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at Home: Volume 1
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A Hand-Book for Travellers in Spain, and Readers at Home

Targeted at both intrepid travellers and 'readers at home', this two-volume account of Spanish history, topography and culture by Richard Ford (1796–1858) combines the rigour of a gazetteer with the humour and pace of a private travel diary. First published in 1845, as part of John Murray's series of guidebooks, the work made an immediate impact upon the reading public, and it was celebrated in the press as the 'most comprehensive and accurate account of that country' hitherto produced. Through a series of hand-picked routes, readers encounter an array of landscapes and experiences as varied as coastal Cadiz, lively Barcelona, bull fights, beggars and pig farming. Opening with a guide to the country, its currency, 'gesticulations' and 'slang', Volume 1 leads the reader from Andalucia to Granada and on to Catalonia. The result is an engaging account that will be of interest to modern tourists and historians alike.

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VOLUME 1

RICHARD FORD



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A

H A N D - B O O K

F O R

T R A V E L L E R S I N S P A I N .

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THE Publisher of the 'Hand-book for Travellers in Spain' requests that travellers who may, in the use of the Work, detect any faults or omissions which they can correct *from personal knowledge*, will have the kindness to mark them down on the spot and communicate to him a notice of the same, favouring him at the same time with their names—addressed to the care of Mr. Murray, Albemarle Street. They may be reminded that by such communications they are not merely furnishing the means of improving the Hand-book, but are contributing to the benefit, information, and comfort of future travellers in general; and particularly in regard to Spain, which just now is in a state of transition, change, and progress.

. No attention can be paid to letters from innkeepers in praise of their own houses; and the postage of them is so onerous that they cannot be received.

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A
H A N D - B O O K
FOR
T R A V E L L E R S I N S P A I N,
AND
R E A D E R S A T H O M E.

DESCRIBING THE
COUNTRY AND CITIES, THE NATIVES AND THEIR MANNERS;

THE ANTIQUITIES, RELIGION, LEGENDS, FINE ARTS, LITERATURE,
SPORTS, AND GASTRONOMY:

WITH NOTICES
ON SPANISH HISTORY.

P A R T I.

CONTAINING
ANDALUCIA, RONDA AND GRANADA, MURCIA, VALENCIA,
CATALONIA, AND ESTREMADURA;

With Travelling Maps and a Copious Index.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

1845.

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TO

SIR WILLIAM EDEN, BART.,

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

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND,

RICHARD FORD.

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“Hæc studia adolescentiam, acuum, senectutem oblectant, secundas res
ornant, adversis perfugium ac solatium præbent; delectant domi, non impe-
diunt foris, pernoctant nobiscum, peregrinantur, rusticantur.”

CICERO, *pro Arch.* 7.

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P R E F A C E.

OF the many misrepresentations regarding Spain, few have been more systematically circulated than the dangers and difficulties which are there supposed to beset the traveller. This, the most romantic and peculiar country in Europe, may in reality be visited throughout its length and breadth with ease and safety, for travelling there is no worse than it was in France or Italy in 1814, before English example forced improvements. Still the great desideratum is a practical Hand-book, as the national *Guias* are unsatisfactory, since few Spaniards travel in their own country, and fewer travel out of it; thus, with limited means of comparison, they cannot appreciate differences, nor 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 are ashamed of those very things which the most interest and charm the foreigner, for whose observation they select the new rather than the old, and especially their poor pale copies of Europe, in preference to their own rich and racy originals. Again, the oral information which is to be obtained from the parties on the spot is generally still more meagre; and 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 highly imaginative, magnify or diminish everything as best suits their own views 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 Hand-book attempts to show what may be known and what may be done in Spain, with the least difficulty and the most

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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, general and special, are drawn up, and the best lines laid down for specific and specified objects. The peculiarities of every district and town are noticed, and a short account given of the local antiquities, religion, art, scenery, and manners. Thus 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, whether for the traveller in the country itself or for the reader at home. Those things which every one when on the spot can see with his own eyes, such as scenery, pictures, &c., 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, 'N. H.' xiv. 2), *sed maxime insignia*.

The philosophy of Spain and Spaniards, and what is to be known, not seen, have never been neglected; therefore dates, names, facts, and everything 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, the best writers and sources of fuller information are cited, from whence future and more competent authors may fill up this skeleton framework, whilst an exact reference to the highest authorities on every nice occasion offers a better guarantee of accuracy than the mere unsupported statement of any individual.

In Spain, some few large 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, a supply of what he can read and eat, in the destitute *ventas* of this hungry land of the unformed. Again, as Spain and Spaniards are comparatively so little understood, some departure has been made from the preceding Handbooks which have described countries familiar to all. A little

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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 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, and where men, especially in their collective capacity, act like women and children. A spark, a trifle, sets the impressionable masses in action, and none can foresee the commonest event; nor does any Spaniard ever attempt to guess beyond *la situación actual*, or to foretell what the morrow will bring; that he leaves to the foreigner, who does not understand him. *Paciencia y barajar* is his motto; and he waits patiently to see what next will turn up after another shuffle, for his creed and practice are "Resignation," the *Islam* of the Oriental.

The key to decypher this singular people is scarcely European, since this *Berberia Cristiana* is at least a neutral ground between the hat and the turban, and many contend that Africa begins even at the Pyrenees. Be that as it may, Spain, first civilised by the Phœnicians, and long possessed by the Moors, has indelibly retained the original impressions. Test her, therefore, and her natives by an Oriental standard, how analogous does much appear that is strange and repugnant, if compared with European usages! This land and people of routine and habit are also 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, as we shall carefully point out.

Again, here are those seas which reflect the glories of Drake, Rooke, 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 scenes 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?

But the mirror that shall truly reflect Spain and her things, her glories and shame, must disclose a chequered picture in which dark shadows will contrast with bright lights, and the evil clash with the good; sad, indeed, will be many a page; alas! for the works of

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PREFACE.

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 a brand which will pain the scholar, the artist, and the philanthropist. If, however, inexorable history forbids the total concealment of such crimes and culprits, far more pleasant has been the duty of dwelling on achievements of skill and valour, of pointing out the many beauties and excellencies of this highly favoured land, and of enlarging on the generous, manly, and independent PEOPLE OF SPAIN (see Index). A distinction has always been drawn between the noble and brave Nation at large and those unworthy individuals who, by means of vicious institutions, have endeavoured to depress its best energies; for the thing wanting to the vigorous members of the political body in Spain is a Head.

In presenting these and other things of Spain, let not any occasional repetition be imputed to carelessness or tautology, for matter descriptive and critical more than sufficient to have made another volume, has been cancelled in order to economise space, already too confined for so large a subject. By repetition alone are impressions made and fixed; and as no hand-book is ever read through continuously, each page should in some wise tell its own story; and when so many sites have witnessed similar events, the narrative and deductions cannot materially differ. References will, however, frequently be made to analogous points; and the bulk of information on any given subjects, purposely scattered in these pages, will be brought together under distinct heads in the Index, to which the reader is entreated to refer when any word or fact seems to require explanation.

Postscript.

July 19, 1845.

By arrangements just concluded, Madrid may now be reached in six days from London; the Peninsular Steamer from Southampton arrives at Corunna in about 72 hours, whence a Royal Mail runs to the capital in three days and a-half, *via* Lugo and Benavente. (See Routes lxvii., lxxv., lxxx.)

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