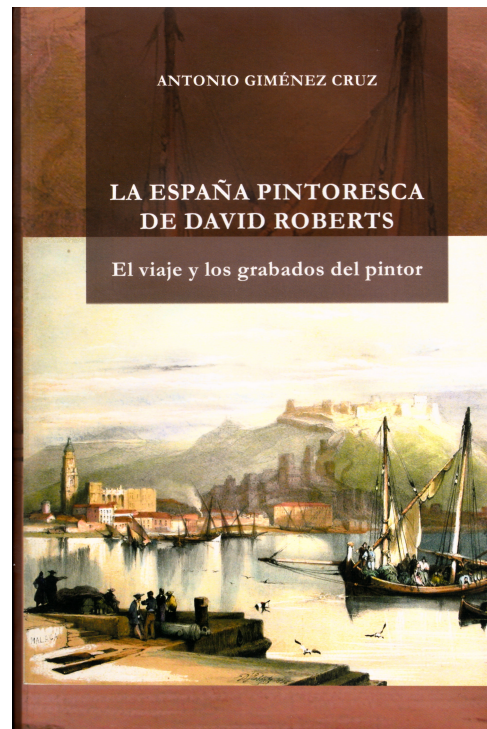
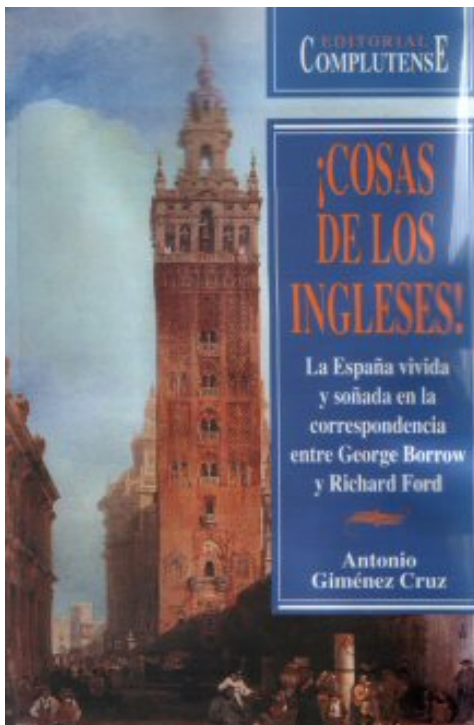


# *George Borrow and the Spanish Press*

By Antonio Giménez Cruz

[Antonio Giménez Cruz was born in Spain in 1936. He studied at the University of Madrid and received a PhD in Romance Languages from the Ohio State University. His teaching career took place mainly at Williams College, Massachusetts, where he taught until his retirement some years ago. His fields of interest are the historical prose of fifteenth century and nineteenth century Spanish travel literature. He is the author of several books and a great many articles in scholarly journals. Amongst these different publications deserve to be mentioned *¡Cosas de los ingleses!*, a study of the relationship and correspondence of George Borrow with Richard Ford, and *La España pintoresca de David Roberts*, a reconstruction of the Spanish travels of the famous Scottish painter.]

[The present text was first delivered as a speech during the George Borrow Conference at the George Borrow Hotel of Ponterwyd (Wales) on 24 June 1989. It was subsequently published in the *Proceedings of the 1989 George Borrow Conference*, ed. G. Fenwick, Toronto 1990, pp. 19 - 31. A Spanish version is available as: 'La prensa española de la época y George Borrow', separata de *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, tomo xxx, Madrid 1991, pp. 361 - 379.]



It is well known that George Borrow arrived in Madrid for the first time at the end of January 1836. His mission in the peninsula is also well known: 'to obtain permission from the government to print the New Testament in the Castilian language for circulation in Spain'.<sup>1</sup> However, these two simple goals stated so concisely, hide not only the magnitude of the task but also the infinite number of obstacles which our protagonist would confront in the four and a half years he was there. We know that about that time the Spaniards were in the midst of one of the bloodiest civil disputes in history, which had begun only three years before and would last until 1840. The so-called First Carlist War apparently began over a problem of royal succession. However this war, in its scope, embraced many of the other tensions and conflicts of nineteenth century Spain. Thus, we can understand that the end, the solution for this long and difficult war, could barely be glimpsed in this time of intense political, religious and social unrest.

In the first half of the century, and more specifically in these crucial years, the vestiges, the pillars of the Ancient Regime, were definitely crumbling and slowly giving way to a concept of society where the structures of power were being questioned. This new society aspired to better social relations, advocated economic justice and equality, and looked towards a more open political and religious atmosphere. These goals, however, would take many years to materialise, despite the sacrifices and ideals that were employed in the process. It was, more than anything, a time of struggles, of ups and downs, of small and often ephemeral accomplishments that historians would consider to be solid signs that a new epoch was on the way. Therefore, we should be careful not to deceive ourselves. In order to understand the successes and failures of George Borrow on the political level and, above all, on the religious level, which is what I am interested in, we must understand the moment he arrived in Spain: the conservative and reactionary forces still maintained their deeply-rooted power over society, and it was logical that they would not yield without presenting what would be a long, lasting fight

The present-day observer has many varied angles to focus in order to understand step by step all of the decisions and mishaps of Borrow's praiseworthy evangelical task. No one has, perhaps, such unity, vitality and freshness as that which encompasses his ample coverage in the press at that time. Today, those yellowed and stained editorials, letters, advertisements, debates and controversial articles from old magazines and newspapers, zealously retrieved from forgotten and out of the way libraries, come to life again in our hands. They begin to recuperate the same vitality and show once again the passion behind the problems and the anguish of the men who created them. Needless to say, all of these documents are, first, a thermometer of the degree of heat and intensity of the attacks which George Borrow had to suffer. Simultaneously, it is also a theatre - a stage upon which the protagonists in question acted. As a thermometer and as a theatre, I have studied all of these articles from the Spanish political and religious press. The latter is perhaps lesser known, without a doubt, for having been directed to a smaller readership or for not having been widely distributed.

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<sup>1</sup> George Borrow, *The Bible in Spain*, (London: John Murray, 1843), 3 volumes, chapter 12.

I will not deny that many of these testimonies are references from Borrow's correspondence, others we know of from his alluding to them, and still others had been forgotten and have come to light today with renewed force. At the same time we cannot limit ourselves exclusively to those texts where George Borrow is the protagonist. We also know that other fronts were creating controversy and that there were other actors whose conduct, also reflected in the press, fanned the flames of Borrow's actions.

Briefly, though, it is necessary to describe the process I followed in doing this research and, no less importantly, indicate the limitations. The periodicals of this time, while good, had not yet arrived at the proliferation and specialisation we know today. They had reached, however, a high degree of development. There were numerous daily, weekly, or monthly publications; their field of interest including the political, economical and commercial press coexisted alongside the religious or the artistic and the literary publications.<sup>2</sup> There were newspapers and magazines that were published for a long time, while others had a shorter lifespan. But what I am mainly concerned with are the documents that have survived, or in other words, the texts from this period to which the researcher has access today. All of this material is found dispersed over the wide peninsular geography in small and often inaccessible libraries, newspaper collections and municipal archives; something which, sometimes for lack of means or knowledge, or from laziness, does not make our task any easier. One could say, then, that documents which are unreachable today may not be so for the investigator of the future. There are also some losses which are now irreplaceable, like the fire in the Archives of Alcalá de Henares where, undoubtedly, there must have been many documents of great interest to those studying this specific field. Neither was it a custom at the time to sign articles, making the work of the investigator much more difficult. This is important when George Borrow writes to John Hasfeld telling him that he has introduced the works of Hyacinth and Crimsky to the Spanish public (Was it done in writing?) and he says:

*In your last letter you were inquiring whether I had been lately enlightening the world by any fresh publications, I beg leave to assure you that I have not, with the exception of some unimportant articles in periodicals and the translation of Saint Luke into Basque and Gypsy.<sup>3</sup>*

If he really wrote those 'unimportant articles', how can we confirm today that this or that unsigned text is or is not Borrow's? Finally, up to what point is the investigator guilty of omission or carelessness? It is, then, in this last case where we must assume all of the responsibility for our own limitations, and for that I offer my sincerest apologies beforehand.

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<sup>2</sup> Henry F. Schulte, *The Spanish Press 1470-1966: Print, Power and Politics* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1968), chapters VII and VIII.

<sup>3</sup> Angus M. Fraser (ed.), *Letters to John Hasfeld 1835-1839 by George Borrow* (Edinburgh: The Tragara Press, 1982), 32.

After his interview with Prime Minister Mendizábal in February of 1836, the result of which is well known to us<sup>4</sup>, Borrow writes to the Bible Society on 27 March:

*The Spanish press have taken up our affair, and I am at present engaged in attempting to lay the foundation of a Bible Society at Madrid, to accomplish which the editor of the influential newspaper, the Español, has promised me his assistance. There has already appeared in that journal a most brilliant article which gives the history of our Society, and states the advantages which would result to Spain from the establishment within its bosom of a society whose aim should be the propagation of the Scripture, in the Spanish language, amongst the population.*<sup>5</sup>

This article of *El Español* dated 18 March, titled ‘*Filosofía de la Historia. Sociedades Bíblicas*’, and cited by Borrow in his letter to London, is the first text which we can prove appeared in the Spanish press. We ignore the name of the author - it possibly came from the pen of Andrés Borrego (editor of *El Español*), or, much more likely, from that of Luis de Usoz y Río (a contributor to this publication) whom Borrow had already met in July 1836.<sup>6</sup> The apologetic and dignified tone used in the defence of the diffusion of the sacred scriptures without notes or commentaries by the Bible Society, makes me venture this supposition.

The first article must have had slight impact. After all, Borrow had limited himself to obtaining what he interpreted as a verbal promise for the printing of the New Testament from the Prime Minister, which, in my opinion, was extremely ambiguous. Meanwhile, he and the commissioner from the Bible Society in the Levant area, James N. Graydon, began to get the feel of the land in order to start the printing of the sacred scriptures for later distribution in the peninsula. Nothing had materialised yet. Everything was in the project phase, and still nothing tangible existed to raise a clamour from the Church or the conservative forces of the country. So he waited a few months. George Borrow then negotiated the printing of the New Testament in the Castilian language with Andrés Borrego, and left for England in order to inform the Bible Society. He returned to Madrid towards the end of 1836.

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<sup>4</sup> Transcription by George Borrow in *The Bible in Spain*, chapter 12, and in his letters to the Bible Society, *Letters of George Borrow to the British and Foreign Bible Society*, ed. T.H. Darlow (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1911), 146-148.

<sup>5</sup> *Letters to BFBS*, 149.

<sup>6</sup> On 25 July 1836 Borrow sent the Bible Society a letter from Usoz y Río in which he expressed his desire to collaborate with the Bible Society on their cause in Spain. *Letters to BFBS*, 172.

During 1837 and the first half of 1838 - that is, from the time Borrow returned to Madrid until the publication of the Royal Order dated 19 May 1838, which emphatically and explicitly prohibited all of the Bible Society's activity in Spain - Borrow's ideas and projects began to take shape. As a consequence, they are going to begin slowly to provoke all types of problems, conflicts and confrontations in the sphere which concerns me - the press.

Please allow me broadly to summarise some of the most important events in this large time period in order to refresh your memory.

Mr Villiers, the English ambassador in Madrid, had assured Borrow that the verbal permission obtained the previous year was still in effect, even though there had been two changes of government after the fall of Mendizábal.<sup>7</sup> With this assurance, Borrow began the happy job of printing the New Testament in Castilian in May 1837. Then he immediately undertook a vigorous distribution campaign in Madrid and the north-west of Spain. Upon his return in the autumn, he began the risky business of opening a Bible Society office in the centre of the capital and accomplished the printing of new versions of the New Testament in the Gypsy and Basque languages in March and April 1838. As a result of all these acts, the wave of opposition was overwhelming, and culminated in the famous and brief incarceration of George Borrow in the Court gaol in May 1838. Meanwhile, James N. Graydon had published editions of the Bible and the New Testament in Catalan and Castilian, and had distributed books for sale or donation along the coastal cities of the Mediterranean. He was doing this at practically the same time that Borrow landed in gaol. Graydon's actions sparked off the noisy episode known as 'lo ocurrido en Málaga' ('what occurred in Málaga'), which, in the end, would close the door to his future activities with a loud bang.

If the previously mentioned article in *El Español*, with its open, liberal, conciliatory tone, raised the hopes of our protagonist, the first thunderclap from the black clouds that were beginning to hang over him sounded in an article titled '¡Alerta, Católicos!' ('Watch out, Catholics!'), published on 27 June 1837. The words of this article had a definite bellicose tone, full of sharpness, opposed to compromise, and the message pointed ominously to the long and thorny road ahead. The article talked about the danger of heresy and discord within the Church; it invoked ancestral ideas of intolerance and the spirit of the crusades which were deeply rooted in the readers' souls - souls filled with firm, unquestioning faith. It was the language that would be used from now on in all the religious articles and publications that I will mention. Even so, '¡Alerta, Católicos!' was at this stage of the conflict a simple skirmish, a modest rambling.

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<sup>7</sup> *Letters to BFBS*, 196.

Although its effects would not be felt for several months, the article placed by James N. Graydon in the *Diario Mercantil* of Valencia on 30 June 1837 was perhaps the detonator of the whole press campaign that would be taking form from now on. It was logical that some of the ideas expressed by this agent of the Bible Society would not go by undetected: he announced the sale of the Bible 'to all classes at the lowest prices and free to labourers'; the edition was true to the original, that is to say 'without being altered by the opinions or decisions of men who were at *the worst* subject to error'; he made a violent attack on the Spanish Church, saying that 'now is the time to purge Christianity of superstition and fanaticism, so that all that remains is the moral supremacy of the *Gospel*'; and finally, it compared reading the Bible to the quest for freedom.<sup>8</sup> It all added up to an inappropriate message, full of aggression and targeted at one of the nation's most important institutions rooted in all layers of society. Both agents firmly believed then, as they sometimes wrote in their letters, that the Spanish Church was a giant with clay feet. Needless to say, viewing the immediate events, both were far from being right; therefore the reaction to this imprudent challenge had to be expected.



*The location of George Borrow's 'Despacho de la Sociedad Biblica y Extranjera'  
On the corner of Calle del Principe with Calle Manuel Fernandez y Gonzalez*

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<sup>8</sup> In a meeting in London on 4 December 1837, the General Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society resolved, 'that Mr Graydon be cautioned with respect to the language adopted by him in his public advertisements', referring to this advertisement in Valencia (*Letters to BFBS*, 270).

In an innocent way, perhaps without thinking too much about the effects of his actions, George Borrow placed himself in the wolf's mouth and became one of the main actors in this drama. Graydon's advertisement gave rise to the expected reaction from the clergy of Valencia on the pages of Madrid's newspaper, *El Español*. Then Borrow, who felt himself to be the object of the attack, impulsively took pen in hand and refuted all the ideas expressed in the article point by point with his customary vehemence. The letter from the clergy of Valencia is dated 5 November; Borrow's is from the 12 November. We can better comprehend what he did if we keep in mind the optimism that Borrow must have felt at this time: the versions of the New Testament in Gypsy and Basque were already in progress; he had printed the New Testament in Castilian without any trouble and had distributed this edition in north-western Spain with relative success during four or five months; and most importantly, perhaps, during this time, he opened the office of the Bible Society on Principe Street, in the centre of the capital. Borrow himself gives us an outline of the conflict in his correspondence:

*A violent and furious letter against the Bible Society and its proceedings has lately appeared in a public print; it is prefixed to a Pastoral of the Spiritual Governor [i.e. Bishop] of Valencia, in which he forbids the sale of the London Bible in that see. About a week since I inserted in the *Español* an answer to that letter, which answer has been read and praised. I send you herewith an English translation of it. You will doubtless deem it too warm and fiery, but tameness and gentleness are of little avail when surrounded by the vassal slaves of bloody Rome. It has answered one purpose - it has silenced our antagonist, who, it seems, is an unprincipled benefice-hunting curate.*<sup>9</sup>

To think that this letter 'has silenced our antagonist' showed Borrow's lack of correct judgement about the strength of his opponent. For their part, the higher officials of the Spanish Church did understand the danger of their adversaries' action and they began to close ranks. They started piling up obstacles that would block the way and eventually lead to the total paralysis of all Bible Society activity. Borrow's letter of 12 November has been reproduced in its entirety in his correspondence, but it is helpful to transcribe a few paragraphs to show the degree of animosity and verbal violence that Borrow used in this first episode of his long struggle:

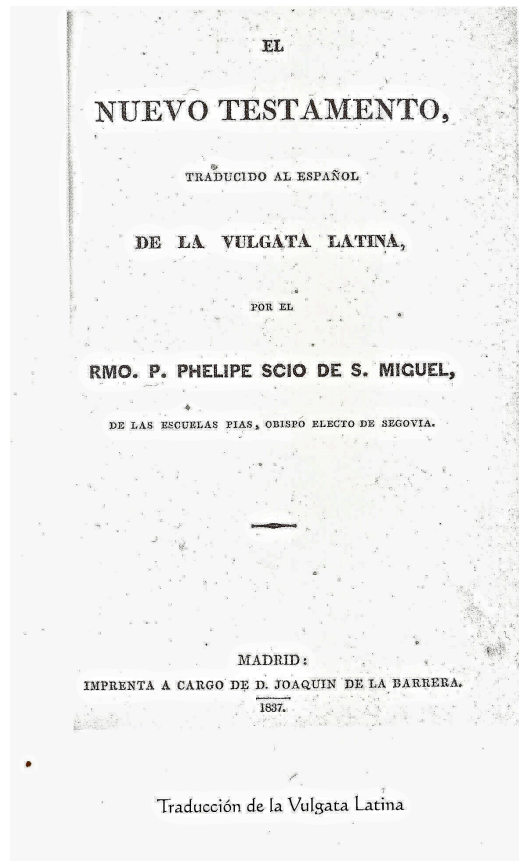
*What struck me most on the perusal of this singular epistle, all the main points of which I believe I have tolerably well answered, and without much trouble, was the ignorance more than childish, the extraordinary, unaccountable ignorance, which the author displays on the subject on which he has written, and all which relates to it, notwithstanding that subject is a religious one, and he, an ecclesiastic as he gives the world to know, standing forward as champion of the Church of Rome.*

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<sup>9</sup> *Letters to BFBS*, 263.

*The miserable attack which, in his rancorous feebleness, he has just committed on the Bible Society will redound merely to his own shame and ridicule, and the disgrace of the sect to which he belongs.*

*The heretics look for salvation to Christ and hope to be forgiven by lively faith in Him and by virtue of His blood-shedding. They trust not in Peter nor in Paul - both men are sinners - in Luther nor in Calvin - greater sinners still - but in Christ alone. They trust not in stick nor stone, in picture nor in image, in splinter of cross nor bone of saint, but in Christ alone - not in His mother or His brother - He Himself has said: 'those that do the will of my Father that is in heaven, they are my mother, they are my brethren.'<sup>10</sup>*



*Fly-leaf of George Borrow's 1837 'Scio New Testament'*

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<sup>10</sup> *Letters to BFBS*, 268-70.



George Borrow made no mention, however, of another article that appeared in *El Español* on 12 November. Its intelligent, reasonable arguments, devoid of the aggressiveness that characterised Borrow's and Graydon's writing, leads me to think, once again, that the author could have been Don Luis de Usóz y Río. In its logical way, slowly, without damaging the susceptibility of the clergy, it defends the rights of all Catholics to read the Bible without notes or commentaries. I have no doubt that this type of argument would have given Borrow much better results.

Encouraged perhaps by what he deemed a big success - remember he said his article 'has silenced our antagonist' - Borrow went to Toledo to distribute the New Testament. In Madrid too, he brought his campaign out into the broad daylight:

*To call the attention of the people to this establishment [the Bible Society shop], I printed three thousand advertisements on paper, yellow, blue, and crimson, with which I almost covered the sides of the streets, and besides this inserted notices in all the journals and periodicals, employing also a man after the London fashion to parade the streets with a placard, to the astonishment of the populace.<sup>11</sup>*

This period marks a crucial turn of events and at a time when events began to happen at a dizzying pace. Now, one can begin to see that the opposition that George Borrow had to face was sizeable, if not superior to his own actions. With a certain sadness one can begin to outline the change of direction and the darkness that was taking over. 'The priests and bigots', he says, 'are teeming with malice and.... I am fighting with wild beasts.'<sup>12</sup> References like this are constant from now on and I should not overwhelm my readers. The reality is that difficulties continued now without interruption: the sale of the New Testament was prohibited; Borrow had to take the name of the Bible Society off the front of the store; and he was forced to close it. However, Borrow was not yet fully aware of the great volatility of the situation. Neither was he capable of accurately assessing the situation when he reported a new incident to London:

*The Levitical party in Madrid have, in the meantime, spared no effort to vilify me. They have started a publication called 'The friend of the Christian religion,' in which has appeared a furious attack upon me, which I have however treated with the contempt it deserves. But not satisfied with this, they have endeavoured to incite the ignorant populace against me, by telling them that I am a sorcerer and a companion of Gypsies and witches, and I have been called so in the streets. That I am an associate of Gypsies and fortune-tellers I do not deny, and why should I be ashamed of their company when my Master mingled with publicans and thieves?<sup>13</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> *Letters to BFBS*, 274.

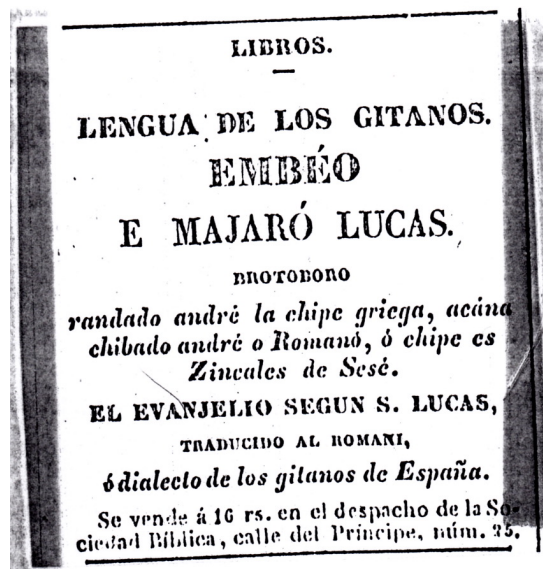
<sup>12</sup> *Letters to BFBS*, 275.

<sup>13</sup> *Letters to BFBS*, 280.



They are words that indirectly tried to make Borrow realise that his hands were tied, and that he must stop. However, this was not Borrow's interpretation. Unbelievably he went on to open the store again, print the New Testament in Gypsy and Basque and resume his activities with renewed energy. At this point we can begin to glimpse the end of this long odyssey.

These months of April, May and June 1838 are filled with decisive events for the Bible Society. They were also, logically, the peak period of activity in the domain of the press. One cannot leaf through any of the newspapers or magazines from these months without finding an editorial, article or letter written about the matter. Truthfully, it is difficult not to link the widespread diffusion and the speed with which the news travelled to the rapid chain of events that led to the end. The actions of these men in their conflict with the institutions and beliefs of the country were what determined the final result. Nevertheless, for the focus that I have chosen, it is also important to see the role that the press played by quickly and repeatedly airing all their problems and ups and downs. At this time the press is the main theatre of operations. It is the battlefield where they fought, debated, and, in the end, where all that was taking place was reported and magnified to tip the scales against their cause.



*Diario de Madrid, 11.IV.1838  
Advertisement for the 'Gypsy Luke'  
(see n° 13 in Documents below)*

Of course, from Borrow's perspective, his first serious stumbling block was his imprisonment in May. It may never be known how much premeditation on the part of the government led to his imprisonment; or if, which is also possible, it was caused by an overzealous subordinate. Today, it does not get us anywhere to make such conjectures. What we know for sure is that this incident forced the government to look for a satisfactory solution. It was unthinkable for the government to remain as indecisive as it had been before. The imprisonment of Borrow demanded that they intervene in this sticky situation and help bring it to an end. Borrow's preceding actions in the capital caused his imprisonment. However, as I have said before, this time he was ignoring the complexity of the problem. In addition, other events occurred and other actors over whom he had no control came on the scene. Borrow was aware of the difficulties encountered by William Rule, who tried to set up a Methodist school in Cádiz. He also knew about the serious situation in which Pascual Marín, a priest in Valencia, had to abandon his church, possibly instigated by James Graydon. What he did not know until after being freed from prison was that the imprudent behaviour of James N. Graydon in Málaga at the end of April (eight or ten days before he went to prison) had decisively influenced the outcome of his case for the worse. Of course, the government, the Church, public opinion and the press all looked on the actions of the two agents as one, considering them the pieces of a larger plan to undermine the foundations of the society. This episode with Graydon, 'Lo ocurrido en Malaga' was, in Borrow's accurate assessment, the straw that broke the government's patience. All these actions had the cumulative effect of changing the government's ambivalent attitude and forcing a more drastic decision. Once again, the press played a vital role in covering the developing story during these days.

The advertisement published by James N. Graydon in the 'Official Bulletin of the Province of Malaga' on 24 April, was what finally gave the government cause to take action. In it, as he had already done a year earlier at Valencia, Graydon announced the sale of the Bible without notes. He also renewed his attacks on the government and the Church in the following terms:

*A despicable system of superstition and fanaticism, hungry only for pesetas, giving neither temporal nor eternal happiness to men has been prevailing in Spain (as well as in other nations) for centuries by absolutely preventing men from truly knowing the Great God and Final Judge, and in this way has overwhelmed them with the most frightening kind of disasters.*<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Boletín Oficial de la Provincia de Málaga* of 24 April 1838. This advertisement was cited in part by Borrow in *Letters to BFBS*, 328.

These and other offensive words gave rise to a tremendous commotion in the city. Commentaries and letters appeared frequently in the press. But when it looked as though a case was about to be brought against him, there was an unexpected surprise: a sentence absolving him appeared in the *Boletín de la Provincia de Málaga* on 9 May. The sentence said:

*the law absolves Don Jaime N. Grasidon [sic], of responsibility of said printing [the advertisement of the Holy Bible] and consequently revokes the arrest that resulted from it, without causing detriment or damage to his good name and reputation.*

George Borrow had been freed in similar circumstances - that is to say not being charged with anything in particular. In both cases, it is clear there was an attempt to hush up the matter and look for a kind of compromise allowing for all those implicated to get out of the crisis without losing face. What had occurred behind the scenes, and unbeknown to both protagonists? Today we know that the English ambassador had started intense negotiations with the government to look for a non-radical solution satisfactory to both sides - a solution that could put an end to this problem that had taken on the dimensions of a State affair. The agreement was simply to free Graydon and Borrow without formal charges on the condition that they stop once and for all the printing, distributing, etc. of the holy scriptures.<sup>16</sup> The Royal Order of 19 May was a result of this agreement between the Spanish government and the British embassy. I have transcribed the Order in its entirety, in the words of the Prime Minister to the English ambassador:

*I have the honour of making it known to Your Excellency that as a consequence of what occurred in Malaga and other places over the publication and sale of Bibles translated by Father Scio, which do not contain all the books or notes required by the canons of the Catholic Church, Her Majesty has deemed it necessary to prohibit their publication and sale, but without vexing or molesting the English subjects who for some time now have introduced them into the Kingdom and sold them at low prices, believing they were doing good while in reality they were doing damage. I must also make it known to Your Excellency that this Royal Order hereby prohibits printing the Bible in Spain in the Spanish language, and not interpreting the Bible wholly with its corresponding notes, as recognised by the Catholic Church. It also prohibits books printed in the Castilian language from being imported across the border into Spain and it so orders that the Bibles already put on sale be recovered and handed over to their owners in a sealed package that is to be taken out of the country, through customs at the border or port.<sup>17</sup>*

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Collie, *George Borrow: Eccentric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 134.

<sup>17</sup> George Borrow file, National Historical Archives, Madrid.

Following the publication of this Royal Order it became impossible for the two agents to continue their activities in the way in which they had been engaged until now. Their cause was already irretrievably lost. But there is more to Borrow's story. It consists of the coming and going to England, his animosity towards Graydon, and the stubbornness of both men in trying new attempts to distribute and spread the scriptures, without any hope or possibility of success. Other incidents, like the opening of the Methodist school in Cadiz or the short-lived appearance of a preacher in Guadalajara - actions not related to the previous ones - would only reaffirm the government's position, which was reflected in the Royal Order. The final link in this long chain of events has to do with the order given by the British Minister of Exterior Affairs, Lord Palmerston. It backs up the policy of the Spanish government by prohibiting British subjects from violating Spanish laws and denying them protection if the laws are disobeyed.<sup>18</sup>

In a nutshell, we have seen the role that the press, particularly the religious press, has played in this fascinating episode of our recent history. I have chosen only the texts that significantly mark the outstanding changes in the development of this episode. Now I return to what I said in the beginning: the work of the investigator has not been exhausted in this field. Specifically, I am thinking that if one can properly study the Archives of the Archbishopric of Toledo, which were made inaccessible to me, all research on this subject could be enriched by new contributions that would add up substantially to the already ample studies on Borrow. Neither did I want to comment on all the editorials, letters or articles one by one. It would have been cumbersome and dull because they are so repetitive. For this, please see the Documents section at the end of my paper. Merely reading the titles gives a good idea of the importance of the press in this affair; it also shows the great degree to which the press participated. These large numbers of news stories, the speed of their transmission and the string intolerance and passion of their content played a role that I cannot help denying as determining the outcome of this affair. But if the established structures of Spanish society channelled their opposition through the press in this manner, it should also be pointed out that the Bible Society agents acted just as thoughtlessly and overzealously. Despite the value of their idealistic motives, it is difficult to justify their behaviour if we take into account the timing and the appropriateness of their actions. In the final analysis it was not a battle fought in vain. It was a first step, a failed step, but nevertheless one that helped open the door and pave the road in the quest for more political, religious and social freedom. If only temporarily again, these goals would become a reality during the First Republic some thirty years later.

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<sup>18</sup> The circular of 6 August 1839 from Henry Southern to consuls in Spain said: 'I am directed by Viscount Palmerston to instruct you to warn any British Subjects who may attempt, by preaching or by distributing books in Spain, to assail the Roman Catholic Church, that they will render themselves liable to a State prosecution which may probably end in their imprisonment, or their expulsion from the Country; and that H.M. Mission at Madrid cannot be expected to protect them from the consequences of such open violation of the Laws of Spain.' (Public Record Office Kew, Surrey FO. 185/181.)

## Documents

1. 'Filosofía de la Historia. Sociedades Bíblicas', *El Español* (Madrid), 18 March 1836. Anonymous. Article cited in part by Borrow in a letter to the Bible Society dated 22 March 1836 (*Letters to BFBS*, 149).

In the first paragraphs of this article the author compares the *three* great religions - Christianity, Islam and Hindu - to demonstrate the supremacy of Christianity. He attributes this supremacy to Christianity's message of fraternity and equality among men, and says that Christianity is the best at spreading its message to all the people of the world. Hence the importance of the Bible Society of London, an organisation that has overcome sectarianism to spread the divine word without notes or commentaries. In order to show the importance of printing in this task, the author asks why there is no Bible Society in Spain. He concludes that the unhindered distribution of the holy scriptures goes hand in hand with freedom and argues for a separation of church and state.

2. '¡Alerta, Católicos!', *El amigo de la Religión y de los hombres* (Madrid), nº 40, tome V (21 June 1837), 105-10. Anonymous.

This article warns Spanish Catholics about the danger of the presence of the Bible Society agents in Spain. It says the agents were operating under the pretence of purifying the church and re-establishing the original discipline of the church's first centuries, while trying to introduce heresy. To do this, the Society does not spare the use of any type of print media. Above all, it reported the existence of a 'new business of religious periodicals' that was about to start publishing. 'In fact we have heard about a new religious publication that is cheap and periodical. We advise our readers to completely ignore this material'. I do not know to what type of publication this author is referring.

3. *Diario Mercantil de Valencia*, 30 June 1837. Without title or signature, but there is no doubt the author is James N. Graydon (see *Letters to BFBS*, 265 and 270).

This is an advertisement that praised the distribution of the Bible by the Bible Society, saying: 'Let's not forget that the strongest support for freedom comes from the good habits of the people; that now is the time to purge Christianity of superstition and fanaticism, so that what remains is the purified message of the *Gospel*; and that one can truthfully say that the Bible is, without equal, the book of the *Constitution*.' Due to the high cost of Bibles printed in Spain, the Bible Society has printed the holy scriptures in Barcelona and imported others from France 'to distribute them whenever they are desired, and priced at cost'. Reading the Bible will make us believers in liberty, will help us improve our habits, and restore to us 'the simplicity and purity of the original *Gospel*'.

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## ANUNCIO.

### EL NUEVO TESTAMENTO

DE N. S. J. C.

traducido por el reverendísimo padre Felipe Scio de S. Miguel: un volumen en octavo prolongado, de 534 páginas de impresion, en pasta. Se ha impreso este importantísimo libro con buen carácter de letra, papel excelente y sumo cuidado en la correccion; de modo que puede competir, bajo estos aspectos, con las mejores ediciones de Ibarra. Se ha conservado la misma ortografía del tiempo del traductor. El precio á que se ha puesto este libro, facilita su adquisicion á todas las clases de la sociedad: y el único objeto que se ha tenido en imprimirle, es el de propagar mas y mas cada vez la santa palabra del Salvador.

Véndese á 12 rs. vn. en las librerías de Cuesta y de Paz, frente á las gradas de S. Felipe.

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*La España of 21.X.1837*

4. *La España* (Madrid), 21 October 1837.

This advertises the sale of an edition of the New Testament translated by Father Scio San Miguel, published in May 1837 by George Borrow.

5. *El Español* (Madrid), 5 November 1837 (see *Letters to BFBS*, 263).

This long article has clearly two different parts: the first is a letter from a canon in Valencia, which leads to the second part, a circular from the Bishop of Valencia to the faithful in this see. Notwithstanding the different authors, the contents of the two texts are practically the same. They both attack the advertisement of 30 June 1837. They argue with the same passion that Graydon did over the reasons the Church has for recommending that the Bible be read with explanatory notes. Together with many attacks on 'that infernal society called "*Biblica*"', they also warn that the advertised Bibles are incomplete, since they do not contain all the books recognised by the Church. Finally, they prohibit buying the Castilian version of the Bible of Father Scio.



6. *El Español* (Madrid), 12 November 1837.

This article, in the same two-part form, answers the previous one of 5 November. The first part, signed by George Borrow as 'member and agent in Spain of the British and Foreign Bible Society', has been wholly reproduced (*Letters to BFBS* 265). The second part, unsigned, stands out from the previous text because of its dispassionate, conciliatory tone. It refutes two of the Church's classic arguments against reading the Bible without explanatory notes: 1<sup>o</sup> that there are many things in the Bible that common people cannot understand [and] 2<sup>o</sup> that reading the Bible alone results in heresy, the formation of sects and errors; and because of this common people should not read it.

7. *El Tiempo* (Cádiz), 8 December 1837.

This advertises George Borrow's edition of the New Testament, translated by Father Scio.

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**LIBROS.**

**EL NUEVO TESTAMENTO.**

TRADUCIDO AL CASTELLANO

POR EL

**Rmo. P. PHELIPPE SCIO DE S. MIGUEL.**

Hace poco tiempo se ha verificado en Madrid una bellissima edicion de esta porcion interesante de la Sagrada Escritura, sin las notas y comentarios que hasta ahora han acompañado à las varias ediciones publicadas en Español, dando al tomo un volumen excesivo, y por consiguiente aumento en el precio, poniéndole fuera del alcance de la clase pobre y mas numerosa de la sociedad.

Esta obra preciosísima està ahora al de todas las clases. En el despacho de la sociedad biblica de Lóndres, núm. 25 calle del Príncipe, se hallan de venta algunos ejemplares en octavo mayor, hermosamente encuadrados en pasta à 10 reales cada uno, siendo la mitad del gasto que ha espendido la sociedad, la cual trayendo en memoria el mandamiento del Salvador, procura en todas ocasiones propagar su santa palabra entre las gentes del mundo. †

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*Diario de Madrid 22.XII.1837*

8. *Diario de Madrid*, 22 December 1837. Also inserted on 23, 27 and 28 December.

This advertises the New Testament translated by Father Scio and edited by George Borrow. The advertisement already announces its sale 'in the office of the Bible Society of London, number 25, calle de Príncipe'.

9. *El amigo de la Religión Cristiano Católica* (Madrid), tome I (January 1838), 18-41 and 139-58 (see *Letters to BFBS*, 280). Title: 'Refutation of heretical maxims, propagated by Mr George Borrow, member and agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which appeared in *El Español* last 12 November'. Anonymous.

In this long article, the Bible Society and its agents are the recipients of many insults. It includes the following points:

- i) the edition of the Bible without notes is incomplete because it does not include all the books recognised by the Church
- ii) it defends the use of Latin
- iii) it is not idolatry or superstition to worship images and reliquaries of saints
- iv) it explains the reasons why Catholics venerate the Virgin Mary
- v) it reaffirms the Pope as the figurehead of the Church

10. *El amigo de la Religión Cristiano Católica* (Madrid), tome II (March 1838), 47-52.

This includes a letter from a subscriber who had been asked for his opinion on the English Bible Societies. In this letter, dated 30 January 1838, the author concurs with the ideas expressed in the previous edition of the magazine (see document 9).

11. *El madrileño católico* (Madrid), tome I (April 1838), 55-59.

This includes a review of the New Testament translated into Castilian by Don Felix Torres Amat, Bishop of Astorga. The edition was made in London by the Society for the Promotion of Christian Beliefs. It is a luxury edition also without notes.

12. *Diario de Madrid*, 11 April 1838. Also 14, 18, 19 and 20 April.

This includes an advertisement for *Embeo e Majaro Lucas*, an edition of the Gospel according to St Luke in the Gypsy language made by George Borrow. The book was for sale in the Bible Society office, calle de Principe 25.

## Bibliografía.

### EMBEO E MAJARO LUCAS.

*Diccionario rondado andré la chipé griega, acuna chibado andré o Romanó, o chipé es Zincales de Sesé. Un vol. 8.º Madrid, 1837. Se vende en la calle del Príncipe número 25.*

Con este título acaba de publicarse El Evangelio según S. Lucas, traducido al Romaní ó dialecto de los gitanos de España: publicación muy importante bajo dos conceptos; pero que aquí se considerará solo por su valor científico, siendo el primer libro escrito en gitano, y que va á ser el conservador de una lengua que aun se habla hoy en nuestro país por una raza de gente ignorante, miserable y despreciada hasta el último extremo, pero desconocida. Es de esperar que este libro merezca en breve la atención de los que en el mundo literario se aplican á los estudios filológicos; y abra camino al segundo volumen que debe seguirle, y que fijará para siempre el nuevo y verdadero adelanto hecho en este ramo del saber, que despues de conocido merecerá ser valúo mejor su importancia. Las conversaciones y el largo trato que el traductor del Evangelio de S. Lucas ha tenido con los gitanos de España, para mejor profundizar en el misterio de su lengua, de sus costumbres, de su estado moral, darán á conocer cuanto se apartan de la verdad las ideas que hasta hoy se tienen en España acerca de los gitanos y su habla, cuando su resultado se presente en la obra que indudablemente seguirá al libro ya publicado.

Desde luego, el que examínare el *Embeo ó majaró Lucas*, echará de ver que el lenguaje en que está, nada tiene que ver con ese lenguaje de *germania*, que comunmente se atribuye á los gitanos, y en el que están escritos los *Romances de germania* dados á luz por Juan Hidalgo. No dan mas noticia estos romances, y el discurso del doctor Sancho de Moncada, y el vocabulario que se les sigue, para conocer la lengua gitana, que las que pudieran dar para aprender la lengua china. No me atrevo sin embargo á decir que Juan Hidalgo cometiese la grosera equivocacion de confundir la *germania* con el *caló* ó habla gitana. El prólogo con que Hidalgo encabeza sus romances, solo dá á entender que él juzgaba á la *germania*, el lenguaje ó jerga con que se hablan entre sí los ladrones, y jente de mal vivir para no ser entendidos. Quien de hecho confunde la *germania* con el gitano, es el editor del libro de Hidalgo, como se ve en la advertencia (pág. 3). Y esto no tiene nada de extraño si se observa que el editor escribía en el bendito siglo pasado, en el que así se escribía. Ya entre nosotros Martin del Río juzgó que el lenguaje de los gitanos provenia del esclavon, y era una verdadera lengua; y aunque el primer aserto es falso, todavía se ve que este autor ni procede en el lib. 6.º de sus *Disquisiciones mágicas*, tan de ligero como el editor del siglo XVIII. Despues Grelhan, Bock, y nuestro compatriota D. Lorenzo Hervás, en su inapreciable obra *Catálogo de las lenguas*, han hablado con mucho mayor acierto de los gitanos y su lengua, y de las diversas familias de ellos que se hallan errantes por Europa, Asia y Africa. Hervás consagra todo el largo capítulo 6.º del tratado 3.º á hablar de la *nación cingana ó gitana, y de su origen y lengua*: y aunque en lo que allí dice aparece alguna oscuridad contradictoria, hija sin duda de la falta de exámen práctico en

la materia, todavía hay en su obra noticias exactas acerca de los gitanos y de su lengua. De ellas resulta que consideradas las palabras ó voces gitanas en su derivacion y construcción, y en la significacion que las dan los gitanos, es la lengua de estos un dialecto de la Samsereda ó Sanscrit, como vulgarmente se dice, y que los gitanos son verdaderos indostanos, fugitivos en tiempo de la formidable invasion de Timur en las Indias: invasion atrocísima de que no se halla igual en los fastos antiguos de las Indias, ni en los modernos. Y dejando aparte si los *zinganos* pasaron á Egipto como quiere Kircher, lo cierto ya es que es innegable haber salido de las Indias orientales los gitanos, y que su lengua es un dialecto samseredo semejante al que se habla en el reino de Guzarat y en la ciudad de Talla, de donde parece haber emigrado las familias *parreas* huyendo del incendio, espada y muerte con que Timur amenazaba á todos los idolatras indios que no querian profesar la secta mahometana.

Pero, abreviando este artículo, bien puede asegurarse que ni la excelente obra de D. Lorenzo Hervás, ni las observaciones de su amigo Fr. Paulino de S. Bartolomé, pueden en este caso satisfacer al verdadero investigador con la extensión que lo hará el *Embeo ó majaró Lucas*, particularmente cuando completen á este libro, hasta ahora inapreciable, los trabajos de un *vocabulario y unas noticias sobre los gitanos, su lengua y su poesía*, cuya publicacion indispensable no debe tardar. Estas dos obras, y su conocimiento, nos harán descubrir el verdadero origen nacional de los gitanos; de los que, como dice muy bien Hervás, ha publicado el vulgo muchas fábulas, y los autores han escrito con variedad de opiniones poco acertadas. Las noticias que publicará el autor de la obra anunciada demostrarán la union de origen

que enlaza á todos los gitanos de la tierra, y á los dialectos que ellos hablan; realizando el interés de la obra, no solo la claridad y lógica grande que en ella lucen, sino tambien el grato alimento que prestarán á la curiosidad de todos, las observaciones sobre el estado y costumbres del rico y educado gitano de Rusia, comparado con el pobre y degradado gitano de España: el careo de voces gitanas húngaras, con gitanas españolas, y otra multitud de revelaciones curiosas, de que yo no me valdré por no rebajar aquí el interés que inspirarán. Otra razon secundaria merece atraer la atención de los españoles entendidos hacia este libro. Con esta, se ha hecho entre nosotros una publicacion literaria, que acogerán en el extranjero, valuándola, sin duda, por de monta ó importancia en aquel grado que no hacen con casi ninguna de las obras que en España se dan á luz.

Por lo demas, la correccion, el papel y esmero del libro tampoco son vulgares: el número de ejemplares que se han tirado es corto; y para final recomendacion de la obra, repetiré por última vez, que á favor de ella y del volumen que la complete, conocerán los observadores, y pararán mejor la atención en el hasta ahora mal conocido y acetunado gitano, de vivos ojos, de negro cabello, de cuerpo bien hecho, de gran movilidad y ligereza; en el gitano que ama con pasión el calor, al paso que tolera los frios mas rigorosos, y cuya complexion es tan fuerte y sana, que llega á la edad mayor sin haber estado jamás enfermo. Y sobre todo, y lo que es mas importante, como ya se ha dicho, esta obra llamará la atención, por ser el depósito y conservador del esqueleto de una lengua que aun conserva cierta existencia, pero que está pronta á desmoronarse del todo.

U.

Correo Nacional 20.IV.1838

13. *El Correo Nacional* (Madrid), 20 April 1838 (*Letters to BFBS*, 298).

This is a review praising the *Embeo e Majaró Lucas*. This article was signed with the initial 'U' indicating that the author was probably Don Luis de Usóz y Río.

14. *Boletín Oficial de la Provincia de Málaga*, Number 1416 (24 April 1838) (see *Letters to BFBS*, 305 and 328).

This is an advertisement placed by James N. Graydon. The text is generally the same as the advertisement he published in Valencia on 30 June 1837 (see document 3).

15. *Boletín Oficial de la Provincia de Málaga*, nº 1418 (26 April 1838).

In this article the Bishop of Málaga censures Graydon's advertisement, published two days earlier. In it he prohibits the sale and reading of this Bible because it is incomplete, does not have the proper notes and has not been printed in Spain. Finally, he condemns the 'gross language used in the advertisement referred to'.

16. *Boletín Oficial de la Provincia de Málaga*, nº 1419 (27 April 1838).

This is an official statement from the prosecutor of the province, saying that he thinks Graydon's advertisement is grounds for a case to be brought against him.

17. *Boletín Oficial de la Provincia de Málaga*, nº 1431 (9 May 1838).

This includes the sentence absolving James N. Graydon of guilt for placing the advertisement for the Holy Bible on 17 May 1838.

18. *El Correo Nacional* (Madrid), 17 May 1838.

This is an article published by George Borrow (transcribed in its entirety in *Letters to BFBS* 311). He signs it 'Sole authorised Agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society in Spain'. In this article he tries to disclaim, in the name of the Bible Society any writings which may have been circulated tending to lower the authorities, civil and ecclesiastic, in the eyes of the people, and denying that it is the intention or wish to make proselytes from the Catholic form of worship obviously referring to Graydon's actions in Malaga.

19. 'Sociedad bíblica inglesa, y su agente en España el Sr. Jorge Borrow', *El amigo de la Religión Cristiano Católica* (Madrid), tome III (May 1838), 165-78. Anonymous.

This is an article which reacts against the advertisement placed by Borrow in *El Correo Nacional* on 17 May. It criticises the opening of the Bible Society office and all the activities of its two agents. It includes a new warning about heresy and a schism in the Church.

20. *El amigo de la Religión Cristiano Católica* (Madrid), tome III (May 1838), 215 (see *Letters to BFBS*, 321).

This contains a brief notice of the appearance of Graydon in Murcia. It makes known that in spite of what happened in Málaga, Graydon continued to sell Bibles and distribute pamphlets in Murcia which the Spanish Church found offensive.

21. *El madrileño católico* (Madrid), tome I (May 1838), 204-5.

This includes a new notice of Graydon's appearance in Murcia. It warns that 'it is necessary to find a solution to this disorderly affair if we do not want to see ourselves involved in a religious war which would complicate even more the present dynastic war'.

22. *Diario de Madrid*, 19 May 1838.

This includes a brief communication from the political governor requiring the presence of Joaquin de la Barrera, printer of George Borrow's Castilian edition of the New Testament.

23. *Gaceta de Madrid*, 21 May 1838 (see *Letters to BFBS*, 322).

This contains a repetition of the sentence absolving Graydon from blame in the incident in Málaga (see document 17).

24. *Gaceta de Madrid*, 24 May 1838.

This has a new reference to the incident in Murcia with James N. Graydon.

25. *Gaceta de Madrid*, 27 May 1838.

This contains an editorial responding to the letter that Borrow placed in the same newspaper on 17 May. In the words of Borrow, 'It gives me a rap on the knuckles for an anti-catholic expression or two in the advertisement in which I denounced them'. Then later it transcribes two paragraphs that praise the work of the Bible Society (see a letter from 14 June in *Letters to BFBS* 324).

26. *Gaceta de Madrid*, 9 June 1838.

It is interesting to note that when Borrow wrote his letter on 14 June (see document 25) he must have known about the existence of this editorial, but nevertheless made no mention of it. The content of this editorial is much stronger than the previous one and that may explain why Borrow did not comment on it. Between the publication of these two editorials, Graydon's appearance in Murcia became known in Madrid

27. 'Amaños del Protestantismo', *El madrileño católico*, tome I (June 1838), 209-243.

The title, 'Protestantism's Schemes', indicates the slant of its contents. In it a violent attack is made on the Bible Society and its presence in Spain through its two agents.

28. *Diario Mercantil de Valencia*, 23 August 1838.

Graydon published an advertisement in this paper that appeared after he had left the country. It shows his anger at the Royal Order that prohibited him from printing and distributing the Bible. It also tries to argue the advantages of reading the Bible without notes or commentaries. He concludes with his customary aggressiveness: 'a system that opposes such a philanthropic enterprise must have its origin in ignorance and hypocrisy; its fruits will always be the most violent hatred for free institutions and cruelty for those who do not support them; it is a system that can only be maintained by despotism, by the Inquisition, and by *pesetas*.'

29. *El madrileño católico* (Madrid), tome III (December 1838), 359-90.

This includes a presentation of two alternative projects that would create a Catholic Bible Society, to counteract the efforts of Protestantism, and would offer the working classes good doctrines to read in order to neutralise the venom that was produced by those who tried to de-Catholicise Spain, and cause the misery of heresy.

30. 'Sociedades Bíblicas: Dos palabras a su comisionado en España', *El amigo de la Religión Cristiano Católica* (Madrid), tome IV (December 1838), 153-66.

This is an article that answers and debates the arguments expressed by James N. Graydon in the *Diario Mercantil de Valencia* of 23 August 1838 (see document 28).

31. 'Sociedad Bíblica', *El Nuncio de la Verdad* (Madrid), tome II, notebook IV (February 1839), 202-205.

This is an article condemning and denouncing the actions of the Bible Society agents, in spite of the fact that the government had issued the Royal Order of 19 May prohibiting these activities. It goes on to include a letter from a priest in Vicalvaro (province of Madrid) complaining about the presence in this town of a man dressed in the coarse clothes of a day worker, who set up a stand on the main plaza to sell eight copies of the New Testament translated into the Castilian by Father Scio, and printed in May 1837 in the Ibarra printing house.

32. *El Correo Nacional* (Madrid), 18 April 1839.

This includes an editorial that comments on and criticises the opening of a school in Cadiz by William Rule, in which public instruction is given in the protestant religion.

33. *El Genio del Cristianismo* (Madrid), volume I (April 1839), 49-59.

This includes a new attack on the Bible Societies and the activities of its agents after the Royal Order of 19 May 1838.

34. *El Correo Nacional* (Madrid), 10 May 1839.

This records the presence in Guadalajara of a preacher named Manuel Rodríguez, who freely preached anti-Catholic doctrines. This article finds a relation in the actions of Rodríguez, Rule, Graydon and Borrow, seeing them all as a menace to the Spanish Church.

35. 'Sobre las versiones de la Biblia sin notas', *El Genio del Cristianismo* (Madrid), volume II, number 8 (July 1839), 49-54.

This article comments on and rebukes the editions of Father Scio and Don Félix Torres Amat, because they lack notes.

36. 'Nuevos amañes del Protestantismo', *El madrileño católico* (Madrid), tome III (December 1839), 228-39.

This article describes these new 'schemes' - the opening of a Methodist school in Cádiz, and the presence of the preacher in Guadalajara, commented on in *El Correo Nacional* (see document 34).

37. *El madrileño católico* (Madrid), tome III (December 1839), 296.

This includes brief notes about whether or not the preacher in Guadalajara was deranged, and it denounces the sale of Protestant Bibles from the printer Bergnes in Barcelona.

38. *El Correo Nacional* (Madrid), 15 December 1839.

This contains two articles that praise the idea of creating a religious society to counteract the pernicious effect of the English Bible Societies.

39. *El Genio del Cristianismo* (Madrid), tome V, nº 29 (March 1840), 239-240.

This includes a letter from a prelate in the city of Cádiz saying that even though William Rule has been expelled, another Englishman, Jacob Lyon, is continuing to try to teach Protestantism. The political chief demands that he leave the city.

40. 'Nueva agresión de los Protestantes', *El Genio del Cristianismo* (Madrid), tome IV, nº 30 (April 1840), 248-52.

This is another reference to the events in Cádiz and Guadalajara.