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HAND-BOOK

SPAIN

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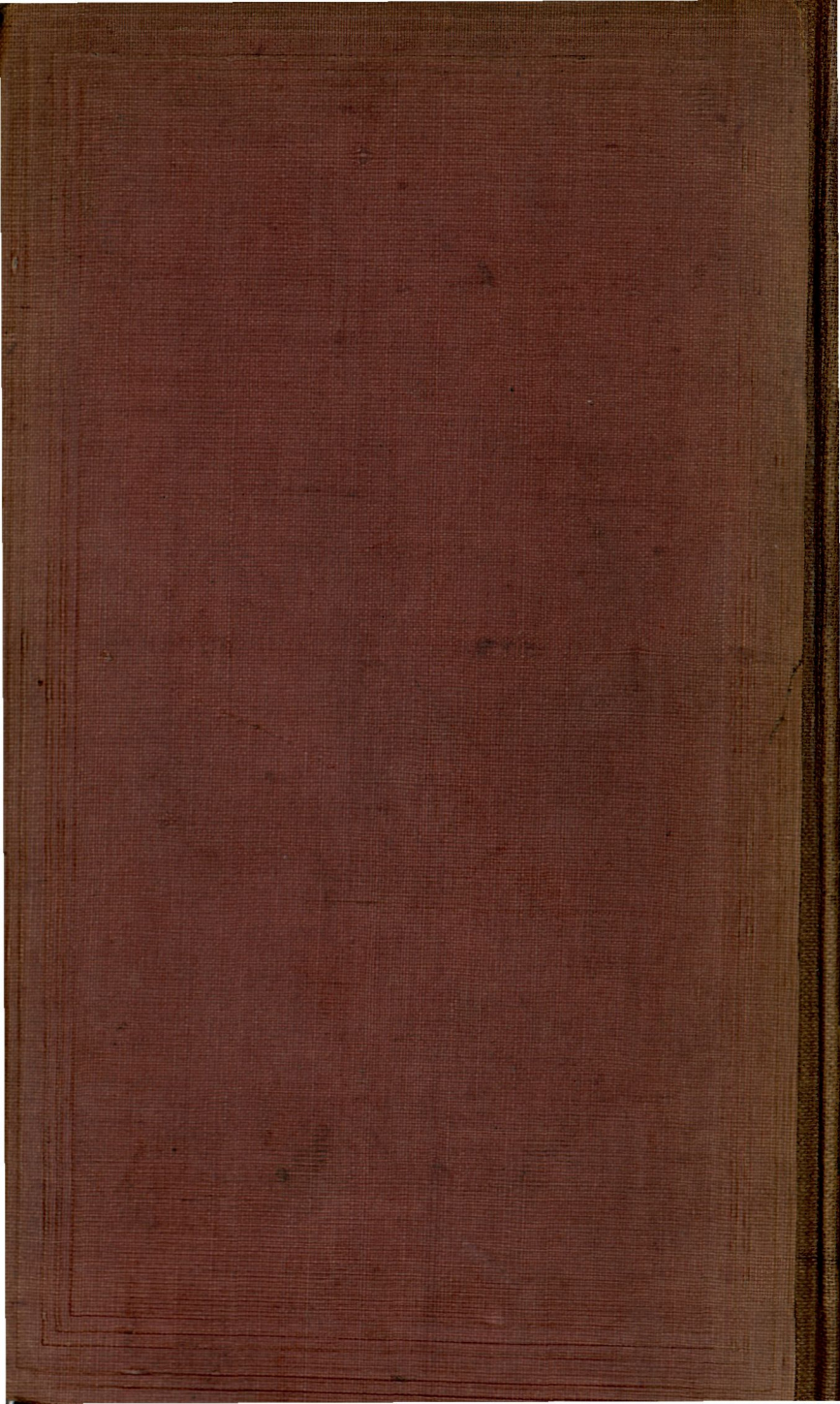
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SIR WILLIAM EDEN, BART.,

THESE PAGES ARE DEDICATED, IN REMEMBRANCE OF PLEASANT
YEARS SPENT IN WELL-BELOVED SPAIN,

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND,

RICHARD FORD.



N O T I C E.

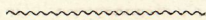
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PREFACE TO THE THIRD EDITION.



THE rapid exhaustion of two large editions of this 'Handbook for Spain,' a country hitherto little known and less visited, proves that the Pyrenees have ceased to bar out travellers from England, to whose especial use this work is destined.

Of the many misrepresentations regarding the Peninsula, few had been previously more systematically circulated, than the dangers and difficulties. It was our office to show, that this, the most romantic and peculiar country in Europe, might in reality be visited throughout its length and breadth, with ease and safety,—that travelling there was no worse than it was in most parts of the continent in 1814, before English example forced improvements. The greatest desideratum was a practical Handbook, since the national *Guias* are scanty and unsatisfactory, as few Spaniards travel in their own country, and fewer travel out of it; thus, with limited means of comparison, they cannot appreciate differences, or know what are the wants and wishes of a foreigner. Accordingly, in their Guides, usages, ceremonies, &c. which are familiar to themselves from childhood, are often passed over without notice, although, from their novelty to the stranger, they are exactly what he most desires to have pointed out and explained. Nay, the natives frequently despise, or feel ashamed, from a sensitiveness of being thought "picturesque barbarians," of those very things which the most interest and charm the foreigner, for whose observation they select the new rather than the old, and point out their poor pale copies of Europe, in preference to their own rich and racy originals. Again, the oral information to be obtained on the spot is generally meagre; as these incurious semi-orientals look with jealousy on the foreigner who observes or questions, they either fence with him in their answers, raise difficulties, or, being creatures of self-esteem and imagination, magnify or diminish everything as best suits their own objects and suspicions. The national expressions "*Quien sabe ? no se sabe,*"—"who knows ? I do not know," will often be the prelude to "*No se puede,*"—"it can't be done."

This Handbook endeavours to show what might be known and what may be done in Spain, with the least difficulty and the greatest satisfaction. With this view, the different modes of travelling by land or water, and the precautions necessary to be taken to insure comfort and

security, are first pointed out in the Introduction. The Provinces are then described one after another. The principal lines of high roads, cross-communications, names of inns, and quality of accommodation, are detailed, and the best seasons of the year for exploring each route suggested. Plans of tours are drawn up, and the best lines laid down for specific and specified objects. The peculiarities of districts and towns are noticed, and a short account given of the local antiquities, religion, art, scenery, and manners. This work, the fruit of many years' wandering in the Peninsula, is an humble attempt to furnish in the smallest compass, the greatest quantity of useful and entertaining information. Those things which every one, when on the spot, can see with his own eyes, are seldom described minutely; stress is laid upon *what to observe*, leaving it to the spectator to draw his own conclusions; nor is everything that can be *seen* set down, but only what is *really worth seeing*,—*nec omnia dicentur* (as Pliny says, 'Nat. Hist.,' xiv. 2), *sed maxime insignia*; and how often does the wearied traveller rejoice when no more is to be "done;" and how does he thank the faithful pioneer, who, by having himself toiled to see some "local lion," has saved others the tiresome task, by his assurance that it is not worth the time or trouble.

The philosophy of Spain and Spaniards, and things to be known, not seen, have never been neglected; therefore dates, names, facts, and matters are mentioned by which local interest may be enhanced. Curiosity is awakened, rather than exhausted; for to do that would require many more such volumes as this. But as next to knowing a thing oneself, is the knowing where to find it, sources of fuller information are cited, from whence this skeleton framework may be filled up, whilst such a reference to the best authorities on nice occasions, offers a better guarantee than any mere unsupported statement; and the author whose object is *truth*, and whose wish is to have his views disseminated, must feel much flattered to find the *good use* his pages have been of to many authors, gentlemen and ladies too.

In Spain, a few larger cities excepted, libraries, newspapers, cicerones, and those resources which so much assist the traveller in other countries of Europe, are among the things that are not: therefore the provident traveller should carry in his saddle-bags food both for mind and body, some supply of what he can read and eat, in this hungry land of the uninformed. A little more is now aimed at than a mere book of roads, or description of the husk of the country. To *see* the cities, and *know* the minds of men, has been, since the days of the Odyssey, the object of travel: but how "difficult is it," in the words of the Great Duke (Disp., Dec. 13, 1810), "to understand the Spaniards exactly!" Made up of contradictions, they dwell in the land of the unexpected, *le pays de*

l'imprévu, where exception is the rule; where accident and the impulse of the moment are the moving powers; a land where men, especially in their collective capacity, act like women and children; where a spark, a trifle, sets the impressionable masses in action, and where no one can foresee the commonest events, which baffle the most rational and well-founded speculations. An explosion may occur at any moment; nor does any Spaniard ever attempt to guess beyond *la situacion actual*, or to foretell what the morrow will bring: that he leaves to the foreigner, who does *not* understand him—accordingly, sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. *Paciencia y barajar* is his motto, and he waits patiently to see what next will turn up after another sunrise and shuffle. His creed and practice are “Resignation,” the *Islam* of the Oriental; for this singular people is scarcely yet European; this *Berberia Cristiana* is at least a neutral ground between the hat and the turban, and many still contend that Africa begins at the Pyrenees.

Be that as it may, Spain, first civilized by the Phœnicians, and long possessed by the Moors, has indelibly retained many of the original impressions. Test her, therefore, and her natives by an Oriental standard,—decypher her by that key,—how analogous will much appear, that seems strange and repugnant, when compared with European usages! This land and people of routine and habit are potted for antiquarians, for here Pagan, Roman, and Eastern customs, long obsolete elsewhere, turn up at every step in church and house, in cabinet and campaign. In this age of practical investigation, the physical features of Spain, her mighty mountain ranges and rivers, her wealth above and below ground, her vegetation and mines, offer a wide and almost new field to our naturalists and men of science.

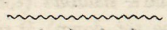
Again, to those of a less utilitarian turn, here are those seas which reflect the glories of Drake, Blake, and Nelson, and those plains that are hallowed by the victories of the Black Prince, Stanhope, and Wellington; and what *English* pilgrim will fail to visit such sites, or be dead to the *religio loci* which they inspire? And where better than on the sites themselves, can be read the great deeds of our soldiers and sailors, their gallantry and good conduct, the genius, mercy, and integrity of their immortal chiefs, which will be here faithfully yet not boastingly recorded? While every lie and libel is circulated on each side of the Pyrenees, is, forsooth, the truth to be altogether withheld in pages destined especially for their countrymen? Is their history to be treated as an old almanack, in order in false or cowardly delicacy, to curry favour with unprincipled vanity writhing under defeat, or with impotent pride resenting benefits which imply inferiority? The mirror that shall truly reflect Spain and her things, her glories and shame, must disclose a chequered picture

in which black spots will contrast with bright lights, and the evil clash with the good; sad indeed will be many a page; alas! for the works of ages of piety, science, and fine art, trampled down by the Vandal heel of destroyers, foreign and domestic, who have left a deep footprint, and set "the mark of the beast," which will pain the scholar, the artist, and the philanthropist. If, however, such crimes and culprits come like dark *shadows* (for not one tith of the full substance of crime will be set down), it must never be forgotten that these verdicts of guilty refer to *particular* individuals and periods, and not to any nation in *general* or to all times. And far more pleasant has been the duty of dwelling on deeds of skill and valour performed on the peninsular arena by native or foreigner, by friend or foe, and of pointing out the excellences of this favoured land of SPAIN, and of enlarging on the generous, manly, independent, and picturesque PEOPLE, whose best energies in peace and war have been too often depressed by misgovernment in Church and State.

However it may be the bounden duty of an honest guide to put English travellers in possession of the *truth* as regards many things, facts and persons, and thus to guard them against misrepresentations, our readers need by no means, on crossing the Channel, blurt out all they know of these truths, often the worst of libels. These double-edged weapons may be kept undrawn until necessary for self-defence. Gratuitously to wound a sensitive kindly people, is neither polite or friendly in the stranger, who is their guest—who will pass more quietly through the land by making things pleasant to the natives, and if speech be silver, silence is often gold.

"Hæc studia adolescentiam agunt, senectutem oblectant, secundas res ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent; delectant domi, non impediunt foris; pernoctant nobiscum, perigrinantur, rusticantur."—Cicero, pro Arch. 7.

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SECTION I.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

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I.—SPAIN AND SPANIARDS.

SINCE Spain appears, on the map, to be a square and most compact kingdom, politicians and geographers have treated it and its inhabitants as one and the same; practically, however, this is almost a geographical expression, as the earth, air, and mortals, of the different portions of this conventional whole, are altogether heterogeneous. Peninsular man has followed the nature by which he is surrounded; mountains and rivers have walled, and moated the dislocated land; mists and gleams have diversified the heaven; and differing like soil and sky, the *people*, in each of the once independent provinces now loosely bound together by one golden hoop, the Crown, has its own particular character. To hate his neighbour is a second nature to the Spaniard; no spick and span constitution, be it printed on parchment or

calico, can at once efface traditions and antipathies of a thousand years ; the accidents of localities and provincial nationalities, out of which they have sprung, remain too deeply dyed to be forthwith discharged by theorists. The climate and productions vary no less than do language, costume, and manners ; and so division and localism have, from time immemorial, formed a marked national feature. Spaniards may talk and boast of their country, of their *Patria*, as is done by the similarly circumstanced Italians, but like them and the Germans, they have the fallacy, but no real Fatherland ; it is an aggregation rather than an amalgamation,—every single individual in his heart really only loving his native province, and only considering as his fellow-countryman, *su paisano*—a most binding and endearing word—one born in the same locality as himself : hence it is not easy to predicate much in regard to “the Spains” and Spaniards in general, which will hold quite good as to each particular portion ruled by the sovereign of *Las Españas*, the plural title given to the chief of the federal union of this really little united kingdom. *Españolismo* may, however, be said to consist in a love for a common faith and king, and in a coincidence of resistance to all foreign dictation. The deep sentiments of religion, loyalty, and independence, noble characteristics indeed, have been sapped in our times by the influence of transpyrenean revolutions.

In order to assist strangers in understanding the Peninsula and its people, some preliminary remarks are prefixed to each section or province, in which the leading characteristics of nature and man are pointed out. Two general observations may be premised. *First*. The People of Spain, the so-called Lower Orders, are superior to those who arrogate to themselves the title of being their Betters, and in most respects are more interesting. The masses, the least spoilt and the most national, stand like pillars amid ruins, and on them the edifice of Spain's greatness is—if ever—to be reconstructed. This may have arisen, in this land of anomalies, from the peculiar policy of government in church and state, where the possessors of religious and civil monopolies who dreaded knowledge as power, pressed heavily on the noble and rich, dwarfing down their bodies by intermarriages, and all but extinguishing their minds by Inquisitions ; while the People, overlooked in the obscurity of poverty, were allowed to grow out to their full growth like wild weeds of a rich soil. They, in fact, have long enjoyed under despotisms of church and state, a practical and personal independence, the good results of which are evident in their stalwart frames and manly bearing.

Secondly. A distinction must ever be made between the Spaniard in his *individual* and in his *collective* capacity, and still more in an *official* one : taken by himself, he is true and valiant : the nicety of his *Pundonor*, or point of personal honour, is proverbial ; to him as an individual, you may safely trust your life, fair fame, and purse. Yet history, treating of these individuals in the collective, *juntados*, presents the foulest examples of misbehaviour in the field, of Punic bad faith in the cabinet, of bankruptcy and repudiation on the exchange. This may be also much ascribed to the deteriorating influence of bad government, by which the individual Spaniard, like the monk in a convent, becomes fused into the corporate. The atmosphere is too

infectious to avoid some corruption, and while the Spaniard feels that his character is only in safe keeping when in his own hands, and no man of any nation knows better than how to uphold it, when linked with others, his self-pride, impatient of any superior, lends itself readily to feelings of mistrust, until self-interest and preservation become uppermost. From suspecting that he will be sold and sacrificed by others, he ends by floating down the turbid stream like the rest: yet even *official* employment does not quite destroy all *private* good qualities, and the *empleado* may be appealed to as an *individual*.

II.—PASSPORTS.

A Passport—that curse of continental travelling, and still essential in Spain—may be obtained at the Foreign-office, Downing-street, for 7s. 6d., by any British subject, backed with the recommendation of a banker. It had better be *viséd* by the Spanish Ambassador in London. As this *Refrendacion* is expressed in the Spanish language, the import of a foreign passport becomes intelligible in Spain, where, out of the large towns, few persons understand either English or French. The essence of a passport is the name and country of the bearer; all the rest is leather and prunella and red-tapeism.

Travellers who propose taking Portugal in their way to Spain, may obtain a passport from the Portuguese consul, at No. 5, Jeffreys-square, St. Mary Axe; the fee is five shillings. It must be *viséd* at Lisbon by the English and Spanish Ambassadors previously to entering Spain. Those who enter Spain from France must have their passports *viséd* at Paris by the Spanish Ambassador, and at Bayonne by the Spanish and English Consuls; the latter demanding a fee, “according to Act of Parliament.”

At the principal sea-ports of Spain, foreigners are constantly arriving in the steamers without passports, who, if they wish to travel into the interior, obtain one from the local authorities, which is never refused when applied for by the English Consul. This especially holds good with regard to those who visit the coast in their yachts, or in ships of war. Those English who go directly to Gibraltar require no passport; and when starting for Spain they can obtain one either from the English Governor or from the Spanish Governor of Algeciras: both of these require to be *viséd* by the Spanish Consul at Gibraltar, who demands a trifling fee.

Although in peaceful times, and since the decree on this subject of February 15, 1854, many rigid rules are relaxed, yet as they may be put in force, ultra-prudent travellers who intend travelling with fire-arms, (which on the whole had better be avoided, a pocket revolver perhaps excepted,) should have the circumstance mentioned on their passport by the Spanish official at starting, when it is first *refrendado*. And it is not amiss to have specified the particular objects of travel, such as botanising, geologizing, sketching, &c. In our and in all troublesome times a stranger making drawings or writing down notes in a book, “*sucando planos*,” “taking plans,” “*mapeando el pais*,” “mapping the country,”—for such are the expressions for the simplest pencil sketch—was liable to become an object of suspicion in out-of-the-way places, and was thought to be an engineer, a spy, and at all events