CLASSIC LIVING BOOK

THE BIBLE IN SPAIN

George Henry Borrow

COMPLETE AND UNABRIDGED

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by

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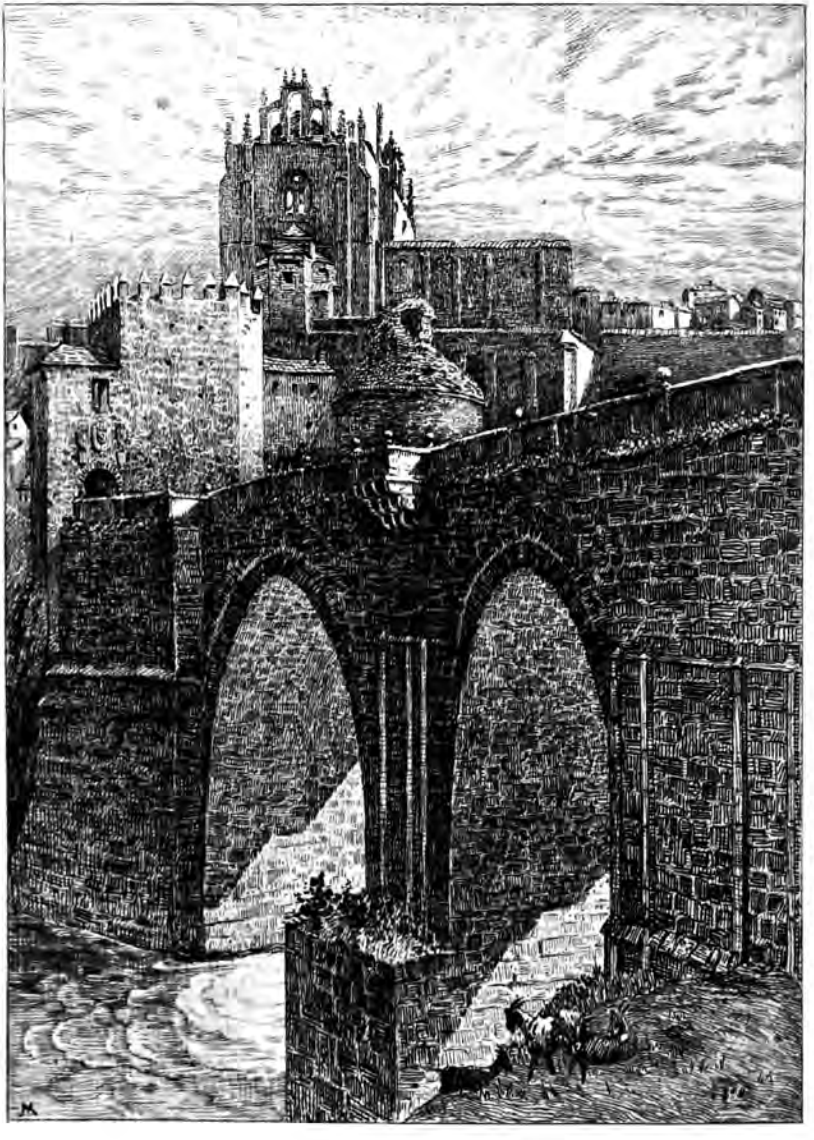

Toledo

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Blessed with a magnificent physique, and an unswerving belief in God's beneficence; endowed with "the gift of tongues" and a cheerful disposition, George Borrow was well equipped for life. That he was called to be a Bible Society missionary was surely a curious turn of fortune. The son of a Militia captain, whose duties took him about the country, Borrow early acquired the taste for a roving life, and it must have been a severe hardship to him when, at the age of sixteen, he was articled to a Norwich firm of solicitors. Indeed, it would almost appear that the gypsy spirit was quenched, for on the completion of his five years he was engaged as literary hack to Phillips, the London publisher. But after a year or so the "call of the wild" came, and Borrow eagerly responded. What happened is not really known, though much of his gypsy life is pictured in *Lavengro*.

In 1832 he commenced his work for the Bible Society, and the next year went as its representative to Russia. He stayed there until 1835, when he was ordered to Spain and Portugal. In spite of their adventurous nature, the five years there spent were described by Borrow as "the most happy years of my life." *The Bible in Spain* consists largely of his letters to the Society, and the vigour and directness of his language must ofttimes have startled the officials. The book was published in December, 1842.

George Henry Borrow was born July 5, 1803, and died July 26, 1881.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

It is very seldom that the preface of a work is read; indeed, of late years, most books have been sent into the world without any. I deem it, however, advisable to write a preface, and to this I humbly call the attention of the courteous reader, as its perusal will not a little tend to the proper understanding and appreciation of these volumes.

The work now offered to the public, and which is styled *The Bible in Spain*, consists of a narrative of what occurred to me during a residence in that country, to which I was sent by the Bible Society, as its agent for the purpose of printing and circulating the Scriptures. It comprehends, however, certain journeys and adventures in Portugal, and leaves me at last in "the land of the Corahai," to which region, after having undergone considerable buffeting in Spain, I found it expedient to retire for a season.

It is very probable that had I visited Spain from mere curiosity, or with a view of passing a year or two agreeably, I should never have attempted to give any detailed account of my proceedings, or of what I heard and saw. I am no tourist, no writer of books of travels; but I went there on a somewhat remarkable errand, which necessarily led me into strange situations and positions, involved me in difficulties and perplexities, and brought me into contact with people of all descriptions and grades; so that, upon the whole, I flatter myself that a narrative of such a pilgrimage may not be wholly uninteresting to the public, more especially as the subject is not trite; for though various books have been published about Spain, I believe that the present is the only one in existence which treats of missionary labour in that country.

Many things, it is true, will be found in the following volume which have little connexion with religion or religious enterprise; I offer, however, no apology for introducing them. I was, as I may say, from first to last adrift in Spain, the land of old renown, the land of wonder and mystery, with better opportunities of becoming acquainted with its strange secrets and peculiarities than perhaps ever yet were afforded to any individual, certainly to a foreigner; and if in many instances I have introduced scenes and characters perhaps unprecedented in a work of this description, I have only to observe, that, during my sojourn in Spain, I was so unavoidably mixed up with such,

that I could scarcely have given a faithful narrative of what befell me had I not brought them forward in the manner which I have done.

It is worthy of remark that, called suddenly and unexpectedly "to undertake the adventure of Spain," I was not altogether unprepared for such an enterprise. In the daydreams of my boyhood, Spain always bore a considerable share, and I took a particular interest in her, without any presentiment that I should at a future time be called upon to take a part, however humble, in her strange dramas; which interest, at a very early period, led me to acquire her noble language, and to make myself acquainted with her literature (scarcely worthy of the language), her history and traditions; so that when I entered Spain for the first time I felt more at home than I should otherwise have done.

In Spain I passed five years, which, if not the most eventful, were, I have no hesitation in saying, the most happy years of my existence. Of Spain, at the present time, now that the daydream has vanished, never, alas! to return, I entertain the warmest admiration: she is the most magnificent country in the world, probably the most fertile, and certainly with the finest climate. Whether her children are worthy of their mother, is another question, which I shall not attempt to answer; but content myself with observing, that, amongst much that is lamentable and reprehensible, I have found much that is noble and to be admired; much stern heroic virtue; much savage and horrible crime; of low vulgar vice very little, at least amongst the great body of the Spanish nation, with which my mission lay; for it will be as well here to observe, that I advance no claim to an intimate acquaintance with the Spanish nobility, from whom I kept as remote as circumstances would permit me; *en revanche*, however, I have had the honour to live on familiar terms with the peasants, shepherds, and muleteers of Spain, whose bread and bacalao I have eaten; who always treated me with kindness and courtesy, and to whom I have not unfrequently been indebted for shelter and protection.

"The generous bearing of Francisco Gonzales, and the high deeds of Ruy Diaz the Cid, are still sung amongst the fastnesses of the Sierra Morena."[1]

I believe that no stronger argument can be brought forward in proof of the natural vigour and resources of Spain, and the sterling character of her population, than the fact that, at the present day, she is still a power-

1 "Om Frands Gonzales, og Rodrik Cid.
End siunges i Sierra Murene!"
Krönike Riim. By Severin Grundtvig. Copenhagen, 1829.

ful and unexhausted country, and her children still, to a certain extent, a high-minded and great people. Yes, notwithstanding the misrule of the brutal and sensual Austrian, the doting Bourbon, and, above all, the spiritual tyranny of the court of Rome, Spain can still maintain her own, fight her own combat, and Spaniards are not yet fanatic slaves and crouching beggars. This is saying much, very much: she has undergone far more than Naples had ever to bear, and yet the fate of Naples has not been hers. There is still valour in Astruria; generosity in Aragon; probity in Old Castile; and the peasant women of La Mancha can still afford to place a silver fork and a snowy napkin beside the plate of their guest. Yes, in spite of Austrian, Bourbon, and Rome, there is still a wide gulf between Spain and Naples.

Strange as it may sound, Spain is not a fanatic country. I know something about her, and declare that she is not, nor has ever been; Spain never changes. It is true that, for nearly two centuries, she was the she-butcher, *La Verduga*, of malignant Rome; the chosen instrument for carrying into effect the atrocious projects of that power; yet fanaticism was not the spring which impelled her to the work of butchery; another feeling, in her the predominant one, was worked upon—her fatal pride. It was by humouring her pride that she was induced to waste her precious blood and treasure in the Low Country wars, to launch the Armada, and to many other equally insane actions. Love of Rome had ever slight influence over her policy; but flattered by the title of Gonfaloniera of the Vicar of Jesus, and eager to prove herself not unworthy of the same, she shut her eyes and rushed upon her own destruction with the cry of "Charge, Spain."

But the arms of Spain became powerless abroad, and she retired within herself. She ceased to be the tool of the vengeance and cruelty of Rome. She was not cast aside, however. No! though she could no longer wield the sword with success against the Lutherans, she might still be turned to some account. She had still gold and silver, and she was still the land of the vine and olive. Ceasing to be the butcher, she became the banker of Rome; and the poor Spaniards, who always esteem it a privilege to pay another person's reckoning, were for a long time happy in being permitted to minister to the grasping cupidity of Rome, who during the last century, probably extracted from Spain more treasure than from all the rest of Christendom.

But wars came into the land. Napoleon and his fierce Franks invaded Spain; plunder and devastation ensued, the effects of which will probably be felt for ages. Spain could no longer pay pence to Peter so freely as of yore, and from that period she became contemptible in the eyes of Rome, who has no respect for a nation, save so far as it can minister to her cruelty

or avarice. The Spaniard was still willing to pay, as far as his means would allow, but he was soon given to understand that he was a degraded being,—a barbarian; nay, a beggar. Now, you may draw the last cuarto from a Spaniard, provided you will concede to him the title of cavalier, and rich man, for the old leaven still works as powerfully as in the time of the first Philip; but you must never hint that he is poor, or that his blood is inferior to your own. And the old peasant, on being informed in what slight estimation he was held, replied, "If I am a beast, a barbarian, and a beggar withal, I am sorry for it; but as there is no remedy, I shall spend these four bushels of barley, which I had reserved to alleviate the misery of the holy father, in procuring bull spectacles, and other convenient diversions, for the queen my wife, and the young princes my children. Beggar! carajo! The water of my village is better than the wine of Rome."

I see that in a late pastoral letter directed to the Spaniards, the father of Rome complains bitterly of the treatment which he has received in Spain at the hands of naughty men. "My cathedrals are let down," he says, "my priests are insulted, and the revenues of my bishops are curtailed." He consoles himself, however, with the idea that this is the effect of the malice of a few, and that the generality of the nation love him, especially the peasantry, the innocent peasantry, who shed tears when they think of the sufferings of their pope and their religion. Undeceive yourself, Batuschca, undeceive yourself! Spain was ready to fight for you so long as she could increase her own glory by doing so; but she took no pleasure in losing battle after battle on your account. She had no objection to pay money into your coffers in the shape of alms, expecting, however, that the same would be received with the gratitude and humility which becomes those who accept charity. Finding, however, that you were neither humble nor grateful; suspecting, moreover, that you held Austria in higher esteem than herself, even as a banker, she shrugged up her shoulders, and uttered a sentence somewhat similar to that which I have already put into the mouth of one of her children, "These four bushels of barley," etc.

It is truly surprising what little interest the great body of the Spanish nation took in the late struggle, and yet it has been called, by some who ought to know better, a war of religion and principle. It was generally supposed that Biscay was the stronghold of Carlism, and that the inhabitants were fanatically attached to their religion, which they apprehended was in danger. The truth is, that the Basques cared nothing for Carlos or Rome, and merely took up arms to defend certain rights and privileges of their own. For the dwarfish brother of Ferdinand they always exhibited supreme

contempt, which his character, a compound of imbecility, cowardice, and cruelty, well merited. If they made use of his name, it was merely as a *cri de guerre*. Much the same may be said with respect to his Spanish partisans, at least those who appeared in the field for him. These, however, were of a widely different character from the Basques, who were brave soldiers and honest men. The Spanish armies of Don Carlos were composed entirely of thieves and assassins, chiefly Valencians and Manchegans, who, marshalled under two cut-throats, Cabrera and Palillos, took advantage of the distracted state of the country to plunder and massacre the honest part of the community. With respect to the Queen Regent Christina, of whom the less said the better, the reins of government fell into her hands on the decease of her husband, and with them the command of the soldiery. The respectable part of the Spanish nation, and more especially the honourable and toilworn peasantry, loathed and execrated both factions. Oft when I was sharing at nightfall the frugal fare of the villager of Old or New Castile, on hearing the distant shot of the Christino soldier or Carlist bandit, he would invoke curses on the heads of the two pretenders, not forgetting the holy father and the goddess of Rome, Maria Santissima. Then, with the tiger energy of the Spaniard when roused, he would start up and exclaim: "Vamos, Don Jorge, to the plain, to the plain! I wish to enlist with you, and to learn the law of the English. To the plain, therefore, to the plain to-morrow, to circulate the gospel of Ingalaterra."

Amongst the peasantry of Spain I found my sturdiest supporters: and yet the holy father supposes that the Spanish labourers are friends and lovers of his. Undeceive yourself, Batuschca!

But to return to the present work: it is devoted to an account of what befell me in Spain whilst engaged in distributing the Scripture. With respect to my poor labours, I wish here to observe, that I accomplished but very little, and that I lay claim to no brilliant successes and triumphs; indeed I was sent into Spain more to explore the country, and to ascertain how far the minds of the people were prepared to receive the truths of Christianity, than for any other object; I obtained, however, through the assistance of kind friends, permission from the Spanish government to print an edition of the sacred volume at Madrid, which I subsequently circulated in that capital and in the provinces.

During my sojourn in Spain, there were others who wrought good service in the Gospel cause, and of whose efforts it were unjust to be silent in a work of this description. Base is the heart which would refuse merit its meed, and, however insignificant may be the value of any eulogium which

can flow from a pen like mine, I cannot refrain from mentioning with respect and esteem a few names connected with Gospel enterprise. A zealous Irish gentleman, of the name of Graydon, exerted himself with indefatigable diligence in diffusing the light of Scripture in the province of Catalonia, and along the southern shores of Spain; whilst two missionaries from Gibraltar, Messrs. Rule and Lyon, during one entire year, preached Evangelic truth in a Church at Cadiz. So much success attended the efforts of these two last brave disciples of the immortal Wesley, that there is every reason for supposing that, had they not been silenced and eventually banished from the country by the pseudo-liberal faction of the Moderados, not only Cadiz, but the greater part of Andalusia, would by this time have confessed the pure doctrines of the Gospel, and have discarded for ever the last relics of popish superstition.

More immediately connected with the Bible Society and myself, I am most happy to take this opportunity of speaking of Luis de Usoz y Rio, the scion of an ancient and honourable family of Old Castile, my coadjutor whilst editing the Spanish New Testament at Madrid. Throughout my residence in Spain, I experienced every mark of friendship from this gentleman, who, during the periods of my absence in the provinces, and my numerous and long journeys, cheerfully supplied my place at Madrid, and exerted himself to the utmost in forwarding the views of the Bible Society, influenced by no other motive than a hope that its efforts would eventually contribute to the peace, happiness, and civilisation of his native land.

In conclusion, I beg leave to state that I am fully aware of the various faults and inaccuracies of the present work. It is founded on certain journals which I kept during my stay in Spain, and numerous letters written to my friends in England, which they had subsequently the kindness to restore: the greater part, however, consisting of descriptions of scenery, sketches of character, etc., has been supplied from memory. In various instances I have omitted the names of places, which I have either forgotten, or of whose orthography I am uncertain. The work, as it at present exists, was written in a solitary hamlet in a remote part of England, where I had neither books to consult, nor friends of whose opinion or advice I could occasionally avail myself, and under all the disadvantages which arise from enfeebled health; I have, however, on a recent occasion, experienced too much of the lenity and generosity of the public, both of Britain and America, to shrink from again exposing myself to its gaze, and trust that, if in the present volumes it finds but little to admire, it will give me credit for good spirit, and for setting down nought in malice.

Nov. 26, 1842.

CHAPTER I

Man Overboard—The Tagus—Foreign Languages—Gesticulation—Streets of Lisbon—The Aqueduct—Bible tolerated in Portugal—Cintra—Don Sebastian—John de Castro—Conversation with a Priest—Colhares—Mafra—Its Palace—The Schoolmaster—The Portuguese—Their Ignorance of Scripture—Rural Priesthood—The Alemtejo.

On the morning of the tenth of November, 1835, I found myself off the coast of Galicia, whose lofty mountains, gilded by the rising sun, presented a magnificent appearance. I was bound for Lisbon; we passed Cape Finisterre, and standing farther out to sea, speedily lost sight of land. On the morning of the eleventh the sea was very rough, and a remarkable circumstance occurred. I was on the forecastle, discoursing with two of the sailors: one of them, who had but just left his hammock, said, "I have had a strange dream, which I do not much like, for," continued he, pointing up to the mast, "I dreamt that I fell into the sea from the cross-trees." He was heard to say this by several of the crew besides myself. A moment after, the captain of the vessel perceiving that the squall was increasing, ordered the topsails to be taken in, whereupon this man with several others instantly ran aloft; the yard was in the act of being hauled down, when a sudden gust of wind whirled it round with violence, and a man was struck down from the cross-trees into the sea, which was working like yeast below. In a short time he emerged; I saw his head on the crest of a billow, and instantly recognised in the unfortunate man the sailor who a few moments before had related his dream. I shall never forget the look of agony he cast whilst the steamer hurried past him. The alarm was given, and everything was in confusion; it was two minutes at least before the vessel was stopped, by which time the man was a considerable way astern; I still, however, kept my eye upon him, and could see that he was struggling gallantly with the waves. A boat was at length lowered, but the rudder was unfortunately not at hand, and only two oars could be procured, with which the men could make but little progress in so rough a sea. They did their best, however, and had arrived within ten yards of the man, who still struggled for his life, when I lost

sight of him, and the men on their return said that they saw him below the water, at glimpses, sinking deeper and deeper, his arms stretched out and his body apparently stiff, but that they found it impossible to save him; presently after, the sea, as if satisfied with the prey which it had acquired, became comparatively calm. The poor fellow who perished in this singular manner was a fine young man of twenty-seven, the only son of a widowed mother; he was the best sailor on board, and was beloved by all who were acquainted with him. This event occurred on the eleventh of November, 1835; the vessel was the *London Merchant* steamship. Truly wonderful are the ways of Providence!

That same night we entered the Tagus, and dropped anchor before the old tower of Belem; early the next morning we weighed, and, proceeding onward about a league, we again anchored at a short distance from the Caesodré, or principal quay of Lisbon. Here we lay for some hours beside the enormous black hulk of the *Rainha Nao*, a man-of-war, which in old times so captivated the eye of Nelson, that he would fain have procured it for his native country. She was, long subsequently, the admiral's ship of the Miguelite squadron, and had been captured by the gallant Napier about three years previous to the time of which I am speaking.

The *Rainha Nao* is said to have caused him more trouble than all the other vessels of the enemy; and some assert that, had the others defended themselves with half the fury which the old vixen queen displayed, the result of the battle which decided the fate of Portugal would have been widely different.

I found disembarkation at Lisbon to be a matter of considerable vexation; the custom-house officers were exceedingly uncivil, and examined every article of my little baggage with most provocating minuteness.

My first impression on landing in the Peninsula was by no means a favourable one; and I had scarcely pressed the soil one hour before I heartily wished myself back in Russia, a country which I had quitted about one month previous, and where I had left cherished friends and warm affections.

After having submitted to much ill-usage and robbery at the custom-house, I proceeded in quest of a lodging, and at last found one, but dirty and expensive. The next day I hired a servant, a Portuguese, it being my invariable custom on arriving in a country to avail myself of the services of a native; chiefly with the view of perfecting myself in the language; and being already acquainted with most of the principal languages and dialects of the east and the west, I am soon able to make myself quite intelligible to the

inhabitants. In about a fortnight I found myself conversing in Portuguese with considerable fluency.

Those who wish to make themselves understood by a foreigner in his own language, should speak with much noise and vociferation, opening their mouths wide. Is it surprising that the English are, in general, the worst linguists in the world, seeing that they pursue a system diametrically opposite? For example, when they attempt to speak Spanish, the most sonorous tongue in existence, they scarcely open their lips, and putting their hands in their pockets, fumble lazily, instead of applying them to the indispensable office of gesticulation. Well may the poor Spaniards exclaim, *These English talk so crabbedly, that Satan himself would not be able to understand them.*

Lisbon is a huge ruinous city, still exhibiting in almost every direction the vestiges of that terrific visitation of God, the earthquake which shattered it some eighty years ago. It stands on seven hills, the loftiest of which is occupied by the castle of Saint George, which is the boldest and most prominent object to the eye, whilst surveying the city from the Tagus. The most frequented and busy parts of the city are those comprised within the valley to the north of this elevation.

Here you find the Plaza of the Inquisition, the principal square in Lisbon, from which run parallel towards the river three or four streets, amongst which are those of the gold and silver, so designated from being inhabited by smiths cunning in the working of those metals; they are upon the whole very magnificent; the houses are huge and as high as castles; immense pillars defend the causeway at intervals, producing, however, rather a cumbrous effect. These streets are quite level, and are well paved, in which respect they differ from all the others in Lisbon. The most singular street, however, of all is that of the Alemcrin, or Rosemary, which debouches on the Caesodré. It is very precipitous, and is occupied on either side by the palaces of the principal Portuguese nobility, massive and frowning, but grand and picturesque, edifices, with here and there a hanging garden, overlooking the streets at a great height.

With all its ruin and desolation, Lisbon is unquestionably the most remarkable city in the Peninsula, and, perhaps, in the south of Europe. It is not my intention to enter into minute details concerning it; I shall content myself with remarking, that it is quite as much deserving the attention of the artist as even Rome itself. True it is that though it abounds with churches it has no gigantic cathedral, like St. Peter's, to attract the eye and fill it with wonder, yet I boldly say that there is no monument of man's labour and skill, pertaining either to ancient or modern Rome, for whatever purpose

designed, which can rival the water-works of Lisbon; I mean the stupendous aqueduct whose principal arches cross the valley to the north-east of Lisbon, and which discharges its little runnel of cool and delicious water into the rocky cistern within that beautiful edifice called the Mother of the Waters, from whence all Lisbon is supplied with the crystal lymph, though the source is seven leagues distant. Let travellers devote one entire morning to inspecting the Arcos and the Mai das Agoas, after which they may repair to the English church and cemetery, Père-la-Chaise in miniature, where, if they be of England, they may well be excused if they kiss the cold tomb, as I did, of the author of *Amelia*, the most singular genius which their island ever produced, whose works it has long been the fashion to abuse in public and to read in secret. In the same cemetery rest the mortal remains of Doddridge, another English author of a different stamp, but justly admired and esteemed. I had not intended, on disembarking, to remain long in Lisbon, nor indeed in Portugal; my destination was Spain, whither I shortly proposed to direct my steps, it being the intention of the Bible Society to attempt to commence operations in that country, the object of which should be the distribution of the Word of God, for Spain had hitherto been a region barred against the admission of the Bible; not so Portugal, where, since the revolution, the Bible had been permitted both to be introduced and circulated. Little, however, had been accomplished; therefore, finding myself in the country, I determined, if possible, to effect something in the way of distribution, but first of all to make myself acquainted as to how far the people were disposed to receive the Bible, and whether the state of education in general would permit them to turn it to much account. I had plenty of Bibles and Testaments at my disposal, but could the people read them, or would they? A friend of the Society to whom I was recommended was absent from Lisbon at the period of my arrival; this I regretted, as he could have afforded me several useful hints. In order, however, that no time might be lost, I determined not to wait for his arrival, but at once proceed to gather the best information I could upon those points to which I have already alluded. I determined to commence my researches at some slight distance from Lisbon, being well aware of the erroneous ideas that I must form of the Portuguese in general, should I judge of their character and opinions from what I saw and heard in a city so much subjected to foreign intercourse.

My first excursion was to Cintra. If there be any place in the world entitled to the appellation of an enchanted region, it is surely Cintra; Tivoli is a beautiful and picturesque place, but it quickly fades from the mind of

those who have seen the Portuguese Paradise. When speaking of Cintra, it must not for a moment be supposed that nothing more is meant than the little town or city; by Cintra must be understood the entire region, town, palace, quintas, forests, crags, Moorish ruin, which suddenly burst on the view on rounding the side of a bleak, savage, and sterile-looking mountain. Nothing is more sullen and uninviting than the south-western aspect of the stony wall which, on the side of Lisbon, seems to shield Cintra from the eye of the world, but the other side is a mingled scene of fairy beauty, artificial elegance, savage grandeur, domes, turrets, enormous trees, flowers and waterfalls, such as is met with nowhere else beneath the sun. Oh! there are strange and wonderful objects at Cintra, and strange and wonderful recollections attached to them. The ruin on that lofty peak, and which covers part of the side of that precipitous steep, was once the principal stronghold of the Lusitanian Moors, and thither, long after they had disappeared, at a particular moon of every year, were wont to repair wild santons of Maugrabie, to pray at the tomb of a famous Sidi, who slumbers amongst the rocks. That grey palace witnessed the assemblage of the last cortes held by the boy king Sebastian, ere he departed on his romantic expedition against the Moors, who so well avenged their insulted faith and country at Alcazarquibir, and in that low shady quinta, embowered amongst those tall alcornoques, once dwelt John de Castro, the strange old viceroy of Goa, who pawned the hairs of his dead son's beard to raise money to repair the ruined wall of a fortress threatened by the heathen of Ind; those crumbling stones which stand before the portal, deeply graven, not with "runes," but things equally dark, Sanscrit rhymes from the Vedas, were brought by him from Goa, the most brilliant scene of his glory, before Portugal had become a base kingdom; and down that dingle, on an abrupt rocky promontory, stand the ruined halls of the English Millionaire, who there nursed the wayward fancies of a mind as wild, rich, and variegated as the scenes around. Yes, wonderful are the objects which meet the eye at Cintra, and wonderful are the recollections attached to them.

The town of Cintra contains about eight hundred inhabitants. The morning subsequent to my arrival, as I was about to ascend the mountain for the purpose of examining the Moorish ruins, I observed a person advancing towards me whom I judged by his dress to be an ecclesiastic; he was in fact one of the three priests of the place. I instantly accosted him, and had no reason to regret doing so; I found him affable and communicative.

After praising the beauty of the surrounding scenery, I made some inquiry as to the state of education amongst the people under his care. He answered,

that he was sorry to say that they were in a state of great ignorance, very few of the common people being able either to read or write; that with respect to schools, there was but one in the place, where four or five children were taught the alphabet, but that even this was at present closed; he informed me, however, that there was a school at Colhares, about a league distant. Amongst other things, he said that nothing more surprised him than to see Englishmen, the most learned and intelligent people in the world, visiting a place like Cintra, where there was no literature, science, nor anything of utility (*coisa que presta*). I suspect that there was some covert satire in the last speech of the worthy priest; I was, however, Jesuit enough to appear to receive it as a high compliment, and, taking off my hat, departed with an infinity of bows.

That same day I visited Colhares, a romantic village on the side of the mountain of Cintra, to the north-west. Seeing some peasants collected round a smithy, I inquired about the school, whereupon one of the men instantly conducted me thither. I went upstairs into a small apartment, where I found the master with about a dozen pupils standing in a row; I saw but one stool in the room, and to that, after having embraced me, he conducted me with great civility. After some discourse, he showed me the books which he used for the instruction of the children; they were spelling books, much of the same kind as those used in the village schools in England. Upon my asking him whether it was his practice to place the Scriptures in the hands of the children, he informed me that long before they had acquired sufficient intelligence to understand them they were removed by their parents, in order that they might assist in the labours of the field, and that the parents in general were by no means solicitous that their children should learn anything, as they considered the time occupied in learning as so much squandered away. He said, that though the schools were nominally supported by the government, it was rarely that the schoolmasters could obtain their salaries, on which account many had of late resigned their employments. He told me that he had a copy of the New Testament in his possession, which I desired to see, but on examining it I discovered that it was only the epistles by Pereira, with copious notes. I asked him whether he considered that there was harm in reading the Scriptures without notes: he replied that there was certainly no harm in it, but that simple people, without the help of notes, could derive but little benefit from Scripture, as the greatest part would be unintelligible to them; whereupon I shook hands with him, and on departing said that there was no part of Scripture so difficult to understand as those very notes which were intended to elucidate

it, and that it would never have been written if not calculated of itself to illume the minds of all classes of mankind.

In a day or two I made an excursion to Mafra, distant about three leagues from Cintra; the principal part of the way lay over steep hills, somewhat dangerous for horses; however, I reached the place in safety.

Mafra is a large village in the neighbourhood of an immense building, intended to serve as a convent and palace, and which is built somewhat after the fashion of the Escurial. In this edifice exists the finest library in Portugal, containing books on all sciences and in all languages, and well suited to the size and grandeur of the edifice which contains it. There were no monks, however, to take care of it, as in former times; they had been driven forth, some to beg their bread, some to serve under the banners of Don Carlos, in Spain, and many, as I was informed, to prowl about as banditti. I found the place abandoned to two or three menials, and exhibiting an aspect of solitude and desolation truly appalling. Whilst I was viewing the cloisters, a fine intelligent-looking lad came up and asked (I suppose in the hope of obtaining a trifle) whether I would permit him to show me the village church, which he informed me was well worth seeing; I said no, but added, that if he would show me the village school I should feel much obliged to him. He looked at me with astonishment, and assured me that there was nothing to be seen at the school, which did not contain more than half a dozen boys, and that he himself was one of the number. On my telling him, however, that he should show me no other place, he at length unwillingly attended me. On the way I learned from him that the schoolmaster was one of the friars who had lately been expelled from the convent, that he was a very learned man, and spoke French and Greek. We passed a stone cross, and the boy bent his head and crossed himself with much devotion. I mention this circumstance, as it was the first instance of the kind which I had observed amongst the Portuguese since my arrival. When near the house where the schoolmaster resided, he pointed it out to me, and then hid himself behind a wall, where he awaited my return.

On stepping over the threshold I was confronted by a short stout man, between sixty and seventy years of age, dressed in a blue jerkin and grey trousers, without shirt or waistcoat; he looked at me sternly, and enquired in the French language what was my pleasure. I apologised for intruding upon him, and stated that, being informed he occupied the situation of schoolmaster, I had come to pay my respects to him and to beg permission to ask a few questions respecting the seminary. He answered that whoever told me he was a schoolmaster lied, for that he was a friar of the convent

and nothing else. "It is not then true," said I, "that all the convents have been broken up and the monks dismissed?" "Yes, yes," said he with a sigh, "it is true; it is but too true." He then was silent for a minute, and his better nature overcoming his angry feelings, he produced a snuff-box and offered it to me. The snuff-box is the olive-branch of the Portuguese, and he who wishes to be on good terms with them must never refuse to dip his finger and thumb into it when offered. I took therefore a huge pinch, though I detest the dust, and we were soon on the best possible terms. He was eager to obtain news, especially from Lisbon and Spain. I told him that the officers of the troops at Lisbon had, the day before I left that place, gone in a body to the queen and insisted upon her either receiving their swords or dismissing her ministers; whereupon he rubbed his hands and said that he was sure matters would not remain tranquil at Lisbon. On my saying, however, that I thought the affairs of Don Carlos were on the decline (this was shortly after the death of Zumalacarregui), he frowned, and cried that it could not possibly be, for that God was too just to suffer it. I felt for the poor man who had been driven out of his home in the noble convent close by, and from a state of affluence and comfort reduced in his old age to indigence and misery, for his present dwelling scarcely seemed to contain an article of furniture. I tried twice or thrice to induce him to converse about the school, but he either avoided the subject or said shortly that he knew nothing about it. On my leaving him, the boy came from his hiding-place and rejoined me; he said that he had hidden himself through fear of his master's knowing that he had brought me to him, for that he was unwilling that any stranger should know that he was a schoolmaster.

I asked the boy whether he or his parents were acquainted with the Scripture and ever read it; he did not, however, seem to understand me. I must here observe that the boy was fifteen years of age, that he was in many respects very intelligent, and had some knowledge of the Latin language; nevertheless he knew not the Scripture even by name, and I have no doubt, from what I subsequently observed, that at least two-thirds of his countrymen are on that important point no wiser than himself. At the doors of village inns, at the hearths of the rustics, in the fields where they labour, at the stone fountains by the wayside where they water their cattle, I have questioned the lower class of the children of Portugal about the Scripture, the Bible, the Old and New Testament, and in no one instance have they known what I was alluding to, or could return me a rational answer, though on all other matters their replies were sensible enough; indeed, nothing surprised me more than the free and unembarrassed manner in which the Portuguese

peasantry sustain a conversation, and the purity of the language in which they express their thoughts, and yet few of them can read or write; whereas the peasantry of England, whose education is in general much superior, are in their conversation coarse and dull almost to brutality, and absurdly ungrammatical in their language, though the English tongue is upon the whole more simple in its structure than the Portuguese.

On my return to Lisbon I found our friend –, who received me very kindly. The next ten days were exceedingly rainy, which prevented me from making any excursions into the country: during this time I saw our friend frequently, and had long conversations with him concerning the best means of distributing the gospel. He thought we could do no better for the present than put part of our stock into the hands of the booksellers of Lisbon, and at the same time employ colporteurs to hawk the books about the streets, receiving a certain profit off every copy they sold. This plan was agreed upon and forthwith put in practice, and with some success. I had thought of sending colporteurs into the neighbouring villages, but to this our friend objected. He thought the attempt dangerous, as it was very possible that the rural priesthood, who still possessed much influence in their own districts, and who were for the most part decided enemies to the spread of the gospel, might cause the men employed to be assassinated or ill-treated.

I determined, however, ere leaving Portugal, to establish dépots of Bibles in one or two of the provincial towns. I wished to visit the Alemtejo, which I had heard was a very benighted region. The Alemtejo means the province beyond the Tagus. This province is not beautiful and picturesque, like most other parts of Portugal: there are few hills and mountains, the greater part consists of heaths broken by knolls, and gloomy dingles, and forests of stunted pine; these places are infested with banditti. The principal city is Evora, one of the most ancient in Portugal, and formerly the seat of a branch of the Inquisition, yet more cruel and baneful than the terrible one of Lisbon. Evora lies about sixty miles from Lisbon, and to Evora I determined on going with twenty Testaments and two Bibles. How I fared there will presently be seen.

CHAPTER II

Boatmen of the Tagus—Dangers of the Stream—Aldea Gallega—The Hostelry—Robbers—Sabocha—Adventure of a Muleteer—Estalagem de Ladroes—Don Geronimo—Vendas Novas—Royal Residence—Swine of the Alemtejo—Monto Moro—Swayne Vonved—Singular Goatherd—Children of the Fields—Infidels and Sadducees.

On the afternoon of the sixth of December I set out for Evora, accompanied by my servant. I had been informed that the tide would serve for the regular passage-boats, or felouks, as they are called, at about four o'clock, but on reaching the side of the Tagus opposite to Aldea Gallega, between which place and Lisbon the boats ply, I found that the tide would not permit them to start before eight o'clock. Had I waited for them I should have probably landed at Aldea Gallega about midnight, and I felt little inclination to make my entrée in the Alemtejo at that hour; therefore, as I saw small boats which can push off at any time lying near in abundance, I determined upon hiring one of them for the passage, though the expense would be thus considerably increased. I soon agreed with a wild-looking lad, who told me that he was in part owner of one of the boats, to take me over. I was not aware of the danger in crossing the Tagus at its broadest part, which is opposite Aldea Gallega, at any time, but especially at close of day in the winter season, or I should certainly not have ventured. The lad and his comrade, a miserable looking object, whose only clothing, notwithstanding the season, was a tattered jerkin and trousers, rowed until we had advanced about half a mile from the land; they then set up a large sail, and the lad, who seemed to direct everything and to be the principal, took the helm and steered. The evening was now setting in; the sun was not far from its bourne in the horizon, the air was very cold, the wind was rising, and the waves of the noble Tagus began to be crested with foam. I told the boy that it was scarcely possible for the boat to carry so much sail without upsetting, upon which he laughed, and began to gabble in a most incoherent manner. He had the most harsh and rapid articulation that has ever come under my observation in any human being; it was the scream of the hyena

blended with the bark of the terrier, though it was by no means an index of his disposition, which I soon found to be light, merry, and anything but malevolent, for when I, in order to show him that I cared little about him, began to hum "*Eu que sou Contrabandista*," he laughed heartily and said, clapping me on the shoulder, that he would not drown us if he could help it. The other poor fellow seemed by no means averse to go to the bottom; he sat at the fore part of the boat looking the image of famine, and only smiled when the waters broke over the weather side and soaked his scanty habiliments. In a little time I had made up my mind that our last hour was come; the wind was getting higher, the short dangerous waves were more foamy, the boat was frequently on its beam, and the water came over the lee side in torrents; but still the wild lad at the helm held on laughing and chattering, and occasionally yelling out part of the Miguelite air, "*Quando el Rey chegou*" the singing of which in Lisbon is imprisonment.

The stream was against us, but the wind was in our favour, and we sprang along at a wonderful rate, and I saw that our only chance of escape was in speedily passing the farther bank of the Tagus where the bight or bay at the extremity of which stands Aldea Gallega commences, for we should not then have to battle with the waves of the stream, which the adverse wind lashed into fury. It was the will of the Almighty to permit us speedily to gain this shelter, but not before the boat was nearly filled with water, and we were all wet to the skin. At about seven o'clock in the evening we reached Aldea Gallega, shivering with cold and in a most deplorable plight.

Aldea Gallega, or the Galician Village (for the two words are Spanish, and have that signification), is a place containing, I should think, about four thousand inhabitants. It was pitchy dark when we landed, but rockets soon began to fly about in all directions, illuming the air far and wide. As we passed along the dirty unpaved street which leads to the Largo, or square in which the inn is situated, a horrible uproar of drums and voices assailed our ears. On inquiring the cause of all this bustle, I was informed that it was the eve of the Conception of the Virgin.

As it was not the custom of the people at the inn to furnish provisions for the guests, I wandered about in search of food; and at last seeing some soldiers eating and drinking in a species of wine-house, I went in and asked the people to let me have some supper, and in a short time they furnished me with a tolerable meal, for which, however, they charged three crowns.

Having engaged with a person for mules to carry us to Evora, which were to be ready at five next morning, I soon retired to bed, my servant sleeping in the same apartment, which was the only one in the house vacant. I closed

not my eyes during the whole night. Beneath us was a stable, in which some almocreves, or carriers, slept with their mules; at our back, in the yard, was a pigsty. How could I sleep? The hogs grunted, the mules screamed, and the almocreves snored most horribly. I heard the village clock strike the hours until midnight, and from midnight till four in the morning, when I sprang up and began to dress, and despatched my servant to hasten the man with the mules, for I was heartily tired of the place and wanted to leave it. An old man, bony and hale, accompanied by a barefooted lad, brought the beasts, which were tolerably good. He was the proprietor of them, and intended, with the lad, who was his nephew, to accompany us to Evora.

When we started, the moon was shining brightly, and the morning was piercingly cold. We soon entered on a sandy hollow way, emerging from which we passed by a strange-looking and large edifice, standing on a high bleak sand-hill on our left. We were speedily overtaken by five or six men on horseback, riding at a rapid pace, each with a long gun slung at his saddle, the muzzle depending about two feet below the horse's belly. I inquired of the old man what was the reason of this warlike array. He answered, that the roads were very bad (meaning that they abounded with robbers), and that they went armed in this manner for their defence; they soon turned off to the right towards Palmella.

We reached a sandy plain studded with stunted pine; the road was little more than a footpath, and as we proceeded, the trees thickened and became a wood, which extended for two leagues, with clear spaces at intervals, in which herds of cattle and sheep were feeding; the bells attached to their necks were ringing lowly and monotonously. The sun was just beginning to show itself; but the morning was misty and dreary, which, together with the aspect of desolation which the country exhibited, had an unfavourable effect on my spirits. I got down and walked, entering into conversation with the old man. He seemed to have but one theme, "the robbers," and the atrocities they were in the habit of practising in the very spots we were passing. The tales he told were truly horrible, and to avoid them I mounted again, and rode on considerably in front.

In about an hour and a half we emerged from the forest, and entered upon a savage, wild, broken ground, covered with mato, or brushwood. The mules stopped to drink at a shallow pool, and on looking to the right I saw a ruined wall. This, the guide informed me, was the remains of Vendas Velhas, or the Old Inn, formerly the haunt of the celebrated robber Sabocha. This Sabocha, it seems, had, some sixteen years ago, a band of about forty ruffians at his command, who infested these wilds, and supported them-

selves by plunder. For a considerable time Sabocha pursued his atrocious trade unsuspected, and many an unfortunate traveller was murdered in the dead of night at the solitary inn by the wood-side, which he kept; indeed, a more fit situation for plunder and murder I never saw. The gang were in the habit of watering their horses at the pool, and perhaps of washing therein their hands stained with the blood of their victims; the lieutenant of the troop was the brother of Sabocha, a fellow of great strength and ferocity, particularly famous for the skill he possessed in darting a long knife, with which he was in the habit of transfixing his opponents. Sabocha's connection with the gang at length became known, and he fled, with the greater part of his associates, across the Tagus to the northern provinces. Himself and his brothers eventually lost their lives on the road to Coimbra, in an engagement with the military. His house was razed by order of the government.

The ruins are still frequently visited by banditti, who eat and drink amidst them, and look out for prey, as the place commands a view of the road. The old man assured me, that about two months previous, on returning to Aldea Gallega with his mules from accompanying some travellers, he had been knocked down, stripped naked, and all his money taken from him, by a fellow whom he believed came from this murderers' nest. He said that he was an exceedingly powerful young man, with immense moustaches and whiskers, and was armed with an espingarda, or musket. About ten days subsequently he saw the robber at Vendas Novas, where we should pass the night. The fellow on recognising him took him aside, and, with horrid imprecations, threatened that he should never be permitted to return home if he attempted to discover him; he therefore held his peace, as there was little to be gained and everything to be risked in apprehending him, as he would have been speedily set at liberty for want of evidence to criminate him, and then he would not have failed to have had his revenge, or would have been anticipated therein by his comrades.

I dismounted and went up to the place, and saw the vestiges of a fire and a broken bottle. The sons of plunder had been there very lately. I left a New Testament and some tracts amongst the ruins, and hastened away.

The sun had dispelled the mists and was beaming very hot; we rode on for about an hour, when I heard the neighing of a horse in our rear, and our guide said there was a party of horsemen behind; our mules were good, and they did not overtake us for at least twenty minutes. The headmost rider was a gentleman in a fashionable travelling dress; a little way behind were an officer, two soldiers, and a boy in livery. I heard the principal horseman, on overtaking my servant, inquiring who I was, and whether

French or English. He was told I was an English gentleman, travelling. He then asked whether I understood Portuguese; the man said I understood it, but he believed that I spoke French and Italian better. The gentleman then spurred on his horse and accosted me, not in Portuguese, nor in French or Italian, but in the purest English that I ever heard spoken by a foreigner; it had, indeed, nothing of foreign accent or pronunciation in it; and had I not known, by the countenance of the speaker, that he was no Englishman, (for there is a peculiarity in the countenance, as everybody knows, which, though it cannot be described, is sure to betray the Englishman), I should have concluded that I was in company with a countryman. We continued discoursing until we arrived at Pegoens.

Pegoens consists of about two or three houses and an inn; there is likewise a species of barrack, where half a dozen soldiers are stationed. In the whole of Portugal there is no place of worse reputation, and the inn is nick-named *Estalagem de Ladroes*, or the hostelry of thieves; for it is there that the banditti of the wilderness, which extends around it on every side for leagues, are in the habit of coming and spending the money, the fruits of their criminal daring; there they dance and sing, eat fricasseed rabbits and olives, and drink the muddy but strong wine of the Alemtejo. An enormous fire, fed by the trunk of a cork tree, was blazing in a niche on the left hand on entering the spacious kitchen. Close by it, seething, were several large jars, which emitted no disagreeable odour, and reminded me that I had not broken my fast, although it was now nearly one o'clock, and I had ridden five leagues. Several wild-looking men, who if they were not banditti might easily be mistaken for such, were seated on logs about the fire. I asked them some unimportant questions, to which they replied with readiness and civility, and one of them, who said he could read, accepted a tract which I offered him.

My new friend, who had been bespeaking dinner, or rather breakfast, now, with great civility, invited me to partake of it, and at the same time introduced me to the officer who accompanied him, and who was his brother, and also spoke English, though not so well as himself. I found I had become acquainted with Don Geronimo Joze D'Azveto, secretary to the government at Evora; his brother belonged to a regiment of hussars, whose headquarters were at Evora, but which had outlying parties along the road,—for example, the place where we were stopping.

Rabbits at Pegoens seem to be a standard article of food, being produced in abundance on the moors around. We had one fried, the gravy of which was delicious, and afterwards a roasted one, which was brought up

on a dish entire; the hostess, having first washed her hands, proceeded to tear the animal to pieces, which having accomplished, she poured over the fragments a sweet sauce. I ate heartily of both dishes, particularly of the last; owing, perhaps, to the novel and curious manner in which it was served up. Excellent figs, from the Algarves, and apples concluded our repast, which we ate in a little side room with a mud floor, which sent such a piercing chill into my system, as prevented me from deriving that pleasure from my fare and my agreeable companions that I should have otherwise experienced.

Roman military monument showing the rabbit as a Spanish device,

Don Geronimo had been educated in England, in which country he passed his boyhood, which in a certain degree accounted for his proficiency in the English language, the idiom and pronunciation of which can only be acquired by residing in the country at that period of one's life. He had also fled thither shortly after the usurpation of the throne of Portugal by Don Miguel, and from thence had departed to the Brazils, where he had devoted himself to the service of Don Pedro, and had followed him in the expedition which terminated in the downfall of the usurper and the establishment of the constitutional government in Portugal. Our conversation rolled chiefly on literary and political subjects, and my acquaintance with the writings of the most celebrated authors of Portugal was hailed with surprise and delight; for nothing is more gratifying to a Portuguese than to observe a foreigner taking an interest in the literature of his nation, of which, in many respects, he is justly proud.

At about two o'clock we were once more in the saddle, and pursued our way in company through a country exactly resembling that which we had previously been traversing, rugged and broken, with here and there a clump of pines. The afternoon was exceedingly fine, and the bright rays of the sun relieved the desolation of the scene. Having advanced about two leagues, we caught sight of a large edifice towering majestically in the distance, which I learnt was a royal palace standing at the farther extremity of Vendas Novas, the village in which we were to pass the night; it was considerably more than a league from us, yet, seen through the clear transparent atmosphere of Portugal it appeared much nearer.

Before reaching it we passed by a stone cross, on the pedestal of which