

## CHAPTER 49

**The Solitary House - The Dehesa - Johannes Chrysostom - Manuel - Bookselling at Seville - Dionysius and the Priests - Athens and Rome - Proselytism - Seizure of Testaments - Departure from Seville.**



49.1 *The Golden Tower in Seville*

I have already stated, that I had hired an empty house in Seville, wherein I proposed to reside for some months. It stood in a solitary situation, occupying one side of a small square. It was built quite in the beautiful taste of Andalusia, with a court paved with small slabs of white and blue marble. In the middle of this court was a fountain well supplied with the crystal lymph, the murmur of which, as it fell from its slender pillar into an octangular basin, might be heard in every apartment. The house itself was large and spacious, consisting of two stories, and containing room sufficient for at least ten times the number of inmates which now occupied it.<sup>1</sup> I generally kept during the day in the lower apartments, on account of the refreshing coolness which pervaded them.<sup>2</sup> In

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<sup>1</sup> ‘*Number of inmates*’ is a marvellously nondescript term for a delicate situation, as Borrow was not living in the Pila Seca house just with Antonio Buchino, but also with Mrs. Mary Clarke, his future wife, and her 20-year old daughter Henrietta. Mrs. Clarke, the widow of a naval officer, was an old friend from the early 1830s, who had been instrumental in getting Borrow his position with the Bible Society. She had recently run into trouble over a complicated inheritance, and was advised by her solicitors to make herself temporarily scarce so as to escape legal harassment [Jenkins 300f; Knapp, I : 314ff]. For this reason, and conceivably for amorous motives, she decided to join Borrow in Seville, arriving on 17 June 1839. Their *ménage a trois*, with Mary Clarke’s young daughter thrown into the bargain, was naturally a touchy affair in Victorian times. So much so, that long before Borrow ever proposed marriage, he passed the two women off to the neighbourhood as his wife and daughter. The Marques de Santa Coloma, for one, when visiting his old friend in the following winter, was clearly made to understand so much [Webster, 151].

<sup>2</sup> It was customary in Seville to occupy the lower part of the house, around the canvas-covered patio, in summer time (i.e. from the summer solstice to Michaelmass), and the warmer upper parts in winter [Cook, *Sketches*, vol. 1, 129f].

one of these was an immense stone water-trough, ever overflowing with water from the fountain, in which I immersed myself every morning.<sup>3</sup> Such were the premises to which, after having provided myself with a few indispensable articles of furniture, I now retreated with Antonio and my two horses.

I was fortunate in the possession of these quadrupeds, inasmuch as it afforded me an opportunity of enjoying to a greater extent the beauties of the surrounding country. I know of few things in this life more delicious than a ride in the spring or summer season in the neighbourhood of Seville. My favourite one was in the direction of Xerez, over the wide Dehesa, as it is called, which extends from Seville to the gates of the former town, a distance of nearly fifty miles, with scarcely a town or village intervening. The ground is irregular and broken, and is for the most part covered with that species of brushwood called carrasco, amongst which winds a bridle-path, by no means well defined, chiefly trodden by the arrieros, with their long train of mules and borricos.<sup>4</sup> It is here that the balmy air of beautiful Andalusia is to be inhaled in full perfection. Aromatic herbs and flowers are growing in abundance, diffusing their perfume around. Here dark and gloomy cares are dispelled as if by magic from the bosom, as the eyes wander over the prospect, lighted by unequalled sunshine, in which gaily-painted butterflies wanton, and green and golden Salamanquesas<sup>5</sup> lie extended, enjoying the luxurious warmth, and occasionally startling the traveller, by springing up and making off with portentous speed to the nearest coverts, whence they stare upon him with their sharp and lustrous eyes. I repeat, that it is impossible to continue melancholy in regions like these, and the ancient Greeks and Romans were right in making them the site of their Elysian fields. Most beautiful they are even in their present desolation, for the hand of man has not cultivated them since the fatal era of the expulsion of the Moors, which drained Andalusia of at least two thirds of its population.

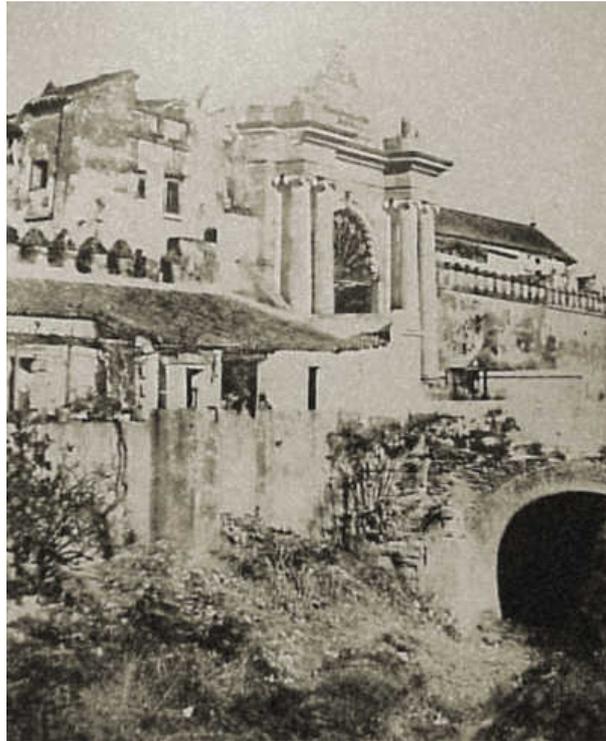
Every evening it was my custom to ride along the Dehesa, until the topmost towers of Seville were no longer in sight. I then turned about, and pressing my knees against the sides of Sidi Habismilk, my Arabian, the fleet creature, to whom spur or lash had never been applied, would set off in the direction of the town with the speed of a whirlwind, seeming in his headlong course to devour the ground of the waste, until he had left it behind, then dashing through the elm-covered road of the Delicias, his thundering hoofs were soon heard beneath the vaulted archway of the Puerta de Xerez, and in another moment he would stand stone still before the door of my solitary house in the little silent square of the Pila Seca.

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<sup>3</sup> In 2006, David Fernández, a young author on a Borrovian tour, tried to discover if such a trough had possibly survived in the new house built on the spot. His spokesman, the owner of a nearby bookshop, remembered something of the kind; but the house had recently been sold and renovated again, and the present owners proved uncooperative. [Fernandez de Castro, 235f.]

<sup>4</sup> Borrow exaggerates the wildness of this area a little for effect. Arthur Capell Brooke [vol. 1, 64] notes that the first fifteen miles of the banks of the Guadalquivir south of Seville were covered with orange- and olive trees.

<sup>5</sup> Burke [Glossary]: a salamander or star-lizard.



49.2 The Puerta de Geres

It is eight o'clock at night, I am returned from the Dehesa, and am standing on the *sotea*, or flat roof of my house, enjoying the cool breeze. Johannes Chrysostom has just arrived from his labour.<sup>6</sup> I have not spoken to him, but I hear him below in the courtyard, detailing to Antonio the progress he has made in the last two days. He speaks barbarous Greek, plentifully interlarded with Spanish words; but I gather from his discourse, that he has already sold twelve Testaments among his fellow labourers. I hear copper coin falling on the pavement, and Antonio, who is not of a very Christian temper, reproving him for not having brought the proceeds of the sale in silver. He now asks for fifteen more, as he says the demand is becoming great, and that he shall have no difficulty in disposing of them in the course of the morrow, whilst pursuing his occupations. Antonio goes to fetch them, and he now stands alone by the marble fountain, singing a wild song, which I believe to be a hymn of his beloved Greek church. Behold one of the helpers which the Lord has sent me in my Gospel labours on the shores of the Guadalquivir.

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<sup>6</sup> If the letter from which this comes may be believed, this scene took place on 28 June 1839. Note the sudden, and uncommon, change to the present tense here. See footnote 15 to chapter 43 above for similar 'real time' events.

I lived in the greatest retirement during the whole time that I passed at Seville<sup>7</sup>, spending the greater part of each day in study, or in that half-dreamy state of inactivity which is the natural effect of the influence of a warm climate. There was little in the character of the people around to induce me to enter much into society. The higher class of the Andalusians are probably upon the whole the most vain and foolish of human beings, with a taste for nothing but sensual amusements, foppery in dress, and ribald discourse. Their insolence is only equalled by their meanness, and their prodigality by their avarice. The lower classes are a shade or two better than their superiors in station: little, it is true, can be said for the tone of their morality; they are overreaching, quarrelsome, and revengeful, but they are upon the whole more courteous, and certainly not more ignorant.

The Andalusians are in general held in the lowest estimation by the rest of the Spaniards, even those in opulent circumstances finding some difficulty at Madrid in procuring admission into respectable society, where, if they find their way, they are invariably the objects of ridicule, from the absurd airs and grimaces in which they indulge, - their tendency to boasting and exaggeration, their curious accent, and the incorrect manner in which they speak and pronounce the Castilian language.

In a word, the Andalusians, in all estimable traits of character, are as far below the other Spaniards as the country which they inhabit is superior in beauty and fertility to the other provinces of Spain.



49.3 An Andalusian 'Majo'

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<sup>7</sup> Grown wise from experience, Borrow kept a low profile and lived in relative seclusion in his *Pila Seca* house, so as not to attract the nosy attentions of the authorities. This gets perfectly illustrated by an anecdote of the Marques de Santa Coloma, who went to visit him there sometime in late 1839 or early 1840. The Marques 'had great difficulty in finding him out; though he was aware of the street in which [Borrow] resided, no one knew him by name. At last, by dint of inquiry and description, someone exclaimed, "Oh! You mean *el Brujo!*" (the wizard) and he was directed to the house. He was admitted with great caution and conducted through a lot of passages and stairs, till at last he was ushered into a handsomely furnished apartment in the "mirador", where Borrow was living with his wife and daughter' [Webster, 151]. Since the family resided in the upper part of the house at the time, it probably occurred in winter (see footnote 2 above).

Yet let it not for a moment be supposed that I have any intention of asserting, that excellent and estimable individuals are not to be found amongst the Andalusians; it was amongst THEM that I myself discovered one, whom I have no hesitation in asserting to be the most extraordinary character that has ever come within my sphere of knowledge; but this was no scion of a noble or knightly house, "no wearer of soft clothing," no sleek highly-perfumed personage, none of the romantics who walk in languishing attitudes about the streets of Seville, with long black hair hanging upon their shoulders in luxuriant curls; but one of those whom the proud and unfeeling style the dregs of the populace, a haggard, houseless, penniless man, in rags and tatters: I allude to Manuel, the - what shall I call him? - seller of lottery tickets, driver of death carts, or poet laureate in Gypsy songs? <sup>8</sup>

[From: *The Zincali*, part 3, chapter 2]

Whilst at Seville, chance made us acquainted with a highly extraordinary individual, a tall, bony, meagre figure, in a tattered Andalusian hat, ragged capote, and still more ragged pantaloons, and seemingly between forty and fifty years of age. The only appellation to which he answered was Manuel. His occupation, at the time we knew him, was selling tickets for the lottery, by which he obtained a miserable livelihood in Seville and the neighbouring villages. His appearance was altogether wild and uncouth, and there was an insane expression in his eye. Observing us one day in conversation with a Gitana, he addressed us, and we soon found that the sound of the Gitano language had struck a chord which vibrated through the depths of his soul. His history was remarkable; in his early youth a manuscript copy of the compilation of Luis Lobo<sup>9</sup> had fallen into his hands. This book had so taken hold of his imagination, that he studied it night and day until he had planted it in his memory from beginning to end; but in so doing, his brain, like that of the hero of Cervantes<sup>10</sup>, had become dry

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<sup>8</sup> Next to the sale of vernacular Scripture, Borrow's main occupation in Seville was the collection of Caló vocabulary and texts for his book on Spanish Gypsies that would be published as *The Zincali* in 1841. To this purpose he mobilized a small battalion of friends and acquaintances: from academics like Usoz, Pascual de Gayangos and Serafin Esteban Calderon, to the owner of the Posada de la Reina, Francisco José de Silva, and the tour guide Antonio Bailly (see footnote 35 to chapter 48 above). Manuel the lottery ticket salesman was one of his most prolific sources of Caló songs, rhymes, and sayings, but unfortunately much of this material rooted in the pseudo-Gypsy lore and artificial poetry current among the 'aficion' or 'masters of Caló', i.e. upper class, non-Gypsy romantics who affected a *gitano* lifestyle. Borrow, whose scholarship belonged rather to the 18<sup>th</sup> than the 19<sup>th</sup> century, was never sufficiently critical in the modern philological sense. Consequently this dubious material often 'contaminated' the true Caló specimens in *The Zincali*. [Fraser, *Unsung*, 35].

<sup>9</sup> What compilation this may have been still waits to be explained. Borrow himself did not know, and cared little. He wrote in *The Zincali*, part 3, chapter 2: 'Many of their compositions, which are both in poetry and prose, exist in manuscript in a compilation made by one Luis Lobo. It has never been our fortune to see this compilation, which, indeed, we scarcely regret, as a rather curious circumstance has afforded us a perfect knowledge of its contents.' The circumstance was Manuel's fine memory.

<sup>10</sup> Don Quijote, who reached this feverishly state by obsessive reading of the books of fake chivalry popular in his day.

and heated, so that he was unfitted for any serious or useful occupation. After the death of his parents he wandered about the streets in great distress, until at last he fell into the hands of certain toreros, or bull-fighters, who kept him about them, in order that he might repeat to them the songs of the AFICION. They subsequently carried him to Madrid, where, however, they soon deserted him after he had experienced much brutality from their hands. He returned to Seville, and soon became the inmate of a madhouse, where he continued several years. Having partially recovered from his malady, he was liberated, and wandered about as before. During the cholera at Seville<sup>11</sup>, when nearly twenty thousand human beings perished, he was appointed conductor of one of the death-carts, which went through the streets for the purpose of picking up the dead bodies. His perfect inoffensiveness eventually procured him friends, and he obtained the situation of vendor of lottery tickets<sup>12</sup>. He frequently visited us, and would then recite long passages from the work of Lobo. He was wont to say that he was the only one in Seville, at the present day, acquainted with the language of the Aficion; for though there were many pretenders, their knowledge was confined to a few words.

#### [Chapter 49 continued]

I wonder whether thou art still living, my friend Manuel; thou gentleman of Nature's forming - honest, pure-minded, humble, yet dignified being! Art thou still wandering through the courts of beautiful Safacoro, or on the banks of the Len Baro<sup>13</sup>, thine eyes fixed in vacancy, and thy mind striving to recall some half-forgotten couplet of Luis Lobo; or art thou gone to thy long rest, out beyond the Xeres gate within the wall of the Campo Santo, to which in times of pest and sickness thou wast wont to carry so many, Gypsy and Gentile, in thy cart of the tinkling bell? Oft in the REUNIONS of the lettered and learned in this land of universal literature, when weary of the display of pedantry and egotism, have I recurred with yearning to our Gypsy recitations at the old house in the Pila Seca. Oft, when sickened by the high-wrought professions of those who bear the cross in gilded chariots, have I thought on thee, thy calm faith, without pretence, - thy patience in poverty, and fortitude in affliction; and as oft, when thinking of my speedily approaching end, have I wished that I might meet thee once again, and that thy hands might help to bear me to "the dead man's acre" yonder on the sunny plain, O Manuel!

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<sup>11</sup> The *Cólera Morbo* was the Spanish Flu of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Begun in India in 1817, it first entered Spain in January 1833 at Vigo, and ravaged Seville in the latter half of the same year. Of the 96,000 inhabitants of the city, 24,000 caught the disease, and more than 6,000 died.

<sup>12</sup> A much sought-after position in the state monopoly. Spaniards have always been addicted to the lottery. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the exclusive right of ticket sale was granted to the blind, in lieu of social benefits paid by the state. The resultant company, called ONCE, is today one of Spain's richest and most successful businesses.

<sup>13</sup> In Caló, *Safacoro* is Seville and the *Len Baro* is the 'Great River', a direct translation from the Arabic 'Wadi-al-Kebir', which gives the Spanish 'Guadalquivir'.

My principal visitor was Dionysius, who seldom failed to make his appearance every forenoon: the poor fellow came for sympathy and conversation. It is difficult to imagine a situation more forlorn and isolated than that of this man, - a Greek at Seville, with scarcely a single acquaintance, and depending for subsistence on the miserable pittance to be derived from selling a few books, for the most part hawked about from door to door. "What could have first induced you to commence bookselling in Seville?" said I to him, as he arrived one sultry day, heated and fatigued, with a small bundle of books secured together by a leather strap.

DIONYSIUS - For want of a better employment, Kyrie<sup>14</sup>, I have adopted this most unprofitable and despised one. Oft have I regretted not having been bred up as a shoemaker, or having learnt in my youth some other useful handicraft, for gladly would I follow it now. Such, at least, would procure me the respect of my fellow-creatures inasmuch as they needed me; but now all avoid me and look upon me with contempt; for what have I to offer in this place that any one cares about? Books in Seville! where no one reads, or at least nothing but new romances, translated from the French, and obscenity. Books! Would I were a Gypsy and could trim donkeys, for then I were at least independent and were more respected than I am at present.

MYSELF - Of what kind of books does your stock in trade consist?

DIONYSIUS - Of those not likely to suit the Seville market, Kyrie; books of sterling and intrinsic value; many of them in ancient Greek, which I picked up upon the dissolution of the convents, when the contents of the libraries were hurled into the courtyards, and there sold by the arrobe. I thought at first that I was about to make a fortune, and in fact my books would be so in any other place; but here I have offered an Elzevir for half a dollar in vain<sup>15</sup>. I should starve were it not for the strangers who occasionally purchase of me.

MYSELF. - Seville is a large cathedral city, abounding with priests and canons; surely one of these occasionally visit you to make purchases of classic works, and books connected with ecclesiastical literature.

DIONYSIUS. - If you think so, Kyrie, you know little respecting the ecclesiastics of Seville. I am acquainted with many of them, and can assure you that a tribe of beings can scarcely be found with a more confirmed aversion to intellectual pursuits of every kind. Their reading is confined to newspapers, which they take up in the hope of seeing that their friend Don Carlos is at length reinstated at Madrid; but they prefer their chocolate and biscuits, and nap before dinner, to the wisdom of Plato and the eloquence of Tully. They occasionally visit me, but it is only to pass away a heavy hour in chattering nonsense. Once on a time, three of them came, in the hope of making me a convert to their Latin superstition. "Signior Donatio," said they, (for so they called me,)

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<sup>14</sup> 'My Lord' in Greek.

<sup>15</sup> Books printed by the Leiden family of Elzevir, active between 1594 and 1680, whose fame rests mainly on the gorgeous, incomparable editions of classical authors, mainly published around the year 1635. Half a 'duro' would be 10 reales (about twice the daily wages of a worker), a laughable price for such a work of art.

"how is it that an unprejudiced person like yourself, a man really with some pretension to knowledge, can still cling to this absurd religion of yours? Surely, after having resided so many years in a civilised country like this of Spain, it is high time to abandon your half-pagan form of worship, and to enter the bosom of the church; now pray be advised, and you shall be none the worse for it." "Thank you, gentlemen," I replied, "for the interest you take in my welfare; I am always open to conviction; let us proceed to discuss the subject. What are the points of my religion which do not meet your approbation? You are of course well acquainted with all our dogmas and ceremonies." "We know nothing about your religion, Signior Donatio, save that it is a very absurd one, and therefore it is incumbent upon you, as an unprejudiced and well-informed man, to renounce it." "But, gentlemen, if you know nothing of my religion, why call it absurd? Surely it is not the part of unprejudiced people to disparage that of which they are ignorant." "But, Signior Donatio, it is not the Catholic Apostolic Roman religion, is it?" "It may be, gentlemen, for what you appear to know of it; for your information, however, I will tell you that it is not; it is the Greek Apostolic religion. I do not call it catholic, for it is absurd to call that catholic which is not universally acknowledged." "But, Signior Donatio, does not the matter speak for itself? What can a set of ignorant Greek barbarians know about religion? If they set aside the authority of Rome, whence should they derive any rational ideas of religion? whence should they get the gospel?" "The Gospel, gentlemen? Allow me to show you a book, here it is, what is your opinion of it?" "Signior Donatio, what does this mean? What characters of the devil are these, are they Moorish? Who is able to understand them?" "I suppose your worships, being Roman priests, know something of Latin; if you inspect the title-page to the bottom, you will find, in the language of your own church, the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' in the original Greek, of which your vulgate is merely a translation, and not a very correct one. With respect to the barbarism of Greece, it appears that you are not aware that Athens was a city, and a famed one, centuries before the first mud cabin of Rome was thatched, and the Gypsy vagabonds who first peopled it, had escaped from the hands of justice." "Signior Donatio, you are an ignorant heretic, and insolent withal, WHAT NONSENSE IS THIS! . . . ." But I will not weary your ears, Kyrie, with all the absurdities which the poor Latin PAPAS poured into mine; the burden of their song being invariably, WHAT NONSENSE IS THIS! which was certainly applicable enough to what they themselves were saying. Seeing, however, that I was more than their match in religious controversy, they fell foul of my country. "Spain is a better country than Greece," said one. "You never tasted bread before you came to Spain," cried another. "And little enough since," thought I. "You never before saw such a city as Seville," said the third. But then ensued the best part of the comedy: my visitors chanced to be natives of three different places; one was of Seville, another of Utrera, and the third of Miguel Turra, a miserable village in La Mancha. At the mention of Seville, the other two instantly began to sing the praises of their respective places of birth; this brought on comparisons, and a violent dispute was the consequence. Much abuse passed between them, whilst I stood by, shrugged my shoulders, and said TIPOTAS<sup>16</sup>. At last, as they were leaving the house, I said, "Who would have thought, gentlemen, that the polemics of the Greek and Latin churches were so closely connected with the comparative merits of Seville, Utrera, and Miguel Turra?"

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<sup>16</sup> [Author's note] Nothing at all. (Greek.)

MYSELF. - Is the spirit of proselytism very prevalent here? Of what description of people do their converts generally consist?

DIONYSIUS. - I will tell you, Kyrie: the generality of their converts consist of German or English Protestant adventurers, who come here to settle, and in course of time take to themselves wives from among the Spanish, prior to which it is necessary to become members of the Latin church. A few are vagabond Jews, from Gibraltar or Tangier, who have fled for their crimes into Spain, and who renounce their faith to escape from starvation. These gentry, however, it is necessary to pay, on which account the priests procure for them padrinos or godfathers; these generally consist of rich devotees over whom the priests have influence, and who esteem it a glory and a meritorious act to assist in bringing back lost souls to the church. The neophyte allows himself to be convinced on the promise of a peseta a day, which is generally paid by the godfathers for the first year, but seldom for a longer period. About forty years ago, however, they made a somewhat notable convert. A civil war arose in Morocco, caused by the separate pretensions of two brothers to the throne. One of these being worsted, fled over to Spain, imploring the protection of Charles the Fourth. He soon became an object of particular attention to the priests, who were not slow in converting him, and induced Charles to settle upon him a pension of a dollar per day. He died some few years since in Seville, a despised vagabond. He left behind him a son, who is at present a notary, and outwardly very devout, but a greater hypocrite and *picaron* does not exist. I would you could see his face, Kyrie, it is that of Judas Iscariot. I think you would say so, for you are a physiognomist. He lives next door to me, and notwithstanding his pretensions to religion, is permitted to remain in a state of great poverty.<sup>17</sup>

And now nothing farther for the present about Dionysius.

About the middle of July our work was concluded at Seville, and for the very efficient reason, that I had no more Testaments to sell; somewhat more than two hundred having been circulated since my arrival.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Who this father and son were remains to be discovered. The diplomat Pedro Ortiz Armengol, a well-informed amateur scholar, mentioned in a speech to a Madrid audience in 1993 that the author Cipriano Rivas Cherif (brother-in-law and biographer of Manuel Azaña) claimed to be a descendent of this refugee Moroccan. [*Proceedings of the 1993 George Borrow Conference*, Toronto 1994, 22]. Don Cipriano's parents were Matias Rivas and Susana Cherif, hence one imagines he was related to the mystery Moroccans on his mother's side.

<sup>18</sup> In his letter to Brandram of 18 July 1839, Borrow adds that 'a poor Genoese, the waiter at a Swiss ordinary [possibly *El Suizzo* in the Calle de la Sierpe, mentioned by Ford, *HB* 365] has just been with me requesting a dozen, which he says have been bespoken by people who frequent the house, but I have been obliged to send him away, it not being in my power to supply him' [Darlow, 424f] Hence, for the moment, Borrow's only chance to continue selling Testaments – and to remain in the employ of the Bible Society - was to pick up the confiscated lot sent down river to the San Lucar custom-house, export them from the land, and try to sell them elsewhere, in this case: Morocco.

About ten days before the time of which I am speaking, I was visited by various *alguazils*, accompanied by a kind of headborough<sup>19</sup>, who made a small seizure of Testaments and Gypsy Gospels, which happened to be lying about. This visit was far from being disagreeable to me, as I considered it to be a very satisfactory proof of the effect of our exertions in Seville. I cannot help here relating an anecdote - A day or two subsequent, having occasion to call at the house of the headborough respecting my passport,<sup>20</sup> I found him lying on his bed, for it was the hour of siesta, reading intently one of the Testaments which he had taken away, all of which, if he had obeyed his orders, would have been deposited in the office of the civil governor. So intently, indeed, was he engaged in reading, that he did not at first observe my entrance; when he did, however, he sprang up in great confusion, and locked the book up in his cabinet, whereupon I smiled, and told him to be under no alarm, as I was glad to see him so usefully employed. Recovering himself, he said that he had read the book nearly through, and that he had found no harm in it, but, on the contrary, everything to praise. Adding, he believed that the clergy must be possessed with devils (ENDEMONIADOS) to persecute it in the manner they did.

It was Sunday when the seizure was made<sup>21</sup>, and I happened to be reading the Liturgy. One of the *alguazils*, when going away, made an observation respecting the very different manner in which the Protestants and Catholics keep the Sabbath; the former being in their own houses reading good books, and the latter abroad in the bull-ring, seeing the wild bulls tear out the gory bowels of the poor horses.<sup>22</sup> The bull amphitheatre at Seville is the finest in all Spain, and is invariably on a Sunday (the only day on which it is open) filled with applauding multitudes.

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<sup>19</sup> The *Alcalde de Barrio* according to the letter to Brandram of 18 July 1839 which describes the scene [Darlow, 425]. Possibly this is the same man with whom he later got into a screaming fight, and who imprisoned him (see Appendix 1 at the end of this book).

<sup>20</sup> In Borrow's letter to Brandram from Seville of 18 July 1839, there is no mention of a passport. Borrow writes instead that he visited the headborough 'to complain of an act of dishonesty which had been committed by my porters' [Darlow, 425].

<sup>21</sup> Since, according to the letter to Brandram of that date, this event took place some ten days before 18 July 1839, it must have been Sunday, 7 July 1839.

<sup>22</sup> Nowadays the horses employed in the bullfight are protected from the bull's horns by thick matting. In Borrow's days, however, the horses – old animals at the end of their working life - were considered dispensable and the spectacle of the mount being gorged while the picador jammed his spear into the bull's neck was regarded as one of the additional enchantments of this edifying National Feast. It goes without saying that the horses, like the bulls today, did not suffer pain...

I now made preparations for leaving Seville for a few months, my destination being the coast of Barbary. Antonio, who did not wish to leave Spain, in which were his wife and children, returned to Madrid, rejoicing in a handsome gratuity with which I presented him.<sup>23</sup> As it was my intention to return to Seville, I left my house and horses in charge of a friend in whom I could confide<sup>24</sup>, and departed. The reasons which induced me to visit Barbary will be seen in the following chapters<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Antonio was 'let go' for many reasons, but one of the most pressing was that his presence in the *Pila Seca* house was disagreeable to Mrs Clarke and her daughter Henrietta. Hence the Greek was fired on 1 July 1839, only a fortnight after their arrival. In his letter to Browne of 21 September 1839, Borrow speaks plainer and says that 'my servant Antonio I was compelled to send back to Madrid ere my departure from Seville on account of his many irregularities' [Darlow, 442]. The 'handsome gratuity' consisted of 400 reales, on top of the 360 reales of his wages over June [Knapp, I : 318].

<sup>24</sup> I.e. Mrs. Clarke

<sup>25</sup> Borrow first described this project in his letter of 28 June 1839 to Brandram, writing: 'Within a few weeks I propose to cross the water to Ceuta and Tangiers with part of the books at present in embargo at San Lucar. I shall take the liberty of giving you a full and minute description of the state of those places, the first of which has, I believe, never been visited by any one bearing the Gospel' [Darlow 423]. Seeing that he had sought no permission to go there from his employers, who were to pick up the bill and essentially wanted him home as soon as he had disposed of his remaining stock of books, the choice of the phrase 'taking the liberty' was a good one. On July 15, two weeks before leaving, Borrow described his project thus to Hasfelt: 'In a few days I purpose with Gods leave to proceed to Tangiers in Fez; I shall probably remain there a month, and if I have an opportunity I will not fail to write to you from thence. I wish to study the character of the Moors in their own home, to make a small collection of their national songs, and above all to speak to them on the main subject. I have already known several of these singular people, especially one who resided in Madrid about two years since and who was my principle instructor in that dialect of the Arabic which is spoken in Barbary. From Tangiers I shall probably proceed to Ceuta a strong Spanish fortress on the Moorish coast opposite to Gibraltar' [Fraser, *Hasfeld*, 36f]. As far as we can tell, Borrow never visited Ceuta.