The George Borrow Society Newsletter
No. 3

Contents

Introduction

George Borrow by John Thomas Borrow, oil on canvas, circa 1821–1824, NPG 1651 © National Portrait Gallery, London.

The above portrait of George Borrow was painted by his brother John, a pupil of the great artist John Crome, and the picture was exhibited by John in the 1821 *Norwich Society of Artists* exhibition: George would be around 18. George talks of his brother in *Lavengro*, and you can view the above portrait at the National Portrait Gallery's website.

The newsletter compiler would like to apologise for the delay in producing this edition: whilst there's always content, getting it into the final form sometimes takes a lot longer than expected. Mike Skillman pointed out that when the *George Borrow Society* was formed the original plan was to have a newsletter, so our newsletters are only a few decades late.

In November we have an online Zoom event, organised by Catherine Bayliss: everyone is welcome to join in (see the emails sent out to members). Back in May when we thought it would "all be over by Christmas" we anticipated having a few smaller events this year, but that's not possible yet and so we might end up having more virtual events that folk can join in. As always, volunteers welcome.

In this newsletter a bit more thought has gone into the picture competition: still no prizes of course, but some interesting pictures to view, and answers towards the end. There's a mix of articles as well, from Ireland to Spain to Norfolk and Gloucester, Massachusetts. If you have something for our newsletter, feel free to contact David Price on ccx074@coventry.ac.uk

With our electronic format there's no longer a cost to including longer pieces, so included is Borrow's "review" of Richard Ford's *Hand-book*. Only 30 copies of this were printed so many won't have seen it.

Lastly, it was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of two of our members. Freda Wilkins-Jones passed away in 2019, and Peter Asher passed away in August 2020. They will be very much missed.

Picture Competition

Here's a few pictures for you to puzzle over: can you work out what's the connection to George Borrow? Not very helpful clues are supplied, and answers at the end of this newsletter. The first picture is from the National Portrait Gallery (see the answer for the credit). She's a nemesis of Borrow's.

The next lady was also a bit of a rival to Borrow, but probably neither understood the other, and both elected to "show off." For an extra clue you've possibly stood outside where her house was.

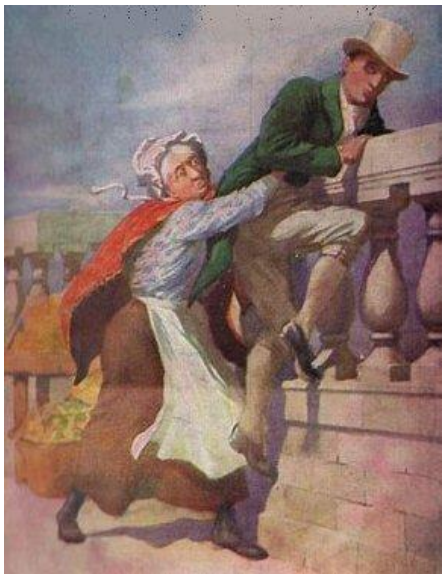
Who are these people and what's meant to be going on?

Well it's a building, and your clue is "the farmer-landlord"—that's got you pondering!

Did you know that you can buy a George Borrow T-Shirt? Below is from the company's site: the picture question is did Borrow say it, and if so, where?

And where is the following desolate place where Borrow met the Queen?

What's going on here?



And finally, Borrow said of this person: ‘I cannot say that I ever saw him walk fast.’

Norway Hawks in *Lavengro*
by Mike Skillman

When I was eight years of age my uncle the baronet, who was also my godfather, sent me a pair of Norway hawks, with directions for managing them; he was a great fowler. Oh, how rejoiced was I with the present which had been made me, my joy lasted for at least five minutes; I would let them breed, I would have a house of hawks; yes, that I would—but—and here came the unpleasant idea—suppose they were to fly away, how very annoying! Ah, but, said hope, there’s little fear of that; feed them well and they will never fly away, or if they do they will come back, my uncle says so; so sunshine triumphed for a little time. Then the strangest of all doubts came into my head; I doubted the legality of my tenure of these hawks; how did I come by them? why, my uncle gave them to me, but how did they come into his possession? what right had he to them? after all, they might not be his to give. I passed a sleepless night. The next morning I found that the man who brought the hawks had not departed.

“How came my uncle by these hawks?” I anxiously inquired.

“They were sent to him from Norway, master, with another pair.”

“And who sent them?”

"That I don't know, master, but I suppose his honour can tell you."

I was even thinking of scrawling a letter to my uncle to make inquiry on this point, but shame restrained me, and I likewise reflected that it would be impossible for him to give my mind entire satisfaction; it is true he could tell who sent him the hawks, but how was he to know how the hawks came into the possession of those who sent them to him, and by what right they possessed them or the parents of the hawks? In a word, I wanted a clear valid title, as lawyers would say, to my hawks, and I believe no title would have satisfied me that did not extend up to the time of the first hawk, that is, prior to Adam; and, could I have obtained such a title, I make no doubt that, young as I was, I should have suspected that it was full of flaws.

I was now disgusted with the hawks, and no wonder, seeing all the disquietude they had caused me; I soon totally neglected the poor birds, and they would have starved had not some of the servants taken compassion upon them and fed them. My uncle, soon hearing of my neglect, was angry, and took the birds away; he was a very good-natured man, however, and soon sent me a fine pony.

Lavengro, Chapter 64.

So what exactly is a Norway Hawk?

The Norway Hawk or Gyrfalcon or was considered a royal bird in medieval times. In European falconry the gyrfalcon was reserved for kings and nobles; very rarely was a man of lesser rank seen with a gyrfalcon on his fist. They were known by various names, such as Greenland falcons, Iceland falcons, Norway falcons or jerfalcons. These are large powerful falcons physically capable and with the courage to tackle a bird such as the heron.

Gryfalcon painted by Archibald Thorburn (1860–1935), from Coloured figures of the birds of the British Island by Baron Powys (1885).

Falconry almost died out in Britain following the introduction of firearms but then there was a revival. *The Renfrewshire Subscription Hawks* was set up in about 1755 and a little later, starting in 1771, there was a rather more ambitious one: *The Confederate Hawks of Great Britain* that was based for hawking at Barton Mills in the eastern counties. These two clubs were run on a subscription basis.

Excepting these, by the mid-1700s falconry was not practised in the British Isles, with the exception of a very few individuals who ran their own hawking establishments in Scotland. Lord Orford and Col. Thornton made a considerable effort to revive hawking in this country, for which end they introduced the 'Dutch School of Falconry' into England. This school chiefly differs from the Scotch form of the sport in using "Passage Hawks," (captured) whereas Scotch falconers employ "Eyesses" (raised from chicks).

Only a rich person could afford to buy a gyrfalcon. Colonel Thornton who ran *The Confederate Hawks of Great Britain* paid £22 for a gyrfalcon at the port of Kings Lynn in 1786. Given that gyrfalcons, in particular, were difficult to keep in good health, this was a very high price to pay. But these falcons, and particularly the gyrfalcon, became fashionable, and were believed to be necessary for the sport. This made English falconry far more expensive than it otherwise would have been.

The Confederate Hawks of Great Britain that was originally based at Barton Mills in the eastern counties, was started by the Earl of Orford, then run by Colonel Thornton for nine years before reverting to the Earl, and after his death in 1792 was passed to Robert Wilson of

Didlington, who became Lord Berners in 1832. They continued falconry in the 'grand' style, mounted and with a substantial field and eventually became known as the *High Ash Club*. It folded in 1838 after the enclosure and drainage of the land around Didlington.

The actual training and conditioning of the hawks and falcons was often considered tedious and rather beneath the 'dignity' of those of status; the wealthy and elite, and certainly of the aristocratic membership of the *Confederate Hawks of Great Britain*. There were very few professional falconers and the majority of those came from Holland.

May 1815

> "The diversion of hawking, a sport antiently much used, has been revived in this country on a considerable scale by Lord Rivers, Major Wilson, of Didlington, and Mr. Downes, of Gunton. Their subscription hawks, under the management of German falconers, have afforded much amusement to numerous spectators. Last week they were exhibited at Newmarket after the races, and flown off at some rooks in the Flat, which they speedily brought down."

Norfolk Annals:
A Chronological Record of Remarkable Events in the Nineteenth Century,
Vol. 1, Charles Mackie

When Robert Wilson became President of *The Confederate Hawks of Great Britain* its name became *The High Ash Club* because hawks were kept at High Ash, near Didlington.

The hawk's chief quarry, the kites, eventually became very scarce and the heron became the chief quarry.

The club seems to have been carried on and the hawks maintained, to some extent at any rate, by subscription up to the date of Lord Berners's death in 1838.

Col. Robert Wilson had Falconer's Lodge built on his estate at Didlington in around 1814, and it became the centre of formal falconry in Britain and reportedly Europe.

Falconer's Lodge.

And here we have the connection with George Borrow. He would have undoubtedly been aware of Colonel Robert Wilson and his famous High Ash hawking club at Didlington, attended by many wealthy members.

Why? Because Didlington is just a few miles from Dereham where he was born and raised.

After having looked into all this I am convinced that Borrow was making up this story about the hawks. The hawks would not be a suitable present for an eight-year-old. Furthermore, that particular type of hawk was susceptible to disease and needed the constant attention of an on-site falconer. Borrow plainly writes that the man who brought the hawks (two of them!) was just about to leave and no falconer was left to look after them. The story is full of holes as is the rest of the chapter.

Let us look at the baronet, for example. The author himself is said to be of middle age. The baronet is supposed to be the brother of the author's mother and also the author's godfather. He is still alive and has never married, wrote Borrow. If this were true, in 1825 when by all accounts the story is set, the baronet would be an elderly bachelor. So when he died the baronetcy would have become extinct. Fortunately there is a record of extinct baronetcies up to the year 1838. [i] There is only one that became extinct between 1825 and 1838 and that is when Sir David William Smith died without heirs on the 9th of May 1837. But he was a married man. This means that Borrow's baronet was yet another fabrication.

Footnote.

[i] John Bernard Burke (1838) *Extinct Baronetcies*.

The Bible in Spain and The Bible in Ireland
by Colm Kerrigan

Two Authors: Two Missionaries

The authors of *The Bible in Spain* and *The Bible in Ireland*, George Borrow and Asenath Nicholson, make clear in their books how they came to be distributing bibles in their respective missionary fields, Borrow doing so in the 1835 'Preface' for his 1843 book, while Nicholson does so in the penultimate chapter of her book. Both explain how their assignments entailed scope for wider observations on the state of the countries of their missionary endeavours. It is these observations and the two authors' reflections on them, that render their books to be of interest as much to the social as to the religious historian. In the bracketed references in the text of this article, Borrow's book is abbreviated to *BiSp*, while that of Nicholson is abbreviated to *BiIr*. [i]

He was sent to Spain, Borrow remarks in his Preface, 'more to explore the country, and to ascertain how far the minds of the people were prepared to receive the truths of Christianity'. [*BiSp*, xv] Nicholson, for her part, besides giving bible-readings and distributing bibles and tracts, explained the wider object of her mission to a lady in Connemara. It was because of the great number of 'beggared and abused' Irish immigrants arriving in America, and she came to Ireland to 'see how and what they could be at home'. [*BiIr*, 247]

At the time of their protestant missionary activity in Spain and Ireland recorded by Borrow and Nicholson, the vast majority of the population of both countries was Catholic, a religion which, although based on the bible as interpreted by the Catholic Church, discountenanced private reading and interpretation of the bible.

Of the two writers, Borrow may be considered the better qualified to have undertaken the role of missionary. As he records in his 'Preface', he had been interested in Spain from boyhood, an interest that led him to master the Spanish language at an early age and become acquainted with Spanish history and literature. [*BiSp*, x] Besides, he had published *The Zincali*, a book on Spanish gypsies which, although not a success, had been recommended to John Murray for publication by Richard Ford, one of the foremost English experts on Spain at the time. [ii] Most important, Borrow was paid by the British and Foreign Bible Society for his missionary work.

Nicholson, an American widow approaching fifty, a hater of tobacco, a temperance advocate and vegetarian, had experience of some work among native American Indians and slaves. She had some knowledge of the history of Ireland and knew a certain amount about the conditions she might expect to find among the poor there at the time of her visit, gleaned mostly from Irish girls who were immigrants in America, including some who had been servants in her house. Unlike Borrow, she was not paid, but was supplied with protestant tracts by friends in America before her departure and in Ireland received 'a selection of tracts on practical piety and English and Irish Testaments' for distribution around the country from the Hibernian Bible Society. That she might have received financial support from her American friends while in Ireland is suggested by her disappointment at not receiving letters from America at post offices, as in Galway, where her funds had dwindled to a pittance. [*BiIr*, 112]

Asenath Nicholson painted by Anna Maria Howitt.

Missionaries' Travel and Accommodation

Their respective financial situations in fact determined a significant difference between the two missionaries, both with regards to the means of transport they employed and the accommodation they used in the course of their travels. Apart from his early ride from

Badajoz to near Madrid on a donkey and the occasional use of stagecoaches, Borrow normally travelled on horseback and was usually accompanied by a servant or guide. He stayed overnight, or sometimes for several consecutive nights in posadas. A posada was an inn for travellers, providing accommodation varying from that of a hotel to that of a lodging house. Nicholson, who almost always travelled alone, had a free pass on the Bianconi coaches, but as these plied only between the main towns, she had often to walk long distances to reach her destination in the countryside. She sometimes accepted offers of lifts for herself and her bags of tracts and bibles from drivers of donkeys and carts going her way. While she sometimes stayed at a lodging house, where she came across one cheap enough to afford on her frugal budget, she frequently slept in a peasant's cabin, for which she paid a pittance and often nothing at all. For, as she wrote of a family to whom she had tried to offer money for their hospitality in their cabin and the potatoes they had boiled especially for her, the mother thrust the money back, 'giving a frown of half anger and half grief, and the daughter said, "She gave ye the potatoes in the name of God, and d'ye think we'd take money for it?"' [*BiIr*, 211]

Borrow in Spain

Borrow had a glimpse of Spain as the ship taking him to Lisbon sailed along the coast of Galicia in November 1835. From Lisbon he made his way through Portugal to enter Spain by crossing a stream that formed part of the frontier between Portugal and Spain near Badajoz. Entering that town, he met some gypsies, and, as he wrote, 'It was here that I first preached the gospel to the gypsy people, and commenced that translation of the New Testament in the Spanish gypsy tongue, a portion of which I subsequently printed in Madrid.' [*BiSp*, 80]

Antonio, one of the gypsies, having claimed to have some secret gypsy business to pursue in Madrid, offered to be Borrow's guide on the long journey by donkey to the Spanish capital, an offer that Borrow accepted, mainly for his protection, because, in Antonio's words, 'there is now but little law in the land'. [*BiSp*, 82] Following a stay in Marida, where Borrow was offered, but refused, a gypsy bride, the two travellers proceeded to Trujillo, where Antonio's expected lodgings were unavailable. Antonio was reluctant to seek alternative accommodation for them in the town because, it would seem, he was a wanted man by the authorities in the area. For the same reason, as they continued on their journey, it was Borrow rather than Antonio who dropped off to purchase supplies. When he rejoined Antonio, Borrow learnt that his guide would be unable to continue with him to Madrid because of news of complications in his gypsy business conveyed to him by his daughter. Borrow was, however, able to continue his journey alone by buying Antonio's daughter's donkey. He was joined by one of the many eccentrics he was to meet in Spain as he approached Talamara, at which town he found lodgings and after a day's rest took the stagecoach to Madrid.

Borrow found a spacious apartment near the Puerta del Sol, a central point in the city for meetings and demonstrations. Besides the favourable location of his lodgings, he was fortunate also, perhaps, in that Baltasar, the son of his landlady, was a prominent supporter of the dominant political force in the city at the time who, when Borrow met him, made offers of friendship so lavish as to extend to an offer to provide Borrow's second should he be engaged in a duel, and to accompany Borrow, in the absence of bullfights suspended for the winter, to witness the public spectacle of an execution by strangulation of two murderers. [*BiSp*, 129–31]

Borrow was again fortunate in that, through the agency of the British ambassador, he was able to secure an early interview with Mendizabal, the busy Spanish Prime Minister, a man who, through his known enmity towards the British and Foreign Bible Society, was unlikely to be favourable towards arrangements 'for introducing the Gospel into Spain'. [*BiSp*, 127] Although Borrow did not say so in his book, he must have charmed Mendizabal, as the latter agreed that after a few months, when Spain would be in 'a more tranquil state', Borrow 'should be allowed to print the Scriptures.' But Mendizabal added that it was not Bibles that Spain was in need of but guns, gunpowder and money to pay the troops in their fight against the rebels. [*BiSp*, 128]

Borrow's problems in having the New Testaments in Spanish printed and the distribution of them as recounted in *The Bible in Spain* will be familiar to readers of this Newsletter from the various biographies of Borrow and in more detail, including the economics of the venture, from Peter Missler's book, *A Daring Game*, as well as from numerous articles in the *George Borrow Bulletin* over the years and from the visits to places associated with Borrow's enterprise in Spain, Gibraltar and Portugal, organised by Ann Ridler, of beloved memory. In this article I shall be referring only to some aspects of Borrow's adventure in Spain that bear comparison or contrast with Nicholson's endeavours in Ireland. An exception to that is a brief comment on Mendizabal's mention of 'rebels' as the conflict in which they were engaged formed a significant part of the background to Borrow's time in Spain.

The rebels to whom Mendizabal referred were the Carlists, the supporters of Don Carlos' claim to be the rightful monarch of Spain in a conflict that became known as 'The First Carlist War'. While volumes have been written on the war, its main causes may be briefly summarized. When King Ferdinand VII of Spain was close to death and having no male heir, he introduced a law whereby a female could succeed to the throne, thus making way for his infant daughter Isabel to succeed him and excluding from the succession Ferdinand's own brother Don Carlos. In the conflict that followed, the supporters of the infant Isabel, whose mother (and, after Ferdinand's death, Spain's Regent), was Queen Cristina, became known as 'Cristinos' while those who felt Carlos should be the rightful successor to the throne were known as 'Carlists'. A crude distinction between the sides in the war that broke out in the year before Borrow arrived in Spain might be that the 'Cristinos' were the more liberal, while the Carlists were the more conservative and attached to traditional social, economic and religious attitudes, most evident in Navarre and the Basque provinces, strongholds of the Carlist cause. In some provinces, issues in the war went beyond those of the royal succession and the conflict between liberalism and conservatism, for, as a historian of the war has noted, Carlism 'reflected different problems and concerns' in different parts of Spain. [iii] While Borrow was in Madrid a split among the Cristinos between those favouring rule under the constitution of 1823 and those preferring an absolute monarchy came to a head. Borrow witnessed a large demonstration in the Puerta del Sol that followed Queen Regent Christina being forced under threat to swear in writing to abide by the constitution.

Nicholson in Ireland

After Nicholson's arrival in Ireland, her early days in Dublin were not characterised by any spacious and well-situated accommodation like that secured by Borrow in Madrid, nor did she meet any personages of importance among the many such that lived in and near the city who were active in the political, administrative, social and religious life of Ireland at the time. Nicholson did, however, having visited the city's poor house, which housed 1,700 inmates, including a woman of 106, find herself introduced to a lady who was typical of the many

upper and middle class Irish people she was to meet throughout Ireland who had no concern for the condition of the poor. Nicholson's account of her is worth quoting for its scathing tone. Of this wine-drinking lady of indeterminate age, Nicholson wrote that she, 'had seen enough of the world to make her vain, possessed enough of its wealth to make her proud, and religion enough to make her a boasting pharisee'. [*BiIr*, 7] From Dublin Nicholson travelled through County Wicklow, one of the least impoverished counties of Ireland at the time and contented herself with viewing some of its scenic sights like Glendalough and the Vale of Avoca, sights admired by visitors to Ireland in the nineteenth century and still frequented by tourists today.

Although advised by a friend before leaving New York not to 'touch' politics while in Ireland, Nicholson was veering close to doing so near Kilkenny when she observed six beggars jump the queue for the coach in which she was a passenger. What a disgrace, she wrote,

> That a body of people should become public nuisances, when there has been no famine nor pestilence in the land, and where the rich soil might well reward the husbandman if the government were suited to its condition! [*BiIr*,49]

Later in her mission, when she had accumulated greater knowledge of the condition of the country, she met a workman who asked her if she thought Repeal would be achieved. The reference was to the campaign for the repeal of the Act of Union whereby Ireland became part of Britain. Spearheaded by Daniel O'Connell, the movement had gained so much momentum, among Catholics in particular, through 'monster' meetings throughout Ireland that 1843—the year before Nicholson arrived—became known as 'The Repeal Year'. Nicholson's comment on the workman's question, as recorded in her book, was that

> It was affecting to see how the hearts of these poor labourers were everywhere intent on that one subject, Repeal. They feel daily more and more the iron hand which crushes them; and were it not that Father Mathew has sobered them, and O'Connell is enjoining, 'peace, peace, peace', their forebearance would cease. [*BiIr*, 87]

Father Theobald Mathew was the leader of the Irish temperance movement at the time that had succeeded in turning Ireland almost teetotal for some years and a movement which O'Connell had, as one of his biographers has put it, 'shrewdly incorporated into the Repeal campaign.' [iv] As a temperance advocate herself, Nicholson frequently referred to the beneficial results of Father Mathew's work and made a point of attending one of his metings at Roscrea and later visiting him at his home in Cork. [*BiIr*, 97, 168]

But Nicholson strayed even further from the advice of her American friends in the course of one of the many discussions provoked by questions arising from her scripture readings and comments on her tracts, tracts which seemingly made no mention of the Virgin Mary, devotion to whom was widespread among Irish Catholics. Her sarcastic response to a man named Pat, who claimed that whatever favour he asked of the Virgin Mary was granted to him, is recorded in her book:

> I begged the talented Pat, if he had nothing to do but ask any favour and it would be granted, to apply immediately, and have her remove them out of their poverty and filth, and give them their rights as a nation. [*BiIr*, 127]

After leaving Wicklow Nicholson spent some time in Kilkenny, where she visited several cabins and as a result in her book gave a description, presumably based on the journal she kept of her travels, of what she called a 'specimen' cabin:

> In a corner, where a bed might have stood, was a huge bank of turf, and a pile of straw for the pigs. There was but one room beside, and the family consisted of five or six individuals. The cabin door being open, the pigs, geese, ducks, and dogs walked in and out at option. [*BiIr*, 63]

While still in Kilkenny, following what she called 'a repast of potatoes and salt' and a comfortable night's sleep in a cabin [*BiIr*, 67] she called on a protestant clergyman who had, she wrote, 'a rich living, and read his prayers weekly to a flock of perhaps one in one hundred of the population of his parish.' [*BiIr*, 69] The other 99 people in his parish were probably Catholics, who by the compulsory payment of tithes were forced to support the protestant church, a religion in which they not only did not believe but thought was heretical. While, in the decade before Nicholson came to Ireland, Kilkenny had seen some of the worst violence in what was called the 'Tithe War', with fatalities among those refusing to pay tithe and those trying to collect it. The Irish Tithe Act of 1838 'reduced the assessment by one-fourth and converted it into a rent charge. [v] Whether the clergyman in his 'rich' living that Nicholson met had any part in tithe disturbances of the eighteen-thirties is unknown, but at the time Nicholson met him the issue of tithe was in any case in the process of being superseded by Repeal as the focus of Irish agitation.

Interior of an Irish hovel during the great famine of 1845–50, artist uncredited, from Smithsonian Magazine.

Nicholson was to see much worse cabins as she travelled south and west from Kilkenny, with many cabins consisting of only one smoke-filled room. In Galway, for example, where she found lodgings as cheap as 'twopence' a night, she called at a cabin where there were 'two pigs, two dogs, two cats, two batches of chickens. . . a hole in the floor for the pigs and poultry to take their bit.' [*BiIr*, 102] That parts of Spain could compete with Ireland in having ghastly habitations for poor peasants is revealed by Borrow's account of the cabins he passed in villages near Lugo:

> There were dunghills before the doors, and no lack of pools and puddles. Immense swine were stalking about, intermingled with naked children. The interior of the cabins corresponded with their external appearance: filled with filth and misery. [*BiSp*, 268–69]

If Nicholson's description of a 'specimen' cabin may have needed modification in the light of further experience among the Irish peasantry, she did actually encounter in Kilkenny something that was extremely rare among travellers who wrote books about Ireland at that time, namely a community of peasants who, by their actions, showed their high regard for their landlord. Such was the peasants' respect for this landlord, according to Nicholson, that they helped him gather his harvest and dig his potatoes. Among them were women who, Nicholson wrote, 'will go out and bind sheaves, rake and toss hay, pick up potatoes etc.' [*BiIr*, 59] The women's hard work reminds us of Borrow's account of the Magatos he met near Artorga. Said to have been descended from the Goths who sided with the Moors in their conquest of Spain, the Magatos men at Borrow's time were commercial carters, leaving it to the women 'to plough the flinty fields and gather in the scanty harvests'. [*BiSp*, 245] Ireland and Spain were not alone in the heavy physical workloads undertaken by peasant women. In Italy, another catholic country, there were concerns that the wives of peasants who had emigrated to America were left alone to undertake traditional heavy tasks on the land that included ploughing and grinding grain with handmills. [vi]

Nicholson made no claim that the landlord she mentioned as having been respected by his tenants, as well as another landlord she met shortly afterwards who provided a dispensary and free medicine for his tenants, were typical, as indeed they were not. Henry Inglis travelled around Ireland ten years before Nicholson and wrote a perceptive book about his travels, especially as regards the great gulf between the Irish rich and poor. Having spoken to many landowners in Galway, he wrote that he 'regretted to find among them so little sympathy for the condition of the poor' and in Longford, when he asked a wealthy landlord why he did not improve his estate, thereby giving employment to people in need of work, the landlord replied that 'he made it a rule to circumscribe within the least possible limits, his intercourse with the lower orders' [vii]

Although many Irish politicians and visitors to Ireland in the nineteenth century, as well as others whose knowledge of the country was second-hand, drew attention to what might be called the 'undeclared war' between landlord and tenant, none expounded its causes with such brevity and precision as Lord Donoughmore in addressing the House of Lords in 1854 on the Irish land system:

> The landlord let land—a strip of bog, barren, wild, dreary. The tenant reclaimed it, drained, fenced, built; reduced the waste to a cultivable state; made the "land" a "farm". Then the landlord pounced upon him for an increased rent. The tenant could not pay: his resources had been exhausted in bringing the bog into a state of cultivation; he had not yet recouped himself for his outlay and labour. He was evicted; flung on the road-side to starve, without receiving one shilling compensation for his outlay on the land, and the "farm" which he had made was given to another at an enhanced rental. What was the evicted tenant to do? [viii] What the aggrieved Irish tenents did in fact do was to continue agitation, with increasing political assistance, and pressure, for tenant rights over the course of the second half of the nineteenth century until such rights were to some extent attained. With reference to Nicholson,

> her account of her meeting with a woman in Connemara, who rented an acre of well-kept land, vividly captures, in human terms, the plight of a victim of landlordism. If she and her teenage son were to make their cabin look nice outside, she told Nicholson, the landlord's agent 'will put a pound more rent on me, or turn me out and my little things' as she would be unable to pay the pound. Nicholson comments that 'if the poor tenant improves the premises, he must be turned out or pay more. If he does not improve it, he is a lazy, dirty Irishman, and must be put out for that.' [*BiIr*, 241]

Borrow back in Spain

Having departed from Madrid with an assurance from Isturitz, Mendizabal's successor, that the Bibles might be printed in Madrid without interference, Borrow returned to England but was back in the Spanish capital a year later. Narrowly escaping shipwreck off north-west Spain, he arrived at Cadiz, from where he boarded a steamer that took him along the River Gaudalquiver to Seville. In that city he became aware of the continued warring state of the country by noticing that some of the gates of the city were blocked up in expectation of an attack from a Carlist army thought to be in the area. [*BiSp*, 168] He was further made aware of the disturbed state of the country when, wishing to make his way to Madrid, he found the stagecoach to the first town on the way, Cordova, had ceased operating because of the troubles and he had to travel to the latter town on horseback. His landlord in Cordova, himself in sympathy with the Carlists, had one son who had lately joined the Carlist ranks although another son was already in the Cristino army, presumably a conscript, a not infrequent form of family disjunction at a time of civil war. The landlord, though, arranged for Borrow to be accompanied on horseback to Madrid by his brother-in-law, a smuggler, in whose care Borrow arrived safely in Madrid.

Having secured new lodgings, Borrow set about arranging the printing of the Spanish translation of the New Testament in Madrid with a printer named Borrego, who had been recommended to him by Isturitz the previous year. [*BiSp*, 197] Satisfied with Borrego's production of the volumes, Borrow in his book articulated dramatically his aims for their distribution, not just to booksellers in Madrid but

> To ride forth, Testament in hand, and endeavour to circulate the word of God amongst the Spaniards, not only of the towns but of the villages; amongst the children not only of the plains but of the hills and mountains. I intended to visit Old Castile, and to traverse the whole of Galicia and the Asturias—to establish Scripture depôts in the principal towns, and to visit people in secret and secluded spots – to talk to them of Christ, to explain to them the nature of his book, and to place that book in the hands of those I should deem capable of deriving benefit from it. [*BiSp*, 199]

Fully aware of the dangers of his enterprise, Borrow engaged a servant, recommended to him by Borrego. As he related his previous engagements as a servant, Borrow considered Antonio Buchini, a Greek in origin but a long time in Spain, to be, as he told him, 'of a turbulent disposition' but engaged him nonetheless although at half the extravagant terms that Antonio was demanding. [*BiSp*, 205]

Clergy in Spain and Ireland

In his book, a few pages after his account of his liberation from Madrid prison, Borrow wrote:

> Throughout my residence in Spain the clergy were the party from which I experienced the strongest; opposition; and it was at their instigation that the government originally adopted those measures which prevented my extensive circulation of the sacred volume through the land. I shall not detain the course of my narrative with reflections as to the state of a church, which, though it pretends to be founded on Scripture, would yet keep the light of Scripture from all mankind, if possible. [*BiSp*, 441]

The most vivid account of the hostility of clerics to Borrow's efforts to circulate the New Testament occurred in his time in the largely Carlist-dominated city of Leon, the inhabitants of which, he wrote, were 'ignorant and blinded followers of the old papal church'. On learning of Borrow's placing of Bibles with a bookseller, the clergy 'went from house to house, banning and cursing, and denouncing misery to whomsoever should purchase or read the accursed books, which had been sent into the country by heretics for the purpose of perverting the innocent minds of the population.' Although proceedings were initiated against the bookseller, he ignored them and went on to sell Bibles, including some to ex-friars and to priests in surrounding villages. [*BiSp*, 240–41] The attitude of priests towards the scriptures may perhaps seem less extraordinary in the light of Borrow's later interview with the bishop of Toledo, head of the Catholic Church in Spain at the time. When Borrow asked him if he thought that 'a knowledge of the Scripture would work inestimable benefit' to Spain, the Bishop merely replied that he did not know. [*BiSp*, 444]

There were exceptions, of course, like the priests near Leon, mentioned earlier, who bought Bibles despite the majority of the clergy in the city actively condemning them. And when Borrow had given up hope of selling any New Testaments in an impoverished village near Madrid, the local catholic curate bought a couple and was satisfied that they were 'good books'. As a result of this good opinion of the books, Borrow went on to sell more than twenty New Testaments in the village. The curate's recommendation, Borrow wrote,

> not only affords an instance of the power still possessed by the Spanish clergy over the minds of the people, but proves that such influence is not always exerted in a manner favourable to the maintenance of ignorance and superstition. [*BiSp*, 478–79]

While Nicholson's reservations about superstitions of the Irish peasantry were as evident as those that Borrow saw as the 'ignorance and the superstition' encouraged by the catholic clergy in Spain, she made no specific denunciation of the Irish priesthood for any role they might have had in encouraging them. With regards to widespread belief in the curative properties of holy wells in Ireland, for example, she referred to one she saw in Wexford but noted that 'the priests are not encouraging a resort to them'. [*BiIr*, 159] and while remarking on the peasantry's belief in the reputed efficacious qualities of a holy well near Youghal, she added that 'the Bishop has thought it expedient to prohibit its resort, as being a place where miracles are no more to be expected'. [*BiIr*, 82] Generally, such criticisms of Irish priests as appear in Nicholson's book come in the form of remarks by people she met in the course of her travels. A woman in a group to which Nicholson had been reading complained to her of living in darkness and continued, 'Our clergy are good for nothing: they go to the altar and

say Mass, but they preach no sermons. They give no other instructions, and who is any better?' [*BiIr*, 131] At one of her gatherings in Galway she read the New Testament account of the 'miracle of loaves and fishes.' A listener wondered why he had never heard the story before, a wonder perhaps understandable in a country regularly plagued by famine. Nicholson recorded the man's words: '"By dad," said he to the landlord, "and why didn't we never hear the like from the praist?"' [*BiIr*, 109]

The main aim of Nicholson's missionary work in Ireland, like that of Borrow's in Spain, was to promote reading of the Bible as a means of salvation over the traditional priest-led Catholic faith. Nevertheless, when it was suggested to her that 'their nasty religion', the Catholic Church, was the cause of the oppression of the Irish peasantry, she was adamant in her volatile response that this was not the case:

> But does their religion compel them to work for six or eightpence a day, and eat their potatoes on the side of a ditch? Does it compel them to reclaim a bog, for which they are paying twice the value, without the encouragement of a lease for their improvements? And does it compel them to pay a tenth for the support of a religion which they neither believe nor hear? [*BiIr*, 164]

Face to Face Missionary Work

Borrow's achievement of his aim of distributing New Testaments throughout Spain through placing them with booksellers and by sales to individuals, often at reduced prices, could not be disputed. Less well realised, perhaps, was his aim to speak to people of Christ and to explain the New Testament to them.

When Borrow was resting on his bed in his lodging house in Finisterra, tired from having earlier climbed the mountain behind the village to view the fort overlooking the sea, he thought that he might call a meeting of the villagers that evening with the intention of, as he put it in his book, 'to read a few chapters of the Scripture, and then to address them with a little Christian exhortation.' [*BiSp*, 329] He was ridiculously arrested before he had the opportunity to implement his wish for such a meeting in the village. But his recorded wish for such a meeting is significant in that it is the only mention I can find in his book of him reflecting on, or arranging, or participating in any face to face meetings with groups of people he met on his travels, with a view to leading them to an understanding of the religious relevance of the New Testament. Nicholson's account of her mission, in contrast, abounds in such meetings. She recorded, for example, that while in Kenmare,

> The village assembled in the evening and listened to reading till a late hour, for I always found it a better way before distributing tracts to read something interesting, which always awakened a curiosity to become better acquainted with them. [*BiIr*, 198]

In Clifden, at a reading that lasted five hours, she wrote of being 'surrounded with a roomful of attentive hearers.' [*BiIr*, 248] Her readings of scripture and distribution of religious tracts were not always so peaceful. While the horses were being changed at an unnamed town as she travelled by the Bianconi coach from Sligo to Dublin, she distributed tracts at a hastily-arranged meeting. Several of the tracts were torn up in her presence, seemingly because they contained nothing about the Virgin Mary. [*BiIr*, 266]

Conclusion

While the two missionaries may have differed in their approaches to their missionary work, it is clear from their books that Borrow and Nicholson genuinely believed in the value of their efforts and were willing to suffer to achieve their aims. In Borrow's words, his religious aim was to counter 'the manner in which the Word of God was persecuted in this unhappy kingdom'. [*BiSp,* 520] Nicholson's religious aim, although not articulated as clearly as that of Borrow, seems to have been to undermine what the wife of a protestant clergyman in Galway told her were 'the delusions of Romanism'. [*BiIr*, 232] It remains to consider briefly which of the two missionaries suffered most severely in their travels, in pursuing their missionary aims.

Secure in the knowledge that the winter rains of the west of Ireland and those of northern Spain were equally drenching, I compare here an instance of the two missionaries' experiences of those rains. When Nicholson was leaving Oranmore for Loughrea in Galway in the west of Ireland, the rain had made the road so muddy that for the first four miles she was, as she wrote, 'literally sticking in clay'. She got a lift on a cart for a few miles before resuming her walk in fog and mist, on her 'weary feet, already blistered.' [*BiIr,* 123] She covered the remaining eight or nine miles of her journey to her destination, as she put it, 'by limping and halting, wading and inquiring of all I met'. [*BiIr,* 124]

The rain encountered by Borrow, with his servant and guide, in Asturia in northern Spain was so heavy that, on descending a mountain on a narrow bridle-path, leading their horses, the animals, Borrow wrote 'were occasionally down on their knees, owing to the slipperiness of the path'. [*BiSp,* 359]

Having reached Loughrea, Nicholson's lodgings for the night provided her with a 'dirty chaff bed with a pile of potatoes at the head of it and the servant across the foot' and next morning left the town walking against a strong wind in her face and on a road she described as 'a complete bed of clay'. [*BiIr,* 125]

Borrow, complete with servant, guide and horses, was shortly released from the drenching Asturian rain by reaching a posada in the nearby village of Muros, where he was able to dry his clothes by a blazing fire, dine at an oak table and sleep in a bed with a canopy and curtains, before continuing on his journey to Oviedo via Giyon. [*BiSp,* 359]

These examples of the discomforts of the two missionaries seem to me to be typical of their respective suffering in the course of their travels, as recorded in their books. Borrow's ability to recover from setbacks, however, thanks to his youth, resilience, income and good luck, was greater than that of Nicholson, from which it may be concluded that the latter suffered more. There is no doubt, though, that Borrow, if, having suffered less, wrote the better book. Surprisingly, perhaps, while Borrow seems never to have visited Spain thereafter, Nicholson travelled around Ireland again during the Great Famine. But that, as the saying goes, is another story, to which I may add that it is a story that has no Borrovian relevance.

Footnotes.

[i] The editions of the two books are, for Borrow the Norwich edition of his works, and for Nicholson, an undated edition with an introduction by Tresidder Sheppard, published by Hodder and Stoughton. Nicholson's book was first published with the title *Ireland's Welcome to the Stranger* by Baker and Scribner in 1847.

[ii] Clement King Shorter, (1913) *George Borrow and his Circle*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, p. 227.

[iii.] John F. Coverdale, (n.d.) *The Basque Phase of Spain's First Carlist War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 6.

[iv] Fergus O'Farrell (1981) *Daniel O'Connell*. Dublin: Mackmillan, p. 115.

[v] Stanley H. Palmer, (1988) *Police and Protest in England & Ireland 1780–1850*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press p. 325.

[vi] Donna R. Gabaccia, (2000) *Italy's Many Diasporas*. London: University College London Press, p. 88.

[vii] Henry D. Inglis, (1838) *A Journey Throughout Ireland during the Summer and \autumn of 1834*. London: Keir & Co., pp. 213, 195.

[viii] Quoted in Barry O Brien, (1889) *Thomas Drummond: Life and Letters*. London: French & Co, p. 889.

The Landlord who beat Tom o' Hopton
by Mike Skillman

We read in *Lavengro*, chapter 88:

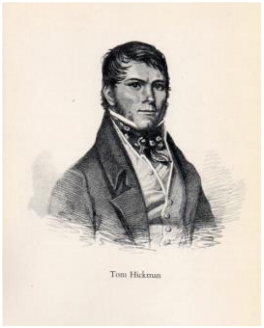
> The kitchen of the public-house was a large one, and many people were drinking in it; there was a confused hubbub of voices . . . presently a bulky man, in a green coat of the Newmarket cut, and without a hat, entered, and observing me, came up, and in rather a gruff tone cried, 'Want anything, young fellow?' . . . "I remember, when I was young, fighting with Tom of Hopton, the best man that ever pulled off coat in England. I remember, too, that I won the battle; for I happened to hit Tom of Hopton in the mark, as he was coming in, so that he lost his wind, and falling squelch on the ground, do ye see, he lost the battle, though I am free to confess that he was a better man than myself; indeed, the best man that ever fought in England; yet still, I won the battle, as every customer of mine, and everybody within twelve miles round, has heard over and over again.

And in chapter 92:

> . . . 'I loves the conversation of all you coves of the ring,' said he once, 'which is natural, seeing as how I have fought in a ring myself. Ah, there is nothing like the ring; I wish I was not rather too old to go again into it. I often think I should like to have another rally—one more rally, and then—but there's a time for all things—youth will be served, every dog has his day, and mine has been a fine one—let me be content. After beating Tom of Hopton, there was not much more to be done in the way of reputation.'

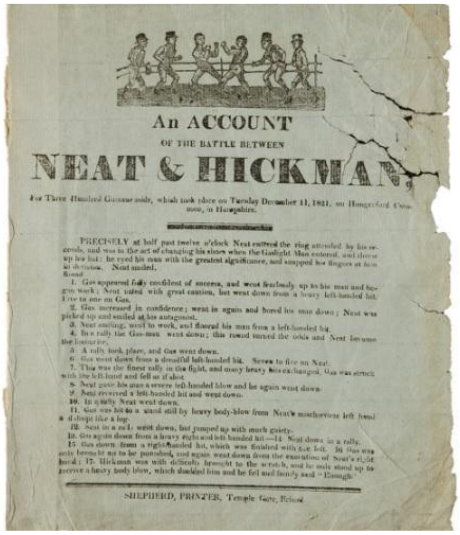
One gets the impression that the landlord is aged between 35 and 40, has been a bare-knuckle fighter, had one major fighting success by defeating a mighty opponent but is now not the pugilist that he was.

According to the author Brian Vesey-FitzGerald in his book *Gypsy Borrow* Tom o' Hopton was the famous pugilist Tom Hickman, who was born in Hopton, Shropshire, although most records say Dudley, where he actually lived. His sobriquet was *The Gas-light Man*. Vesey-FitzGerald goes on to say that only one man ever beat Hickman. If this is all true then the landlord must have been that man. Borrow names the landlord as Catchpole.


Tom Hickman

The man who beat Hickman was Bill Neate. The fight took place on Hungerford Common on 11th of December 1821 in front of 22,000 people just two and a half years before the summer of 1825 when *Lavengro* is supposed to have been set. Neate was born in 1788 so would have been aged 33 at the time and 37 in 1825. His sobriquet was *The Bristol Butcher*.


BILL NEAT


An ACCOUNT
OF THE BATTLE BETWEEN
NEAT & HICKMAN

Tom Hickman was involved in a road accident in 1822 and was killed.

So what do we know of Bill Neate's whereabouts?

Vesey-FitzGerald says that from 1822 to 1825 he was landlord of *The White Horse Inn* in Horse Fair, Bristol and that in 1826 he was involved in "a rather nasty affair in Liverpool, out of which he must have made a good deal of money." It would be interesting to read more of this but he gives no details and then goes on to say that in 1827 he was landlord of *The Black*

Bull stagecoach inn at Stretton in Rutland and that the area was favoured by pugilists. However, the inn at Stretton, now called the *Jackson Stops Country Inn*, was formally called *The White Horse*, the landlord there told me. There is a *Black Bull Inn* nearby but it is at Overton. This seems the more likely one.

The 1841 census has him living back in Bristol at *The George and Dragon* on Commercial Road. He is living with a widow, Mrs. Frances Pearce, who had taken over as innkeeper when her husband died. He is still there with her in 1851 aged 63, described as a butcher. [i] He died in 1858, his death registered at Bedminster.

On the corner with Redcliff Hill, the *George & Dragon* is pictured here in the early 1950s. The pub was demolished in 1961 to allow for road widening as part of the second Bedminster bridge roundabout scheme.

George and Dragon.

Conclusion

If Vesey-FitzGerald was right about Tom of Hopton being Tom Hickman then we have identified the publican character Catchpole in *Lavengro* and *The Romany Rye* as Bill Neate. Whether he ever was the landlord of a public house near Borrow's dingle we may never know but I suspect that Borrow did talk to him about his fighting career somewhere, possibly in Bristol. Did he ever go to Bristol? Well he says he did in chapter 99 of *Wild Wales*. When chatting in the Inn at Gutter Vawr we read:

> "And are there any towns and cities in Russia, sir, as there are in Britain?" said the old man who had resigned his seat in the chimney-corner to me; "I suppose not, or if there be, nothing equal to Hereford or Bristol, in both of which I have been."

Footnote.

[i] Below you can see who was found there in 1841 and 1851.

Census 1841.

Mrs. Frances Pearce 45, innkeeper, born in county (but states born Cornwall in 1851)

William Neate 50, butcher, born in county
Ann Moon 60, lace maker, born in county
Sarah Brooks 25, servant, born in county
Lambert John Croome 3, born in county
John England 11, born in county
John Symes 35, independent, born in county

Census 1851.

Mrs. Frances Pearce 57, head, widow, publican, born St Stephens Cornwall
William Neat 63, lodger unmarried, butcher, born Castle St. Gloucestershire (probably Castle Street, Bristol)
Mary Blackmore 27, house servant unmarried, Devon
Kessia Champion 14, Visitor scholar, Bristol
Lambert Johns 13, grandson scholar, Bristol

Borrow and the Reviewers

Continuing our random pick of the literary reviews that greeted Borrow's works in their day, here's a positive review of *The Romany Rye* from *The Era*, published 14 June 1857. *The Era* was a weekly national newspaper which prided itself on its sports coverage, reviews etc.

LITERATURE.

THE ROMANY RYE. A Sequel to "Lavengro." By GEORGE BORROW, Author of "The Bible in Spain," "The Gipsies in Spain," &c. Two vols. John Murray, Albemarle-street, 1857.

The age which produces three such prose writers of fiction as Thackeray, Dickens, and last, but not least, George Borrow, will bear comparison with the most celebrated epochs of English literature. Where do we find such close, Dutch painting of middle and lower life in England as in the pages of Charles Dickens? such minute dissection of the hollow heart of fashion as Thackeray's pen of steel produces? and who has ever drawn, as a novelist, broader pictures of nature and character than Borrow? All three possess indisputable genius, of which originality and power are essential ingredients; and whilst one has gone into the crowds of busy life, and another into the assemblies of conventional refinement for their studies, Borrow, with an eccentricity peculiarly his own, has sought the bye-paths of old England for his subjects—the shadowy lane, in which the potter mends his kettle, or the gipsy rears his tent—the common, where the angles of several counties meet, and afford the pugilist an equal opportunity of either fighting his antagonist or flying from the "beaks"—the country horse fair, where the jockey tribe assemble as at a passover—the open field, where the itinerant preacher holds forth after the Divine pattern—and the wayside inn, with its quaint ostler and tip-top coachman, who is equally adept at fingering the ribbons and using his tongue for the amusement of the passengers whom he drives fifty miles down the road. The English language was never used in greater purity, or with more picturesque effect, than by Mr. Borrow in his delineations of these homely and interesting topics.

"The Romany Rye" is a sequel to "Lavengro;" the conclusion of this wild and bewitching history is yet to come. The author denies that his work is an autobiography, and we believe

him; but, were he to give us his own life, we should only find that "truth is stranger than fiction."

It is commonly reported that the Bible Society, having heard many years ago that a copy of the Gospel by St. John, written in Manchow Tartar—which, we believe, is the royal language of China—was to be seen at St. Petersburgh, were desirous of finding a scholar competent to examine and compare the interesting MS.; and, in due course, there appeared before the committee of this Protestant *propaganda* a very young man, of athletic form, toil worn and dusty, who had left his high stool in an attorney's office, and walked up to London from Norwich, to offer himself as an interpreter to the society. The astonished conclave asked him what he knew of foreign tongues? and his answer was, "I have read the Scriptures in twenty-two languages." This polyglot candidate for the difficult mission was George Borrow; and, having been successfully employed in Russia, he was subsequently sent to disseminate the Scriptures in Spain, a result of which was his very extraordinary work, "The Bible in Spain," which combines adventures quite as marvellous and amusing as those of Gil Blas, together with an account of missionary zeal for the conversion of the Roman Catholics, which reminds one of apostolic earnestness. "Stripes and imprisonment" were nothing in the way of the hardy *colporteur.*

That the real "Lavengro"—"master of tongues"—had a severe task in London of the first struggles of a friendless aspirant for literary employment and distinction, such as Johnson, Goldsmith, and other of our best writers tasted the bitterness of, in their day, we have no doubt; and we may conclude, from the Appendix to "The Romany Rye," that Sir John Bowring, who, years ago, gave us translations from the Magyar and Scandinavian poetry, used Borrow's real knowledge of these out of the way dialects to exalt his own fame as an universal linguist. At any rate, the knowledge of life in the lanes of the country, is said by the author himself to have been acquired from the necessity he felt to refresh his brain, after severe study, by a wandering with gipsies and other vagrants in his forced abstinence from books. With only a few pounds in his pocket, and a knowledge of the Romany language, which the gipsies speak (as we ourselves have tested by Borrow's own dictionary), he went amongst these English Arabs, and studied their lives and the face of nature, just as Salvator Rosa consorted with banditti to get an insight into the wildest scenery for his art.

It would be vain to attempt an analysis of the story of "The Romany Rye." Its chief value consists in its detached parts—episodes of great power told in language which Defoe never excelled. Indeed, "Robinson Crusoe," read in childhood, is said to have first converted Lavengro into an ardent lover of study, and his finding Defoe's "Moll Flinders" in the hands of the apple woman on London-bridge is one of the very choicest bits of writing we ever read.

Mr. Borrow is, in his way, a devoted Christian—an out-and-out Church of England man. What his bishop would say to his love for the manly art of self-defence—his life in the dingle with dear Isopel Berners—("Belle," whom to read of is to love, but the scholar let her slip)—his liking for hard old ale—his rare attendance at church, and then in company with Mr. and Mrs. Petulangro, the gipsy pair, who ensconce themselves with him in the Earl's empty pew—his confessional under the hedge with Ursula unbosoming her secrets to him, we cannot pretend to guess. As critics we must absolve him for the combined wit and philosophy which almost every description contains.

Whilst, however, Mr. Borrow generalises, like Hamlet, when allowed to tell his own story, he displays all the prejudices of a fool when he judges of real men. We sincerely wish that his

publisher had rejected the "Appendix" to these volumes. The greatness of Wellington is doubted. Scott is absurdly said to have originated the Puseyites by his Stuart novels; and Bounty Bligh is elevated into a hero, when, except for his wonderful abilities as a navigator, he had no claim to be so esteemed. Nelson doubted his courage, and so placed his ship very prominently at Copenhagen; and when his government was rebelled against in Van Diemen's Land, as it had also been on shipboard—for he was a tyrant—his daughter is said to have kept the rebels at bay with a pointed pistol whilst the "hero" was under a bed. But we will give a sample of our author's power of writing:—

THE JOCKEY'S BEST FRIEND.

One day, whilst in trouble, I was visited by a person I had occasionally met at sporting dinners. He came to look after a Suffolk Punch, the best horse, by-the-bye, that any body can purchase to drive, it being the only animal of the horse kind in England that will pull twice at a dead weight. I told him that I had none at that time that I could recommend; in fact, that every horse in my stable was sick. He then invited me to dine with him at an inn close by, and I was glad to go with him, in the hope of getting rid of unpleasant thoughts. After dinner, during which he talked nothing but slang, observing I looked very melancholy, he asked me what was the matter with me, and I, my heart being open by the wine he had made me drink, told him my circumstances without reserve. With an oath or two for not having treated him at first like a friend, he said he would soon set me all right; and pulling out two hundred pounds, told me to pay him when I could. I felt as I never felt before; however, I took his notes, paid my sneaks, and in less than three mouths was right again, and had returned him his money. On paying it to him, I said that I had now a Punch which would just suit him, saying that I would give it to him—a free gift—for nothing. He swore at me; telling me to keep my Punch, for that he was suited already. I begged him to tell me how I could requite him for his kindness, whereupon, with the most dreadful oath I ever heard, he bade me come and see him hanged when his time was come. I wrung his hand, and told him I would, and I kept my word. The night before the day he was hanged at H—, I harnessed a Suffolk Punch to my light gig, the same Punch which I had offered to him, which I have ever since kept, and which brought me and this short young man to Horncastle, and in eleven hours I drove that Punch 111 miles. I arrived at H— just in the nick of time. There was the ugly gaol—the scaffold—and there upon it stood the only friend I ever had in the world. Driving my Punch, which was all in a foam, into the midst of the crowd, which made way for me as if it knew what I came for, I stood up in my gig, took off my hat, and shouted, "God Almighty bless you, Jack!" The dying man turned his pale grim face towards me—for his face was always somewhat grim, do you see—nodded, and said, or I thought I heard him say, "All right, old chap." The next moment . . . my eyes water. He had a high heart, got into a scrape whilst in the marines, lost his half-pay, took to the turf, ring, gambling, and at last cut the throat of a villain who had robbed him of nearly all he had. But he had good qualities, and I know for certain that he never did half the bad things laid to his charge; for example, he never bribed Tom Oliver to fight cross, as it was said he did, on the day of the awful thunderstorm. Ned Flatnose fairly beat Tom Oliver, for though Ned was not what's called a good fighter, he had a particular blow,

> which, if he could put in, he was sure to win. His right shoulder, do you see, was two inches farther back than it ought to have been, and consequently his right fist generally fell short; but if he could swing himself round, and put in a blow with his right inn, he could kill or take away the senses of any body in the world. It was by putting in that blow in his second fight with Spring that he beat noble Tom.

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

A few notes:

The Era probably misprinted *Petulangro* as it's *Petulengro* in all of Borrow's works.

The reviewer had checked George Borrow's Gypsy words, "by Borrow's own dictionary," which must mean *Lavengro* and *Romany Rye* as Borrow's actual dictionary, *Romano Lavo-Lil*, wasn't written until 1873.

Whilst the reviewer doesn't get Borrow's life quite right, much of what he writes hadn't been published at the time, and yet "it is commonly reported." He also identifies Bowring whilst *Lavengro* / *Romany Rye* doesn't name him.

The quote is from *Romany Rye*, chapter 42: it's Jack Dale, the horse-dealer at Horncastle, talking to Borrow. The "friend" is presumably Borrow's pal from the Norwich days, John Thurtell, who was hanged at Hertford, 9th January 1824. Various biographers think Borrow was present at the hanging.

"I drove that Punch 111 miles," or 110 miles in the book. Horncastle is about 97 miles from Hertford.

Notes and Queries

Whilst Dr. Ann Ridler managed to pack far more notes than queries into *The George Borrow Bulletin*, our current newsletter editor, alas, comes up with far from queries than notes. Here's a few queries that came up during the preparation of this newsletter: any notes on these will be more than welcome and will be published in a forthcoming newsletter.

The Bishop of Toledo and George Borrow

Writing to the Rev. Andrew Brandram from Madrid prison, 11 May 1838, Borrow wrote:

> . . . My arch-enemy the Archbishop of Toledo, the Primate of Spain, wish to give me the kiss of brotherly peace. He has caused a message to be conveyed to me in my dungeon, assuring me that he has had no share in causing my imprisonment, which he says was the work of the Civil Governor, who was incited to that step by the Jesuits.

Letters of George Borrow to the British and Foreign Bible Society, ed. T. H. Darlow.
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Note this was written 1838. Internet lists of the Archbishops of Toledo claim Pedro Inguanzo y Rivero was archbishop 1824–36, when the position became vacant, with the next archbishop being Juan José Bonel y Orbe, 1849–57. So who was Borrow referring to? In *The Bible in Spain* Borrow says:

> Of this personage I can say but little, his early history being entirely unknown to me. At the death of Ferdinand, I believe, he was Bishop of Mallorca, a small insignificant see . . . but he was said to be a liberal, and the Queen Regent thought fit to bestow upon him the dignity of Archbishop of Toledo, by which he became the head of the Spanish church. The Pope, it is true, had refused to ratify the nomination...
>
> *The Bible in Spain*, chapter 42

Jack Slingsby

In *Lavengro* chapter 68, Borrow having met a tinker and his family, the following unexpectedly occurs:

> Your name is Slingsby—Jack Slingsby. There, don't stare, there's nothing in my telling you your name: I've been in these parts before, at least not very far from here. Ten years ago, when I was little more than a child, I was about twenty miles from here in a post chaise, at the door of an inn, and as I looked from the window of the chaise, I saw you standing by a gutter, with a big tin ladle in your hand, and somebody called you Jack Slingsby. I never forget anything I hear or see; I can't, I wish I could.

Borrow's first biographer, William Knapp, adds a footnote:

> The regiment was at Tamworth from April 28th to May 3rd, 1812, according to the records of the West Norfolk Militia. George was nearly nine years old.
>
> *Life, Writings, and Correspondence of George Borrow*, page 105.

Knapp thought Borrow was around Staffordshire in 1825 hence his linking the two, but perhaps he didn't link to the right event. Borrow had been "twenty miles" from Dingle around 1815? What's behind all this?

Borrow and the veracity of the Bible

Frances Power Cobbe wrote of Borrow in her autobiography:

> his translations of Scriptures into the out-of-the-way tongues, for which he had a gift, were by no means consonant with his real opinions concerning the veracity of the said Bible
>
> *Life of George Borrow*, Clement Shorter, p. 257

Apart from Borrow's translation of St. Luke in Caló (Spanish Gypsy) did Borrow translate the scriptures into any other language, or was Frances mistaken? Also, in *Religious Duty* Cobbe wrote:

> We honour God before His Church; God's law in our hearts before any law in a book; a godlike man before an ungodlike man. ... The Church, the Bible, the priest, must prove themselves first to be God's Church, a true Bible, a virtuous priest, and then we will give them the *secondary* reverence they derive from such relation.
>
> *Religious Duty*, p. 90.

Doesn't sound like Cobbe was particularly fundamental on the veracity of the Bible herself! So what was Borrow's view that upset her religious sensibility?

George Borrow and Isopel Berners
by Catherine Bayliss

Jonathan Bayliss, (the JB of the article) was an American author and playwright, and creator of the Gloucesterman novels, set in Gloucester, Massachusetts. He was also a keen Borrovian and member of the George Borrow Society. This article, which appeared on the Jonathan Bayliss Society website, explores his links with Borrow.

Some of JB's allusions in his novel *Prologos* to other writers are clear, especially in context, such as St Willie, St Joseph, St James, St Jack the First, St Herman, St Richard, St Alexis, St Alfred, St Jean Louis, St Laurence, St Henry (Yeats, Conrad, Joyce, London, Melville, Dana, Toqueville, Whitehead, Kerouac, Sterne, Fielding).

The names George Borrow and Isopel Berners, which come up in the Gloucester novels, may be more puzzling, even to wide-ranging students of English literature. These names first appear in *Gloucesterbook,* when Caleb is showing his new friend Bice Picory the tombstones in Acorn Pasture Cemetery. One of the granite lumps displays a chiseled "Isobel Berners," and Caleb refers to her as "George Borrow's Fayaway" (Fayaway of St Herman's *Typee*). Amazingly Bice is already familiar with Borrow's fiction, as she responds to Caleb's comment about Isopel being taller than Maud Gonne by saying:

> "More independent too . . . She would have been a healthy match for Yeats. If he'd lived among gypsies instead of mooning for the fairies" (p. 259).

Later in *Gloucesterbook*, when Bice is mulling over a new first name for herself, Caleb makes the suggestion:

> "Then Belle—for Isopel. It doesn't matter that Isopel Berners was blonde too, and tall to boot. She travelled in her own solitary caravan, and gave tinkers as good as she got" (p. 569).

Isopel Berners, sometimes referred to as Belle, is a tall, strong, and fiercely independent blonde in George Borrow's novels *Lavengro* and *The Romany Rye*. Perhaps Borrow modelled

her on a real person, but she comes to us as fiction, and she never visited or was buried in the real Gloucester, Massachusetts.

In JB's final novel, *Gloucestermas*, we learn from Fay Gabriel that her old friend Mary, Caleb's mother, shared with her son a love of George Borrow's work. Fay describes Borrow this way:

> "English. A self-educated linguist. His greatest character, generally taken to be fabulous, was an astonishing woman called Isopel Berners, the Artemis of Mumpers' Dingle, a creature after Mary's own heart, who subsequently emigrated to Atlantis and is buried here at the untended back of Acorn Pasture Cemetery. Borrow wrote a lot about Gypsies, but I'm told that none of the modern Atlantean ones who drive their trailer-kilroys in and out of Dogtown have ever heard of her. Until Caleb got enough education in college to read it for himself he apparently never appreciated his mother's heroines, but now he boasts that Isopel landed here in the end." (p. 393)

In January 2004, planning a trip to England including Norwich, JB emailed his friend Mark Power, who was living in a small village near Norwich:

> I've just been reviving my old enthusiasm for George Borrow, the Victorian novelist, whose life was based in Norwich. Is he still celebrated famous? He was famous for his association with Gypsies.
>
> Actually he was born in "nearby" East Dereham.
>
> Does that town still exist?
>
> He went to Norwich Grammar School. And in Norwich he lived [in] Willow Lane, which as of a century ago was renamed Borrow's Court. He was associated with "The Octagon Chapel".
>
> Other local place names: Eaton (a hamlet); Tombland Fair; Mousehold Heath.
>
> "Tree of Liberty" in Norwich 1789?
>
> For a few early years he worked as a law clerk (apprentice), at his father's behest, in Tuck's Court, St Giles, Norwich?
>
> I'm not demanding research, just wondering if you know about him or his local audit trail. To my mind he's a sort of English counterpart to Herman Melville (though very different in subject matter and talents). In any event, a fascinating character. Alas, he was a vigorous anti-Papist—yet he made friends with individual Jesuits!

JB followed up with more information about his assessment of Borrow and alludes to his past readings "many years ago":

JB in 2001 in an unknown churchyard, Norfolk? Photograph by Mark Power.

> . . . try to get from your public library a copy of the Everyman edition of Lavengro, which has a prolix but informative introduction to Borrow and his work (from the point of view of the early 20C literati). It doesn't do justice to the man's genius for making literature from unique and REAL experience, but that you can discover for yourself if you read Lavengro, the key auto biog novel.
>
> I bet Norwich University has some sort of collection. He helped put Norwich on the Victorian map. Borrow died the same year that George Eliot and Dostoyevsky did, like Melville, in unhappy obscurity. He deserves a patriotic revival!
>
> It makes me homesick for Norwich just to recall my readings of Borrow many years ago. (Indirectly he figures in my own fiction through one of his romantic characters.) But the dollar's getting so weak under Bush that it dims my prospects for a trip this year. Like me, but for a different reason, Borrow was interested in the Isle of Man.

Of all the "saints" in JB's literary universe, the one he felt closest to was undoubtedly St Herman. In a July 2005 email message to his editor Gene Bailey, JB again showed his appreciation of Borrow in comparing him with his favorite:

> [The George Borrow Society is] carrying the torch that may eventually re-ignite him in the literary world devoted to the 19C. He was a rare character, a peculiar genius well worth comparing with our (much more important) Melville.

JB (2nd row, 4th from left), at a 2005 George Borrow Society meeting in Llangollen, Wales.

A couple of days later, JB wrote to Gary Grieve-Carlson mentioning a Melville biography and again made the Borrow-Melville comparison, praising Borrow while emphasizing Melville's greater genius:

> I am interested in him [Borrow] now as a sort of personal counterpart to Melville, his slightly older contemporary. In character it's John Bull vs Brother Jonathan. GB was a linguistic genius, and certainly can't match HM's creative genius or imagination, but in some degree they were both de-classed adventurers—i.e., life-heroes as well as highly individual writers with literary offbeats in nonliterary kinds of life.

JB visited Norwich and surrounding areas in 2001.
Outside a Norfolk pub.
Photograph by Mark Power.

Picture Competition: Answers

Did you work out who was who and what was what with the pictures?

Borrow's Nemesis

This is from the National Portrait Gallery:

> Harriet Martineau by Richard Evans
> oil on canvas, exhibited 1834
> NPG 1085.

Harriet and Borrow were rivals together in Norwich, both competing to shine in the Norwich literary circles of the early 1800's. Borrovians know her for writing:

> But matters grew worse in his [William Taylor of Norwich] old age, when his habits of intemperance kept him out of the sight of ladies, and he got round him a set of ignorant and conceited young, who thought they could set the world right by their destructive propensities. One of his chief favourites was George Borrow, as George Borrow has himself given the world to understand. When this polyglot gentleman appeared before the public as a devout agent of the Bible-society in foreign parts, there was one burst of laughter from all who remembered the old Norwich days.
>
> Harriet Martineau's Autography, page 227.

Harriet's brother, James, became a famous Unitarian philosopher and Frances Power Cobbe claimed James told her George Borrow was horsed on James' back by Dr. Richard Valpy at Norwich Grammar school (i.e. caned). [Source Clement Shorter's *Life of George Borrow*, page 49]

Borrow's rival

The lady is Frances Power Cobbe (1822–1904), writer, women's suffrage campaigner etc. The Borrows had moved to 22 Hereford Square, Brompton in 1860 and George was to remain there until 1874. In 1866 Frances and her life partner Mary Lloyd (1819–1896) moved into 26 Hereford Square, and so became "friends" with the George and Mary. Frances was to write in her Autobiography:

> George Borrow, who, if he were not a gypsy by blood, *ought* to have been one, was for some years our near neighbour in Hereford Square. My friend [i.e. Mary Llloyd, who was Welsh] was amused by his quaint stories and his (real or sham) enthusiasm for Wales, and cultivated his acquaintance. I never liked him, thinking him more or less of a hypocrite. His missions, recorded in *The Bible in Spain*, and his translations of Scriptures into the out-of-the-way tongues, for which he had a gift, were by no means consonant with his real opinions concerning the veracity of the said Bible.
>
> *Life of George Borrow*,
> by Clement Shorter, p. 247

Who are these people?

It's captioned "Travellers attacked by Gitános" and is from the 1901 John Murray edition *The Gypsies of Spain* (i.e. *The Zincali*). The name of the artist isn't given. Borrow, writes:

> Let us for a moment suppose some unfortunate traveller, mounted on a handsome mule or beast of some value, meeting, unarmed and alone, such a rabble rout at the close of eve, in the wildest part, for example, La Mancha ... In a moment he is in the midst of the Gypsy group ... with a faltering hand, produces his purse, and is proceeding to loosen its strings, ... struck violently by a huge knotted club in an unseen hand, he tumbles headlong from his mule. Next morning, a naked corse, besmeared with brains and blood, is found by an arriéro...
>
> To many, such a scene, as above described, will appear purely imaginary, or at least a mass of exaggeration, but many such anecdotes are related by old Spanish writers.
>
> Zincali, p. 52

The artist has at least been faithful to Borrow's text, but the caption writer is wrong with "travellers": there's only one. Also note that Borrow is fabricating a story here, albeit from older anecdotes, something William Knapp claimed Borrow couldn't do.

The Farmer-Landlord

Let Borrow explain:

> Without descending to the river, we turned aside up a hill, and, after passing by a few huts, came to a large house, which my guide told me was the inn of Pont Erwyd.
>
> My guide went to a side door, and opening it without ceremony went in. I followed and found myself in a spacious and comfortable-looking kitchen: a large fire blazed in a huge grate, on one side of which was a settle; plenty of culinary utensils, both pewter and copper, hung around on the walls, and several goodly rows of hams and sides of bacon were suspended from the roof. There were several people present, some on the settle and others on chairs in the vicinity of the fire. As I advanced, a man arose from a chair and came towards me. He was about thirty-five years of age, well and strongly made, with a fresh complexion, a hawk nose, and a keen grey eye. He wore top-boots and breeches, a half jockey coat, and had a round cap made of the skin of some animal on his head.
>
> "Servant, sir!" said he in rather a sharp tone, and surveying me with something of a supercilious air.
>
> "Your most obedient humble servant!" said I; "I presume you are the landlord of this house."
>
> "Landlord!" said he, "landlord! It is true I receive guests sometimes into my gouse, but I do so solely with the view of accommodating them; I do not depending upon innkeeping for a livelihood. I hire the principal part of the land in this neighbourhood".
>
> *Wild Wales*, chapter 82

The inn at Ponterwyd is now *The George Borrow Hotel*, and is within walking distance of the Devil's Bridge, which Borrow was going to see.

T-Shirt

Firstly, the t-shirt is available from RedMolotov.com:

https://www.redmolotov.com/drugs-tshirts/george-borrow-ale-tshirt

(don't read that URL too carefully). They are UK based, in Bromsgrove, with contact details if you'd like one of their t-shirts on the website.

The quote comes from *Lavengro* chapter 68. Borrow, after tramping from London (circa 1825) meets the tinker Jack Slingsby as his family who are weeping because the Flaming Tinman has driven them off the road. Borrow buys them ale which cheers them greatly, and then we have:

> Oh, genial and gladdening is the power of good ale, the true and proper drink of Englishmen. He is not deserving of the name of Englishman who speaketh against ale, that is good ale, like that which has just made merry the hearts of this poor family; and yet there are beings, calling themselves Englishmen, who say that it is a sin to

> drink a cup of ale, and who, on coming to this passage will be tempted to fling down the book and exclaim, "The man is evidently a bad man, for behold, by his own confession, he is not only fond of ale himself, but is in the habit of tempting other people with it." Alas! alas! what a number of silly individuals there are in this world; I wonder what they would have had me do in this instance—given the afflicted family a cup of cold water? go to!
>
> *Lavengro*, chapter 68

Borrow has in mind the teetotallers of his age who were often Methodists, hence the reference to "sin". Borrow would return to this topic in the *Romany Rye*, and also in *Wild Wales*.

Where Borrow met the Queen

This place is Kirk Yetholm, in the Scottish borders. Borrow gives a detailed account of his visit there on 5 August 1866, in his last book, *Romano Lavo-Lil* (word-book of the Romany, or English Gypsy language).

And meeting the Queen? Well, that was Hesther Blyth (as Borrow recorded in his notebook). In *Lavo-lil* we have:

> *Woman*.—Weel, sir, . . . there are not many Gypsies just now in Kirk Yetholm; but the one . . . whom they ca' the 'Gypsy Queen o' Yetholm,' and whom they lead about the toon once a year, mounted on a cuddy, with a tin crown on her head, with much shouting, and with mony a barbaric ceremony.
>
> Romano Lavo-lil, page 257

The meeting between Borrow and Hesther is quite funny and is well worth reading. Lavo-lil is available on Project Gutenberg (or via our Society's website).

For more background detail, including a transcription of Borrow's notebooks, see *George Borrow's Tour of Galloway and the Borders* 1866, edited by Angus Fraser and published by *Lavengro Press*.

What's going on?

It's the dust jacket from the Collin's Cleartype edition of Lavengro (c1910). The illustrator was William Sewell. It's the apple woman of London Bridge trying to prevent (a very well dressed) George Borrow throwing himself off. *Lavengro*, chapter 31:

> ... As for myself, I was so excited that I strove to clamber up the balustrade of the bridge, in order to obtain a better view of the daring adventurers. Before I could accomplish my design, however, I felt myself seized by the body, and, turning my head, perceived the old fruit-woman, who was clinging to me.
>
> 'Nay, dear! don't—don't!' said she. 'Don't fling yourself over—perhaps you may have better luck next time!'

I cannot say that I ever saw him walk fast

Apologies for the clue, but anything else and you'd have it instantly. This is a painting of William Simpson, the gentleman lawyer the young George Borrow was articled to in Norwich.

> A more respectable-looking individual was never seen; he really looked what he was, a gentleman of the law—there was nothing of the pettifogger about him: somewhat under the middle size, and somewhat rotund in person, he was always dressed in a full suit of black, never worn long enough to become threadbare. His face was rubicund, and not without keenness; but the most remarkable thing about him was the crown of his head, which was bald, and shone like polished ivory, nothing more white, smooth, and lustrous. Some people have said that he wore false calves, probably because his black silk stockings never exhibited a wrinkle; they might just as well have said that he waddled, because his shoes creaked; for these last, which were always without a speck, and polished as his crown, though of a different hue, did creak, as he walked rather slowly. I cannot say that I ever saw him walk fast.
>
> *Lavengro*, chapter 19.

The original painting was (and possibly still is) in Blackfriars' Hall, Norwich. A copy of it by Thomas Phillips was made for the *Souvenir of the George Borrow Celebration*, 1913.

A Supplementary Chapter to the Bible in Spain by George Borrow

The following was printed by Thomas Wise in an edition of 30 copies in 1913. The full pamphlet is available on Project Gutenberg. Wise starts with an introduction to explain it:

PREFATORY NOTE

In 1845 Richard Ford published his *Hand-Book for Travellers in Spain and Readers at Home* [2 Vols. 8vo.], a work which still commands attention, and the compilation of which is said to have occupied its author for more than sixteen years. In conformity with the wish of Ford (who had himself favourably reviewed *The Bible in Spain*) Borrow undertook to produce a study of the *Hand-Book* for *The Quarterly Review*. The following Essay was the result.

But the Essay, brilliant as it is, was not a 'Review.' Not until page 6 of the suppressed edition (p. 25 of the present edition) is reached is the *Hand-Book* even mentioned, and but little concerning it appears thereafter. Lockhart, then editing the *Quarterly*, proposed to render it more suitable for the purpose for which it had been intended by himself interpolating a series of extracts from Ford's volumes. But Borrow would tolerate no interference with his work, and promptly withdrew the Essay, which had meanwhile been set up in type. The following letter, addressed by Lockhart to Ford, sufficiently explains the position:

London,
June 13*th*, 1845.

Dear Ford,

'El Gitano' sent me a paper on the "Hand-Book" which I read with delight. It seemed just another capital chapter of his "Bible in Spain," and I thought, as there was hardly a word of 'review,' and no extract giving the least notion of the peculiar merits and style of the "Hand-Book," that I could easily (as is my constant custom) supply the humbler part myself, and so present at once a fair review of the work, and a lively specimen of our friend's vein of eloquence in exordio.

But, behold! he will not allow any tampering . . . I now write to condole with you; for I am very sensible, after all, that you run a great risk in having your book committed to hands far less competent for treating it or any other book of Spanish interest than Borrow's would have been . . . but I consider that, after all, in the case of a new author, it is the first duty of "The Quarterly Review" to introduce that author fully and fairly to the public.

Ever Yours Truly,
J. G. Lockhart.

The action of Lockhart in seeking to amend his Essay excited Borrow's keenest indignation, and induced him to produce the following amusing squib:—

Would it not be more dignified
To run up debts on every side,
And then to pay your debts refuse,
Than write for rascally Reviews?
And lectures give to great and small,
In pot-house, theatre, and town-hall,
Wearing your brains by night and day
To win the means to pay your way?
I vow by him who reigns in [hell],
It would be more respectable!

This squib was never printed by Borrow. I chanced to light upon it recently in a packet of his as yet unpublished verse.

The Essay itself is far too interesting, and far too characteristic of its author, to be permitted to remain any longer inaccessible; hence the present reprint. The original is a folio pamphlet, extending to twelve numbered pages. Of this pamphlet no more than two copies would appear to have been struck off, and both are fortunately extant to-day. One of these was formerly in the possession of Dr. William J. Knapp, and is now the property of the Hispanic Society of New York. The second example is in my own library. This was Borrow's own copy, and is freely corrected in his handwriting throughout. From this copy the present edition has been printed, and in preparing it the whole of the corrections and additions made by Borrow to the text of the original pamphlet have been adopted.

T. J. W.

A SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER TO THE BIBLE IN SPAIN

Does Gibraltar, viewing the horrors which are continually taking place in Spain, and which, notwithstanding their frequent grotesqueness, have drawn down upon that country the indignation of the entire civilized world, never congratulate herself on her severance from the peninsula, for severed she is morally and physically? Who knows what is passing in the bosom of the old Rock? Yet on observing the menacing look which she casts upon Spain across the neutral ground, we have thought that provided she could speak it would be something after the following fashion:—

Accursed land! I hate thee; and, far from being a defence, will invariably prove a thorn in thy side, a source of humiliation and ignominy, a punishment for thy sorceries, thy abominations and idolatries—thy cruelty, thy cowardice and miserable pride; I will look on whilst thy navies are burnt in my many bays, and thy armies perish before my eternal walls—I will look on whilst thy revenues are defrauded and ruined, and thy commerce becomes a bye word and a laughing-stock, and I will exult the while and shout—'I am an instrument in the hand of the Lord, even I, the old volcanic hill—I have pertained to the Moor and the Briton—they have unfolded their banners from my heights, and I have been content—I have belonged solely to the irrational beings of nature, and no human hum invaded my solitudes; the eagle nestled on my airy crags, and the tortoise and the sea-calf dreamed in my watery caverns undisturbed; even then I was content, for I was aloof from Spain and her sons. The days of my shame were those when I was clasped in her embraces and was polluted by her crimes; when I was a forced partaker in her bad faith, soul-subduing tyranny, and degrading fanaticism; when I heard only her bragging tongue, and was redolent of nought but the breath of her smoke-loving borrachos; when I was a prison for her convicts and a garrison for her rabble soldiery—Spain, accursed land, I hate thee: may I, like my African neighbour, become a house and a retreat only for vile baboons rather than the viler Spaniard. May I sink beneath the billows, which is my foretold fate, ere I become again a parcel of Spain—accursed land, I hate thee, and so long as I can uphold my brow will still look menacingly on Spain.'

Strong language this, it will perhaps be observed—but when the rocks speak strong language may be expected, and it is no slight matter which will set stones a-speaking. Surely, if ever there was a time for Gibraltar to speak, it is the present, and we leave it to our readers to determine whether the above is not a real voice from Gibraltar heard by ourselves one moonlight night at Algeziras, as with our hands in our pockets we stood on the pier, staring across the bay in the direction of the rock.

'Poor Spain, unfortunate Spain!' we have frequently heard Spaniards exclaim. Were it worth while asking the Spaniard a reason for anything he says or does, we should be tempted to ask him why he apostrophizes his country in this manner. If she is wretched and miserable and bleeding, has she anything but what she richly deserves, and has brought down upon her own head? By Spain we of course mean the Spanish nation—for as for the country, it is so much impassible matter, so much rock and sand, chalk and clay—with which we have for the moment nothing to do. It has pleased her to play an arrant jade's part, the part of a *mula falsa*, a vicious mule, and now, and not for the first time, the brute has been chastised—there she lies on the road amidst the dust, the blood running from her nose. Did our readers ever peruse the book of the adventures of the Squire Marcos de Obregon? No! How should our readers have perused the scarce book of the life and adventures of Obregon? never mind! we to whom it has been given to hear the voice of Gibraltar whilst standing on the pier of Algeziras one moonlight evening, with our hands in our pockets, jingling the cuartos which

they contained, have read with considerable edification the adventures of the said Marcos, and will tell the reader a story out of the book of his life. So it came to pass that in one of his journeys the Señor de Obregon found himself on the back of a mule, which, to use his own expression, had the devil in her body, a regular jade, which would neither allow herself to be shod or saddled without making all the resistance in her power—was in the habit of flinging herself down whenever she came to a sandy place, and rolling over with her heels in the air. An old muleteer, who observed her performing this last prank, took pity on her rider, and said, "Gentleman student, I wish to give you a piece of advice with respect to that animal"—and then he gave Marcos the piece of advice, which Marcos received with the respect due to a man of the muleteer's experience, and proceeded on his way. Coming to a sandy place shortly after, he felt that the mule was, as usual, about to give way to her *penchant*, whereupon, without saying a word to any body, he followed the advice of the muleteer and with a halter which he held in his hand struck with all fury the jade between the two ears. Down fell the mule in the dust, and, rolling on her side, turned up the whites of her eyes. 'And as I stood by looking at her,' said Marcos, 'I was almost sorry that I had struck her so hard, seeing how she turned up the whites of her eyes. At length, however, I took a luncheon of bread, and steeping it in wine from my bota, I thrust it between her jaws, and thus revived her; and I assure you that from that moment she never played any tricks with me, but behaved both formally and genteelly under all circumstances, but especially when going over sandy ground. I am told, however, that as soon as I parted with her she fell into her old pranks, refusing to be shod or saddled—rushing up against walls and scarifying the leg of her rider, and flinging herself down in all sandy places.' Now we say, without the slightest regard to contradiction, knowing that no one save a Spaniard will contradict us, that Spain has invariably proved herself just such a jade as the mule of the cavalier De Obregon: with a kind and merciful rider what will she not do? Look at her, how she refuses to be bridled or shod—how she scarifies the poor man's leg against rude walls, how ill she behaves in sandy places, and how occasionally diving her head between her fore-legs and kicking up behind she causes him to perform a somersault in the air to the no small discomposure of his Spanish gravity; but let her once catch a Tartar who will give her the garrote right well between the ears, and she can behave as well as any body. One of the best of her riders was Charles the First. How the brute lay floundering in the dust on the plains of Villalar, turning up the whites of her eyes, the blood streaming thick from her dishonest nose! There she lay, the Fleming staring at her, with the garrote in his hand. That's right, Fleming! give it her again—and withhold the sopa till the very last extremity.

Then there was Napoleon again, who made her taste the garrote; she was quiet enough under him, but he soon left her and went to ride other jades, and his place was filled by those who, though they had no liking for her, had not vigour enough to bring her down on her side. She is down, however, at present, if ever she was in her life—blood streaming from her nose amidst the dust, the whites of her eyes turned up very much, whilst staring at her with uplifted garrote stands Narvaez.

Yes, there lies Spain, and who can pity her?—she could kick off the kind and generous Espartero, who, though he had a stout garrote in his hand, and knew what kind of conditioned creature she was, forbore to strike her, to his own mighty cost and damage. She kicked off him, and took up—whom? a regular muleteer, neither more nor less. We have nothing further to say about him; he is at present in his proper calling, we bear him no ill-will, and only wish that God may speed him. But never shall we forget the behaviour of the jade some two years ago. O the yell that she set up, the true mulish yell—knowing all the time that she had nothing to fear from her rider, knowing that he would not strike her between the ears. 'Come

here, you scoundrel, and we will make a bell-clapper of your head, and of your bowels a string to hang it by'—that was the cry of the Barcelonese, presently echoed in every town and village throughout Spain—and that cry was raised immediately after he had remitted the mulct which he had imposed on Barcelona for unprovoked rebellion. But the mule is quiet enough now; no such yell is heard now at Barcelona, or in any nook or corner of Spain. No, no—the Caballero was kicked out of the saddle, and the muleteer sprang up—There she lies, the brute! *Bien hecho, Narvaez*—Don't spare the garrote nor the mule!

It is very possible that from certain passages which we have written above, some of our readers may come to the conclusion that we must be partisans either of Espartero or Narvaez, perhaps of both. In such case, however, they would do us wrong. Having occasion at present to speak of Spain, we could hardly omit taking some notice of what has been lately going on in the country, and of the two principal performers in the late *funcion*. We have not been inattentive observers of it; and have, moreover, some knowledge of the country; but any such feeling as partisanship we disclaim. Of Narvaez, the muleteer, we repeat that we have nothing more to say, his character is soon read. Of the caballero—of Espartero, we take this opportunity of observing that the opinion which we at first entertained of him, grounded on what we had heard, was anything but favourable. We thought him a grasping ambitious man; and, like many others in Spain, merely wishing for power for the lust thereof; but we were soon undeceived by his conduct when the reins of government fell into his hand. That he was ambitious we have no doubt; but his ambition was of the noble and generous kind; he wished to become the regenerator of his country—to heal her sores, and at the same time to reclaim her vices—to make her really strong and powerful—and, above all, independent of France. But all his efforts were foiled by the wilfulness of the animal—she observed his gentleness, which she mistook for fear, a common mistake with jades—gave a kick, and good bye to Espartero! There is, however, one blot in Espartero's career; we allude to it with pain, for in every other point we believe him to have been a noble and generous character; but his treatment of Cordova cannot be commended on any principle of honour or rectitude. Cordova was his friend and benefactor, to whom he was mainly indebted for his advancement in the army. Espartero was a brave soldier, with some talent for military matters. But when did either bravery or talent serve as credentials for advancement in the Spanish service? He would have remained at the present day a major or a colonel but for the friendship of Cordova, who, amongst other things, was a courtier, and who was raised to the command of the armies of Spain by a court intrigue—which command he resigned into the hands of Espartero when the revolution of the Granja and the downfall of his friends, the Moderados, compelled him to take refuge in France. The friendship of Cordova and Espartero had been so well known that for a long time it was considered that the latter was merely holding the command till his friend might deem it safe and prudent to return and resume it. Espartero, however, had conceived widely different views. After the return of Cordova to Spain he caused him to be exiled under some pretence or other. He doubtless feared him, and perhaps with reason; but the man had been his friend and benefactor, and to the relations which had once existed between them Cordova himself alludes in a manifesto which he printed at Badajoz when on his way to Portugal, and which contains passages of considerable pathos. Is there not something like retribution in the fact that Espartero is now himself in exile?

Cordova! His name is at present all but forgotten, yet it was at one time in the power of that man to have made himself master of the destinies of Spain. He was at the head of the army—was the favourite of Christina—and was, moreover, in the closest connexion with the Moderado party—the most unscrupulous, crafty, and formidable of all the factions which in these latter times have appeared in the bloody circus of Spain. But if ever there was a man, a

real man of flesh and blood, who in every tittle answered to one of the best of the many well-drawn characters in Le Sage's wonderful novel—one of the masters of Gil Blas, a certain Don Mathias, who got up at midday, and rasped tobacco whilst lolling on the sofa, till the time arrived for dressing and strolling forth to the prado—a thorough Spanish coxcomb highly perfumed, who wrote love-letters to himself bearing the names of noble ladies—brave withal and ever ready to vindicate his honour at the sword's point, provided he was not called out too early of a morning—it was this self-same Don Cordova, who we repeat had the destinies of Spain at one time in his power, and who, had he managed his cards well, and death had not intervened, might at the present moment have occupied the self-same position which Narvaez fills with so much credit to himself. The man had lots of courage, was well versed in the art military; and once, to his honour be it said, whilst commanding a division of the Christine army, defeated Zumalacarregui in his own defiles; but, like Don Mathias, he was fond of champagne suppers with actresses, and would always postpone a battle for a ball or a horse-race. About five years ago we were lying off Lisbon in a steamer in our way from Spain. The morning was fine, and we were upon deck staring vacantly about us, as is our custom, with our hands in our pockets, when a large barge with an awning, and manned by many rowers, came dashing through the water and touched the vessel's side. Some people came on board, of whom, however, we took but little notice, continuing with our hands in our pockets staring sometimes at the river, and sometimes at the castle of Saint George, the most remarkable object connected with the 'white city,' which strikes the eye from the Tagus. In a minute or two the steward came running up to us from the cabin, and said, 'There are two or three strange people below who seem to want something; but what it is we can't make out, for we don't understand them. Now I heard you talking 'Moors' the other day to the black cook, so pray have the kindness to come and say two or three words in Moors to the people below.' Whereupon, without any hesitation, we followed the steward into the cabin. 'Here's one who can jabber Moors with you,' bawled he, bustling up to the new comers. On observing the strangers, however, who sat on one of the sofas, instead of addressing them in 'Moors,' we took our hands out of our pockets, drew ourselves up, and making a most ceremonious bow, exclaimed in pure and sonorous Castilian, 'Cavaliers, at your feet! What may it please you to command?'

The strangers, who had looked somewhat blank at the first appearance of our figure, no sooner heard us address them in this manner than they uttered a simultaneous 'Ola!' and, springing up, advanced towards us with countenances irradiated with smiles. They were three in number, to say nothing of a tall loutish fellow with something of the look of a domestic, who stood at some distance. All three were evidently gentlemen—one was a lad about twenty, the other might be some ten years older—but the one who stood between the two, and who immediately confronted us, was evidently the principal. He might be about forty, and was tall and rather thin; his hair was of the darkest brown; his face strongly marked and exceedingly expressive; his nose was fine, so was his forehead, and his eyes sparkled like diamonds beneath a pair of bushy brows slightly grizzled. He had one disagreeable feature—his mouth—which was wide and sensual-looking to a high degree. He was dressed with elegance—his brown surtout was faultless; shirt of the finest Holland, frill to correspond, and fine ruby pin. In a very delicate and white hand he held a delicate white handkerchief perfumed with the best atar-de-nuar of Abderrahman. 'What can we oblige you in, cavalier?' said we, as we looked him in the face: and then he took our hand, our brown hand, into his delicate white one, and whispered something into our ear—whereupon, turning round to the steward, we whispered something into his ear. 'I know nothing about it,' said the steward in a surly tone—we have nothing of the kind on board—no such article or packet is come; and I tell you what, I don't half like these fellows; I believe them to be custom-house spies: it was

the custom-house barge they came in, so tell them in Moors to get about their business.' 'The man is a barbarian, sir,' said we to the cavalier; 'but what you expected is certainly not come.' A deep shade of melancholy came over the countenance of the cavalier: he looked us wistfully in the face, and sighed; then, turning to his companions, he said, 'We are disappointed, but there is no remedy—Vamos, amigos.' Then, making us a low bow, he left the cabin, followed by his friends. The boat was ready, and the cavalier was about to descend the side of the vessel—we had also come on deck—suddenly our eyes met. 'Pardon a stranger, cavalier, if he takes the liberty of asking your illustrious name.' 'General Cordova,' said the cavalier in an under voice. We made our lowest bow, pressed our hand to our heart—he did the same, and in another minute was on his way to the shore. 'Do you know who that was?' said we to the steward—'that was the great General Cordova.' 'Cordova, Cordova,' said the steward. 'Well, I really believe I have something for that name. A general do you say? What a fool I have been—I suppose you couldn't call him back?' The next moment we were at the ship's side shouting. The boat had by this time nearly reached the Caesodrea, though, had it reached Cintra—but stay, Cintra is six leagues from Lisbon—and, moreover, no boat unless carried can reach Cintra. Twice did we lift up our voice. At the second shout the boat rested on its oars; and when we added 'Caballeros, vengan ustedes atras,' its head was turned round in a jiffy, and back it came bounding over the waters with twice its former rapidity. We are again in the cabin; the three Spaniards, the domestic, ourselves, and the steward; the latter stands with his back against the door, for the purpose of keeping out intruders. There is a small chest on the table, on which all eyes are fixed; and now, at a sign from Cordova, the domestic advances, in his hand a chisel, which he inserts beneath the lid of the chest, exerting all the strength of his wrist—the lid flies open, and discloses some hundreds of genuine Havannah cigars. 'What obligations am I not under to you!' said Cordova, again taking us by the hand, 'the very sight of them gives me new life; long have I been expecting them. A trusty friend at Gibraltar promised to send them, but they have tarried many weeks: but now to dispose of this treasure.' In a moment he and his friends were busily employed in filling their pockets. Yes Cordova, the renowned general, and the two secretaries of a certain legation at Lisbon—for such were his two friends—are stowing away the Havannah cigars with all the eagerness of contrabandistas. 'Rascal,' said Cordova, suddenly turning to his domestic with a furious air and regular Spanish grimace, 'you are doing nothing; why don't you take more?' 'I can't hold any more, your worship,' replied the latter in a piteous tone. 'My pockets are already full; and see how full I am here,' he continued pointing to his bosom. 'Peace, bribon,' said his master; 'if your bosom is full, fill your hat, and put it on your head. We owe you more than we can express,' said he, turning round and addressing us in the blandest tones. 'But why all this mystery?' we demanded. 'O, tobacco is a royal monopoly here, you know, so we are obliged to be cautious.' 'But you came in the custom-house barge?' 'Yes, the superintendent of the customs lent it to us in order that we might be put to as little inconvenience as possible. Between ourselves, he knows all about it; he is only solicitous to avoid any scandal. Really these Portuguese have some slight tincture of gentility in them, though they are neither Castilian nor English,' he continued, making us another low bow. On taking his departure the general gave the steward an ounce of gold, and having embraced us and kissed us on the cheek, said, 'In a few weeks I shall be in England, pray come and see me there.' This we promised faithfully to do, but never had the opportunity; he went on shore with his cigars, gave a champagne supper to his friends, and the next morning was a corpse. What a puff of smoke is the breath of man!

But here before us is a Hand-book for Spain. From what we have written above it will have been seen that we are not altogether unacquainted with the country; indeed we plead guilty to having performed the grand tour of Spain more than once; but why do we say guilty—it is

scarcely a thing to be ashamed of; the country is a magnificent one, and the people are a highly curious people, and we are by no means sorry that we have made the acquaintance of either. Detestation of the public policy of Spain, and a hearty abhorrence of its state creed, we consider by no means incompatible with a warm admiration for the natural beauties of the country, and even a zest for Spanish life and manners. We love a ride in Spain, and the company to be found in a Spanish venta; but the Lord preserve us from the politics of Spain, and from having anything to do with the Spaniards in any graver matters than interchanging cigars and compliments, meetings upon the road (peaceable ones of course), kissing and embracing (see above). Whosoever wishes to enjoy Spain or the Spaniards, let him go as a private individual, the humbler in appearance the better: let him call every beggar Cavalier, every Don a Señor Conde; praise the water of the place in which he happens to be as the best of all water; and wherever he goes he will meet with attention and sympathy. 'The strange Cavalier is evidently the child of honourable fathers, although, poor man, he appears to be, like myself, unfortunate'—will be the ejaculation of many a proud *tatterdemalion* who has been refused charity with formal politeness—whereas should the stranger chuck him contemptuously an ounce of gold, he may be pretty sure that he has bought his undying hatred both in this world and the next.

Here we have a Hand-book for Spain—we mean for travellers in Spain—and of course for English travellers. The various hand-books which our friend Mr. Murray has published at different times are very well known, and their merit generally recognized. We cannot say that we have made use of any of them ourselves, yet in the course of our peregrinations we have frequently heard travellers speak in terms of high encomium of their general truth and exactness, and of the immense mass of information which they contain. There is one class of people, however, who are by no means disposed to look upon these publications with a favourable eye—we mean certain gentry generally known by the name of *valets de place*, for whom we confess we entertain no particular affection, believing them upon the whole to be about the most worthless, heartless, and greedy set of miscreants to be found upon the whole wide continent of Europe. These gentry, we have reason to know, look with a by no means favourable eye upon these far-famed publications of Albemarle-street. 'They steal away our honest bread,' said one of them to us the other day at Venice, '*I Signori forestieri* find no farther necessity for us since they have appeared; we are thinking of petitioning the government in order that they may be prohibited as heretical and republican. Were it not for these accursed books I should now have the advantage of waiting upon those *forestieri*'—and he pointed to a fat English squire, who with a blooming daughter under each arm, was proceeding across the piazza to St. Marco with no other guide than a 'Murray,' which he held in his hand. High, however, as was the opinion which we had formed of these Hand-books from what we had heard concerning them, we were utterly unprepared for such a treat as has been afforded us by the perusal of the one which now lies before us—the Hand-book for Spain.

It is evidently the production of a highly-gifted and accomplished man of infinite cleverness, considerable learning, and who is moreover thoroughly acquainted with the subject of which he treats. That he knows Spain as completely as he knows the lines upon the palm of his hand, is a fact which cannot fail of forcing itself upon the conviction of any person who shall merely glance over the pages; yet this is a book not to be glanced over, for we defy any one to take it up without being seized with an irresistible inclination to peruse it from the beginning to the end—so flowing and captivating is the style, and so singular and various are the objects and events here treated of. We have here a perfect panorama of Spain, to accomplish which we believe to have been the aim and intention of the author; and gigantic as the conception

was, it is but doing him justice to say that in our opinion he has fully worked it out. But what iron application was required for the task—what years of enormous labour must have been spent in carrying it into effect even after the necessary materials had been collected—and then the collecting of the materials themselves—what strange ideas of difficulty and danger arise in our minds at the sole mention of that most important point! But here is the work before us; the splendid result of the toil, travel, genius, and learning of one man, and that man an Englishman. The above is no overstrained panegyric; we refer our readers to the work itself, and then fearlessly abandon the matter to their decision. We have here all Spain before us; mountain, plain, and river, *poblado y desploblado*—the well known and the mysterious—Barcelona and Batuecas.

Amidst all the delight and wonder which we have felt, we confess that we have been troubled by an impertinent thought of which we could not divest ourselves. We could not help thinking that the author, generous enough as he has been to the public, has been rather unjust to himself—by publishing the result of his labours under the present title. A Hand-book is a Hand-book after all, a very useful thing, but still—The fact is that we live in an age of humbug, in which every thing to obtain much note and reputation must depend less upon its own intrinsic merits than on the name it bears. The present work is about one of the best books ever written upon Spain; but we are afraid that it will never be estimated at its proper value; for after all a Hand-book is a Hand-book. Permit us, your Ladyship, to introduce to you the learned, talented, and imaginative author of the—shocking! Her Ladyship would faint, and would never again admit ourselves and our friends to her *soirées*. What a pity that this delightful book does not bear a more romantic sounding title—'Wanderings in Spain,' for example; or yet better, 'The Wonders of the Peninsula.'

But are we not ourselves doing our author injustice? Aye surely; the man who could write a book of the character of the one which we have at present under notice, is above all such paltry considerations, so we may keep our pity for ourselves. If it please him to cast his book upon the waters in the present shape, what have we to do but to be grateful?—we forgot for a moment with what description of man we have to do. This is no vain empty coxcomb; he cannot but be aware that he has accomplished a great task; but such paltry considerations as those to which we have alluded above are not for him but for writers of a widely different stamp with whom we have nothing to do.

WHAT TO OBSERVE IN SPAIN.

Before we proceed to point out the objects best worth seeing in the Peninsula, many of which are to be seen there only, it may be as well to mention what is *not* to be seen: there is no such loss of time as finding this out oneself, after weary chace and wasted hour. Those who expect to find well-garnished arsenals, libraries, restaurants, charitable or literary institutions, canals, railroads, tunnels, suspension-bridges, steam-engines, omnibuses, manufactories, polytechnic galleries, pale-ale breweries, and similar appliances and appurtenances of a high state of political, social, and commercial civilisation, had better stay at home. In Spain there are no turnpike-trust meetings, no quarter-sessions, no courts of *justice*, according to the real meaning of that word, no treadmills, no boards of guardians, no chairmen, directors, masters-extraordinary of the court of chancery, no assistant poor-law commissioners. There are no anti-tobacco-teetotal-temperance meetings, no auxiliary missionary propagating societies, nothing in the blanket and lying-in asylum line, nothing, in short, worth a revising barrister of three years' standing's notice. Spain is no country for the political economist, beyond affording an example of the decline of the wealth of nations, and offering a wide topic on

errors to be avoided, as well as for experimental theories, plans of reform and amelioration. In Spain, Nature reigns; she has there lavished her utmost prodigality of soil and climate which a bad government has for the last three centuries been endeavouring to counteract. *El cielo y suelo es bueno, el entresuelo malo*, and man, the occupier of the Peninsula *entresol*, uses, or rather abuses, with incurious apathy the goods with which the gods have provided him. Spain is a *terra incognita* to naturalists, geologists, and every branch of ists and ologists. The material is as superabundant as native labourers and operatives are deficient. All these interesting branches of inquiry, healthful and agreeable, as being out-of-door pursuits, and bringing the amateur in close contact with nature, offer to embryo authors, who are ambitious to *book something new*, a more worthy subject than the *decies repetita* descriptions of bull-fights and the natural history of ollas and ventas. Those who aspire to the romantic, the poetical, the sentimental, the artistical, the antiquarian, the classical, in short, to any of the sublime and beautiful lines, will find both in the past and present state of Spain subjects enough, in wandering with lead-pencil and note-book through this singular country, which hovers between Europe and Africa, between civilisation and barbarism; this is the land of the green valley and barren mountain, of the boundless plain and the broken sierra, now of Elysian gardens of the vine, the olive, the orange, and the aloe, then of trackless, vast, silent, uncultivated wastes, the heritage of the wild bee. Here we fly from the dull uniformity, the polished monotony of Europe, to the racy freshness of an original, unchanged country, where antiquity treads on the heels of to-day, where Paganism disputes the very altar with Christianity, where indulgence and luxury contend with privation and poverty, where a want of all that is generous or merciful is blended with the most devoted heroic virtues, where the most cold-blooded cruelty is linked with the fiery passions of Africa, where ignorance and erudition stand in violent and striking contrast.

Here let the antiquarian pore over the stirring memorials of many thousand years, the vestiges of Phœnician enterprise, of Roman magnificence, of Moorish elegance, in that storehouse of ancient customs, that repository of all elsewhere long forgotten and passed by; here let him gaze upon those classical monuments, unequalled almost in Greece or Italy, and on those fairy Aladdin palaces, the creatures of Oriental gorgeousness and imagination, with which Spain alone can enchant the dull European; here let the man of feeling dwell on the poetry of her envy-disarming decay, fallen from her high estate, the dignity of a dethroned monarch, borne with unrepining self-respect, the last consolation of the innately noble, which no adversity can take away; here let the lover of art feed his eyes with the mighty masterpieces of Italian art, when Raphael and Titian strove to decorate the palaces of Charles, the great emperor of the age of Leo X., or with the living nature of Velazquez and Murillo, whose paintings are truly to be seen in Spain alone; here let the artist sketch the lowly mosque of the Moor, the lofty cathedral of the Christian, in which God is worshipped in a manner as nearly befitting His glory as the power and wealth of finite man can reach; art and nature here offer subjects, from the feudal castle, the vasty Escorial, the rock-built alcazar of imperial Toledo, the sunny towers of stately Seville, to the eternal snows and lovely vega of Granada: let the geologist clamber over mountains of marble, and metal-pregnant sierras, let the botanist cull from the wild hothouse of nature plants unknown, unnumbered, matchless in colour, and breathing the aroma of the sweet south; let all, learned or unlearned, listen to the song, the guitar, the Castanet; let all mingle with the gay, good-humoured, temperate peasantry, the finest in the world, free, manly, and independent, yet courteous and respectful; let all live with the noble, dignified, high-bred, self-respecting Spaniard; let all share in their easy, courteous society; let all admire their dark-eyed women, so frank and natural, to whom the voice of all ages and nations has conceded the palm of attraction, to whom Venus has bequeathed her magic girdle of grace and fascination; let all—*sed ohe*! *jam satis*—enough for starting on this expedition,

where, as Don Quixote said, there are opportunities for what are called adventures elbow deep.

The following account of the rivers of Spain would do credit to the pen of Robertson:—

> 'There are six great rivers in Spain,—the arteries which run between the seven mountain chains, the vertebras of the geological skeleton. These six watersheds are each intersected in their extent by others on a minor scale, by valleys and indentations, in each of which runs its own stream. Thus the rains and melted snows are all collected in an infinity of ramifications, and carried by these tributary conduits into one of the six main trunks, or great rivers: all these, with the exception of the Ebro, empty themselves into the Atlantic. The Duero and Tagus, unfortunately for Spain, disembogue in Portugal, thus becoming a portion of a foreign dominion exactly where their commercial importance is the greatest. Philip II. saw the true value of the possession of Portugal, which rounded and consolidated Spain, and insured to her the possession of these valuable outlets of internal produce, and inlets for external commerce. Portugal annexed to Spain gave more real power to his throne than the dominion of entire continents across the Atlantic. The *Miño*, which is the shortest of these rivers, runs through a bosom of fertility. The *Tajo*, Tagus, which the fancy of poets has sanded with gold and embanked with roses, tracks much of its dreary way through rocks and comparative barrenness. The *Guadiana* creeps through lonely Estremadura, infecting the low plains with miasma. The *Guadalquivir* eats out its deep banks amid the sunny olive-clad regions of Andalucia, as the Ebro divides the levels of Arragon. Spain abounds with brackish streams, *Salados*, and with salt-mines, or saline deposits, after the evaporation of the sea-waters. The central soil is strongly impregnated with saltpetre: always arid, it every day is becoming more so, from the singular antipathy which the inhabitants of the interior have against trees. There is nothing to check the power of evaporation, no shelter to protect or preserve moisture. The soil becomes more and more baked and calcined; in some parts it has almost ceased to be available for cultivation: another serious evil, which arises from want of plantations, is, that the slopes of hills are everywhere liable to constant denudation of soil after heavy rain. There is nothing to break the descent of the water; hence the naked, barren stone summits of many of the sierras, which have been pared and peeled of every particle capable of nourishing vegetation; they are skeletons where life is extinct. Not only is the soil thus lost, but the detritus washed down either forms bars at the mouths of rivers, or chokes up and raises their beds; they are thus rendered liable to overflow their banks, and convert the adjoining plains into pestilential swamps. The supply of water, which is afforded by periodical rains, and which ought to support the reservoirs of rivers, is carried off at once in violent floods, rather than in a gentle gradual disembocation. The volume in the principal rivers of Spain has diminished, and is diminishing. Rivers which were navigable are so no longer; the artificial canals which were to have been substituted remain unfinished: the progress of deterioration advances, while little is done to counteract or amend what every year must render more difficult and expensive, while the means of repair and correction will diminish in equal proportion, from the poverty occasioned by the evil, and by the fearful extent which it will be allowed to attain.

> The rivers which are really adapted to navigation are, however, only those which are perpetually fed by those tributary streams that flow down from mountains which are covered with snow all the year, and these are not many. The majority of Spanish rivers are very scanty of water during the summer time, and very rapid in their flow when filled by rains or melting snow: during these periods they are impracticable for boats. They are, moreover, much exhausted by being drained off, bled, for the purposes of artificial irrigation. The scarcity of rain in the central table-lands is much against a regular supply of water to the springs of the rivers: the water is soon sucked up by a parched, dusty, and thirsty soil, or evaporated by the dryness of the atmosphere. Many of the *sierras* are indeed covered with snow, but to no great depth, and the coating soon melts under the summer suns, and passes rapidly away.'

Here we have a sunny little sketch of a certain locality at Seville; it is too life-like not to have been taken on the spot:—

> 'The sunny flats under the old Moorish walls, which extend between the gates of *Carmona* and *La Carne*, are the haunts of idlers and of gamesters. The lower classes of Spaniards are constantly gambling at cards: groups are to be seen playing all day long for wine, love, or coppers, in the sun, or under their vine-trellises. There is generally some well-known cock of the walk, a bully, or *guapo*, who will come up and lay his hands on the cards, and say, 'No one shall play here but with mine'—*aquí no se juega sino con mis barajas*. If the gamblers are cowed, they give him *dos cuartos*, a halfpenny each. If, however, one of the challenged be a spirited fellow, he defies him. *Aquí no se cobra el barato sino con un punal de Albacete*—'You get no change here except out of an Albacete knife.' If the defiance be accepted, *vamos alla* is the answer—'Let's go to it.' There's an end then of the cards, all flock to the more interesting *écarté*; instances have occurred, where Greek meets Greek, of their tying the two advanced feet together, and yet remaining fencing with knife and cloak for a quarter of an hour before the blow be dealt. The knife is held firmly, the thumb is pressed straight on the blade, and calculated either for the cut or thrust, to chip bread and kill men.'

Apropos of Seville. It is sometimes called we believe La Capital de Majeza; the proper translation of which we conceive to be the Head Quarters of Foolery, for nothing more absurd and contemptible than this Majeza ever came within the sphere of our contemplation. Nevertheless it constitutes the chief glory of the Sevillians. Every Sevillian, male or female, rich or poor, handsome or ugly, aspires at a certain period of life to the character of the majo or maja. We are not going to waste either space or time by entering into any lengthened detail of this ridiculous nonsense: indeed, it is quite unnecessary; almost every one of the books published on Spain, and their name at present is legion, being crammed with details of this same Majeza—a happy combination of insolence, ignorance, frippery, and folly. The majo or Tomfool struts about the streets dressed something like a merry Andrew with jerkin and tight hose, a faja or girdle of crimson silk round his waist, in which is sometimes stuck a dagger, his neck exposed, and a queer kind of half-peaked hat on his head. He smokes continually, thinks there is no place like Seville, and that he is the prettiest fellow in Seville. His favourite word is 'Carajo!' The maja or she-simpleton, wears a fan and mantilla, exhibits a swimming and affected gait, thinks that there's no place like Seville, that she is the flower of Seville—

Carai! is her favourite exclamation. But enough of these poor ridiculous creatures. Yet, ridiculous in every respect as they are, these majos and majas find imitators and admirers in people who might be expected to look down with contempt upon them and their follies; we have seen, and we tell it with shame, we have seen Englishmen dressed in Tomfool's livery lounging about Seville breathing out smoke and affecting the airs of hijos de Sevilla; and what was yet worse, fair blooming Englishwomen, forgetful of their rank as daughters of England, appearing à la maja on the banks of the Guadalquivir, with fan and mantilla, carai and caramba. We wish sincerely that our countrymen and women whilst travelling abroad would always bear in mind that they can only be respected or respectable so long as they maintain their proper character—that of Englishmen and Englishwomen;—but in attempting to appear French, Italians, and Spaniards, they only make themselves supremely ridiculous. As the tree falls, so must it lie. They are children of England; they cannot alter that fact, therefore let them make the most of it, and after all it is no bad thing to be a child of England. But what a poor feeble mind must be his who would deny his country under any circumstances! Therefore, gentle English travellers, when you go to Seville, amongst other places, appear there as English, though not obtrusively, and do not disgrace your country by imitating the airs and graces of creatures whom the other Spaniards, namely, Castilians, Manchegans, Aragonese, &c., pronounce to be fools.

THE NORMANS IN SPAIN.

'In the ninth century, the Normans or Northmen made piratical excursions on the W. coast of Spain. They passed, in 843, from Lisbon up to the straits and everywhere, as in France, overcame the unprepared natives, plundering, burning, and destroying. They captured even Seville itself, September 30, 844, but were met by the Cordovese Kalif, beaten, and expelled. They were called by the Moors *Majus*, *Madjous*, *Magioges* (Conde, i. 282), and by the early Spanish annalists *Almajuzes*. The root has been erroneously derived from Μιγος, Magus, magicians or supernatural beings, as they were almost held to be. The term *Madjous* was, strictly speaking, applied by the Moors to those Berbers and Africans who were Pagans or Muwallads, *i.e.* not believers in the Khoran. The true etymology is that of the Gog and Magog so frequently mentioned by Ezekiel (xxxviii. and xxxix.) and in the Revelations (xx. 8) as ravagers of the earth and nations, May-Gogg, "he that dissolveth,"—the fierce Normans appeared, coming no one knew from whence, just when the minds of men were trembling at the approach of the millennium, and thus were held to be the forerunners of the destroyers of the world. This name of indefinite gigantic power survived in the *Mogigangas*, or terrific images, which the Spaniards used to parade in their religious festivals, like the Gogs and Magogs of our civic wise men of the East. Thus Andalucia being the half-way point between the N. and S.E., became the meeting-place of the two great ravaging swarms which have desolated Europe: here the stalwart children of frozen Norway, the worshippers of Odin, clashed against the Saracens from torrid Arabia, the followers of Mahomet. Nor can a greater proof be adduced of the power and relative superiority of the Cordovese Moors over the other nations of Europe, than this, their successful resistance to those fierce invaders, who overran without difficulty the coasts of England, France, Apulia, and Sicily: conquerors everywhere else, here they were driven back in disgrace. Hence the bitter hatred of the Normans against the Spanish Moors, hence their alliances with the Catalans,

where a Norman impression yet remains in architecture; but, as in Sicily, these barbarians, unrecruited from the North, soon died away, or were assimilated as usual with the more polished people, whom they had subdued by mere superiority of brute force.'

If the Moors called the Norsemen Al Madjus, which according to our author signifies Gog and Magog, the Norsemen retorted by a far more definite and expressive nickname; this was Blue-skins or Bluemen, doubtless in allusion to the livid countenances of the Moors. The battles between the Moors and the Northmen are frequently mentioned in the Sagas, none of which, however, are of higher antiquity than the eleventh century. In none of these chronicles do we find any account of this raid upon Seville in 844; it was probably a very inconsiderable affair magnified by the Moors and their historians. Snorre speaks of the terrible attack of Sigurd, surnamed the Jorsal wanderer, or Jerusalem pilgrim, upon Lisbon and Cintra, both of which places he took, destroying the Moors by hundreds. He subsequently 'harried' the southern coasts of Spain on his voyage to Constantinople. But this occurred some two hundred years after the affair of Seville mentioned in the Handbook. It does not appear that the Norse ever made any serious attempt to establish their power in Spain; had they done so we have no doubt that they would have succeeded. We entertain all due respect for the courage and chivalry of the Moors, especially those of Cordova, but we would have backed the Norse, especially the pagan Norse, against the best of them. The Biarkemal would soon have drowned the Moorish 'Lelhies.'

'Thou Har, who grip'st thy foeman
Right hard, and Rolf the bowman,
And many, many others,
The forky lightning's brothers,
Wake—not for banquet table,
Wake—not with maids to gabble,
But wake for rougher sporting,
For Hildur's bloody courting.'

Under the head of La Mancha our author has much to say on the subject of Don Quixote; and to the greater part of what he says we yield our respectful assent. His observations upon the two principal characters in that remarkable work display much sound as well as original criticism. We cannot however agree with him in preferring the second part, which we think a considerable falling off from the first. We should scarcely believe the two parts were written by the same hand. We have read through both various times, but we have always sighed on coming to the conclusion of the first. It was formerly our custom to read the Don 'pervasively' once every three years; we still keep up that custom *in part*, and hope to do so whilst life remains. We say *in part*, because we now conclude with the first part going no farther. We have little sympathy with the pranks played off upon Sancho and his master by the Duke and Duchess, to the description of which so much space is devoted; and as for the affair of Sancho's government at Barataria, it appears to us full of inconsistency and absurdity. Barataria, we are told, was a place upon the Duke's estate, consisting of two or three thousand inhabitants; and of such a place it was very possible for a nobleman to have made the poor squire governor; but we no sooner get to Barataria than we find ourselves not in a townlet, but in a *capital* in Madrid. The governor at night makes his rounds, attended by 'an immense watch;' he wanders from one street to another for hours; he encounters all kinds of adventures, not mock but real adventures, and all kinds of characters, not mock but real

characters; there is talk of bull-circuses, theatres, gambling-houses, and such like; and all this in a place of two or three thousand inhabitants, in which, by the way, nothing but a cat is ever heard stirring after eight o'clock; this we consider to be carrying the joke rather too far; and it is not Sancho but the reader who is joked with. But the first part is a widely different affair: all the scenes are admirable. Should we live a thousand years, we should never forget the impression made upon us by the adventure of the corpse, where the Don falls upon the priests who are escorting the bier by torch light, and by the sequel thereto, his midnight adventures in the Brown Mountain. We can only speak of these scenes as astonishing—they have never been equalled in their line. There is another wonderful book which describes what we may call the city life of Spain, as the other describes the vida del campo—we allude of course to Le Sage's novel, which as a whole we prefer to Don Quixote, the characters introduced being certainly more true to nature than those which appear in the other great work. Shame to Spain that she has not long since erected a statue to Le Sage, who has done so much to illustrate her; but miserable envy and jealousy have been at the bottom of the feeling ever manifested in Spain towards that illustrious name. There are some few stains in the grand work of Le Sage. He has imitated without acknowledgment three or four passages contained in the life of Obregon, a curious work, of which we have already spoken, and to which on some future occasion we may perhaps revert.

But the Hand-book? We take leave of it with the highest respect and admiration for the author; and recommend it not only to travellers in Spain, but to the public in general, as a work of a very high order, written *con amore* by a man who has devoted his whole time, talents, and all the various treasures of an extensive learning to its execution. We repeat that we were totally unprepared for such a literary treat as he has here placed before us. It is our sincere wish that at his full convenience he will favour us with something which may claim consanguinity with the present work. It hardly becomes us to point out to an author subjects on which to exercise his powers. We shall, however, take the liberty of hinting that a good history of Spain does not exist, at least in English—and that not even Shelton produced a satisfactory translation of the great gem of Spanish literature, 'The Life and Adventures of Don Quixote.'