

grounds at some distance. Near the town it crosses a valley, raised high on a long line of quaint narrow arches. We wandered up this valley for several miles to a pretty water-fall called "La Chorrea," where we stopped and had a delicious luncheon, the chief element in it the supply of luscious ripe oranges which we had got fresh from the trees on our way; and, after sitting sketching and chatting during the heat of the day, we quietly retraced our steps to the town, where we found the *Pigeon* awaiting our return.

The valley is well wooded, and, from the peculiar character of the vegetation, in the middle of the region of evergreen shrubs and trees, there was little to remind us of winter. The greater part of our route lay through an old cork-forest, the gnarled, rugged trees a considerable distance apart, with greensward beneath, like the trees in an English park. The foliage of an old cork-tree is dark and gray, and somewhat scanty; but along our path the rough boles and branches were everywhere beautifully relieved by great patches of the furry, tawny rhizomes and light-green feathery fronds of one of the hare's-foot ferns (*Davallia*), perched in the clefts of the branches, or clinging in the deep grooves formed by the splitting of the outer layers of the cork.

We passed several fruit farms, most of them evidently of old standing, with orange and lemon trees thirty and forty feet high, now bending and breaking under their load of golden fruit—eight or ten ripe oranges at the end of every branch, thrown out in splendid contrast against the dark-green leaves. The spring flowers were beginning to bloom, and great spikes of *Narcissus polyanthus* sent out a delightful fragrance from the hedge-rows. The whole scene was very beautiful; but the small amount of cultivation, and the evident carelessness and bad management, produced the feeling of regret which seems inseparable from every thing concerning the Spain of the present—that a country naturally capable of so much should do so little.