

SPANISH LADIES

Collected by CECIL J. SHARP

Am C

Fare - well and a - dieu to you Span - ish la - dies,

Am E7

Fare - well and a - dieu to you la - dies of Spain;

Am E7 Am C

For we've re - ceived or - ders for to sail for old Eng - land,

Am C Am

But we hope in a short time to see you a - gain.

1 Farewell and adieu to you, Spanish ladies,
Farewell and adieu to you, ladies of Spain;
For we've received orders for to sail for old England,
But we hope in a short time to see you again.

Chorus We will rant and we'll roar like true British sailors,
We'll rant and we'll roar all on the salt seas,
Until we strike soundings in the channel of old England:
From Ushant to Scilly is thirty-five leagues.

2 We hove our ship to with the wind from sou'-west, boys,
We hove our ship to, deep soundings to take;
'Twas forty-five fathoms, with a white sandy bottom,
So we squared our main yard and up channel did make.

3 The first land we sighted was call-ed the Dodman,
Next Rame Head off Plymouth, off Portsmouth the Wight;
We sail-ed by Beachy, by Fairlight and Dover,
And then we bore up for the South Foreland light.

4 Then the signal was made for the grand fleet to anchor,
And all in the Downs that night for to lie;
Let go your shank painter, let go your cat stopper!
Haul up your clewgarnets, let tacks and sheets fly!

5 Now let ev'ry man drink off his full bumper,
And let ev'ry man drink off his full glass;
We'll drink and be jolly and drown melancholy,
And here's to the health of each true-hearted lass.

NOTE

This is a Capstan Chantey. It is also well known in the navy, where it is sung as a song, chanteys not being permitted. Captain Kettlewell, R.N., who has made a special study of this song and has very kindly revised the words for me, tells me that when it is sung on board ship, the conclusion of the chorus is, or always used to be, greeted with a shout of "Heave and pawl!" (the pawl is the catch which prevents the recoil of the windlass).

The tune is in the Aeolian mode and, in my opinion, it is one of the grandest of our folk-tunes and one of which a seafaring nation may well be proud. Nowadays, alas! sailors sing a modernized and far less beautiful form of the air in the major mode.