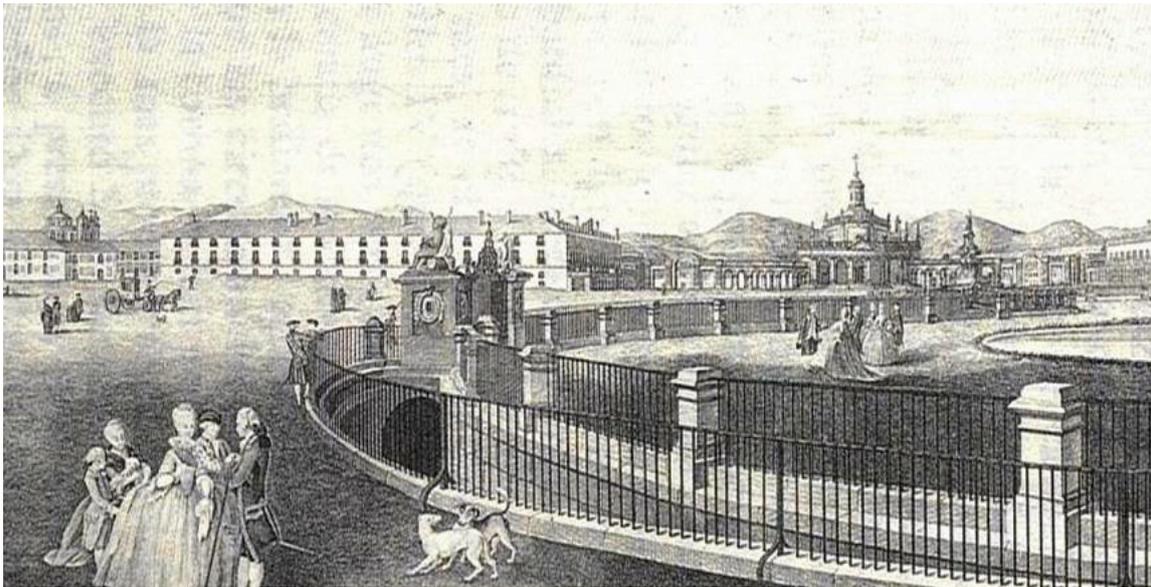


## CHAPTER 44

**Aranjuez - A Warning - A Night Adventure - A Fresh Expedition - Segovia - Abades - Factious Curas - Lopez in Prison - Rescue of Lopez.**

The success which had attended our efforts in the Sagra of Toledo speedily urged me on to a new enterprise. I now determined to direct my course to La Mancha, and to distribute the word amongst the villages of that province. Lopez, who had already performed such important services in the Sagra, had accompanied us to Madrid, and was eager to take part in this new expedition. We determined in the first place to proceed to Aranjuez, where we hoped to obtain some information which might prove of utility in the further regulation of our movements; Aranjuez being but a slight distance from the frontier of La Mancha and the high road into that province passing directly through it. We accordingly sallied forth from Madrid, selling from twenty to forty Testaments in every village which lay in our way, until we arrived at Aranjuez, to which place we had forwarded a large supply of books.<sup>1</sup>



44.1 View of Aranjuez

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<sup>1</sup> Borrow left Madrid for Aranjuez shortly after writing a letter to his mother on 27 July 1838 [Shorter, chapter 18; Jenkins, 275]. He stayed three days in Aranjuez, made the excursion to Ocaña which will be told below, and was back in Madrid by 3 August [Darlow, 345]. The villages visited and supplied on the road to Aranjuez and Ocaña would be Pinto, Valdemoro and possibly Seseña, if that is the correct identification of the inexistent 'Azaña' in Borrow's report [Darlow, 348f; Missler, *Daring Game*, 83f & footnote 62]

A lovely spot is Aranjuez, though in desolation: here the Tagus flows through a delicious valley, perhaps the most fertile in Spain; and here upsprang, in Spain's better days, a little city, with a small but beautiful palace shaded by enormous trees, where royalty delighted to forget its cares. Here Ferdinand the Seventh spent his latter days, surrounded by lovely señoras and Andalusian bull-fighters: but as the German Schiller has it in one of his tragedies:

*"The happy days in fair Aranjuez, are past and gone."*<sup>2</sup>

When the sensual king went to his dread account, royalty deserted it, and it soon fell into decay. Intriguing courtiers no longer crowd its halls; its spacious circus, where Manchegan bulls once roared in rage and agony, is now closed, and the light tinkling of guitars is no longer heard amidst its groves and gardens.

At Aranjuez I made a sojourn of three days, during which time Antonio, Lopez, and myself visited every house in the town. We found a vast deal of poverty and ignorance amongst the inhabitants, and experienced some opposition: nevertheless it pleased the Almighty to permit us to dispose of about eighty Testaments, which were purchased entirely by the very poor people; those in easier circumstances paying no attention to the word of God, but rather turning it to scoff and ridicule.

One circumstance was very gratifying and cheering to me, namely, the ocular proof which I possessed that the books which I had disposed of were read, and with attention, by those to whom I sold them; and that many others participated in their benefit. In the streets of Aranjuez, and beneath the mighty cedars and gigantic elms and plantains which compose its noble woods, I have frequently seen groups assembled listening to individuals who, with the New Testament in their hands, were reading aloud the comfortable words of salvation.

It is probable that, had I remained a longer period at Aranjuez, I might have sold many more of these divine books, but I was eager to gain La Mancha and its sandy plains, and to conceal myself for a season amongst its solitary villages, for I was apprehensive that a storm was gathering around me; but when once through Ocaña, the frontier town, I knew well that I should have nothing to fear from the Spanish authorities, as their power ceased there, the rest of La Mancha being almost entirely in the hands of the Carlists, and overrun by small parties of banditti, from whom, however, I trusted that the Lord would preserve me. I therefore departed for Ocaña, distant three leagues from Aranjuez.

I started with Antonio at six in the evening, having early in the morning sent forward Lopez with between two and three hundred Testaments. We left the high road, and proceeded by a shorter way through wild hills and over very broken and precipitous ground: being well mounted we found ourselves just after sunset opposite Ocaña, which stands on a steep hill. A deep valley lay between us and the town: we descended, and came to a small bridge, which traverses a rivulet at the bottom of the valley, at a very small distance from a kind of suburb. We crossed the bridge, and were passing by a deserted house on our left hand, when a man appeared from under the porch.

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<sup>2</sup> The opening lines of Schiller's poem '*Don Carlos*'. The original line runs: '*Die schönen Tage in Aranjuez sind nun zu Ende.*' [Burke, footnote to 611.]

What I am about to state will seem incomprehensible, but a singular history and a singular people are connected with it: the man placed himself before my horse so as to bar the way, and said "SCHOPHON," which, in the Hebrew tongue, signifies a rabbit. I knew this word to be one of the Jewish countersigns, and asked the man if he had any thing to communicate?<sup>3</sup> He said, "You must not enter the town, for a net is prepared for you. The corregidor of Toledo, on whom may all evil light, in order to give pleasure to the priests of Maria, in whose face I spit, has ordered all the alcaldes of these parts, and the escribanos and the corchetes to lay hands on you wherever they may find you, and to send you, and your books, and all that pertains to you to Toledo. Your servant was seized this morning in the town above, as he was selling the writings in the streets, and they are now awaiting your arrival in the posada<sup>4</sup>; but I knew you from the accounts of my brethren, and I have been waiting here four hours to give you warning in order that your horse may turn his tail to your enemies, and neigh in derision of them. Fear nothing for your servant, for he is known to the alcalde, and will be set at liberty, but do you flee, and may God attend you." Having said this, he hurried towards the town.<sup>5</sup>

I hesitated not a moment to take his advice, knowing full well that, as my books had been taken possession of, I could do no more in that quarter. We turned back in the direction of Aranjuez, the horses, notwithstanding the nature of the ground, galloping at full speed; but our adventures were not over. Midway, and about half a league from the village of Antigola<sup>6</sup>, we saw close to us on our left hand three men on a low bank. As far as the darkness would permit us to distinguish, they were naked, but each bore in his hand a long gun. These were rateros, or the common assassins and robbers of the roads.<sup>7</sup> We halted and cried out, "Who goes there?" They replied, "What's that to you? pass by." Their drift was to fire at us from a position from which it would be impossible to miss.

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<sup>3</sup> This countersign riddle may be less enigmatic than seems at first sight. One of the current etymologies of the name 'Spain' (*Hispania*) is that the land was so called for the countless rabbits observed by the first Phoenician colonists on the south coast, as recorded by Strabo. Consequently they called it 'the rabbit land' after the Semitic word 'Sephan' [Ford, *HB* 161], the Phoenician 'Pahan' [Burke, footnote to page 25] or Hebrew 'Schophon' [Knapp I : 389; but compare Burke, Glossary]. Borrow himself observes in chapter 24 above that the customary challenge of guards and gatekeepers was: '¿Quién Vive?' ('Who lives there?', 'Who goes there?') to which the nocturnal traveller was supposed to answer '¡España!', 'Spain!', which – etymologically speaking – likewise contains the word for Rabbit.

<sup>4</sup> Probably the famous, well-run 'Fonda of the Catalans' mentioned by Widdrington [vol. 2, 9].

<sup>5</sup> Borrow's suggestion that he was somehow under the protection of a secret network of Jewish Spaniards is almost too fanciful to believe. And yet he felt no hesitation in relating this same episode, in these very words, to his employers of the Bible Society, who not only disapproved heartily of eccentric behaviour, but were at the time quite displeased with him. This makes one suspect that there was some truth in the tale.

<sup>6</sup> Present-day Ontigola [Knapp I : 388].

<sup>7</sup> Cook [*Sketches*, vol. 2, 1f] distinguished three sorts of robbers: the *ratero*, the *salteador*, and the 'noble' mounted highwaymen. The *ratero* was a miserable, petty thief who shook down lone travellers; *salteadores* were half-organised bands of locals who mounted the occasional hold-up to supplement their normal income; the 'noble' highwaymen were the true professionals.

We shouted, "If you do not instantly pass to the right side of the road, we will tread you down between the horses' hoofs." They hesitated and then obeyed, for all assassins are dastards, and the least show of resolution daunts them. As we galloped past, one cried, with an obscene oath, "Shall we fire?" But another said, "No, no! there's danger." We reached Aranjuez, where early next morning Lopez rejoined us, and we returned to Madrid.

I am sorry to state that two hundred Testaments were seized at Ocaña<sup>8</sup>, from whence, after being sealed up, they were despatched to Toledo. Lopez informed me, that in two hours he could have sold them all, the demand was so great. As it was, twenty-seven were disposed of in less than ten minutes.

"Ride on because of the word of righteousness." Notwithstanding the check which we had experienced at Ocaña, we were far from being discouraged, and forthwith prepared ourselves for another expedition. As we returned from Aranjuez to Madrid, my eyes had frequently glanced towards the mighty wall of mountains dividing the two Castiles, and I said to myself, "Would it not be well to cross those hills, and commence operations on the other side, even in Old Castile? There I am unknown, and intelligence of my proceedings can scarcely have been transmitted thither. Peradventure the enemy is asleep, and before he has roused himself, I may have sown much of the precious seed amongst the villages of the Old Castilians. To Castile, therefore, to Castile la Vieja!" Accordingly, on the day after my arrival, I despatched several cargoes of books to various places which I proposed to visit, and sent forward Lopez and his donkey, well laden, with directions to meet me on a particular day beneath a particular arch of the aqueduct of Segovia. I likewise gave him orders to engage any persons willing to cooperate with us in the circulation of the Scriptures, and who might be likely to prove of utility in the enterprise. A more useful assistant than Lopez in an expedition of this kind it was impossible to have. He was not only well acquainted with the country, but had friends, and even connexions on the other side of the hills, in whose houses he assured me that we should at all times find a hearty welcome. He departed in high spirits, exclaiming, "Be of good cheer, Don Jorge; before we return we will have disposed of every copy of your evangelic library. Down with the friars! Down with superstition! Viva Ingalaterra, viva el Evangelio!"

In a few days I followed with Antonio.<sup>9</sup> We ascended the mountains by the pass called Pena Cerrada<sup>10</sup>, which lies about three leagues to the eastward of that of Guadarama. It

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<sup>8</sup> In reality 232 copies, according to a communication from the Duke of Rivas (Spain's new Prime Minister) to Sir George Villiers [Knapp, I : 320; Missler, *Daring Game*, 85f]

<sup>9</sup> Lopez was sent ahead on 3 August [Darlow, 348]. Borrow and Antonio Buchino followed the next day [Darlow, 353].

<sup>10</sup> Incorrect for the Navacerrada Pass [Knapp I : 299]. In a later report [Darlow, 378], Borrow mentions explicitly that he passed through Torrelodones, which he disliked deeply (see footnote 25 to chapter 40). The route he followed [described by José Ignacio Uriol, 'Apuntes para una historia del transporte en España: Los Caminos de Ruedas del Siglo XVIII', in: *Revista de obras publicas*, año 124, n° 3143, March 1977, p. 158] went: Madrid – Las Rozas – Torrelodones – Collado Villalba – 'Venta de Martin' – Navacerrada and by the Navacerrada Pass towards Segovia. The highway over this part of the Guadarrama mountain range had only recently been constructed by Ferdinand VII, so as to reach the La Granja palace faster [Robertson, *Ford*, 64].

is very unfrequented, the high road between the two Castiles passing through Guadarama. It has, moreover, an evil name, being, according to common report, infested with banditti. The sun was just setting when we reached the top of the hills, and entered a thick and gloomy pine forest, which entirely covers the mountains on the side of Old Castile. The descent soon became so rapid and precipitous, that we were fain to dismount from our horses and to drive them before us. Into the woods we plunged deeper and deeper still; night-birds soon began to hoot and cry, and millions of crickets commenced their shrill chirping above, below, and around us. Occasionally, amidst the trees at a distance, we could see blazes, as if from immense fires. "They are those of the charcoal-burners, *mon maitre!*" said Antonio; "we will not go near them, however, for they are savage people, and half bandits. Many is the traveller whom they have robbed and murdered in these horrid wildernesses."

It was blackest night when we arrived at the foot of the mountains; we were still, however, amidst woods and pine forests, which extended for leagues in every direction. "We shall scarcely reach Segovia to-night, *mon maitre,*" said Antonio. And so indeed it proved, for we became bewildered, and at last arrived where two roads branched off in different directions, we took not the left hand road, which would have conducted us to Segovia, but turned to the right, in the direction of La Granja, where we arrived at midnight.

We found the desolation of La Granja far greater than that of Aranjuez; both had suffered from the absence of royalty, but the former to a degree which was truly appalling. Nine-tenths of the inhabitants had left this place, which, until the late military revolution, had been the favourite residence of Christina.<sup>11</sup> So great is the solitude of La Granja, that wild boars from the neighbouring forests, and especially from the beautiful pine-covered mountain which rises like a cone directly behind the palace, frequently find their way into the streets and squares, and whet their tusks against the pillars of the porticos.

"Ride on because of the word of righteousness." After a stay of twenty-four hours at La Granja, we proceeded to Segovia. The day had arrived on which I had appointed to meet Lopez. I repaired to the aqueduct, and sat down beneath the hundred and seventh arch<sup>12</sup>, where I waited the greater part of the day, but he came not, whereupon I rose and went into the city.

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<sup>11</sup> The palace of La Granja de San Ildefonso was the spot where, two years previously, Queen Regent Maria Cristina had been taken hostage, together with her daughters, her secret husband and most of the court, by the Royal Body Guard, as related in chapter 14 above. It was understandably no longer a favourite summer resort of the Royal Family. Borrow writes in his letter to Brandram of 1 September 1838 [Darlow, 354]: 'I did not attempt to distribute the Word at La Granja, being well aware that orders had been transmitted to the authorities of the place to seize all copies of the sacred writings which might be offered for sale.'

<sup>12</sup> Which arch this was exactly – and how Borrow knew it was the 107<sup>th</sup> - remains to be discovered. There are, in all, 119 arches to the aqueduct (75 single, and 44 double ones). Counting back from the walls of the old city, one ends up one arch beyond the pillar that nowadays carries the little niche with the statue of Virgin and Child, beneath which the old Roman road used to pass.



*44.2 The Segovia aqueduct*

At Segovia I tarried two days in the house of a friend, still I could hear nothing of Lopez. At last, by the greatest chance in the world, I heard from a peasant that there were men in the neighbourhood of Abades selling books.

Abades is about three leagues distant from Segovia, and upon receiving this intelligence, I instantly departed for the former place, with three donkeys laden with Testaments<sup>13</sup>. I reached Abades at nightfall, and found Lopez, with two peasants whom he had engaged, in the house of the surgeon of the place, where I also took up my residence. He had already disposed of a considerable number of Testaments in the neighbourhood, and had that day commenced selling at Abades itself; he had, however, been interrupted by two of the three curas of the village, who, with horrid curses denounced the work, threatening eternal condemnation to Lopez for selling it, and to any person who should purchase it; whereupon Lopez, terrified, forbore until I should arrive. The third cura, however, exerted himself to the utmost to persuade the people to provide themselves with Testaments, telling them that his brethren were hypocrites and false guides, who, by keeping them in ignorance of the word and will of Christ, were leading them to the abyss. Upon receiving this information, I instantly sallied forth to the market-place, and that same night succeeded in disposing of upwards of thirty Testaments. The next morning the house was entered by the two factious curas, but upon my rising to confront them, they retreated, and I heard no more of them, except that they publicly cursed me in the church more than once, an event which, as no ill resulted from it, gave me little concern.

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<sup>13</sup> 200 copies according to his letter to Brandram of 1 September 1838 [Darlow, 354].

I will not detail the events of the next week; suffice it to say that arranging my forces in the most advantageous way, I succeeded, by God's assistance, in disposing of from five to six hundred Testaments amongst the villages from one to seven leagues' distance from Abades. At the expiration of that period I received information that my proceedings were known in Segovia, in which province Abades is situated, and that an order was about to be sent to the alcalde to seize all books in my possession. Whereupon, notwithstanding that it was late in the evening, I decamped with all my people, and upwards of three hundred Testaments, having a few hours previously received a fresh supply from Madrid. That night we passed in the fields, and next morning proceeded to Labajos, a village on the high road from Madrid to Valladolid. In this place we offered no books for sale, but contented ourselves with supplying the neighbouring villages with the word of God: we likewise sold it in the highways.

We had not been at Labajos a week, during which time we were remarkably successful, when the Carlist chieftain, Balmaseda, at the head of his cavalry, made his desperate inroad into the southern part of Old Castile, dashing down like an avalanche from the pine-woods of Soria.<sup>14</sup> I was present at all the horrors which ensued, - the sack of Arrevalo, and the forcible entry into Martin Muñoz<sup>15</sup>. Amidst these terrible scenes we continued our labours<sup>16</sup>. Suddenly I lost Lopez for three days, and suffered dreadful anxiety on his account, imagining that he had been shot by the Carlists; at last I heard that he was in prison at Villallos, three leagues distant. The steps which I took to rescue him will be found detailed in a communication, which I deemed it my duty to transmit to Lord William Hervey, who, in the absence of Sir George Villiers, now became Earl of Clarendon, fulfilled the duties of minister at Madrid:-<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The Balmaseda expedition, yet one more Carlist attempt to carry the civil war to the rest of the country, left the Basque country shortly before 1 July with little more than 500 men, crossed the Duero and marched into the area below Soria and Burgos [Román Oyarzun, *Historia del Carlismo*, 128f; *Eco del Comercio* of 6 July 1838]. Burke [footnote to 619] qualified Balmaseda as 'a particular scoundrel. His massacre of prisoners, November 9, 1838, was remarkable for its atrocity, when massacre was of daily occurrence.' A professional soldier ever since the days of Ferdinand VII, Juan Manuel Martín de Balmaseda (1798 – 1846) was certainly the toughest of the Carlist commanders. Hughes [*Overland*, vol. 1, chapter 21, 284] thought he might have won the civil war for Don Carlos if he had only been given Cabrera's 30,000 men.

<sup>15</sup> In his letter to Brandram of 1 September 1838 [Darlow 356] Borrow adds: 'and San Cyrian'; while in his '*Account of the Proceedings*' of October 1838 [Darlow, 371] he says that 'it was not the war of men, or even of cannibals, which I witnessed; it seemed a contest of fiends from the infernal pit.' The *Eco del Comercio* of 28 August 1838, p. 3, stated that Balmaseda moved away from Martin Muñoz in an unknown direction on the 19<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>16</sup> In his letter to Brandram of 1 September 1838, this sentence runs differently, and reveals rather more of Antonio Buchino's character: 'Amidst these terrible scenes, we continued our labours undaunted, with the exception of my servant, who seized with uncontrollable fear ran away to Madrid' [Darlow, 356]. Remarkably, Borrow forgave the fierce Greek this cowardice and hired him again on his return to Spain at the end of the year (see chapter 45 below).

<sup>17</sup> The original of this letter (or Borrow's personal copy) somehow fell into the hands of William Knapp, Borrow's first biographer, who observes that it was 'written with the faded ink of some rustic *venta*' [Knapp, I : 299].

LABAJOS, PROVINCE OF SEGOVIA, AUGUST 23, 1838.

MY LORD, - I beg leave to call your attention to the following facts. On the 21st inst. I received information that a person in my employ, of the name of Juan Lopez, had been thrown into the prison of Villallos, in the province of Avila, by order of the cura of that place. The crime with which he was charged was selling the New Testament. I was at that time at Labajos, in the province of Segovia, and the division of the factious chieftain Balmaseda was in the immediate neighbourhood. On the 22nd, I mounted my horse and rode to Villallos, a distance of three leagues. On my arrival there, I found that Lopez had been removed from the prison to a private house. An order had arrived from the corregidor of Avila, commanding that the person of Lopez should be set at liberty, and that the books which had been found in his possession should be alone detained. Nevertheless, in direct opposition to this order, (a copy of which I herewith transmit,) the alcalde of Villallos, at the instigation of the cura, refused to permit the said Lopez to quit the place, either to proceed to Avila or in any other direction. It had been hinted to Lopez that as the factious were expected, it was intended on their arrival to denounce him to them as a liberal, and to cause him to be sacrificed. Taking these circumstances into consideration, I deemed it my duty as a Christian and a gentleman, to rescue my unfortunate servant from such lawless hands, and in consequence, defying opposition, I bore him off, though entirely unarmed, through a crowd of at least one hundred peasants. On leaving the place I shouted, "VIVA ISABEL SEGUNDA."

As it is my belief that the cura of Villallos is a person capable of any infamy, I beg leave humbly to intreat your Lordship to cause a copy of the above narration to be forwarded to the Spanish government. - I have the honour to remain, My Lord, Your Lordship's most obedient,

GEORGE BORROW.

To the Right Honourable LORD WILLIAM HERVEY.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Seven decades later, old Eduardo Lopez, the son of Juan Lopez and Maria Diaz, remembered the same episode in a slightly confused, but more piquant way. As A.G. Jayne reported in his article 'In the Footsteps of George Borrow' [*The Bible in the World: A monthly record of the British and Foreign Bible Society*, July 1908, 201-5]:

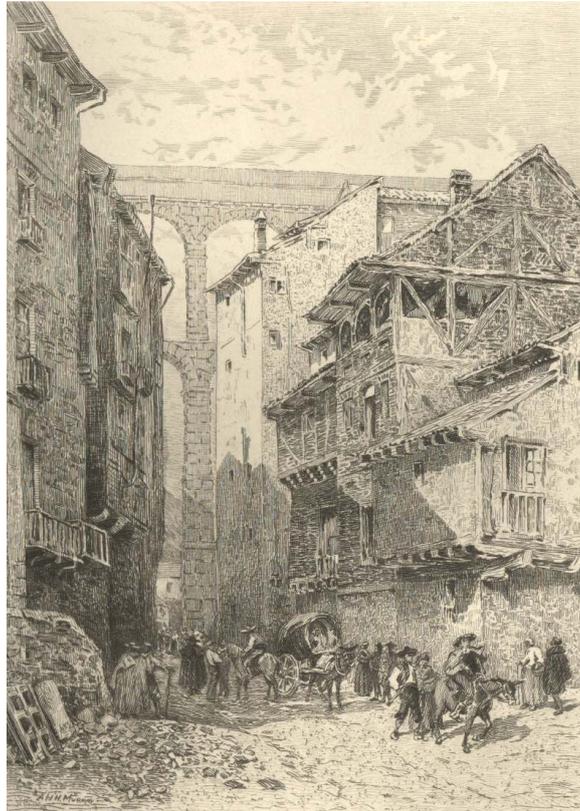
'In the course of his journeys [Juan Lopez] visited a town in Castille called San Cibrian, or Adanero, or Abajos, he could not remember which, where he was put in prison for the crime of selling Protestant Bibles. While there he was greatly frightened by the report that La Perdiz, the ringleader of a Carlist band which infested that region, was coming to the town to shoot him. He wrote accordingly to Borrow in Madrid, and the latter set off at once to the rescue. On arriving at the town he went into the plaza and called out in a loud voice. "Where is that *puñetero* priest? Where is that *puñetero* Alcalde? They must release at once my man whom they have put in prison!" We may explain that *puñetero* is a strong word of offensive meaning, which, although not indecent, would not be used in polite society; it has no determined sense. His shouts had the desired effect, for the colporteur was set at liberty without any loss of time.'

*Abajos* is obviously Labajos, Borrow's base. San Cibrian is less than 15 km north of both Labajos and Velayos, where the arrest took place. Adanero is 10 km north of that village again. All this shows that Eduardo Lopez's memory was not as bad as all that; something which is also borne out by the mention of 'La Perdiz', i.e. the Carlist guerrillero leader Blas Garcia who was very active in the Avila region in the summer of 1838 [*Eco del Comercio* of 6 July 1838 and beyond]. The only thing wrong with all this is that Juan Lopez wrote Borrow in Madrid. In reality Borrow was at Labajos and received Juan Lopez's letter there. There may have been a confusion with the very similar story of the arrest of Vitoriano Lopez at Fuente la Hijera, told in chapter 46 below.

The most fascinating aspect of all is of course the notion that Borrow would have ridden into hostile Velayos shouting 'where is that *puñetero* priest?' One cannot say precisely what the

[From: letter to Brandram of 1 September 1838 from Madrid, in: Darlow, 356]

After the rescue of Lopez, I thought it advisable to return to Madrid, more especially as my stock of Testaments was exhausted, we having in the course of little more than a fortnight disposed of nearly nine hundred Testaments<sup>19</sup> - not in populous and wealthy towns but in highways and villages, not to the spurious Spaniards of Madrid and the coasts, but to the sun-blackened peasantry of Old Castile, the genuine descendants of those terrible men who subjugated Mexico and Peru. My men returned by Pena Cerrada, whilst I, encumbered by two horses, crossed the Guadarama. I nearly perished there, having lost my way in the darkness and tumbled down a precipice.



44.3 Segovia in Borrow's day

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strength of '*puñetero*' was in 1838, but nowadays the word is an adjective expressing very strong hostility, holding a fair middle between *Blasted* and *Fucking*. To picture Borrow doing so does not sit well with his own upright and heroic description of the episode. Yet such vocabulary is in rather eerie accord with other occasions where he showed a vile temper and a foul mouth (compare what the police officer whom he threw out of his quarters in April 1838 said about insults in his official report, in footnote 7 to chapter 29, and his fits of madness in the Seville jail in November 1839, in Appendix 1 below).

<sup>19</sup> Later on, the correct tally of Testaments sold north of the Guadarrama turned out to be 884 copies, a sixth of the whole edition, and a most impressive result [Missler, *Daring Game*, 90]

**[Chapter 44 continued]**

After the rescue of Lopez we proceeded in the work of distribution. Suddenly, however, the symptoms of an approaching illness came over me, which compelled us to return in all haste to Madrid. Arrived there, I was attacked by a fever which confined me to my bed for several weeks; occasional fits of delirium came over me, during one of which, I imagined myself in the market-place of Martin Munos, engaged in deadly struggle with the chieftain Balmaseda.

The fever had scarcely departed, when a profound melancholy took possession of me, which entirely disqualified me for active exertion. Change of scene and air was recommended; I therefore returned to England.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Borrow returned to Madrid on 29 August 1838 [Darlow, 352]. There he found a letter from Brandram positively ordering him home to England for consultation. He could no longer refuse to present himself; nor did he need to, having performed a most successful, last minute selling campaign he could show to his employers with pride and confidence. On 1 September, he still wrote a long report to Brandram about his journey to Segovia, expressing his intention to be back in England in three weeks time [Darlow, 353-356]. But a few days later he was dreadfully ill, and in spite of the good offices of a certain Doctor Hacayo, who had studied in England, the illness confined him to his bed for ten days [Darlow, 357]. Only by 19 September was he able to start making preparation for his return to England. Shortly after 21 September he finally set out by the overland route through France ('the only road open'), travelling by Alcala de Henares, Saragossa, Oléron, Bordeaux and Paris, where he tarried a couple of weeks [Knapp, I : 300; for the route and duration see Ford, *HB* 1449, and Widdrington, *Sketches*, vol. 1, 108]. He reached England on 23 October [Missler, *Daring Game*, 178; the dates come from the ledger 'Foreign Account Current n° 5' in the Bible Society archive].