *en route* from Buenos Ayres to Cadiz, a rosy, great-girthed Scotchman, who lurched into the bedroom, very drunk, at one o'clock in the morning. His eccentricities of course awoke me, and when he lay in bed (in his clothes) he snored so that a continuance of sleep was, for me, impossible. I shouted to him to moderate his spirits; but of what use was it trying to arouse a man accustomed to the shrieks and groans of machinery? He was as deaf to everything as a dead man. And so, at four o'clock, I left him to snore alone, and prowled forth into Las Palmas' streets, bent on hiring a horse and a guide, and going straightway as far in a day as was possible.

By good luck, both horse and guide were found before six o'clock; and thus we started on a long tour in the prime of the morning. The horse was an odd Andalusian: so tall that his legs seemed to have outgrown his body,

and with a movement like the jerk of a camel. He was also hideously bony, and had a sore under the saddle which would have kept both of us at home, if I had known of it ere the journey began. In spite of these apparent demerits, however, the brave fellow took me forty miles with unflagging pluck, in the fourteen hours between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. My guide, too, was not of common mould. An ordinary Canarian would have shrugged his shoulders at the prospect of the exertion implied in the programme submitted to him. But Pancho, as he was called, was brought forward to me as a lad of spirit, whose energies were rather heightened than depressed by an exceptional undertaking. He had lived through a stormy youth in Havana, been criminally associated with blood-shed, could show five knife marks about his body: and was still untamed. They told me I could have no better guide, if I would take him with his peccadilloes. Never was there such a babbler as this Pancho. Gossip and tales of adventure raced one after the other from his tongue; and withal he was my very obedient servant”.

JOHN WHITFORD: *The Canary Islands as a winter resort*. Londres, 1890. Págs. 4-10.

“There are four hotels within the precincts of this city of Las Palmas; two are conducted by English people, and two by Spaniards. During the summer these hotels are not crowded, but as winter approaches they fill rapidly; then the proprietors open one, two, three, or any number of private houses, as annexes, to accommodate surplus guests. As far as their appliances go these caravansaries are comfortable; they are in a transition state between the old fashions and the new, between highly objectionable arrangements for health and the latest sanitary improvements. Food is plentiful and good, but the beef really requires muscular ability to appreciate it. The abundance of fruit, however, supplied at every meal at every hotel, and also enjoyed by the poorest inhabitant, fully compensates for that fault. One gradually becomes so fond of bananas, oranges, figs, and grapes, that joints of beef are passed without regret. The wine of the country is on the table, generally free of charge, at all meals and at all times. The tables fairly groan with épergnes and dishes laden with whatever fruit is in season, and flowers continually smile in all directions—a perfect eye-feast of colours. The Spanish hotels charge from five shillings per day, including room, board, attendance, the run of the drawing-rooms, corridors, and flat roofs; and the English landlords levy from eight shillings upwards for occasional guests. To those who remain for any length of time abatement is made. For families who desire houses to themselves, either for seclusion or economy, or for both, nothing can be simpler than to hire one wherever they choose. There are plenty to be had everywhere in all the islands. They can bring with them from England, bedding, soft pillows, knives, forks, spoons, and other portable requisites, and purchase ordinary bulky articles, such as bedsteads, chairs, and tables, excellently tanned sheep and goat-skin rugs, and useful grass matting, upon the spot. Carpets are not desirable. The climate is luxury and comfort in itself, and sufficient of the Spanish language can be picked up in a few weeks to make ordinary purchases”.

R. VERNEAU: *Cinq années de séjour aux Iles Canaries*. Paris, 1891.  
Págs. 194-203.

“Le port de La Luz n’est plus à l’état de simple projet, il peut déjà abriter les navires du plus fort tonnage, qui trouvent là toutes les facilités pour se ravitailler. Situé dans une position exceptionnelle, à 5 kilomètres de la capitale de l’île, à laquelle il est relié par une route plane, incessamment sillonnée par des voitures, ce port est appelé à un grand avenir. C’est d’ailleurs le seul point des Canaries où, en cas de mauvais temps, les navires puissent trouver un abri sûr.

S’il est une île de l’archipel qui mérite le nom de Fortunée, c’est assurément la Grande Canarie. Elle ne possède ni le fameux pic de Teyde, ni les forêts de Las Mercedes et de l’Agua Garcia, dont je parlerai lorsque j’arriverai à Ténériffe; mais, en dehors de cela, elle n’a rien à envier à celle-ci, et, à beaucoup d’autres points de vue, elle lui est infiniment supérieure.

Il me serait difficile de faire accomplir au lecteur un voyage à travers les mille soixante-cinq villes, bourgs, villages et hameaux que renferme la Grande Canarie; je ne pourrai parler que des localités les plus importantes. Ce grand nombre de centres de population s’explique par ce fait que l’île est relativement la plus peuplée de toutes: ses 89.980 habitants sont répartis sur une superficie de 1.376 kilomètres carrés, soit, en moyenne, plus de 65 habitants par kilomètre.

La capitale, Las Palmas, compte, d’après les chiffres officiels du recensement de 1.879, une population de 17.069 âmes, mais ce chiffre est bien au-dessous de la réalité. Pour des raisons fiscales, cette ville cherche à rester au-dessous de 20.000 habitants; c’est pour cela que la statistique accuse le chiffre que je viens de donner, tandis que, réellement, la population dépasse un peu 24.800 âmes. C’est, on le voit, une ville de quelque importance qui mérite bien une petite description.

Vue de la mer, la *Ciudad de Las Palmas* présente un coup d’œil des plus pittoresques. Tout le long de la plage, s’étale la partie principale de la ville, qui est bordée, au nord et au sud, par de belles propriétés, bien entretenues et plantées de beaux arbres; on distingue de loin une foule de palmiers qui montrent, au-dessus des maisons, leurs panaches de feuilles. En arrière, les divers quartiers s’étagent en amphithéâtre sur les montagnes, qui se terminent en pentes assez rapides à une certaine distance de la mer. Au nord, le Castillo del Rey domine toute la ville, perché comme un nid d’aigle sur un rocher abrupt.

Il n’était pas facile, avant la création du port de La Luz, de débarquer à Las Palmas; la mer y est souvent agitée, et il existe une sorte de barre à la pointe du môle. En 1877, j’ai vu chavirer devant moi une chaloupe conduite pourtant par des marins qui franchissaient chaque jour ce mauvais pas. Mais, aujourd’hui, on peut débarquer de plein pied dans le nouveau port, et, en quelques instants, une voiture vous conduit dans la ville. On y pénètre par une belle rue bordée de quelques jolies maisons et de nombreux magasins. En face de l’ancien môle, s’élève, devant une petite place plantée d’arbres et de massifs de fleurs, le nouveau palais que vient de faire construire l’autorité militaire. Bien que le capitaine général réside encore à Sainte-Croix de Ténériffe, la capitale de la province, il n’en a pas moins voulu avoir une



résidence à Las Palmas, et il est probable que cet édifice ne restera pas inoccupé.

Des nombreux monuments se rencontrent dans la ville. Le plus important est la cathédrale, qui présente un aspect imposant, quoique sa façade ne soit pas terminée; l'intérieur en est un peu nu, mais elle contient pourtant différents objets d'une grande valeur, entre autres une lampe en argent massif et le maître-autel de même métal. Le shoeur en bois du pays, et un bénitier en marbre de la Grande Canarie, ne laissent pas d'offrir un certain intérêt. C'est surtout le trésor et le vestiaire des chanoines qui renferment des richesses inouïes.

Las Palmas, est, depuis longtemps, le siège d'un évêché: depuis quelques années, Ténériffe possède aussi son évêque. Le palais épiscopal, qui s'élève à quelques pas de la cathédrale, n'a de remarquable que sa façade postérieure. La mairie (*ayuntamiento*), située à l'autre extrémité de la place, a au contraire, un aspect monumental; son escalier, sa salle des fêtes, répondent bien à l'aspect extérieur. Au deuxième étage, se trouve le musée canarien, qui renferme déjà de nombreuses pièces intéressantes pour le naturaliste.

Parmi les édifices, il me faudrait citer encore les autres églises, l'hôpital, la prison, le séminaire, le marché au poisson, celui à la viande et aux fruits, le palais de justice, installé dans le vieux convent de San Agustin; c'est là que siège la cour d'appel. Je ne saurais oublier les théâtres, dont un surtout, qui sera bientôt terminé, pourrait lutter avec nos meilleurs théâtres de province. Ce qui est important pour le voyageur, c'est qu'il est assuré de trouver des hôtels à Las Palmas; ils sont même nombreux et offrent un certain confort: les uns sont dirigés par des Espagnols, d'autres par des Italiens, d'autres enfin par des Anglais. Dans l'un, la *Fonda de Europa*, j'ai pu avoir une cuisine française.

Les maisons, terminées en terrasse, possèdent toutes une cour intérieure, généralement ornée de fleurs et entourée d'une galerie couverte, qui permet d'y trouver de l'ombre à toutes les heures de la journée. Elles s'alignent sur des rues assez larges, bien aérées, sauf celles des quartiers construits sur les versants des montagnes.

En dehors des places que j'ai déjà signalées, je dois mentionner celle de San Bernardo, et surtout la *Alameda*, réellement fort belle avec ses palmiers royaux, ses immenses platanes, ses lauriers d'Inde, etc.

La ville est divisée par le ravin du Guinguada; deux ponts, l'un en pierre, l'autre en bois, permettent de passer d'un côté à l'autre. Ce ravin, complètement à sec pendant l'été, devient un torrent impétueux dans la saison des pluies; en 1886 il a emporté toute une façade du marché au poisson.

On trouve à Las Palmas toutes sortes de ressources, et souvent à très bon compte. Il n'est pas rare d'y acheter des articles européens à meilleur marché qu'en France. La douane n'existe pas; les Anglais, et surtout les Allemands, exportent là une foule d'objets qu'ils offrent à des conditions qui rendent bien difficile la concurrence française. Je dois dire pourtant que l'article français est encore préféré par beaucoup d'acheteurs, malgré son prix plus élevé, mais il n'en est pas moins vrai que le commerce de ces îles, jadis tout entier entre nos mains, tend à passer entre celles des Allemands.

J'ai lu dans la relation de voyage d'un touriste qui a séjourné quelques heures à Las Palmas, que le type des habitants rappelait celui du Maroc, qu'on se croirait plutôt dans une ville arabe que dans une ville espagnole.

Les femmes, d'après lui, semblent des Mauresques, et elles ont «quelque chose d'africain dans les éclairs de leurs regards». Je ne sais où l'auteur, auquel je fais allusion, a pu trouver ces ressemblances. Je connais le Maroc, j'ai traversé plusieurs fois toute l'Espagne, et j'ai la prétention de connaître quelque peu les Canaries. Je puis ajouter que, en ma qualité d'anthropologiste, j'ai étudié d'une manière spéciale les types des populations de ces divers pays, et je déclare bien haut qu'il n'a été impossible de constater cette ressemblance. Les habitants de Las Palmas sont bien Espagnols, et je dirai même que, pour la plupart, ils ne présentent pas le type des Espagnols du sud; le type arabe est aussi exceptionnel dans cette ville que dans tout le reste de l'archipel.

Par les coutumes, les gens de Las Palmas sont encore de vrais Européens. Les femmes du peuple ont bien l'habitude de porter sur la tête non seulement des «amphores», mais des paniers ou les objets les plus divers; elles n'en sont pas «arabes» pour cela. Elles se vêtent comme nos paysannes, à l'exception du foulard dont elles se coiffent, en le liant sous le menton, ou du voile d'étoffe blanche par lequel elles le remplacent les jours de fête. Quant aux gens aisés, ils sont vêtus à l'européenne; les dames portent toujours des costumes à la dernière mode de Paris, et il en est fort peu qui n'aient remplacé la mantille par le chapeau. On rencontre peut-être moins d'individus en loques à Las Palmas que dans les autres villes canariennes, ce qui ne veut pas dire que le fait soit rare. Mais, en revanche, on y trouve une nombreuse société avec laquelle on peut avoir d'excellentes relations, et un Français est assuré d'être bien accueilli partout.

La capitale de la Grande Canarie ne saurait donner une idée du reste de l'île. Il me faut faire accomplir au lecteur quelques excursions, et il en est de faciles. Une route de 6 kilomètres mène au delà du port de La Luz; une autre de 36 kilomètres conduit jusqu'à Galdar, en longeant, à une petite distance, toute la côte septentrionale; une troisième se dirige vers le centre de l'île et arrive à San Mateo, à 21 kilomètres de Las Palmas; enfin une dernière, de 20 kilomètres, atteint dans le sud la ville d'Aguimes. On peut donc faire déjà, en voiture, de longues promenades, et ce ne sont pas les voitures de louage qui manquent. En dehors des diligences, qui partent au moins deux fois par jour pour chaque direction, on se procure avec la plus grande facilité des tapissières, voire même des calèches. Il faut s'attendre à payer la location un prix élevé. Pour conduire un voyageur à Telde (11 kilomètres) et le ramener, un cocher ne demande pas moins de 20 ou 25 francs. Les chevaux de selle sont proportionnellement aussi chers. Mais lorsqu'on fait un voyage à la Grande Canarie, ce n'est pas généralement pour se borner à visiter la capitale.

Les routes sont, il est vrai, des plus accidentées, et les petits chevaux du pays, malgré leur vigueur, ne pourraient faire chaque jour de longs voyages. L'île ne renferme, en effet, que montagnes et ravins, et, parmi ces montagnes, il en est qui atteignent 1.954 mètres d'altitude. Bien qu'elles soient orientées dans toutes les directions, qu'elles décrivent les courbes les plus variées, on peut dire cependant qu'il existe une chaîne plus élevée que les autres, qui court du nord-est au sud-ouest, et dont les points culminants oscillent entre 1.008 mètres (La Lechucilla) et le chiffre que je viens de donner, qui est atteint par la montagne de Los Pechos. Dans cette arête centrale, on rencontre des villages jusqu'à une altitude de près de 1.300 mètres; celui d'Artenara

est situé à 1.279 mètres, et il existe même un hameau à une plus grande hauteur.

Nous commencerons nos excursions par le nord; nous reviendrons au port de La Luz en suivant la route, c'est-à-dire en longeant la belle plage de sable fin qui s'étend de Las Palmas jusqu'à La Isleta. La ville s'avance loin, de ce côté, et bientôt les maisons arriveront jusqu'au nouveau port. Cependant on aperçoit, du côté des montagnes, des propriétés fort bien cultivées, et qui approvisionnent la capitale et les navires de légumes de toutes sortes. On y cultive aussi des arbres à fruits, des céréales et des plantes d'ornement; tout y vient très bien. Ces propriétés ont de l'eau qu'on y amène de fort loin dans des aqueducs en maçonnerie, et, avec de l'eau, on peut obtenir, aux Canaries, toutes les récoltes qu'on désire.

A peine a-t-on passé les dernières maisons qu'on remarque de splendides allées bordées, les unes de palmiers, les autres de bananiers, de caoutcheucs, d'arbres à cire, et bien d'autres. Au milieu de tout cela s'enchevêtrent des jasmains, des plumbagos, des bougainvilliers, des rosiers, des géraniums et mille autres fleurs. Le propriétaire, don Cayetano Lugo, a montré là ce que peut faire, avec quelques soins, un homme de goût.

Presque en face, se trouvent les eaux minérales de Santa-Catalina, eaux salines que rendent de grands services dans certaines affections. Un peu plus loin, sur le bord même de la mer, s'élève le vieux fort de Santa-Catalina, aujourd'hui complètement abandonné. Mais déjà, à ce niveau, toute culture a disparu: le sable a tout recouvert et menace même d'envahir les belles propriétés dont je viens de parler, si on n'oppose vite une digue à l'invasion, en plantant d'autres végétaux que les tamarins, déjà en partie recouverts par les dunes.

Après avoir franchi l'isthme de Guanartème, qui ne mesure par 200 mètres de large dans sa partie la plus rétrécie, on rencontre la coulée de lave qui termine La Isleta du côté du sud. De ce côté aussi, le sable commence à gagner, mais il ne peut que recouvrir des scories absolument stériles. Cette nappe de lave est parsemée de petits monticules de pierres qui sont autant de tombeaux; les anciens insulaires avaient là une immense nécropole qui disparaîtra rapidement. En 1878, il n'existait, au port de La Luz, que trois ou quatre maisons; on y voyait de temps à autre un campement de pêcheurs venus de Telde. Ces malheureux, le soir venu, plantent dans le sable quelques pieux qui se réunissent en haut; ils recouvrent cette charpente d'une natte en feuilles de palmier, et ils ont un abri pour la nuit. Une simple natte, étendue sur le sol, sert de lit à toute la famille. C'est un curieux spectacle que de voir cette population déguenillée préparer en plein air le repas du soir: les enfants se roulent sur le sable, les femmes nettoient, à la lueur du foyer, le poisson dont se composera le dîner; des chiens se disputent les débris, et, pendant ce temps, les hommes sont allongés sur la plage.

Si les pêcheurs continuent à venir camper sur l'isthme de Guanartème, ils ont aujourd'hui de nombreux voisins; sur l'emplacement des anciens tumulus s'élève tout un village. De grands dépôts de charbon, des magasins, un hôtel, des restaurants, cachent maintenant aux regards du voyageur une partie de la vieille cité des morts.

Au delà de ce village, on ne voit plus que les noires montagnes de La Isleta qui se terminent, du côté de la mer, en falaises abruptes. A une altitude de 227 mètres, se trouve la guérite de la vigie, et, plus au nord, à 243 mètres,

un phare de troisième ordre, dont on aperçoit les feux à 18 milles, dans un arc de 257 degrés. Au milieu de cette masse sombre, on est tout étonné de rencontrer une belle propriété avec ses étangs toujours pleins d'eau".

STASSANO: *Las Palmas nel 1885 e oggi*. Estratto dall'*Illustraciones Italiana*. N. 14 e 15, 16 y 23 de abril de 1890. Milán.

"Il viaggio dall'Inghilterra a Las Palmas della Gran Canaria fu lungo più del solito ed eccezionalmente avventuroso: nel canale di San Giorgio riuscimmo salvo da una collisione con uno scuner, che disgraziatamente colò al fondo; e appena entrati nell'Atlantico, scampammo ad una burrasca e alle avarie della vecchia carcassa che a stento si reggeva, trascinandoci tra le onde agitate e minacciose.

Ma se alla partenza ci sorprese un tempaccio da mettere i brividi addosso, un' alba, in cambio, di primavera ci accolse undici giorni di poi nell'amenissima rada di Las Palmas. Il cattivo tempo accompagnò il nostro Landana per più giorni, i quali furono per noi oltremodo lunghi e uggiosi; infine, quando il mare cominciò ad acchetarsi, il vento impetuoso e freddo a cangiarsi in zeffiro dolce e tiepido, e il cielo, rasserendosi, divenne azzurro come il nostro d'Italia, scorgemmo alcuni gruppi di uccelletti, e una frotta di gabbiani ci venne incontro annunziandoci la vicinanza alla terra.

Non tardò molto, di fatti, e approdammo all'isola «dello Legname» così chiamata nei portolani medicei del XIV secolo, e anche oggi con vocabolo spagnolo e portoghese. Dispiacevolmente, quando il Landana gettò l'ancora innanzi Funchal, avanzava appena un'ora di giorno, e quell'ora soltanto ci fermammo in quella spiaggia affascinante, in riva a quel giardino delizioso che è Madera, la poetica terra, scoperta, vuol la leggenda, da due amanti, e visitata assiduamente da esseri desiderosi di vivere o di morire tra i fiori e nel bacio dell'amore.

Le impressioni che vi provai furono così svariate e fugaci che ne ho ora debolmente memoria come di un sogno e di visioni lontane. Mi resta sol presente e vivo nella mente, con tutta la malinconica grandiosità della scena circostante, l'aspetto che Madera prendeva a misura che ce ne riallontanavamo sul far della notte, dirigendoci alle Canarie: queda isoia incantevole, poc'anzi inondata d'una pioggia d'oro e splendente di luce e di tinte caldissime, abbrunandosi e calando sotto la distesa sconfinata, fosca e silenziosa delle onde, mi sembrava un immenso astro eclissato che tramontasse misteriosamente nell'oceano infinito.

All'indomani, tra le nubi rossastre e pavonazze che s'addensano al tramonto sull'orizzonte, ci apparve l'isola della Gran Canaria. Vi saremmo potuti giungere la sera medesima, se il nostro Landana, di buona memoria, fosse stato un poco meno vecchio e stanco della traversata. Così dovei rinunciare quella notte al piacere di riposare in terra e mi ritirai nella mia infelice cabina aspettando di poter dormire più tranquillamente dopo un'ora o due, intrando in porto. Ma trascorse quelle due ore, notai che si stava sempre in mareia, quantunque avanzassimo più lentamente, e che sovente si cambiava di direzione, quasi che s'avesse avuto ancora minor premura di arrivare e s'andasse a zonzo.

Gli era che il capitano, tuttavia impressionato dal naufragio, del quale fu

causa involontariamente, era divenuto timido a tal segno da giudicare arrischiato persino dar fondo di notte e in una notte di luna nel sicurissimo ancoraggio della Luz, e preferiva perciò aspettare il giorno in quella guisa... facendomi rollare maledettamente iu cuccetta.

Eravamo di già avanti la città di Las Palmas, ma il Landana non curandosi del suo antico e poco praticabile scalo, seguiva immutabilmente la rotta verso il nuovo della Luz; e così pure i miei sguardi, dalla bella marina alle vette splendenti in azzurro o in oro sul cielo trasparente, correvano rapidissimi, per quelle balze, per quei campi e per quelle gioaie, non fissandosi nella città, che, vista donde io mi trovava, non attrae e seduce se non chi cerca anelante, in una delle sue innumerevoli e imbiancate terrazze, l'essere adorato o desidera ravvivarvi il ricordo d'un amore passato.

Intanto, avanzando sempre verso il porto e lasciando indietro Las Palmas, questa discostandosi dall'arida e giallognola erta cui s'appoggia, e presentandosi lanciata nel mare sopra una lingua di terra, baciata dalle onde azzurrine e spumeggianti, e contornata da macchie di muse e da gruppi d'alte e svelte palme, assumeva un'apparenza di gaiezza e di seduzione inattese: sembrava una città nata per incanto dalle onde e d'un tratto, intorno alle due elevate ed oscure torri della Cattedrale, unico testimoniaio, parevano, di quanto dovea esserci di antico e di triste fra quelle centinaia di bianche e ellegre casette.

Dopo il caseggiato principale della città, passammo disotto il castello del Rey che la domina, edificato a cavaliere della ripa sulla quale s'inerpicano le ultime file dei suoi abituri più poveri, diminuendo l'aspetto severo di quel poggio coll'aria di spensierata e artistica miseria che spira da quei muriccioli bianchissimi e dai cenci innumerevoli e variopinti disseminati d'ogni parte all'intorno per la squallida scoscisa, sopra quegli oscuri sassi minaccianti rovina e i pochi grammi cespugli che vi nascono a stento.

Giunti nelle acque della Luz, ai piedi della «Isleta», le copiose dune di sabbie giallicce, addossate, in vicinanza del porto, all'alta spianata litorale e sparse sulla spiaggia sottostante, sembravano un fiume di arene d'oro che scaturisse da quell'ultimo grado delle pendici riversandosi sul mare e l'istmo dell'isola maestosa, che non mi ristavo dal contemplare, portando nella fresca atmosfera primaverile di quella poetica marina, il ricordo del vicino e ardente Sahara. Un altro vapore e qualche goletta solamente vi trovammo ancorate; se non che un principio di molo ben basato e un gran numero di cubi di cemento situati geometricamente sopra un'ampia spianata, facevano conoscere che colà sarebbe surto un gran porto. In quell'anno poche case segnalavano al largo l'ancoraggio della Luz, ma però le carte nautiche mostravano chiaramente come con quanta saggezza lo si fosse scelto per farne il porto di rifugio dell'arcipelago e quanto avessero agito accortamente quei che vi avevano di già stabiliti grandi depositi di carbone.

Subito dopo l'arrivo, sbarcammo, ma, un po'perchè credevamo che in Las Palmas non vi fosse nulla da vedere e un po'perchè in me ardeva potente il bisogno giovanile dell'esplorare dovunque m'incontrassi fuori di casa mia, e nell'insigne e caro capitano Bove, che io seguiva, dominava l'istessa necessità, per l'abitudine contratta nelle sue precedenti e più fortunate spedizioni in terre lontanissime, ce ne stemmo un buon paio d'ore sul cammino che

Altre volte ho visitato la Gran Canaria, ma d'allora in poi mi son dato sempre fretta di giunger in città, nella graziosa e gentile Las Palmas: agli anfipodi e ai granchi ci pensava poi, e gli inviti importuni di quei monellacci

o non mi furono più diretti, poichè già dovea essere ben conosciuto da essi, o non giunsero più al mio udito. Qual differenza tra l'aspetto sonnolente che presentava in quell'anno la marina della Luz e quello che avea nell' estate ultima, quando la mia goletta per approdarvi dovè manovrare abilmente fra i diciotto grandi vapori che v'erano ancorati, imbarcando o sbarcando carbone, e un'infinità di piccole imbarcazioni che ne solcavano le acque in ogni direzione! E quale differenza tra lo scarso movimento che c'era allora di vetture, carri e gente sullo stradale del porto, e il via vai continuo che vi si incontra oggi, creando un nuovo ed esteso quartiere alla Luz, dando origine al tramvia presentemente in costruzione, e popolando di case, di ville e di alberghi quel cammino: una vera desolazione sino a due o tre anni addietro!

In quel lido scoperto da italiani e primo approdo delle ardite caravelle di Cristoforo Colombo, il nostro vessillo tricolore era quasi sconosciuto nel 1885; sovente esso vi sventola ora dall'alto dei nostri maggiori piroscafi transatlantici; ed appunto, nel mio ultimo arrivo a Las Palmas, mi fu gratissimo salutarvi, risalutato, la nostra bella bandiera, incontrandomi al largo della Gran Canaria, col grandioso vapore *La Duchessa di Genova*".

MARGARET D'ESTE: *In the Canaries with a camera*. Londres. Págs. 185-190.

"If first impressions be the true ones, then Las Palmas — the capital of Grand Canary — may safely lay claim to beauty.

I can still remember — with astonishment — how attractive the place looked as we quietly glided into the harbour on our arrival; the almost incredible blue of the water, flecked with patches of translucent green and purple — the long line of orange sand-dunes stretching between the port and the town — the delicate violet of the low hills behind them — the palm trees upon the sea front, and the town itself, its cathedral towers half veiled in mist, clustering on the shore three miles away.

Neither was the illusion destroyed when we presently got into a *tartana* and in the freshness of early morning drove along an almost deserted road in the direction of the town until we turned off into the grounds of the hotel Santa Catalina.

It is not for a day or two that the true ugliness of one's surroundings is borne in upon one — an ugliness which led one traveller to write of Las Palmas as a place of barbed wire and cinders, but which to me will ever be associated with dust, with heat, with the hideous steam-tram that clanks up and down the sea front, ejecting showers of blacks from its funnel, — and with the daily, endless suffering of the heavily-laden muleteams that pass along the same road on their way to the docks.

I have met people who have spent weeks in the Santa Catalina hotel without once leaving its grounds — not even for an afternoon's perfunctory sight-seeing in the town, for — as they truly remarked — what was the pleasure of going outside? Nobody even pretends that there are any walks at Las Palmas, while bumping along in a carriage through hideous scenery, enveloped in dense clouds of dust, has charms for few.

In the hotel you could at anyrate be comfortable and enjoy the fine weather — and what else, might they ask, did you come to Grand Canary for?

The hotel is indeed an oasis in a weary land — a place of arcaded verandahs, cool polished floors, wide balconies, and luxurious basket-chairs. The tropical creepers outside, the bleached grass, the dusty spaces of earth round the palm trees, and the hoopoes calling about the grounds, recalled an Egyptian garden. Among the trees were tennis courts, and away at the back — on the top of a yellow hill so devoid of vegetation that it seemed to have been skinned — were golf links, but they were for the most part deserted now, and the stillness that falls upon a southern pleasure resort with the approach of the hot weather was already making itself felt, in spite of the dozen or two of visitors who still lingered in the place.

For a while it was pleasant enough to idle away the days, and we should perhaps have stayed longer at the Catalina if we had felt the heat less; but during the first week of May the thermometer stood at 75° in the shade, and our thoughts turned to the cooler climate of the Monte — Grand Canary's hill station — six miles inland.

Also be it said that our liking for Las Palmas by no means increased upon a nearer acquaintance with the place.

The favourite spot in the neighbourhood for picnics — Confital Bay — can only be reached by driving through some of the most squalid slums of the port and then picking on's way across a piece of waste ground strewn with old tins and heaps of refuse; and the seashore between the town and the port is utterly ruined for purposes of pleasure or beauty by being built over with low-class houses and used as a dumping ground for every kind of rubbish.

Las Palmas must thank its climate, and not its natural attractions, for the fact that it is the oldest and best-known winter resort in the Canaries. The main road along the sea front, cut up by the ceaseless traffic to the docks, is a deep bed of loose white dust in dry weather, and in wet a quagmire; in vain has the money for its repair been voted over and over again by the municipality, it always evaporates unaccountably without the public being a penny the better.

From morning to night the potato and banana waggons from Telde and Teror rumble by on their way to the port.

The mules belonging to the English packing companies — one of which owns as many as two hundred and fifty — are big, strong, well-fed beasts quite up to their work, and I am told that the indirect influence of the English colony at Las Palmas has done a good deal within the last twenty years towards diminishing the cruelty to animals that used to go on unchecked.

At the same time the pitiful wrecks of horses in the shafts of the *tartanas* waiting for hire at the harbour, the worn-out mules limping day after day with stone and sand carts along the road — half-starved, and with horrible red galls behind the collar — are sights so common that they effectually destroy any pleasure one might otherwise find in going outside the hotel gates.

A society for the protection of animals was started some years ago, but after the first native witness in a prosecution for cruelty had been knifed it was found impossible to get anyone to come forward with evidence.

Spanish opinion is hard to rouse on the animals' behalf. Pricking a saddle-donkey's withers with a cactus thorn to make him trot, jabbing mules with

the whip stock behind the collar — where the raws are worst, or sticking a knife into them if they jib, are everyday practices with the natives, and if remonstrated with by an Englishman they reply that at any rate there has been found no need for a society to protect *children* in the island, such as we have at home.

It will be a bad day for the world when the occupation of a glass house shall be held to disqualify a nation from throwing stones.

By all means let us remember that when a Bill for securing protection to animals was introduced into the House of Commons — less than a hundred years ago — it was received with ridicule and derisive hoots, and that it was jeeringly said that English legislators would next be called upon to defend the rights of cabbages; by all means let us remember that there are still to be found English men and women in the west country who enjoy hunting hinds to death at a time of the year when by every dictate of humanity they should be protected; but let us also remember that there are higher virtues than consistency, and if there is no other way of mitigating «the burden of the beasts of the South» but by persistently throwing stones at a neighbour's glass house, let us go out boldly and do so, without expecting to escape the crash of broken panes at home.

Some of our pleasantest hours at Las Palmas were spent in the museum in the town. The sight of the devil-fish — a fearsome monster with big black wings and a mouth like a portmanteau, who embraces his victims and carries them away under water — would effectually deter most people from bathing off the coast of Grand Canary.

The collection of relics of the aborigines of the various islands is the most complete that exists; we found ourselves looking at the rows of mummies in glass cases, at vessels of red and black pottery, and at axe and spearheads of polished diorite and obsidian, with the feeling that they belonged to some prehistoric people of the Stone age, or of the time of the ancient Egyptians — instead of to races that had hardly ceased to exist as distinct tribes in the days of Queen Elizabeth, and of which the survivors — merging their nationality in that of their conquerors — became the ancestors of the present islanders.

Reverence for human remains is of so evanescent a nature that we can display in museums the bones of those who died a few centuries ago with as little compunction or sentiment as if we were dealing with so many fir cones. There is something grotesque in the reflection that a modern Canario might quite conceivably be looking upon the mortal remains of a lineal ancestor when inspecting one of the skeletons — «far too naked to be shamed» — that dangle by wire hooks round the walls of the anthropological section of the Las Palmas collection”.

CHARLES F. BARKER: *Two years in the Canaries*. Londres, 1917.  
Págs. 8-13.

“Saturday, September 21st.—We arrived at Puerto de la Luz, which is the port for Las Palmas (Grand Canary), about 6 a.m. While I was washing my teeth one of the stewards, noticing me, remarked to another, «Eso no es marea» (that is not sea-sickness). Proceeding from the Puerto, we made



our way to the Lion Trading Company, where we left my Syrian companion's baggage, and shortly after I found the manager of the company, with whom I was directed to leave my companion, and lo! I was face to face with Mr. F....., a Scotsman and former London acquaintance, who kindly gave me a number of useful pieces of information and advice. He also informed me that Mr. G....., whom I had also known in London, was there in the island; and so, having had two Scotsmen to see me off from Tangier, I find two others to receive me here within two hours of my arrival. I shall have more to say of these gentlemen and kindness received from their hands later.

Putting up at the Hotel de Cuatro Naciones, I spent the remainder of the day making calls, delivering letters of introduction, &c. In the evening I went for a stroll in the city alone, and, sitting down in the Plaza del Ayuntamiento, had a chat with a native who seemed to possess a simple trust in Christ Jesus as our Saviour, and belief in the greatness and purity of God. «Dios es muy grande y puro» (God is very great and pure) were his words. This man could not read. On Sunday morning my Syrian friend took a walk with me before breakfast and we then had what he called *the meeting*; reading together and commending ourselves and others to our Heavenly Father (there being no English service held here just now), I then called on Mr. Jenkins, whose little daughter took me to the Spanish hospital, where I saw first an Irishman and then an Englishman, both sailors: the latter had dislocated his thigh while at sea and had not been able to get it set properly, so had been landed here. Poor fellow, he seemed to bear the trouble well, but the setting will be a painful operation after so long a delay, I fear.

Returning to the hotel I found a card from Mr. Mackenzie, with whom we spent the evening, receiving a considerable amount of useful information, he having spent about fourteen years in these islands. The following Tuesday I saw Mr. Mackenzie and my Syrian companion (with six others who Mr. Mackenzie had brought from England) off to Cape Jube. Words fail me to express my sense of gratitude for the sympathy and kind advice received from Mr. Mackenzie — and now I am left here alone.

The rest of the week was absorbed trying to find cheaper lodgings (not an easy matter here), and various other preliminaries to getting to work. I made the acquaintance of a very interesting gentleman, Don Gregorio Ghil, who possessed an extensive library and showed me a large history of the Canaries just being published, written by himself. The priests, he told me, disapproved of the work. He chatted for a considerable time and spoke highly of Mr. Miller, the British Vice-Consul, calling him «un buen Cristiano» (a good Christian). He also informed me where I could obtain a map of the island, a thing I had been searching for, hitherto without success.

My regret was that I did not understand all his kind and interesting conversation.

One would not have been surprised if he had forgotten me according to the Spanish proverb, «Espaldas vueltas memorias muertas» (back turned, memory dies), but afterwards, when passing on the other side of the road, to my surprise he saluted me in a most charming manner. I arranged to take two rooms with a Portuguese who had an English wife; they seem nice people. On Saturday I took a walk round the outer and upper portion of the city which possesses a decidedly Eastern aspect, with its palm trees and houses mostly painted white. Some man whom I spoke to told me the names

of the various districts, all San something of other (San Juan, &c.), and he remarked that there is only one Santo (Holy One) God!

A young native, whom I had met at the Spanish hospital, came to me to-day for two Spanish Bibles, but as I had not succeeded in getting the books yet, I arranged to see him again.

On Sunday morning I went to the Cathedral service: How grand the Spanish language sounds from a pulpit. One thing especially striking is the way the poor attend such a place here, one old man bare-footed, with a long manta or cloak being among the worshippers. I visited the young man at the Spanish hospital again (he hails from Birmingham), does not like the Spanish food, but tells me that General Thomas sends him food and tea daily. I then walked to the English cemetery outside the town. After dinner, a priest, who sat at the head of the *table d'hôte*, came and invited me to his room. He offered me a cigar on entering, and seemed hurt at my declining it, showed me some English periodicals and spoke a little English. Altogether he was so remarkably courteous that I felt embarrassed considering my mission to this place, and eventually declared the same to him, inviting him to see some of the books I had. His face reddened, «Aquí imposible!» he said (impossible here), «the people consult us and will bring them to the priests to be burnt». After a long conversation this worthy señor, who, I discovered, was the Canon of the Cathedral, shook hands with me, saying, as we parted, *I am your friend apart from religion*. Next week sees me installed in my new quarters in the Calle Constantino, where I have taken two small rooms, one for the stock, the other for sleeping. Also I have begun taking the books round and have sold nearly one hundred books this week—Gospels, Bibles, and Testaments, mostly the former.

Sunday evening. October 6th.—I am writing near the open door of my upper room with my coat off; it is a beautiful warm moonlight night. The sky is a lovely blue here by day, less glaring than at Tangier. I have arranged to pay 22s. per month for rooms and to get my food at a restaurant near for 2s. daily. There has been a procession in the city to-day, with an image of the Virgin, accompanied by a military band. Many of the houses had large pieces of coloured cloth hanging from the windows. For the next fortnight I continue my journeying round the city and suburbs. «Prohibited» is the word one is constantly met with. Others would buy but say they have no cuartos (a Spanish farthing). Others «otro día» (another day). I got a book-binder to mount a map of the island for me and he would not take anything for doing it. He advised me to represent the importance of opening a school and place of worship here, to keep alive interest in the Scriptures. I have now finished my itinerating at Las Palmas, El Puerto and around; have sold over 400 books since arrival. The majority of the people here seem poor, with nothing like the home comforts of the English. One sees lots of women round the town bare-footed, little girls and boys come out of the houses the women generally sit on the floor. The weather is beautiful here still; quite warm at 9.30 a.m. The mosquitoes are very troublesome at night. An English service on Sunday morning. The Rev. Baker gave an interesting address, taking his text from Micah 6, 8th verse: «He hath showed thee, O man, &c.», a favourite passage of mine. I have already found there is much ignorance, superstition, and prejudice to combat here, but also thank Heaven one has some encouragement”.

S. FRANCES LATIMER: *The English in Canary Isles*. Plymouth y London. Págs.

“There is a garden behind of considerable size given up to the cultivation of bananas, which flourish luxuriantly here. The view from the enclosure is strikingly Eastern. Low, white, flat-roofed houses, shabby and poor looking, thickly dot the hills that rise in the background. A disused fortification, half-built into the rocks, crowns the height, yet the town in many respects has a more thorough Spanish look than Tenerife. There is a broad *barranco*, bridged over for the rush of water that does at times come sweeping down, which cuts the city in two. It finds its sea outlet near the market, and serves as a convenient place for the extra supply of live stock, mostly sheep and poultry, the broken crockery of the district, and for an additional highway. At the few pools of water women wash and beat their clothes, spreading them open to dry on the big stones of the river bed, just as they do at Burgos, or any other Spanish city”.

## INTERVENCIONES:

*Julio Hernández García.*

### TEXTO DE SU INTERVENCIÓN:

*En el caso de Cuba, los relatos de los viajeros (Rosemond de Beaucellon, Hespel d'Harponville, etc.), me alumbraron —para mi tesis doctoral— distintos aspectos. Concretamente del tráfico de blancas realizado con mujeres canarias, destinadas a mediados del XIX a los prostíbulos de La Habana colonial. Muchas de las canarias —por consecuencia de la miseria— iban por propio consentimiento, pero otro contingente importante fueron llevadas bajo engaño y vendidas en subasta pública en el propio velero, una vez recalado en la bahía de La Habana.*

*Este es un aspecto inédito y silenciado en la documentación canaria y que los relatos de los viajeros —junto a la prensa canaria en Cuba— han permitido su reconstrucción histórica.*

*Añadir —ya enlazando con Canarias— o mejor traer al recuerdo la publicación de la obra de George Glass, con prólogo del escritor Constantino Aznar de Acevedo. Estimamos que sería del máximo interés continuar con la publicación de obras de este tipo y en esta ocasión nadie mejor que don Alfredo Herrera para su traducción y difusión.*

*Por último me resta agradecerle al amigo Alfredo Herrera Piqué «escarbar» en nuestros orígenes, en nuestras señas de identidad y darle modestamente mi enhorabuena por esta afortunada excursión retrospectiva de la mano de los viajeros extranjeros.*