

HAULING THE BOAT

The Country of Paradoxes

By Mary Heaton Vorse

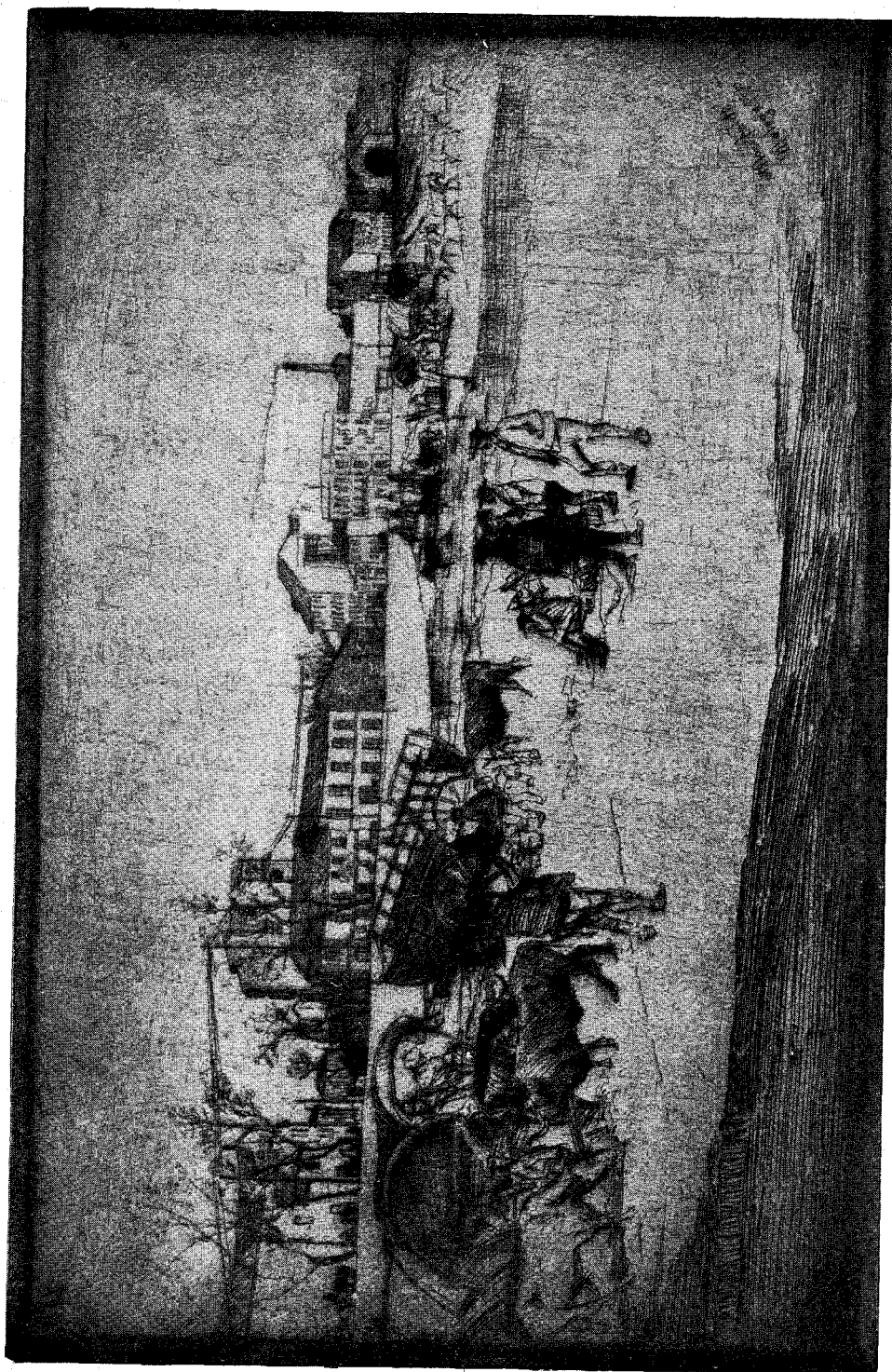
With Pictures by B. J. O. Nordfeldt

WE sat on the top of a steep hill which sloped from us abruptly in all directions, a steep climb any way you took it. There were five of us—three Americans and two Spaniards—one of the latter a little goatherd. From the hill we could see the town of Malaga, which tries so hard to be a modern, bustling town, and which fails so lamentably in the attempt, remaining, in spite of factories, in spite of its great port, a sleepy southern place, a place full of narrow turning streets where no horses could go and where at midday one will hear perhaps no noise except the singing of little caged birds outside the houses.

From where we sat the cathedral seemed to brood over the city, dwarfing the rest of the town. Nearer was the hill of the Moorish fortress, in whose ancient walls people have made swallows' nests of houses. Before us was the

Mediterranean, spotted as thick as though with gulls by a fishing fleet—inconsequent Mediterranean fishing-boats without a keel or centerboard; boats that do not come about of themselves, but have to be rowed about; boats that in an adverse wind make the fisherman take in his sails and row for shore; cumbersome things, unchanged in model since the time of the Cæsars; the delight of painters, but the despair of sailors used to boats which will sail.

Behind us the mountains of Andalusia rose file on file, rocky, abrupt, difficult of ascent, scarred and cut by countless *arroyos*, barren and wild and very beautiful—"Colorado," they call some of them in Malaga—gardens tucked in their flanks. We could look down on other gardens from where we were—gardens full of palms and oranges, full of blooming almond trees and roses, though it was not



PRAIRIE SCHOONERS

yet the middle of January. Malaga has a climate of the sort for which we search in vain up and down the Riviera.

We seated ourselves on the ground, and the little goatherd stood gazing at us with wide eyes.

"Do you stay here, *niño*?" our Spanish friend asked.

"I and the goats; *si, Señor.*"

"And at night?"

"At night also; a man comes from the valley."

"And what do you make?"

"Thirty reals a month"—which is in American money five cents a day.

"And your food?"

"And my food," he answered.

"What do they give you?"

"Good bread, *Señor*, and onions; sometimes a piece of cheese; sometimes, not very often, soup. Shall I show the *Señoras* the youngest kid?"

He went to the house and came out with the youngest kid in his arms.

"See!" he said; "it is too little to jump yet. Eight I have. This one has not lived its seventh day. It is too young to have a name. My sister thinks Victoria for a name, and I am for Fraquita; it will be for the *Señora* to choose."

He was thirteen perhaps, or fourteen, well grown, sweet-spoken, with the look in his eyes of a boy who sits gazing at the sea and at the mountains all day, at peace with himself and all the world. He carried the little kid back to the house, calling as he went, "*Nini, nini!*" And then he led out those big enough to have names, and which already jumped.

"How much does the man make who lives with you?" I asked.

"Pedro? Much—a peseta a day, with his food; he is a man. He works on the farm with my masters, and at night he drives up the other goats and we shut them into the room next the one where we sleep."

"Is that a usual wage?" I asked my friend. "Twenty cents a day and food?"

"Why not?" he answered. "We are poor people in Spain."

Below us the gardens lay fertile in the sun; to the south of us rose mountains where we knew are iron mines rich in ore; a few days before we had passed up

through the cork forests and then swung down through the barren pass of the Chorra out into the fertile plain of Guadalmedina—rich lands full of vineyards and olive and orange groves.

"But why are you poor? With such a climate, where frost is unknown, with mines and rich lands, why are the people poor?"

"Where the poor pay the taxes," he answered, "it must be so. Down in Malaga you know the Calle Larios, which is named after the Marquis Larios? He owns that street. He has interests everywhere in Malaga; the sugar refineries, they are his, and he owns more in other parts of the province; the churches are in his hands—he gives to them. And who can tax Larios?"

"Why not?" we asked.

"No one dares," my friend answered. "He has power; he dictates, he and some others, what shall be done here and what shall not be done; and who shall dispute him? They call him a public benefactor; he gives to the poor, he gives to the hospital, he dictates concerning the public officials of the city."

"It sounds," I said, "like what we call at home 'the boss.'"

Our friend looked blank.

"'The boss'?" he questioned; he did not understand. "It is the remnants of the feudal system. The Larios are a great family, and they always had power. You remember the cork forests through which you passed yesterday? Those belong to the Dukes of M—. What they pay in taxes is negligible, and as the Government must be supported, the poor must pay. The poor pay on everything they bring into the city unless it is wine or bread. Eight cents for each fowl they pay; they must pay so much on each pound of oil, so much for eggs, so much for produce. Besides this, the Government again taxes them on the gross output, and when they have paid rent to those who own the land, what remains to them? The man who makes a peseta a day the year round and his bread is fortunate. Many work for this only for a certain part of the year, and from their twenty cents they must save for the winter, and feed from it, besides their children."

"We have heard that the Spanish cities sell their octroi duties to the highest bidder; so the control of the city custom-house duties passes into the hands of a private concern. Does not this make it harder for the peasants?"

"Certainly," replied our friend; "but the city must have money, and with the city to run its own octrois every peasant would be a smuggler, and there would be no revenue; the officers would come to understandings with certain peasants and they and the peasants would profit. A private concern looks better after its affairs."

"There is a new way, too, of getting money from the people besides taxing; we are beginning to follow your methods in Spain. The millers in the south formed what you call a 'trust.' They mixed the grains and raised the price of bread so that our poor people eat less bread, and in consequence many mills are idle in the country."

"But with war so near at hand," we asked, "and your troops to feed—how should flour mills be idle?"

"The French," he answered, "and the Americans thought of that market first, and supplied flour. Our millers of the south and those of the north who use imported grain were quarreling together to make what you call a 'deal,' and neglected the Melilla market."

"They say since our tariff reforms that you exported last year more than forty per cent increase of ore to our country."

"That does not affect our people; those mines are owned in England and in Germany. The miners get from a peseta to a peseta and a half a day."

"But if the people suffer," we asked, "from what you call the remnants of your feudal system on the one hand and from the modern system of trusts on the other, what happens to them? How do they live?"

"They do not live," he answered; "they starve."

"We have a theory with us that when people starve there is trouble."

"Not here," he answered. "They are used to it. They have always starved, and the weak among them die. They don't know any better. Hardly any one in the villages can read. They are so

ignorant that the chief man in the village may come to them and say, 'There is no election this year. I remain as before.'"

"But in the north you have had troubles—when the reserves were called out instead of the troops already under arms, and Barcelona was in a state near revolution."

"That is the north," he replied "Andalusia and Catalonia are two places."

And I remembered the story of a friend of ours who had traveled in South America, and in Paraguay he had seen a flag which he did not know framed in black, and when he asked, "What is that flag?" the answer had been:

"It is the flag of my people, the flag of Catalonia, which will one day be a republic; and until then it is framed in black."

It is a hard thing for us who think of one vast country as America to realize how in Spain each community lives for itself, and it was here impressed upon our minds that the man in Malaga thinks of himself first as a Malaganian and next as a Spaniard.

This, I think, is a fundamental thing in the life of Spain: each little community has its own separate entity; each little town around Malaga has its separate individual existence, curiously unaffected by the neighborhood of a great city. Even in Palo, where the tram takes you, you find people living in a different epoch of civilization. In Malaga you are in a South European town, half surrounded by a palm-planted Alameda; in the harbor are steamships from all the Mediterranean ports, and other steamships there are ready to take you to South America, to North America, to England—where you will; and half an hour away, bound to Malaga by a series of villas surrounded by blooming gardens, is Palo, a fishing village built on a dry *arroyo* which in one place broadens out into something like an open square, bordered by tiny houses hollowed out of the soft rock—little caves in which the fishermen live. They are clean and whitewashed as any Moorish house, and as little encumbered with the unnecessary things of life.

Here, in the near suburbs of this modern city, men live in caves as they have lived for just how long no one knows; or

rather, I should say, sleep in caves, for they live on the beach or without the house, the women netting great nets, the men and boys engaged in the work of the sea, perpetually pulling up their heavy nets or hauling up their forty-foot boats on the beach for the night.

In Malaga it is as in other cities of Spain: one may see at every hand the old order and the new in sharper contrast than in any other of the European countries. One can descend from the electric

from the railway, others as you walk around the country—a mass of brownish-red roofs, a church, narrow streets like irregular white slits, and frowning over all, very likely, the heavy masonry of some Moorish ruin.

And it was to such a little town that we journeyed, nineteen kilometers, by carriage and by mule. Almogia sits high among the hills, nine kilometers by the road and ten more by mule. Not once along the whole road did the almond trees fail us,

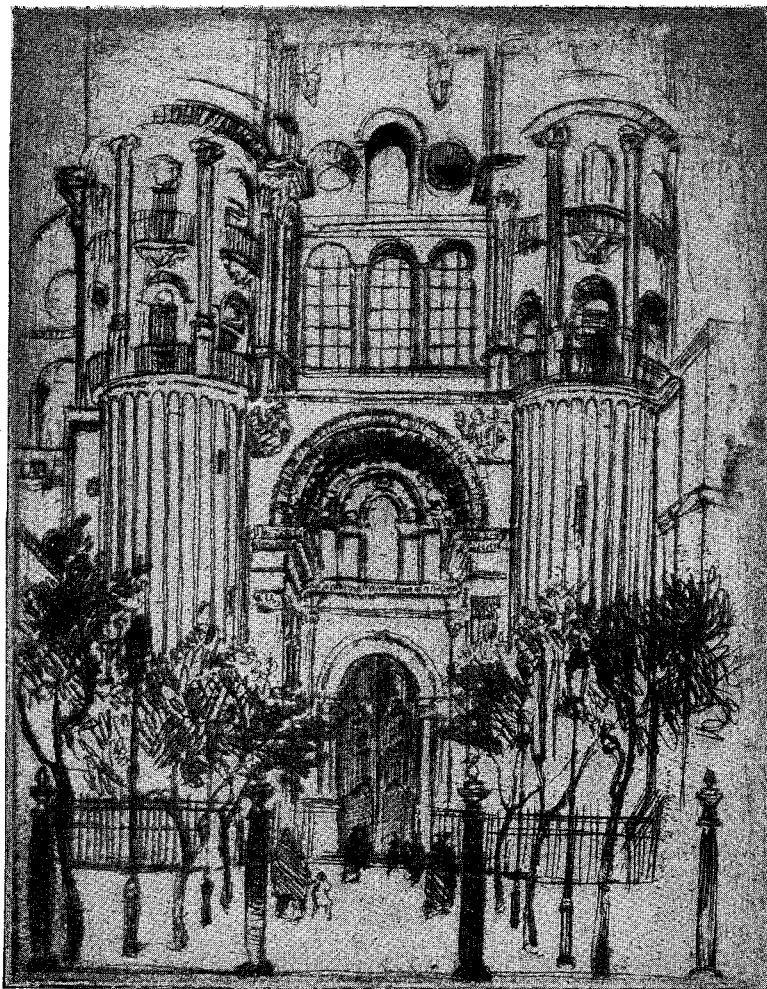


THE HARBOR

tramway to run into a group of prairie schooners drawn by oxen, or see strings of pack-mules with gay trappings being unloaded before modern warehouses. But sharper than any contrast between prairie schooner and trolley car, than between the lateen fishing boat and the steamers which crowd the port of Malaga, is the contrast between the city of Malaga itself and many of the little towns back in the hills.

You see these towns, some of them

and the almond trees of Malaga are one of the beautiful things I have seen in the world. They bloom when the faintest mist of green appears on the bare red earth, before they put out their leaves. Now single trees grew by the steep trail, flinging their branches against a brilliant sky, branches white if you like, but with a very gentle bloom of pink over them, very fragile and very lovely—a very valiant tree, for they dare to bloom when other trees are bare and the ground is



THE NORTH DOOR OF THE CATHEDRAL

bare, and gain in beauty by this contrast. Orchards of them there were in the valleys, and orchards on steep hillsides, throwing a white mist of flowers against the brilliant rocky hillsides, which in places glowed a deep red in the sun. There were whole fields planted with young almond trees, each tree a tiny nosegay. Now and then our trail made us look down into solid masses of flowers neither pink nor white, a color too delicate and too illusive to have an exact name. Or, again, the trail was bordered by trees, while on other slopes the silver green of olive and the bloom of the almond were mingled. Nowhere was there the careful terracing which one sees from one end of the Riviera to the other and through-

out northern Italy. Like certain districts in Calabria, the land was often wasted, and often sunny hillsides were left to gorse—hillsides that with terraces would have borne almond and olive.

The trail wound deviously up and up, through the dry bed of an *arroyo*, above which grew hedges of cactus. At a tiny two-roomed house by the roadside our Spanish friend cried out greetings.

"I asked them how they did," he told us. "They said that they had had good crops of oil and grain, but that the Government had taken all. But then they all say that!"

And we went on, now skirting flanks of hills, now diving abruptly downwards. Across the narrow valleys we could see

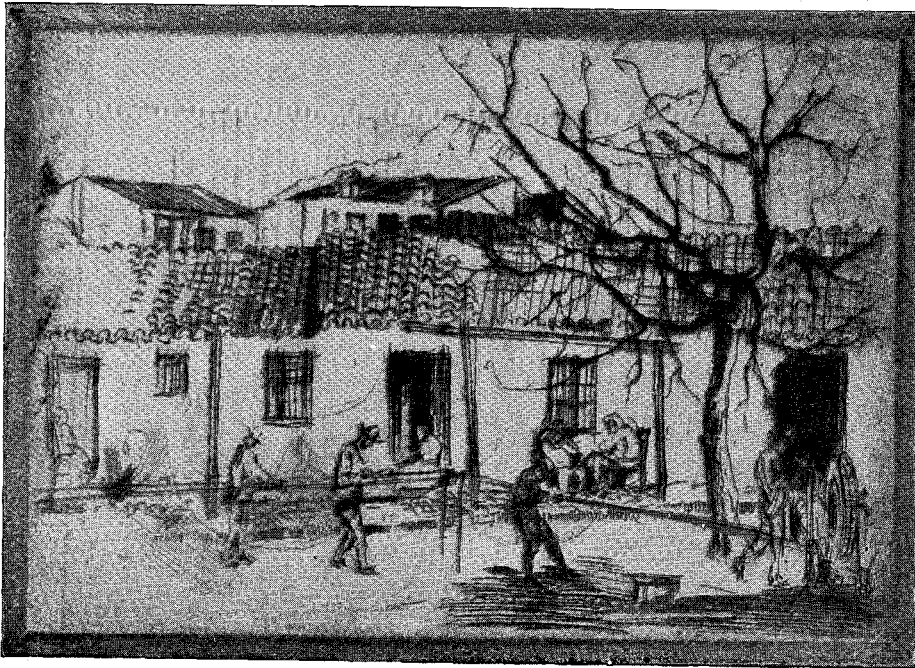
occasional white houses, and again we would catch a glimpse in the distance of the road to Madrid which we had left, white as a chalk-line. A goatherd called to us a greeting and asked us to taste of his bread and cheese, as politeness requires. At long intervals we passed a house. The women, weaving hats, crowded to the door, and as we passed they bade us "Go with God."

We were seated upon high mules whose gait was as comfortable as that of camels. Pillows were set on their backs, and in our honor a ruffled bedspread, doubled on itself, was thrown over the pillow, and a wooden cradle was supposed to keep us from toppling off. By our side walked our mule-drivers. They are the public carriers of Almogia, and every day walk the nineteen kilometers between Almogia and Malaga. They bring back cloth and flour, and supplies of all kinds. Twice a day in all weathers they go over this road, starting before light and in the night-time. The trail is a bad one, full of loose stones and boulders, with no attempt at paving, as in the *salidas* that lead to the towns in Italy which are situated off the main road. They bring down great cargoes of hats slung over the backs of

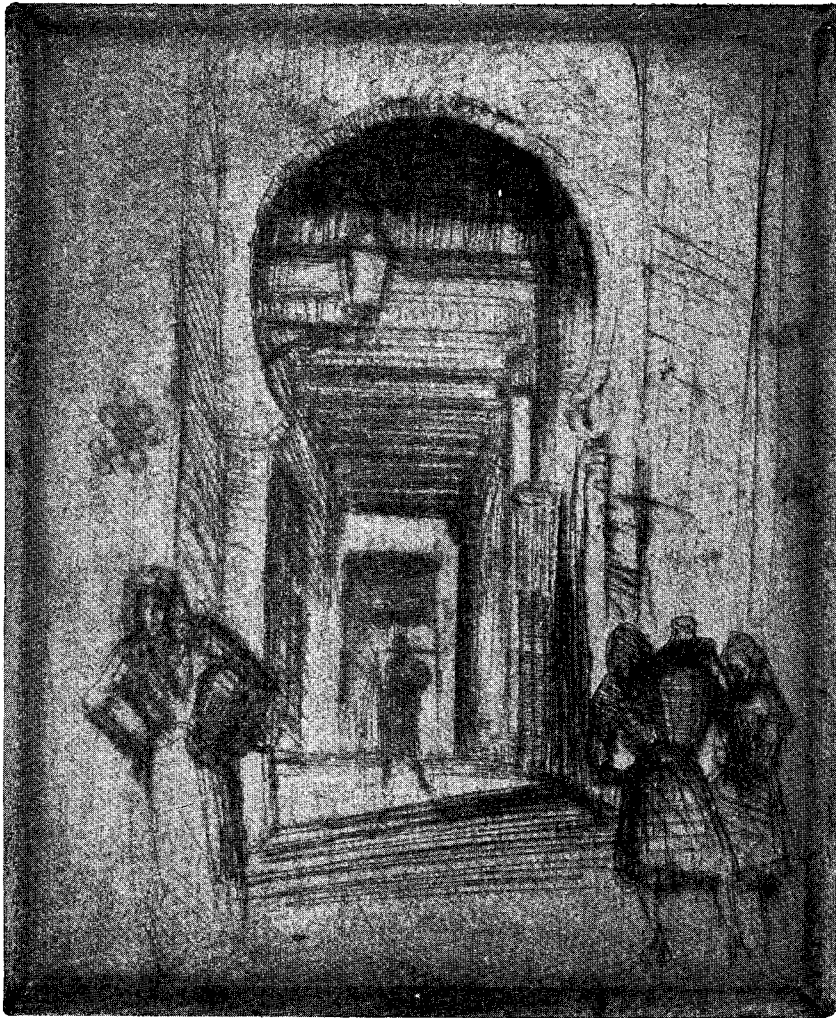
their mules, for the whole town of Almogia makes palm-leaf hats, and makes them for the American market.

Before these hats reach the American retail purchaser they must pass through six hands. They are braided and sewn in this little hillside town, and the cheapest children's hats are paid for at the rate of one cent apiece, the larger hats at a peseta and a half a dozen, and this when the people have gathered and bleached their own palm. If they must buy the palm, it cuts their earnings in two. It is said that the skillful can make as many as a dozen hats a day, although it is hard to believe how they can weave the intricate braid and sew the hats in this time.

The reason for this pitiful wage is a curious little foot-note of the ebb and flow of modern trade. Formerly the trade of hats was important in Malaga, and the palm-leaf hat was much sought for by us. The people of that time got four and even five times as much as they do to-day; and then, at the other side of the world, in Java and Sumatra, they began making hats which suited the public taste in the American market, and Java and Sumatra, without knowing what they did, cut into



THE ROPEWALK



ARCADE CRISTO

the prices of Spain, and so the hat-makers of Almogia starve.

After several hours of climbing, we looked down upon the town which lay below us—its roofs of weathered red, its walls of glistening white, a crown of almond blossoms about it, and almonds and olives slipping down the steep flanks of the hills, and in the distance hills of limestone with a rosy bloom across them, singularly like the almonds in color.

When we had dismounted from our mules, children came to look at us; from all directions they came—little ones and big ones, grown lads and laughing girls—and at once a sense of remoteness such as I have never felt came over me.

Though all my days I have traveled off the beaten track—to remote little hamlets far from the railway in the Bavarian Tyrol, to villages in Italy that, as distance goes, were inaccessible compared with Almogia—yet in Almogia for the first time I was in a place where townspeople were a spectacle, a thing for the whole population to turn out and look at. We were as foreign a sight to them as we would have been to people in the heart of the desert.

Little hands tugged at our skirts and felt of our clothes; the procession about us amounted to a rabble; excitement ran high. Word flew through the village that strangers were here, and the crowd increased about us every moment—not an

impertinent crowd, a crowd that laughed at us for our strange attire, but an admiring crowd, for as they grew bolder little girls quarreled with one another to excel in admiring the clothes such as they wear in cities, and all at once we felt self-conscious and overdressed, though our garments were battered and weather-worn enough and crumpled from our half a day on mule-back. It was truly embarrassing and in a way tragic that a shabby old traveling suit could in the twinkling of an eye become the clothes of a fairy princess—a commentary upon the scale of living more eloquent than any array of figures.

We had sent word of our coming, and lunch had been prepared for us in the house of one of the more well-to-do families of the village, and there we gladly took shelter from our army of admirers. But the children thronged in afterwards; they hid in the wide fireplaces, they sat behind the furniture, and when they were chased out they fled into bedrooms and courtyard. When, finally, with the aid of three men, they had been cleared out, all but some dozen or so, perhaps, and the massive doors had been barred with a great bar, they battered upon it, while over the grated windows little boys swarmed like wasps, obscuring the light.

Meanwhile the meal had begun, and we realized that this meal was a feast; we saw it in the faces of the wide-eyed children, who squabbled with one another without that they might see what was being placed before us. There was first a soup made of oil and onion and water and bread, very savory; next, two plates of meat—bits of chopped ham fried in its own fat, and square chunks of fresh pork, spiced and fried in oil with dry bread, honest in quality; and after this a sweetened dish of rice, not unlike "poor man's pudding" with a coating of cinnamon.

Our hosts ate with us, and, while we ate, the children had found some means of entrance, and the room quietly filled up until a circle of hungry eyes surrounded us, watching us eat the incredible number of courses of hot food. Except for soup, from one year's end to the other only the very well-to-do ever see hot food; and two dishes of meat at a time, with a sweet dish

besides—that was a feast almost incomprehensible.

The house itself was charming; thick-walled, flagged, and through its center a sort of driveway with wide doors opening at both ends, high enough for a man mounted on a mule to ride through, the center part paved in red and white and gray stone in a pretty pattern; a wide fireplace, and above this as fine a display of brass and copper as I have ever seen. The rooms opened off the main room, large, and with solid furniture of a pleasing design.

Our hostess asked us if we cared to arrange our hair and wash, and produced mirror and hand-basin and clean towels; and then, upon this mountain top, where our poor clothes had grown glorious and where the substantial luncheon had seemed a feast, in this town so much more remote than any place to which I have been, my hostess handed me a little box familiar in shape—handed it to me as a matter of course after the towel had done its duty.

"The powder," said she.

Good rice-powder it was, too, and scented with violet, and as much a matter of course as the soap and water—powder and the eider-down powder-puff that you might look in vain for through many a hill-town village in New England.

It was late afternoon when we left Almogia, and the sun struck the almond trees which threw a bridal veil across the whole country. The children followed us as far as they might, still smoothing our skirts and talking about hats and veils.

And so we started on our way back to the near-by city, in whose ports are ships from all parts of the world to take out to all countries its exports—luxuries all of them: olive oil and candied fruits, almonds and Malaga raisins and sweet wines; the city where the old and the new jostle each other at every turn in the road, where the old and the new conditions equally grind the people. They tell us that Andalusia is too Oriental in spirit to fight for its rights; but people emigrate and come back again also, and one day a rich country, happy in climate, rich in soil, rich in minerals, where the people are miserably poor, will seem a paradox to them as it does to us.

A Woman's Ascent of the Matterhorn

By Dora Keen

With Drawings by Leon V. Solon

IT was a still, cold, moonlight night, and the white peaks across the surrounding valleys seemed even more majestic and imposing than by day in their silent grandeur, as, with my two guides, I left the little Schwarzsee Hotel, on the plateau two hours above Zermatt, at two o'clock on the morning of September 7, 1909. For three weeks the lofty Matterhorn, for whose summit we were bound, had been almost completely white with fresh snow every third day, even on its steepest sides, and the mountain climbers at Zermatt had been obliged to content themselves with other peaks whose snow slopes or less steep rocks made the fresh snow less to be reckoned with than on the Matterhorn. There the added difficulty and time make it dangerous to go until a few days of hot sun have melted some of the snow.

One other tourist had decided to attempt it that day, the second day after the last heavy snow, but he turned back exhausted within an hour and a half of the top. He had started with his guides at three in the morning from the miserable hut, one hour and fifty minutes above the little hotel where my experienced guides had advised me to spend the night.

Called at 12:30 A.M., after a breakfast of hot milk and bread, our first two hours' walk was up a comparatively level path by which mules could go, so that, as I walked ahead of my guides, I could enjoy the full beauty of the distant spectral glaciers and the snow and rock peaks that formed a complete circle about me. Rising higher, the few lights in the valley below became mere specks. The great isolated Matterhorn, towards whose base we were fast coming, seemed to rise directly above us, and gradually we saw signs of the beautiful dawn. Reaching the hut, we stopped to rope. From then

until our return to the hut at 8 P.M., I was to walk between the guides, the rope tied securely around each of our waists. A length of thirty feet of rope between each two of us gave leeway to climb, and when less was needed the slack was coiled around the shoulders or in one hand of the guides. At once, a few steps from the hut, our rock work began, and from this hour, 4 A.M., until 8 P.M., when we got back to the hut, the only rests from hard work were a total of three hours—just the briefest stops necessary to eat, to photograph, and to take momentary looks at the view. At six, sunrise, we overtook and passed the other "caravan," as these insignificant parties on the mountains are called, in the similarity to the silent desert wilderness of the vast, pitiless, impressive masses of rocks, ice, and snow. Only with a telescope can the progress of a party climbing be watched, and as our success was thus watched all day from many points below, our return found the base hut overflowing with seven parties who had resolved to profit by our tracks on the next day.

Three and a half hours of hard rock climbing from the upper, now useless, hut where we had breakfasted brought us at 10 A.M. only to the "shoulder," as the long, steep ice slope is called. Under normal conditions—that is, without snow—we should have been on top at this hour. Thus far it had been a steady pull up snow-covered, precipitous rocks, with care and difficulty, but no continuous anxiety. We were following the ridge, but enough at one side not to be in the full north wind. The first beautiful rose hues of the dawn, about 5:15, had given place to the deep lights and shades of a cloudless day in which the green valley, black rocks, and masses of snow and ice against a deep-