

INTRODDED

SPAIN

AND HER

BLACK

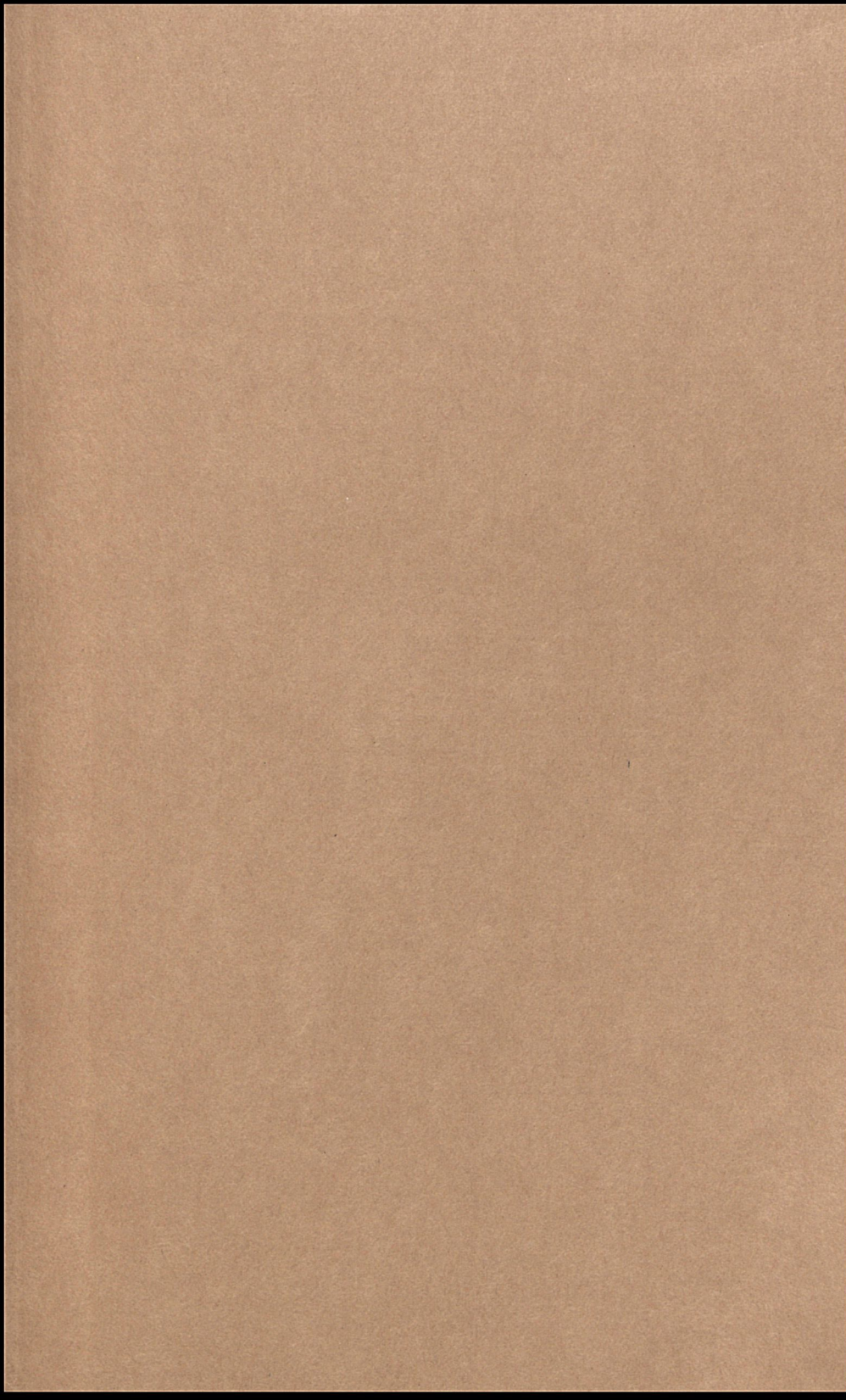
COUNTRY

REV. H. J. ROSE.

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UNTRODDEN SPAIN,

AND HER

BLACK COUNTRY;

BEING

SKETCHES OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF THE SPANIARD OF THE INTERIOR.

BY

HUGH JAMES ROSE,

M.A., of Oriel College, Oxford; Chaplain to the English, French, and German
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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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UNTRIGGERED SPAIN

BLACK COUNTRY

THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER
OF THE KINGDOM OF THE INTERIOR

THE HISTORY OF THE INTERIOR

THE HISTORY OF THE INTERIOR, CONTAINING A
DESCRIPTION OF THE MOUNTAINS, RIVERS, AND
CITIES OF THE INTERIOR OF SPAIN

BY THE AUTHOR

23

VOL. I



THE HISTORY OF THE INTERIOR

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Dedication.

TO THE MEMORY OF THE FATHER,
WHOSE VOICE,
ONCE EVER TENDER, WISE, AND TRUE,
HE MISSES,
AND IN WHOSE ONWARD FOOTSTEPS
HE FAIN WOULD FOLLOW,
THESE PAGES ARE REVERENTLY
Dedicated,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

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P R E F A C E.

It is related of a certain eminent lawyer, that when, being retained for an arduous and extraordinary case, the solicitor handed to him an unusually large amount of manuscript, explaining that the greater portion of the writing consisted of his own (the solicitor's) "observations," he asked,—“Where do your observations on the case commence?” and, on being shown, tore the bundle off at that spot, and committed them to the flames, with the remark, “Then there go your observations.”

Mindful of the warning contained in the above oft-quoted anecdote, the writer of these pages has endeavoured rather to present to the reader a series of simple sketches from life, printed, as they were originally written, with the rough edge full upon them, than to offer many observations or reflections of his own upon the state of things he has attempted to depict. Like the solicitor above referred to, he has not been able to repress *all* his observations; but he has, he believes, given such a backbone of *facts*, that

if the reader chooses ruthlessly to tear the observations off he will still find plenty of simple narrative remaining to give him a fair idea of the condition of the Spanish interior.

These Sketches, some of which are reprinted from the pages of *Macmillan's Magazine*, were, at first, merely a collection of letters, notes, and jottings made in the semi-tropical heat of the weary summer days of 1873. The writer strung them together at the suggestion of a friend, who believed them to be sufficiently interesting to merit publication, and offered them to the magazine in question. They were cordially received by the editor, and the first instalment appeared in November, 1873.

A passing tribute should here be paid to the generosity of the editor of the magazine in question, who, at great personal inconvenience, and in a season of much anxiety, himself corrected the proofs of the letters as they appeared—a task of no slight difficulty, considering the frequent necessary occurrence of *Spanish* words, and one the performance of which, owing to the distance and the irregularity of posts, by the author himself was impossible.

Two reasons have induced the writer of 'Untrodden Spain, and her Black Country' to continue his Sketches, and offer them to the public in a collected form:—

First, the kindly and hearty way in which his Sketches were received, not only by many friends, and even strangers, to whom the authorship was accidentally known, but also by the public press, and noticeably by the *Spectator*, *Guardian*, and *Illustrated London News*.

Secondly, the writer has so done because he believes that his pages, simple and unpretending as they are, chronicle a state of things which has not been before chronicled, and a state of things which is even now yielding steadily, if slowly, to the onward march of education and civilization. Already, in the peaceful valleys around him, the shrill scream of the railway engine mingles with the music of the mule-bells; already, there is a stir being made about compulsory education; already, in a few towns of the interior, may be seen (a welcome sight to a sun-dried and weary English wanderer!) the triangular red label that tells of Bass's bitter beer!

Such are the writer's reasons for thus publishing his Sketches. Simple, roughly written, without any pretensions to beauty of diction or style,—dashed off very often with a full, sometimes with an aching heart,—oftentimes seeming unconnected,—he claims for them no merit whatsoever save this, that they are true. He may here add, that many of them have

been submitted to the criticism of an Englishman for twenty years resident in the interior, and that his comment was, "They are certainly very true."

As to the *matter* of the following pages, it consists almost entirely of narrative of facts which either have happened to the writer or which have come under his immediate notice. The few "Novelettes" with which the pages are interspersed are studies from real life, and are introduced, not so much for their intrinsic interest, as because the necessary surroundings and groupings of a character or a tale give oftentimes a better general idea of the state of affairs and country where such a character lived, where such a tale had its reality, than do isolated statements of facts.

The Sketches of Life and Character—a life and character slowly passing away—have all been written within the last year. They are sketches made at various times and under varying circumstances; but always, in outline, jotted down on the spot, and at the moment of their occurrence. Hence they may possibly have a certain vividness which mere recollections would fail to convey on paper.

Sometimes when inspirited with his ride across the wild grey Campo; sometimes when sitting weary and dispirited in the lonely olive-lodge; sometimes

when wandering with fishing-rod or sketch-book by silent tarn or amidst the grandest scenery; sometimes in the crowded casino or the teeming street; sometimes on the surf-beaten shore; sometimes rocking idly in a *pareja* out upon the blue sun-lit sea; sometimes in the stillness of a sick chamber, with all the weariness of a sick man in a strange land; sometimes beneath the gorgeous orange-groves; sometimes on the treeless waste; in the heated atmosphere of the lead-mine, and the still more heated atmosphere of political or religious excitement and discussion,—have these Sketches been compiled; but chiefly, be it remembered, the writer's experience has been in the wilds of the interior, and chiefly among the lower orders, where the joke and the wine are both rough to the palate; but where the Spaniard, whether gentleman or peasant, is ever courteous, generous, and ready to help the stranger in his work.

And now, if pleasure shall be given, if interest shall be afforded, to some of his countrymen by his rude, unaffected Sketches,—if some few bright, and pure, and grateful thoughts shall be inspired in English breasts by his "Observations,"—the writer will be rejoiced. He will say no more, but will merely send his readers on their journey with the viaticum of the Spanish peasant, which he hopes they will reciprocate

as heartily as he offers it, "Vaya usted con Dios."

There may be trifling inaccuracies the writer of 'Untrodden Spain, and her Black Country' knows—indeed, he fears there surely will be—in his work; but it should be borne in mind that in his lonely and distant home, where letters oftentimes come not once a week, he could not correct his own proofs. So, forgive!

December, 1874.

UNTRODDEN SPAIN,

AND HER

BLACK COUNTRY.

CHAPTER I.

TO SPAIN IN A TRADER.

MANY were the reasons that induced me, at last, to make up my mind to accept a promising offer of employment in the interior of Spain, and to take a passage for the nearest port thereto in the good steam-ship "Lisbon."

One reason, among the many, was the desire to see other lands, other peoples. True, Spain was in a ferment; and each newspaper—(alas! until I came to sunny Spain, I never knew that a newspaper could rank among the greatest of earthly luxuries—luxuries rare, and few, and far between sometimes)—each newspaper told the story of its anarchy, and bloodshed, and disquietude. But, perhaps, that only added to the charm of seeing Spain—the land of the song and the dance,—the land of the vineyard and the olive-grove,—the land where, from A.D. 711 to A.D. 1492, Pagan and Christian, Moorish and Spanish architecture and manners, prevailed side by side, and have

left their relics,—the land of tropical heat, and wintry snows of the Guadalquivir and the Sierra Nevada. All these one's heart had long yearned to see, and now they might be seen. And another of the many reasons for leaving the shores and the friends of dear old England was, that England, in all her professions, is overstocked—her sons are elbowing one another. Go abroad, and, if it please God that your health stands the climate, you will, at least, get more work and more money, a fair field and no favour; and, above all, experience. So, to go I decided, and took a passage in the steamship "Lisbon" for Gibraltar, one of Messrs. John Hall's trading steamers, commanded by Captain John Russell, a very prince of good seamen and true friends.

The fare to Gibraltar in one of these steamers is so trifling (under £10), and the fare on board so good, that I would recommend any invalid, who is not really ill, but only worn out with parish work or city business—the hard-worked minister of a town-parish; the barrister; the merchant; the solicitor, who is suffering from that plague of this hurry-scurrying day of telegraphs, underground railways, and competition, 'yclept by doctors "nervous exhaustion"—to take a moderate purse with him, if he cannot obtain a cruise in a friend's yacht, and go to Lisbon and the Spanish ports in one of the largest of this line of steamers. He will enjoy himself; the bright sea-breeze, the freedom from care, the pleasure of scanning every passing sail—above all, the joy of thinking, as he lies down at night, "at any rate, no Penny Post can bother me in the morning,"—all these will refresh and strengthen the whole nervous system. Besides, there is plenty to be learnt at sea by a landsman,