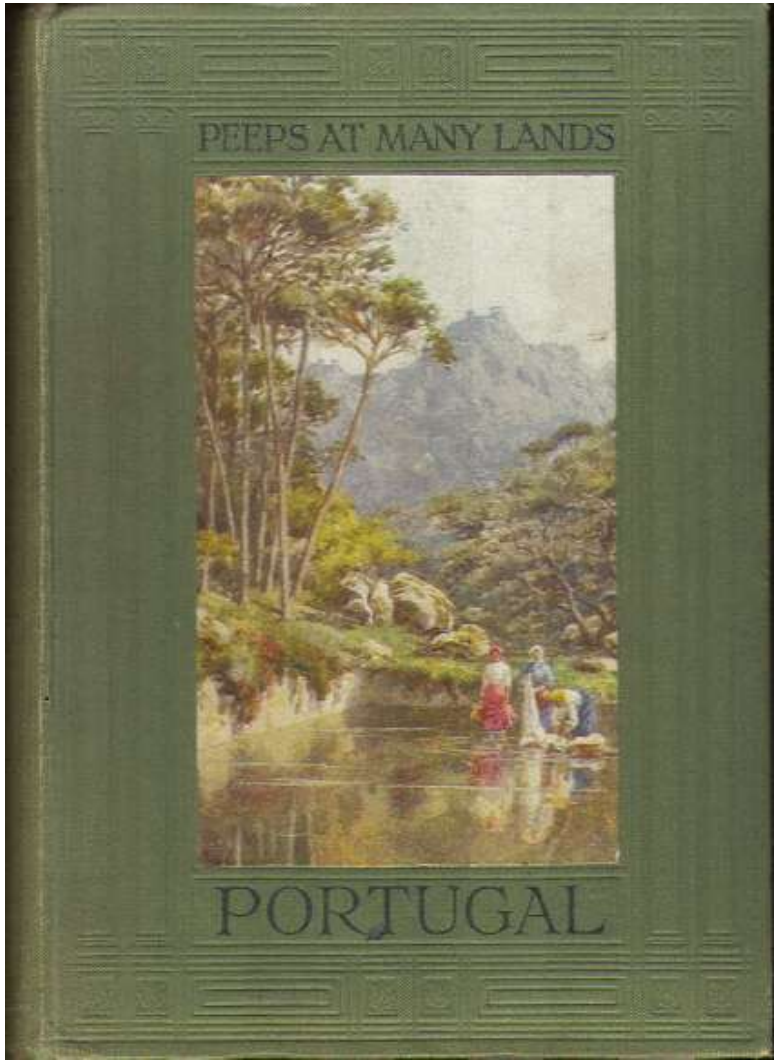

PEEPS AT MANY LANDS

PORTUGAL

BY

AGNES M. GOODALL

WITH TWELVE FULL PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
IN COLOUR
BY
THE AUTHOR

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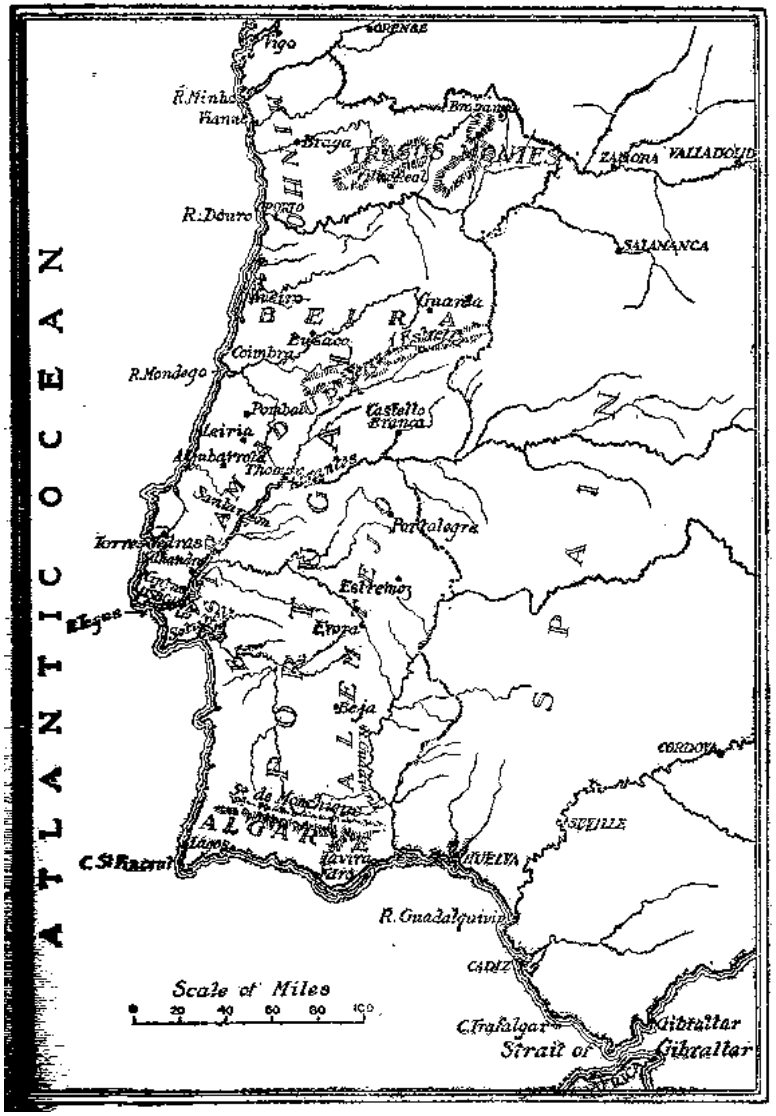


GOSSIP AT THE FOUNTAIN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

HOW PORTUGAL BECAME A GREAT KINGDOM

Portugal is the most westerly country in Europe. It is a narrow strip of land bordered on its northern and eastern frontiers by Spain, to the west and south by the Atlantic Ocean, and is, roughly speaking, about the same size as Ireland. It is a country of many contrasts, of barren rocky mountains with deep gorges and valleys, of bleak and treeless moor-lands and wind-swept plains, of sand-dunes, and bold, rugged headlands. A land also of vineyards, orange and lemon trees, of pine-forests and cork-woods, chestnuts, oak and eucalyptus, of olive groves and fruitful fields.

It is one of the smallest countries in Europe, but its early history is a long romance—the story of a little nation with a great heart. Were it not so, the Portugal of to-day would not exist at all.

Long, long ago, it was inhabited by men of the Celtic race; later on we read of it as belonging to the great Empire of Rome, and later still, as being overrun by Germanic tribes, Vandals, Alans, Suevis, and Goths. In the eighth century came the Moors from the North of Africa, and about the middle of the eleventh century Ferdinand "the Great" of Castile conquered the northern portion, and founded the "countship" of Portugal, as the country was to be henceforth called; and the Counts of Portugal became great feudal lords who owed allegiance to Spain.

There followed many years of fierce warfare with the Moors, who wished to regain their lost possessions, and the Spanish King, Alfonso VI., at last appealed for aid to the chivalry of Christendom, to help him in his battles against the Mohammedan warriors. Among the knights who joined his army was Count Henry of Burgundy, who distinguished himself greatly, and afterwards married one of the King's daughters, Theresa, and became Count of Portugal, and it is their son, Alfonso Henriques, born in 1111, who, in 1140, declared himself independent of Spain, assumed the title of King, and became the greatest hero of his country. He did so much for it, and his memory is still so highly honoured, that I must tell you just a little about him.

He was only three years old when his father died, and his mother acted as Regent till he was seventeen, when he took over the government himself. An old record tells us that at that time he was "a skilful and valiant knight," and "of very comely presence." He had, what is more, the dash and enterprise, the sound judgment, and the grace and courtesy of manner of a born leader of men.

He had already seen a great deal of fighting, and had earned the honour of knighthood when only a little lad of fourteen. The young Count found himself ruler of a land consisting chiefly of mountains, forests, and heaths, and surrounded by enemies. In the north and east he had to fight against the power of Spain, in the south he waged incessant war against the fanatical followers of Mohammed, but he gradually drove them back, till his "heroic exploits were the theme of the wandering troubadour in every Christian Court in western Europe."

The capture of Lisbon, Santarem, Evora, Beja, and many other towns and strongholds, added more and more to his fame, and it is pleasing to learn that it was by the help of some English Crusaders, who were on their way to the Holy Land, that after several failures he at last succeeded in taking the strong citadel of Lisbon.

As the King advanced in years, he deputed his son Sancho to carry on the fighting, and devoted himself to the internal administration of his country, dispensing justice, granting charters to many of his towns, laying down

boundaries, and, in fact, doing all he could to promote the welfare of his subjects.

There is one scene in the life of Alfonso Henriques which I think you would like to hear about—the last great exploit before his death, which occurred the same year.

The Moors had gathered together a vast army, and had besieged Santarem. Sancho and his troops had done their best, there had been many bloody encounters, but at last the overwhelming numbers of the enemy began to tell, and the hard-pressed garrison were on the point of surrendering, when in the distance a large force of mounted men was seen riding furiously to the rescue. Nearer and nearer they came, the well-known banner of many a Christian knight waving in the breeze, and at their head rode the grand old King.

Worn out as he was by years of warfare, bowed down by age, and suffering from the effects of countless wounds received in his country's cause, this old man of seventy-four, on hearing of his son's peril, had led his knights by forced marches from the very furthest corner of the kingdom.

With the help of the now rejoicing garrison, who sallied out to join in the fray, he entirely routed the enemy, slew their leader, and drove the scattered host back over the Tagus and across their own frontier.

It is little wonder that with such a leader the people grew into a brave, chivalrous, and self-reliant race.

The curtain may be dropped for a time, to be raised again on the scene of a great wedding, which was solemnized at Oporto in 1387 with much pomp and splendour, between King John I., surnamed "the Great," and an English Princess, Philippa, daughter of John of Gaunt, and the granddaughter of our own King, Edward III.

Not quite two years earlier, at the Battle of Aljubarrota, Dom John, the first King of the House of Avis, had gained a great victory over the Spaniards, who had disputed the independence of his country, and here again we read of 500 English archers fighting on the side of Portugal, and doing yeoman service. Eight months later the Treaty of Windsor was signed, the first great link between England and Portugal, binding them to stand by one another, and in fulfilment of which John of Gaunt, accompanied by his wife and two of his daughters, landed at Corunna with 2,000 English lances and 3,000 archers. His expedition against Spain proved successful, and ended in one of his daughters being given in marriage to the heir to the Spanish throne, and the other to King John of Portugal.

From this time, when English blood first flowed in the veins of the Royal House of Avis, dates the real power of Portugal. From an obscure little country, she rapidly became a powerful nation, with possessions and colonies in every quarter of the globe, and it was one of the sons of our English Princess, Henry, surnamed "the Navigator," who did so much to help on the explorations and discoveries which were to make Portugal one of the greatest colonial Powers in the world. In the course of twenty-four years—between 1497 and 1521—during the reign of Emanuel, "the Fortunate," her explorers sailed eastward round the coasts of Africa and India to the East Indian Islands, Siam, and China, and westward to the Brazils, and through the Straits of Magellan out into the Pacific Ocean.

It was a period of great deeds performed by gallant men, and just as mariners and soldiers bore high the honour of their country abroad, so also did the statesmen, poets, and chroniclers at home. Lisbon became the centre for all the commerce of the East. The trade of the Spice Islands, of Africa, Persia, India, China, and Japan, all passed through it, and it was the time of Portugal's highest prosperity and power.

CHAPTER II

THE DECLINE OF PORTUGAL

The seeds of Portugal's downfall were, however, already being sown. With added riches the nobles grew self-indulgent, and the old patriotic spirit gave place to a love of ease and luxury. The officials grew corrupt, inclined to oppress the people, and, above all, the best blood in the country was gradually being drained away to supply the wants of her new possessions. Her young men volunteered as sailors to man the fleets, or as soldiers to fight her battles in the far-away lands beyond the seas, and what with the fighting and the unhealthy climates, few of those who sailed away ever returned. There was also much emigration to Madeira and the Brazils, and it was always the strongest and most enterprising who left the mother-country to seek their fortunes abroad.

There were yet other reasons which contributed to the gradual decline.

In 1441 negro slaves had been brought home by the explorer Nuno Tristao, and the slave trade steadily increased as years went on, till by far the greater part of Southern Portugal was cultivated for the nobles by black labour. It was cheap, but it drove out the peasantry for lack of employment, and led to more emigration than would otherwise have been the case.

Then came King Emanuel's great mistake, the expulsion of the Jews.

All Jews who refused to become Christians were ordered to leave the country within six months. A great many of them were well known for their honesty, industry, and wealth, and also for their high intellectual qualities, so that Portugal was in reality banishing vast numbers of her most capable and enterprising citizens.

In 1536, John III. introduced the Inquisition, which in course of time became so fanatical that the merest suggestion of heresy caused men and women to be imprisoned, cruelly tortured, and even burnt at the stake. All this tended still further to crush out the manhood of the people. Moreover, the powers of the Inquisition were largely used for political purposes. Thus, under a fair exterior, the country was steadily decaying.

King John died, and in 1557 we once more find a little child of three years old—Dom Sebastian—ascending the throne.

This time, however, there was no wise mother to act as Regent, and at fifteen the young King was declared of age, and took the government into his own hands. He was by nature a dreamer and a visionary, and very obstinate. He looked on war as the noblest occupation for a King, and being deeply religious, became fired with a romantic ambition to become a true soldier of the Cross, and to carry Christianity to the Moors in the North of Africa at the point of the sword.

The Pope and the King of Spain both refused to help in such a wild undertaking; Sebastian's own Ministers and advisers did their best to dissuade him, but he was a despotic and self-willed monarch, and in his saintly enthusiasm he drained his treasury and imposed new taxes on his already heavily burdened people, to provide money for the great Crusade.

His best Generals and fighting men were all in India, but he raised an army of raw recruits and mercenaries hired from other countries, and at length set sail for Morocco with an army of about 17,000 men.

Poor Dom Sebastian was utterly unpractical, and a hopelessly bad General, but he proved himself, in his first and last great battle, to be a brave and fearless soldier. His little army was surrounded by that of the Moorish "Sherif," more than three times its numbers, and after an heroic struggle, in

which quite half the force lost their lives, the remnant were taken prisoners.

What became of the King nobody quite knows. He was last seen fighting in the forefront of the battle, wearing his crown. Afterwards, stripped of its clothes and disfigured with wounds, a body was found which was supposed to be his, and which was eventually taken back to Portugal for burial. There are others who say that no trace of the King could be discovered, either among the prisoners or the slain, and the Portuguese populace still believe that he will some day return in a miraculous way, crown and all, to rule his people, and to raise his country to her ancient fame.

There is no need to tell you much more about the history of Portugal. After the reign of Dom Sebastian the days of her greatness were over. She came under Spanish rule for sixty disastrous years, during which time the enemies of Spain became her enemies also, and her trade and naval power were practically ruined by the Dutch and English. She was also made to feel the weight of Spanish oppression at home, but at last, in 1640, the plucky little country, remembering the proud traditions of her past, rose in revolt, and threw off the foreign yoke.

Since that time England, her old ally, has more than once stood by her in her day of trouble.

In the time of Napoleon it was England who enabled Portugal to maintain her place among the nations, but we must also not forget that it was largely through her help that Wellington was able to bring the long Peninsular War to a triumphant end.

At the present day the country has a constitutional Government somewhat on the same lines as our own. The Cortes, or Parliament, consists of a house of representatives elected by the people, which corresponds to our House of Commons, and of an upper chamber of grandees—fidalgos they are called—who are appointed for life by the King, and which is rather like our House of Lords. But unluckily for Portugal, there is a tendency among the officials never to do to-day what can be put off till to-morrow, and much corruption prevails.

CHAPTER III

WHICH TREATS OF LISBON AND A GREAT EXPLORER

Lisbon has been the capital of Portugal ever since it was taken from the Moors by King Alfonso Henriques in 1147.

The harbour, where the River Tagus broadens out into a veritable inland sea, is one of the finest in the world. It is about ten miles from the river's mouth, where there is only a narrow passage by which ships may pass in and out, the greater part of the entrance being blocked by the bar or great sandbank, formed by the meeting of sea and river, and which is uncovered at low tide.

Steaming up the river, the first great feature of Lisbon which one notices is the palace of the Ajuda, standing out against the sky, a huge, solid-looking building on a hill, above the western portion of the town. It is in another palace near here, that of the Necessidades, that the present King, hardly more than a boy, remained for so many weeks without daring to venture beyond the walls, after the cruel assassination of his father and elder brother in the early part of 1908. The dreadful event is still so recent that most people will remember all about it.

The King and Queen and the Crown Prince had disembarked at the fine landing-stage on the river side of the Praca do Commercio, or Black Horse Square, as the English call it, from the equestrian statue of King Joseph I., which stands in the centre. They had only just started for the palace, and the carriage was turning out of the Square into the narrow street known as the Street of the Arsenal, when a band of men with firearms, which they had kept hidden under the long cloaks they were wearing, sprang out and shot the King and the Prince before anyone had time to interfere. The coachman lashed up his horses, and drove at a gallop into the gates of the Arsenal close by. The brave Queen had thrown herself in front of her son to try and protect him; but, alas! it was too late to save either him or her husband. It is said that when, some months later, the young King Manuel drove out for the first time through the streets of the capital to attend a solemn requiem Mass, the Queen-mother wandered in rest-less terror up and down the long rooms and corridors of the palace, fear gripping at her heart, lest he too should fall a victim to assassins, and she had arranged to have telephonic messages sent to her from successive points on the royal route as he passed them by in safety.

On the banks of the river below the Ajuda Palace is the historic old Tower of Belem, solid and square, with turrets at the four corners, and with ramparts, parapets, and battlements standing out into the water.

It was from this spot that long ago the great explorer, Vasco da Gama, sailed away to discover the new route to India, round the Cape of Good Hope. Those were the days of Portugal's greatness, when her sons went out to explore and to colonize, encouraged by their enlightened Prince, Henry the Navigator. Gradually her sailors found their way farther and farther from home, and made many settlements on the West Coast of Africa. In 1487 Bartolommeo Diaz, going farther still, discovered the Cape of Good Hope, and ten years later King Emanuel fitted out four ships, which he placed under the command of Vasco da Gama, who was to try and discover a way to India by sea.

We can picture the scene. The great explorer walking slowly down the stone steps to the water's edge, and stepping into the barge which was to take him to the ships lying farther out in the stream; the brightly dressed crowd, which had assembled to see him off; and the hero himself, grave, yet full of hope, as he took his last farewell of his native land before sailing away down the river with his little squadron.

They were considered very fine ships in those days, but compared to the great vessels we are accustomed to now they were really quite small, and only 160 men were required to man all four. For months they battled against adverse winds, which much delayed them, and then encountered one frightful storm after another, till the superstitious crew, feeling that all the powers of evil were being let loose against them, and terrified at the idea of going on into the great unknown, mutinied, and tried to force their leader to turn round and go back to Portugal. But he was made of sterner stuff, and that which he had set out to do he meant to accomplish. After doubling the Cape, he sailed on up the East Coast of Africa, and then across the Indian Ocean, and at last, after a voyage of nearly a year's duration, he reached India. The result of this expedition was that Portugal acquired many settlements and colonies both in India and Africa, and Vasco da Gama had great honours conferred upon him.

Many years later, on another voyage, he died at Cochin, far away from home, but his body was brought back to Portugal, and now lies in the beautiful church of Belem, near the old tower from which he had sailed away on that great voyage of discovery, which, above all others, was to make his name famous, and to alter the whole conditions of commerce with the East. It is a fitting place for him to rest in, for it was built by King Emanuel in fulfilment of a vow he had made to erect a church and convent to the Blessed Virgin on the spot where the famous navigator should land if his voyage proved a successful one, and it is one of the most beautiful buildings in the whole country.

It is built in a style peculiar to Portugal, called "Emmanuelan," a kind of Gothic architecture, very elaborately carved with figures, flowers, and foliage, knots, festooned cables, and endless other devices. Often this is overdone, and many Portuguese buildings are, for this reason, lacking in the simple grandeur of some of our own cathedrals. But at Belem this is not the case, for in its own way it is very beautiful. Coming into the cool semi-darkness from the hot, glaring sunshine outside, you seem at first only to realize that it is high and vast, a place in which to speak in whispers, a sanctuary to worship in, with wonderful carved white pillars disappearing into the mysterious gloom of the vaulted roof.

A GOSSIP AT THE FOUNTAIN.

Behind the church lie the cloisters, where one might almost imagine that some beautiful lace had been converted into stone by a magician's wand, so wonderful is the carving and so delicate the tracery of arch and pillar.

CHAPTER IV

MORE ABOUT LISBON

Still farther up the river, and inland from it, high on one of Lisbon's many hills, stands the fortress of St. George, another of the very few ancient buildings that escaped destruction in the dreadful earthquake of 1755, when hardly a house remained standing, and over 60,000 people perished.

It is a long climb to where the old Moorish fortress stands dominating the town, up long flights of worn, uneven steps, and through narrow twisting streets; but the visitor will be amply repaid by the splendid view of the town and surrounding country which can be obtained from the time-worn battlements of the citadel, to which he is admitted in charge of a private of the "Casadore," after an interview with the friendly sergeant of the guard. From here he can see the Tagus with its shipping, and the red-roofed, white-walled houses, with here and there an odd one, coloured blue, pink, yellow, or green. From this point, also, he may look down on the two largest *pracas*, or squares, of the city—the already-mentioned Praca do Commercio, near the river, and more directly at his feet the Praca de Dom Pedro, so called from the statue of Peter IV., which stands on a high column in the centre. This place is known among the English sailors as "Roly-Poly Square," on account of the strange way the pavement is laid. It is in curved lines of alternate black and white, and looks most uneven, almost like the waves of the sea, or the ridge and furrow of a ploughed field, and it is quite a surprise in walking across it to find that in reality it is perfectly flat.

Still farther from the river is the Avenida da Liberdade, a very wide and shady promenade, planted with palms and other trees. It is the finest part of Lisbon, where smart carriages may be seen driving up and down; and it is the happy haunt of children and nursemaids, not to speak of caracoling cavaliers.

Looking round the old fortress, any Englishman would notice the list of battles emblazoned on the barrack walls. They might have been taken from the roll of honour on the Colours of some of our own regiments, and remind one of the time when the Portuguese and English fought shoulder to shoulder throughout the Peninsular War, and Wellington led the allied armies to victory against the soldiers of the great Napoleon.

The Portuguese still have a very friendly feeling for England, which was prettily shown one day by the gentleman in charge of the Arsenal Museum, who was kindly showing me a fine collection of old bronze guns. They were of many nations, and after examining them for some time, I asked if there were no English guns among them.

"Ah, no!" he answered, with a charming smile; "the French and Spaniards have often left their guns behind them, but the English never!"

Another hill in Lisbon, about midway between the Fort of St. George and the Royal Palace, is crowned by the fine church of the "Estrella," whose towers and high dome stand out in bold relief against the bright blue sky. Near by is the English church and cemetery.

Visiting a cemetery is generally rather a gloomy proceeding, but this one is quite an exception. I saw it first in the month of April, when the tombstones were wreathed in masses of pink roses, and everywhere, growing so thickly that no earth could be seen, were beautiful white arum-lilies, rising out of a perfect sea of glistening green leaves. Above them stood the dark cypresses and light, spreading Judas-trees, covered with purple-pink blossoms, which shed a carpet of flowers on the narrow paths below.

JUDAS-TREE IN BLOOM.

There is a wise old proverb which says, "Do in Rome as Rome does," and certainly it pays in Lisbon to do as Lisbon does, and the same applies to any part of Portugal. When you go shopping you must remember to wish the shopkeeper "Good-day," and if you are a man, to bow and raise your hat. You are always expected to be polite, and you receive great politeness in return. Even if you turn out half the shop, and then go away without buying anything at all, the attendant shows no annoyance, but, on the contrary, is sometimes even profuse in his apologies for not having that which the signor is in search of. If, however, you enter in a lofty way—as I am sorry to say I have sometimes seen English people do—and, omitting all form of greeting, roughly demand this article or that, it is quite possible that even should the shopkeeper have exactly what you want, he may tell you he does not stock it, and bow you out of the door.

The people you see in the streets are mostly small and dark, and to judge by the way they stand about talking, sometimes for hours together, they would not seem to have very much to do. Walking down the principal streets of the town any afternoon, you will see little groups of men leaning up against the walls, or standing on the pavement arm in arm, blocking the way for other people, and talking together with much animation. Many are officers in uniform, from bemedalled generals and admirals to subalterns and midshipmen. It looks quite natural in Lisbon, but would strike us as very odd indeed in Bond Street or Piccadilly.

One of the prettiest sights in the whole town is to be seen early in the morning down on the quays along the river, when the graceful, gaily-painted fishing-boats come in, and land their cargoes of shimmering fish. The quays are very wide, and some of them slope right down to the water's edge. Here the fish are landed and piled up in heaps, and a crowd of waiting women set to work to fill their large fiat baskets and take them off for sale in the market near at hand, or to hawk them round the town. Some balance the baskets on their heads, others have them attached to either end of a long pole, which rests on the shoulder. These women are most picturesque. They have gaudy handkerchiefs tied round their heads, beneath small black "pork-pie" felt hats; the sleeves of their cotton blouses are turned up above the elbows, and their bare feet show below very full, short, brightly-coloured petticoats.

These Lisbon fish-wives correspond to our Cockneys in their fund of ready wit and good-humoured repartee. It is sometimes quite amusing to listen to the banter which passes between the busy workers on the quays and the fishermen, who shout their remarks from the much-encumbered decks of the boats. There are other men and women busily employed, salting and packing some of the fish into boxes and baskets for transportation inland, and others are already at work overhauling the nets.

LISBON FISH-WIVES.

The method of selling milk strikes one as very odd indeed. Instead of a milk-cart and cans, the cows and goats go round to the houses, and in the early morning are to be seen, even in the most busy streets of the town, being driven slowly along and milked as required at people's doors The electric trams which now run throughout the town and far into the country contrast strangely with old-fashioned customs of this kind, for Lisbon is daily growing more up-to-date, though there is still a slowness about many proceedings which makes one sometimes wonder what would happen if a rush of business, such as goes on in our own large towns, were to come that way. Southey, in one of his letters from Portugal, tells an amusing story of an English sailor who happened to see a fire in Lisbon. Assistance came late, and the house burnt slowly. "Confound it all!" cried he; "there is no spirit in this country. Why, we should have had a dozen houses burnt down in London by this time!"

CHAPTER V

PORTUGUESE CHILDREN

Portuguese children are taught to be very respectful to their parents, and those of the upper classes are carefully educated. It is the fashionable thing to have foreign nurses for them—English, French, or German—so that they may grow up to be good linguists. They go out for their daily walks and amuse themselves much like English boys and girls, hide-and-seek being a very favourite game; and they are just as fond as we are of hearing fairy-tales. They know all the old ones—"Cinderella," "Beauty and the Beast," and many others, besides many of the old Portuguese folk stories and legends, which are gradually dying out, but which are still firmly believed in by most of the peasants, and some of which I will tell you about presently. Girls generally have foreign governesses as they grow older, and the boys go to school very early. They work for long hours and have many examinations to pass. In Lisbon the young fellows play football and tennis, which they have taken from the English; but the Portuguese people are not naturally given to playing games. The little ones of the poorer classes have hardly any education at all, and are only too often to be seen begging in the streets.

The one event in the year which the town children look forward to above all others is the Carnival. In Lisbon this is a great time for them, though many of the old customs are gradually disappearing, for, alas! in Portugal, as elsewhere, there are many people who think that the old-time ways are not sufficiently up-to-date. The Carnival used to last for many days, and all kinds of practical jokes were played, some of them not at all amusing for the luckless folk who were the victims. Strings were tied across the road to trip people up. Water was squirted at the passers-by, or gloves full of sand and packets of flour thrown down on them from the windows. Oftener, however, there would be pleasanter missiles—bouquets, buttonholes, and bonbons—which were caught and returned by the gay throng. All this is modified nowadays, but a good deal of frolic still goes on, and it is considered great fun to pin papers on people's backs—"tails" they are called. Many nice and some nasty presents and letters are sent anonymously to friends through the post.

Then, also, there are masquerades, when people go about in fancy costume, decorated carts are seen in the streets, and the whole town gives itself up to amusement. Masked balls take place in the theatres, everyone going in fancy dress, and wearing little black masks, so that no one is supposed to know with whom they are dancing, and many of the "costume balls "in smart society are given during the Carnival.

Some other festivals that are particularly looked forward to by children are St. Anthony's Day, on June 13; St. John the Baptist's Day, on the 24th; and St. Peter's Day, on the 29th. Small altars, decorated with flowers and tiny candles, are placed on the door-steps by poor children who run after the passers-by begging for farthings "for the good Saint"; but it is the children, and not the "good Saint," who benefit by the contributions.

On the eves of these saints' days all children, if they can, rich and poor alike, delight in letting off fireworks, and in the evening crackers and squibs may be heard on all sides.

At about this time of year the girls have many superstitions about marriage. They throw thistles on the large bonfires which are lighted, thinking meanwhile of some lover. These thistles are left out of doors during the night and the following day, and if they remain green, they believe they will be fortunate in their love affairs, but if black and burnt, oh sorrow! no love is to be expected from the one thought of. It is to be feared that under these circumstances there must be many disappointments, unless, indeed, a little mild cheating be resorted to. There is also an old custom of gathering rushes on St. John's Eve. Lovers each cut a rush of equal length, and if in

the morning one is found to be longer than the other, the love of the person who cut it is supposed to be the more true and lasting. Certain plants and flowers are looked on as being lucky, and special virtue is supposed to attach to them if picked on the morning of St. John the Baptist's Day. In many parts there are legends of beautiful enchanted Moorish maidens, who are doomed to live in deep wells, but are allowed to appear early on that morning, and ask of those who come to draw water some boon which may break the spell that binds them.

St. Anthony is supposed to be the match-maker among the saints. In the church dedicated to him in Lisbon there is a letter-box where young people post letters, asking the Saint to find them sweethearts, and if their love affairs prosper, they sometimes post cheques and other thank-offerings to him in the same little box in church. The priests read the letters, and also stand proxy for St. Anthony in the matter of pocketing the money.

It is not only the children who make merry on the eves of these three saints' days. In Lisbon the common people spend the night at the Praca da Figueira—the market-place—which is beautifully decorated with flowers and fruit, some hanging in bunches or, sticks. Men and women buy pots of "Majarico"—a sweet-smelling plant, in the middle of which is stuck a large paper pink with some sweet love-verse, and these pinks are presented and accepted with pleasure by both men and women. Farther north, and especially at Coimbra and Figueira, these festivals are most remarkable. There are bonfires and music; the men and women dress in the picturesque costumes of the country, the women wearing, as on all festive occasions, a great deal of very handsome gold jewellery, for they spend most of their earnings on these quaint ornaments, and are very proud of them. There is much guitar-playing by the men, and all join in the popular Portuguese dances, "Ver-de-Gaio" and others, and sing the most lovely romantic songs.

CHAPTER VI

COUNTRY DANCES, SONGS, AND LEGENDS

The peasants are very fond of dance and song, particularly in Northern Portugal. At harvest-time, and in the month of May, they delight in gatherings where old-fashioned Oriental-looking dances take place. They are slow and sedate, consisting quite as much of movements of the body, arms, and hands, as of the feet, and must have been taken from the Moors. You seldom hear any laughter at these *dancas*, though in the ordinary way the northern Portuguese are cheery and light-hearted enough.

The music which accompanies them is also usually of a weird Oriental nature, in a minor key, like many of the national airs and ballads, but each district has its own peculiar songs, and these have often a great charm and sweetness about them, more especially in the mountainous districts, where the Moors never penetrated, and where the peasants retain more of their ancient Roman and Gothic origin.

"When the Portuguese labourer has done his long day's work, he does not lean against a post and smoke a pipe, nor does he linger in the wine-shop; but if it be a holiday or a Sunday, and in a rural district, he puts on a clean shirt, with a large gold or silver stud as a neck fastening, and his newest hat, varying in shape according to locality, but always of black felt, and of the kind one sees in pictures of Spanish life. He throws over his shoulder a black cloth cloak with a real gold or silver clasp. He takes his favourite ox-goad in his hand, as tall as himself, straight as an arrow, well-rounded, and polished, and bound with brass. He slings his mandolin round his neck, and makes his way to the nearest fashionable threshing-floor—the peasant's drawing-room. As he passes along, strumming careless chords and humming snatches of strange airs, the girls and lads stop their labour and accompany him,

lovers will interrupt their love-making to follow too, or continue their courting to the rhythmic tinkling of the mandolin. When the music and its following arrives at the dancing place, and the partners are all ranged in a circle, the dance will begin, with the strangest, slowest, most old-fashioned steps, the like whereof has not been danced under a civilized roof for centuries. The musician, or the three or four of them whose mandolins make the orchestra, dance in the round with the others, and, when the time arrives, turn and set to their partners like the other dancers."

The above is taken from the writings of an Englishman who spent many years of his life in Portugal, and knew the country well.

There is still a great deal of superstition among the peasants, and some of the quaint legends of vampires, spirits, and fairies in which they firmly believe are most strange. Stories of Moorish maidens are very general. If, wandering through the forests, a man happens to hear an echo of his own voice, he thinks it is that of a Moorish maid, and, being a good Roman Catholic, crosses himself devoutly to keep off harm.

In one place they tell of a huge and terrible dragon, who did all sorts of dreadful things, and terrorized the entire neighbourhood. At last a brave and chivalrous youth set out to try and destroy it, but while he lay in wait for the monster in the heart of a dark wood, he was overcome by sleep, and awoke, to his horror, to find himself in the coils of the monster itself, and the horrible creature in the act of kissing him on the lips. But as it did so the spell was broken, and instead of a dragon, he found he was being embraced by a most beautiful Moorish maiden, with whom he fell in love on the spot, and they were married, and lived happily ever after.

In another place there is a story of one of these maidens whom some wicked spirit had turned into a stone, and quite unconscious of what it really was, a farmer was in the habit of using this particular stone as a weight on his harrow. One day, to his great surprise, he heard a voice in the air above him telling him to break off one corner of the stone and take it home, and then to throw the rest into a deep pool in the river, which flowed near at hand. He did as he was bidden, and as the stone splashed into the water, he heard a peal of joyful unearthly laughter, as the Moorish maid once more resumed her human form; and on returning to his house the farmer found that the piece of stone he had left there had been changed into pure gold, which made him rich for life.

There is also a great belief in witches—*bruxas* they call them. The fishermen often think they see them at night on the crests of the waves. They say they are quite accustomed to them, that the lapping of the water is the murmur of their songs, and they are not at all afraid of them, as these water-witches are considered quite harmless. The land bruxas are, however, much more dreaded, and it is strange in a land of otherwise sensible people to hear of the queer customs which are still in vogue, and are supposed to avert the evil they might otherwise do. On May Day a piece of red wool is tied round the necks of all the young animals on a farm: mules, donkeys, sheep, goats, pigs, etc. Old horseshoes are nailed to the house-doors, and a slip of broom is stuck into every stable-door. Every cart, plough, or ox-yoke in the place is also decorated with broom, which is considered particularly efficacious against the dreaded spells of the *bruxas*.

Some animals are looked on as "lucky," particularly the oxen, and the most superstitious peasant will believe himself to be quite safe from all danger of charms or magic when standing among them.

Of all the birds the house-martins are the most cherished, for the legend still survives that they fly to heaven every day to wash our Lord's feet, and it would be thought most unlucky to in any way destroy their nests or young.

CHAPTER VII

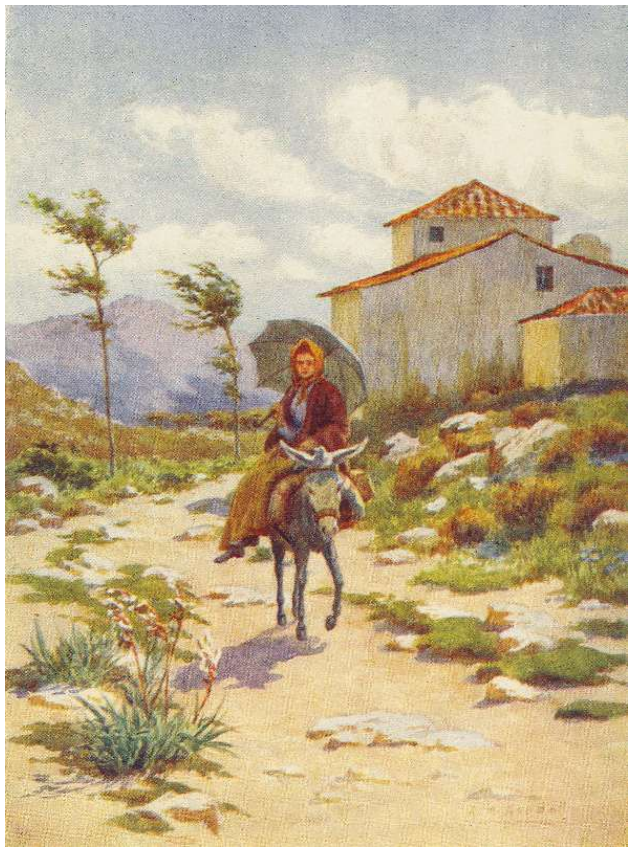
COUNTRY WAYS AND COUNTRY FOLK

The Portuguese peasants, dark-faced and unshaven, often look such ruffians that at first, when you meet them on some lonely country track, you would not be at all surprised if they brandished a knife over your head with the blood-curdling challenge of "Your money or your life!"

But in reality they are nice civil fellows, anxious to please in any way they can, friendly and full of natural politeness. Do you ask your way in broken sentences, your scanty Portuguese vocabulary helped out with signs and gesticulations, the Portuguese workman will take the greatest trouble, first of all to discover your meaning, and then to help you and make himself understood, even going out of his way to accompany you to some point of vantage, from whence he may the more easily direct you. Then, with a smile, a bow, and lifted hat, he will go on his way ready to act the good Samaritan to the next comer.

Would you like to imagine you are going for a walk in Portugal, and that you see all the quaint country folk we should pass? Let us choose a pretty walk—say down the valley to Collares, that little village of vintage fame at the foot of the Cintra range of mountains, which tower above us on the left, their summits standing out in bold masses of rock, clear-cut against a deep blue sky.

It is spring-time, and all the fruit-trees are in blossom. Tender spring colouring throws its veil of softest shimmering green over the tall poplars, and wherever we look there are wild-flowers, springing up in the fields and on the roadside and on the rock-strewn slopes of the untilled land. Such wild-flowers! Vivid gentian-blue, and deepest rose, and many that we know quite well, and cultivate with so much trouble in our gardens at home. Tall, starry-shaped asphodels, slender white lilies and large blue ones, snapdragons, lupins, orchids, gladioli, blue and yellow irises, mallows, foxgloves, and many others; and climbing among the cistusbushes are wild-roses, and sweet-smelling honey-suckle and everlasting peas, and there are the large, rose-like white flowers of the cistus itself, with a handsome dark brown blotch on each leaf. Brightest of all are the fields of blue convolvulus, looking as though a piece of summer sky had lost itself, and had been caught and held prisoner in the grass.



GOING TO SEE FRIENDS.

Down the valley flows a little brook clear as crystal, which goes bubbling and gurgling along; gliding shyly round the big rocks as though it wondered what it would find on the other side, and then, grown bolder, leaping with a sparkle and a splash over some tiny waterfall into a deeper pool below. There is an old moss-grown bridge with maidenhair ferns peeping out from between the stones. We cross over, and before long the footpath comes out into the dusty road.

Presently we meet a girl on a donkey, sitting sideways on a funny-looking affair which does service for a saddle, and which half smothers her small mount. She has got her best shawl on, and her brightest orange handkerchief tied over her head, and because the sun is hot (and perhaps still more because she is going to visit some friends, and wishes to appear smart), she is holding up an old green umbrella.

Next, we meet another donkey, but he is a less prosperous beast than his brother who has just gone by. Thin and tired, he droops his head, and his ears lop sideways in a depressed way; and no wonder, for hanging on either side of his pack-saddle are huge baskets filled with earth, and piled above them and across his poor little back are great bundles and sacks stuffed with green fodder. Perched, goodness knows how, on top of all, sits an old country-woman. There is hardly any donkey to be seen, except the head and legs, and a few inches above the tail. We wonder how he can get along at all, but his mistress won't let him dawdle; and as her ruthless stick comes down with a crack on the few available inches, we feel we would give anything to save his poor thinly-covered bones.

Sights of this kind are the one thing that would make English boys and girls miserable in Portugal. Kind as the people are to one another and to their children, their poor animals are often most brutally over-laden, overworked, and beaten. No one seems to think that animals need kindness and consideration, no one minds seeing acts of cruelty.

But let us walk on and try to forget that poor patient little donkey. What is this coming down the road in a cloud of dust? A horseman, cantering along with his heavy overcoat flying out behind him. He is riding a pretty little bay horse, hardly bigger than a pony, with fine legs and muzzle, long tail and mane, great big eyes looking about him, and ears pricked well forward. What a strange figure the rider makes! He is sitting on a very high saddle covered with flapping goat-skins, and his feet disappear into the quaintest of stirrups, veritable wooden boxes, handsomely ornamented with brass-work. He has a brightly-coloured striped rug, with many tassels, rolled up and thrown across the front of his saddle, and various other odds and ends are swinging about. He is a young farmer, and thinks himself rather a fine fellow, with his broad-brimmed felt hat, wide, magenta-coloured sash, and thick black overcoat or cloak, with fur collar and scarlet lining. It has, however, not struck him to shave since last Sunday week, and his appearance is that of the villain in a play.

CHAPTER VIII

COUNTRY WAYS AND COUNTRY FOLK (CONTINUED)

Next we pass a string of heavily-laden mules, and now a farm-cart drawn by big, sleepy-looking oxen. The Portuguese have seen no reason to change the build of their farm-carts since the old days of the Roman occupation. The wheels have no spokes, they are almost solid, and instead of turning round on the axle as ours do, the axle is fixed in and revolves with them. The body of the cart is just a flat board with upright sticks round the edge, against which side planks can be propped if required. When first you see these odd-looking carts, they strike you as having come out of some prehistoric picture-book.

Away on the right a field is being ploughed, and the plough, like the cart, is of the same pattern as those used by the Romans—a very primitive affair. Just a wooden spike shod

with iron, which scratches shallow furrows in the earth. It is being drawn by a great big ox and a very small donkey. The ploughman has a little boy to help him, who carries a long pole with which to clear away the earth that clogs the plough. Man and boy have been at work since very early morning, and they will go on till six or seven in the evening. All day long, hour after hour, they sing a monotonous kind of chant in a minor key, only about two lines, repeated over and over again, and it sounds as though there were no real words to it. It is just such a tune, or want of tune, as may be heard any day on the east coast of Africa, sung by native boat-boys.

THE FARM CART OF THE COUNTRY.

It is a legacy from the early days when the country was held by the Moors. The Southern Portuguese more especially have retained many Moorish customs, and the peasants have a very distinctly Moorish type of face, with the inscrutable expression which may so often be seen among Eastern peoples.

There are many Arab wells or *shadufs* in the country. A beam is placed horizontally between two pillars, and on this is balanced a long pole, to one end of which a weight (very often a large stone) is attached, and to the other, by means of a rope, a bucket. A pull on the rope lets the bucket down into the well; when full the rope is let go, and the weight at the other end raises the water.

With a few exceptions, in some of the larger towns, nearly all the shops are Eastern-looking. They have no smart plate-glass windows in which to show off their pretty merchandise; often they have hardly any window at all, but just a big doorway, through which you look into a dark passage, where the various goods for sale hang on the walls and from the ceiling.

The Portuguese have many other Eastern ways: for instance, if they wish to send you farther from them, they make a sign with the hand which we should take to be beckoning you nearer, and if they want you to approach, they would seem to be motioning you away—both of which signs are entirely Eastern.

They have also retained from the Moors a love of coloured tiles for decorating their houses, and even their churches, both inside and out. There are many factories at Lisbon and Oporto where these tiles are made, but they never now attain the beauty of the old Moorish ones, which are still to be seen here and there throughout the country. It is a lost art.

But we have left our plough far behind, and are coming to a few cottages and a small wayside inn. A bush hangs over the door to show that wine is sold, the time-honoured sign which was used long ago in England, and from which the saying comes, "Good wine needs no bush."

Outside, tied to rings fastened in the wall, stand two or three donkeys, a pony, and a mule, all very tired and dejected-looking, while lolling in the doorway, or sitting on a bench

inside, are their masters, drinking the good red wine of the country, of which they can buy a large bottle for the modest sum of forty *ries*, or about twopence.

They are fond of a glass of wine, but you will see little or no drunkenness, except occasionally on a Sunday. Close to the inn is the old stone watering-place, the *fonte*, as it is called, whence, out of the mouth of a quaintly-carved stone head, a fresh stream of water, cool and clear from the mountains, is ever flowing. All over the country, wherever there are a few houses together, and at the street corners in the towns, may be seen these stone watering-places and fountains, where the brightly-dressed peasant-women fill their large earthenware jars, carrying them away balanced on their heads, where the lads and maidens wrangle good-humouredly over whose turn it is next, where the children play and dabble in the water, and the gossips meet to talk over the latest scandal.

There is a small boy running about on sturdy, bare brown legs, hands thrust deep into the pockets of his ragged and patched little breeches, which are kept up by the usual sash, worn by men and boys alike, and wound round and round the waist. His shirt is open at the neck, and on his head he wears the cap of the country, a long worsted bag, drawn well over the ears, and hanging almost to the shoulder.

These caps are always either black, or bright green with a scarlet stripe round the opening, and, as we are soon to realize, serve many useful purposes, as well as that of covering the head.

The little urchin, seeing we are strangers, comes up to have a good look at us, and out of idle curiosity we tisk his name. He gives us a string of them, which sounds fitting for a young prince—Henriques Quintino Rodrigues de Monserrate, the latter being probably the name of the village he lives in. Finding us less interesting than he had hoped, our small friend proceeds to remove his cap and to play with something at the bottom of it, which he exhibits with great pride to another child who has come out of one of the cottages. He eventually pulls it out, and we see that it is a very large black beetle! His hand goes in again and draws out another, and yet another, and his three treasures are put down to crawl about on the steps leading up to the watering-place. At last, tired even of this engrossing amusement, he grabs hold of them again, and drops them one by one into the recesses of the cap, which he then proceeds to replace upon his head. When remonstrated with, he quite fails to catch our point, and assures us that there could be no safer place for carrying black beetles.

We have lingered enough, and must be going on our way. The whole valley seems transfigured, and all things loom fairylike through a golden haze as we look towards the setting sun. We wander on through an orchard of orange and lemon trees, with their wealth of golden fruit and tender white blossom, the fallen fruit lying beneath the trees, as do the apples in an orchard at home when shaken by the winds of autumn. We meet an old priest, in wide-brimmed hat and long soutane, who smiles benignly on us. He passes on, and the sound of a church bell, calling to prayer, floats softly up the valley.

CHAPTER IX

CINTRA

If there is one spot in Portugal more famed than another for its beauty, it is Cintra. The little town lies about seventeen miles from Lisbon, perched on the side of the Cintra Mountains. Many of the well-to-do people of the capital have villas there, where they go for change and bracing air when the heat of summer makes town life unendurable. The best time to be at Cintra is, however, in April and May, when the piercing winter winds are gone, and before the sleepy little place—half town and half village—is awakened out of its usual quiet by the invasion of the smart society folk from Lisbon. It is then that Nature puts on her fresh spring dress, and every nook and corner is bright with wild-flowers.

There are many things which lend charm to the place: the beauty and historic interest of the old half-Moorish palace in the village itself, the wonderful Pena Palace, perched high on its rocky pinnacle on the mountain-top; the ruined Moorish fort and castle, whose solidly-built battlements and low towers crown another summit a thousand feet above the town; the many *quintas* or country houses hidden away among the trees; the lovely gardens, full of flowers, palms, and semi-tropical plants; the cool splash of water falling over rocks, and the deep still tanks, covered with water-lilies, and reflecting the surrounding beauty in their quiet depths.

Above all, there are the countless beautiful walks in every direction. You may go by the road which zigzags down the steep hillside to the valley below; wander eastward for miles towards Lisbon, over rough and bleak moorland, or westward towards Collares, through the cork-woods, where gnarled and twisted branches and grey-green foliage meet over shady footpaths, and huge boulders rise out of a carpet of ferns and flowers.

Of the many delightful walks and scrambles, the most charming of all is a climb to the top of the hill—not by the dusty, winding highway, but by a rough and steep footpath. It starts between overhanging trees and high walls, old and lichen-covered. Maidenhair and other ferns grow in every chink of the stones; primroses, periwinkles, and violets stud the grass below.

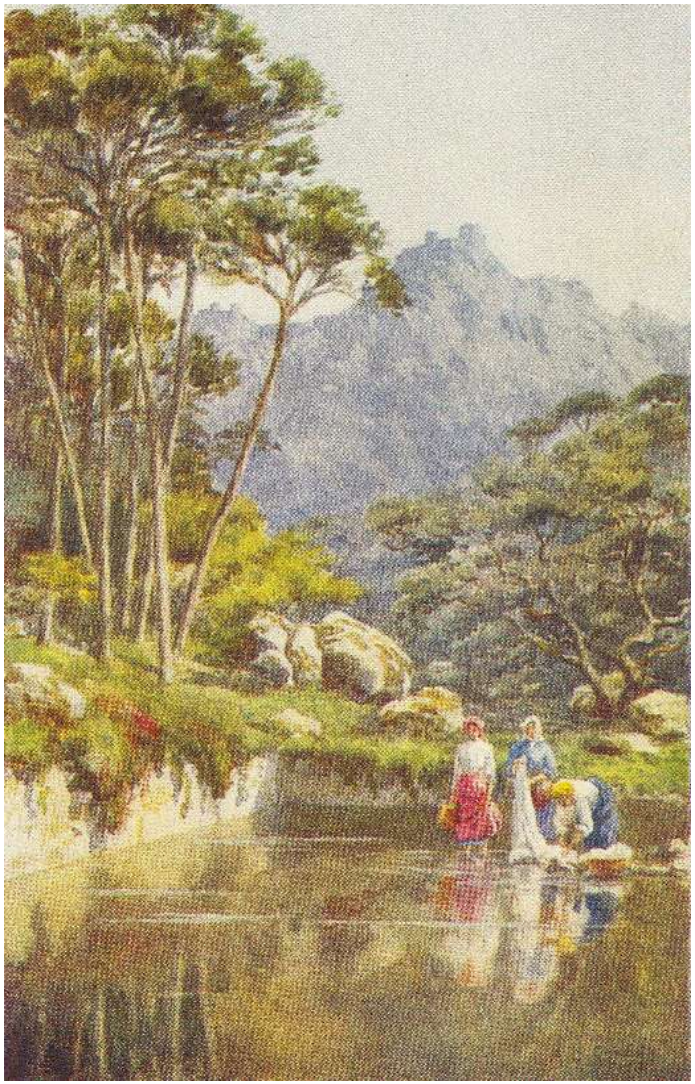
STONE-PINES NEAR CINTRA.

Farther up the walls grow low and crumbling, and seen through the blossom-laden branches of a Judas-tree is a bold mass of giant rocks, crowned by a group of old stone-pines, with their dark umbrella-shaped tops, and their stems glowing red and purple in the afternoon sunlight.

Far below lies the plain, neither green, nor brown, nor grey, nor olive, but a little of all; bare undulating country stretching away to the sea and to the hazy blue hills in the distance. Long white roads can be clearly seen, like narrow tapes, leading over hill and dale to the far horizon.

At length, standing high on its granite rock, you come to the Pena Palace, with its many domes, towers, and turrets, a

royal palace, whence King Emanuel the Fortunate used to gaze out to sea, watching for the return of Vasco da Gama from his first expedition to India.



A QUIET POOL AT CINTRA.

The most striking features of the old Palace in the town below are two tall chimneys, shaped like the tops of a couple of gigantic soda-water bottles. They belong to the royal kitchens, and were intended to carry off the fumes from the row of little charcoal fires along one side of the vast apartments, and on which in days gone by all the cooking was done. The kitchens have no ceiling at all, the walls simply narrowing in to form the chimneys, and I fear that in winter-time the poor cooks must have found it uncommonly draughty.

To enter this Palace you pass the old women who sit under their big umbrellas, selling oranges at the corner of the little market-square, and, taking no notice of a sleepy sentry, who as often as not leans propped up against the gateway, you walk into the courtyard, and up a broad flight of steps.

Most noticeable in the Palace are the exquisite old Moorish tiles let into the walls, and the painted wooden ceilings of some of the rooms. There is one of these in which poor King Alfonso VI. was imprisoned for many years by his wife and younger brother, who usurped the throne. Whatever his faults may have been, one cannot help feeling sorry for the wretched man, who tramped up and down his prison till the stone paving became worn away in a groove.

Whilst on this subject, I must not forget to tell you about Portuguese prisons in general, and so I will describe the one at Cintra, which is a fair sample of the others. It has large unglazed windows looking on to the square, and behind a double row of iron cross-bars you see the haggard pale-faced prisoners, herded together in filth and squalor. They spend most of their time begging for alms from the passers-by. Sometimes their friends stand in the street below, and hold long conversations with them, or pass up food and tobacco in the prisoners' long bag-shaped caps, which they lower by means of a string. The sentry who keeps guard outside takes no notice of these proceedings, for Portuguese criminals are allowed this one indulgence, perhaps to make up for their otherwise wretched lot.

CHAPTER X

OBIDOS, LEIRIA, AND THOMAR

There are many places besides Cintra where ancient strongholds are to be found. In a land where there was so much fighting every town had to be protected, and throughout the country you come across old-world places which but for the tumble-down state of the fortifications can hardly have changed since the days when Moors and Christians struggled for supremacy.

One such old town is Obidos, won from the Moors in 1148. I remember it as I saw it last, perched high on its steep and rocky hill, with battlements, towers, and the ruins of the castle standing out dark and formidable against a glowing sunset sky. It is the quaintest little place in the world, carrying one's thoughts back to the Middle Ages, and scarcely a house has crept beyond the shelter of its high, castellated walls. There are only two narrow fortified gateways, beneath whose arches the inhabitants pass in and out. Within the walls are the tightly-packed houses, low and picturesque, and numerous churches. The narrow, winding streets are full of dark-eyed children, gaunt pigs, and straying donkeys, while flowers hang in masses of brilliant colour over every wall and balcony.

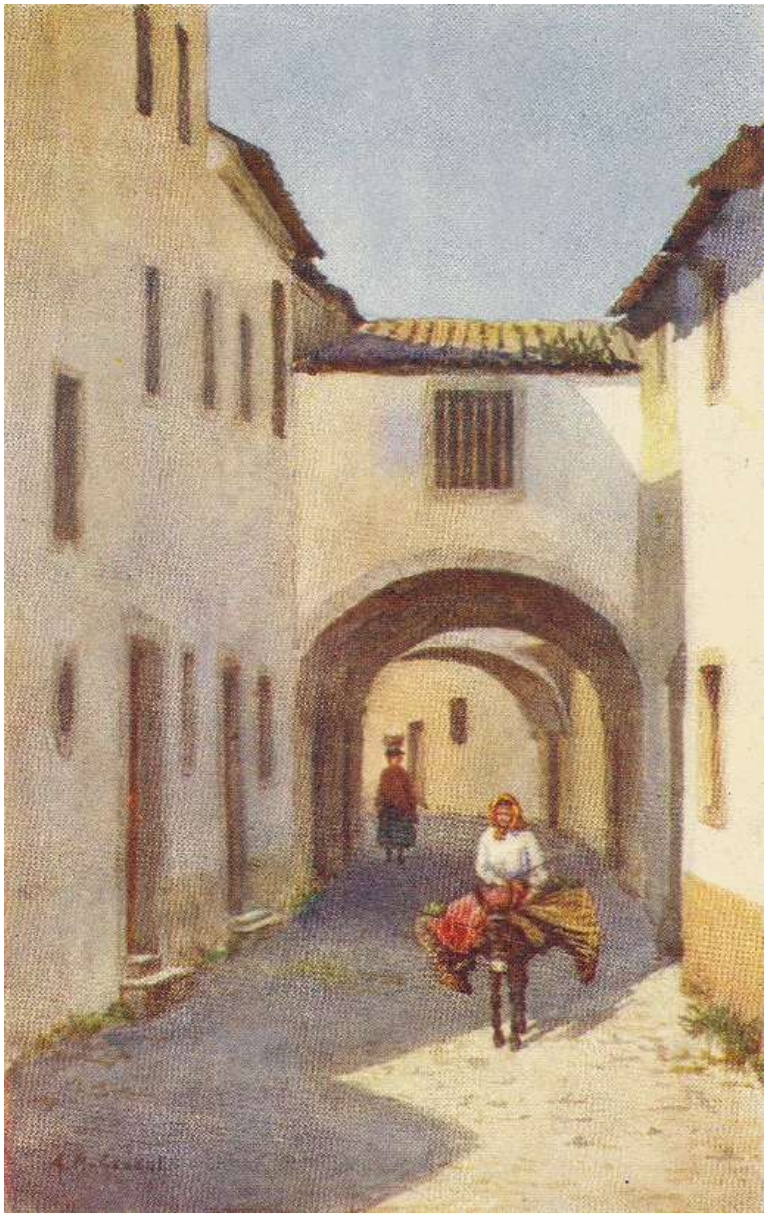
In other towns the protecting fortress stands alone on some high outcrop of rock, while the houses nestle at its foot, as, for instance, at Leiria. Centuries ago it was a Roman centre of some importance, and later on Suevis, Visigoths, and Moors held sway there in turn, until it was finally taken by King Alfonso Henriques in about 1135. More than a hundred years later King Dinez lived there, and on the site of the Moorish stronghold he built the great castle the ruins of which dominate the town to this day.

Surrounded by hills, and standing on the green banks of the River Liz, Leiria is now a sleepy, picturesque country town, with a cathedral, a market-square, wide, shady walks skirting the river, and quaint little streets spanned at intervals by arches. It seems strange now to think of the stormy days when knights in armour rode up the winding way that leads to the castle, yet later years have also brought fire and sword to this peaceful valley. In the Peninsular War, between 1807 and 1810, the French troops passed through it no less than three times, and under Marshal Junot and General Margaron it was given over to pillage and violence.

Some twenty miles or more away, beyond hill-tops clothed with pine-woods and heather, and valleys rich with olives, figs, and vines, lies Thomar, another town sheltering beneath a high castle-crowned hill.

This fortress, under whose protection the town first sprang up, was built by the Knights Templars in the middle of the twelfth century. It was the special mission of this order of knights to defend the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, to protect the Christians in that city, and to fight the Mohammedans wherever they might meet them. The Moslems in Portugal were the Moors, who made a mighty effort to capture this Castle of Thomar some sixty years after it was founded. It was a celebrated siege, and an old inscription, let into one of the walls, tells the history of it in a few quaint words. Translated, it reads as follows:

> "In 1228, on the 3rd day of July, the King of Morocco came with 400,000 cavalry, and 500,000 footmen, to besiege the Castle for six days, and destroyed all that he found outside the walls. God delivered the Castle, its Master and brethren from his hands. The same King returned to his country with innumerable losses of men and horses."



RETURNING FROM MARKET, LEIRA.

On the suppression of the Order of Templars in 1312, King Diniz established the Order of Christ at Thomar—"for the defence of the Faith, the discomfiture of the Moors, and the extension of the Portuguese monarchy," as the old records put it. It became one of the wealthiest and most powerful orders of chivalry in Christendom, its knights fighting in all parts of the world, till in 1523 King John III. converted it into a purely religious community of monks, and the heroic days of war and adventure came to an end.

As the years passed by many additions were made to the grim old fortress. A magnificent new church was added, chapter-houses and cloisters, dormitories and kitchens. There are no fewer than eight cloisters, of different dates, styles, and sizes, and all these oddments of architecture, each one beautiful in its own way, have mellowed with age into a rambling, fascinating whole.

The town below contains several churches of interest, and many factories and cotton-mills. The River Nabao runs through it, passing beneath a fine old bridge, and turning numberless picturesque water-wheels as it flows along. On its banks poplars rear their tall heads, willows dip their long branches in the cool stream, and rows of peasant women may be seen standing in the water, hard at work washing. They rub and scrub the clothes ruthlessly on hard stones, rinsing them in the running water; but one feels quite reconciled to see the garments being worn out and ruined, if only one may be allowed to watch these charming, brightly-dressed laundresses, and to listen to their merry talk and laughter.

CHAPTER XI

THE PEASANTRY

The peasants are very hard-working, particularly in the north, where they are a finer race altogether than in the south, not only better-looking, manlier, and more resolute in character, but thriftier and more industrious.

In a previous chapter I told you about the dancing and singing that they are so fond of; but they are not always light-hearted, for there is another and darker side to their lives.

The wages are much lower than in England, and the working hours much longer; sunrise to sunset is the measure of labour, and the summer days are long and the sun is cruelly hot. By the time work is over, the tired peasants can often have but little heart left for fun or frolic.

THE END OF A LONG DAY.

Very few agricultural machines are used in Portugal, all the sowing and reaping being done by hand. The grain, too, is threshed out with flails. The workers stand round a heap of maize and swing their flails rhythmically up and down with a dull, thudding sound, till all the grain is threshed out.

There is an old folk-song about this which I must quote for you. The feeling that runs all through the verses reveals pathetically the dull monotony of the long hours spent in weary toil. The singer begins by reproaching his flail; then his conscience smites him as he remembers that it is by the aid of this trusty friend that he earns his bread, and that to-morrow will be as to-day—an endless to-morrow of toil and labour.

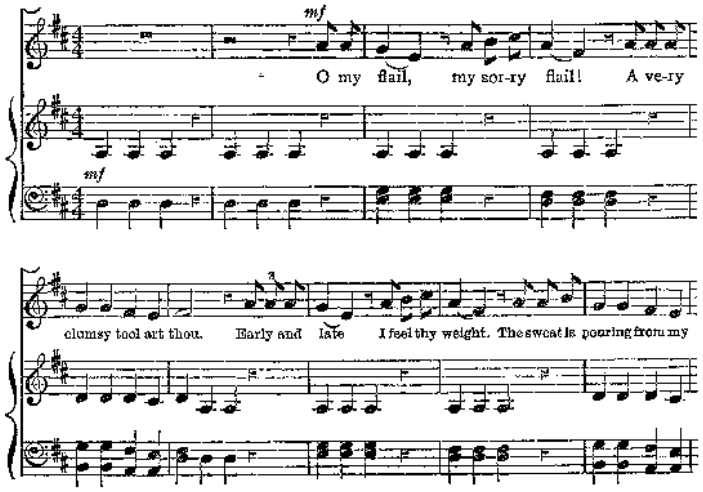
Wheat is separated from the husk in a very odd way. It is trodden out by oxen, and beans are worked out of their pods in the same manner. The women toil in the fields just as hard as the men—if anything harder, and one may often see a woman carrying a huge load on her head with a man strolling idle and empty-handed beside her. Even the children have to make themselves useful, starting work at a very early age. A solemn little boy or girl carrying a goad twice their own height will walk barefooted in front of ox-cart or plough, guiding the great docile beasts in the way they should go. The children, too, are sent out to herd the cattle and to look after the flocks.

The above is a well-known Portuguese folk-song. As is always the case with folk. songs which are traditional, there are slight differences in the versions in use in different places. The above is the version as sung by students at Coimbra. All present should clap their hands on the first three beats of every bar. The author is indebted for the English translation to Mr. Morton Latham.

I knew a little boy who seemed to spend his whole life shepherding his father's flock of sheep and goats, which are always mixed in Portugal. Early in the morning he would leave the farm and wander off over the moors. In cold weather he would wear a sack over his head to protect himself from the piercing wind; in summer he would try to find a cool spot

beneath some high rock or shady tree, and there he would contentedly eat his midday meal of black bread, olives, and goat's-milk cheese, always, however, keeping an eye on his charges, lest any should stray.

"O MY FLAIL."



Quite different is the work of the shepherds in the mountainous country of the north and in the great Estrella range, where the lofty crags and deep gorges of the mountains stretch away as far as the eye can see. Here it is men's work, and in the summer, when the flocks are taken to the high upland pastures, the shepherds live in roughly-built stone huts. At night they often sleep in the midst of their flocks, while their dogs, big long-haired mastiffs, keep guard on the outskirts to give warning at the approach of danger.

Very real danger it is at times, for in the narrow, precipitous ravines of these wild hills are still to be found—though of late years much more rarely—the large brown wolves, which steal down at dead of night to carry off their prey. The struggle is fierce between the faithful watch-dogs and their savage enemies. The shepherds in the darkness lay about them lustily with their staves, the growling and snarling of the wolves and mastiffs mingle with the bleating of the sheep and goats and the shouts of the men, till at last the wolves are beaten off, slinking away as noiselessly as they came.

HERD BOY AND HIS FLOCK.

The cottages of the poor are often only small, one-storied houses, built of loose stones without cement, and just plastered roughly over to keep out the wind. Inside they are dark and dreary, and very scantily furnished. Although they work so hard, the peasants in many parts are wretchedly poor, and their food none too plentiful. It is different from that of an English labourer, being mainly black bread, made from a mixture of maize and rye-flour. They also eat olives, rice, oil, vegetables, and a considerable quantity of dried and salted cod-fish—*bacalhau*, as it is called. It smells and tastes very strong, and before it is cooked is as hard as a board. Nevertheless, it is very nutritious. The whole population is particularly fond of it, so much so that it is by no means unusual to see people eating it uncooked, though to us it would not seem at all a tempting delicacy.

CHAPTER XII

PILGRIMAGES

The *Romarias*, or annual pilgrimages, are a great institution in Portugal. They are looked on partly as being good for the soul, and partly as pleasurable outings. Sometimes the pilgrimage is to a shrine on some lonely hill-top, sometimes to a spot marked by an array of stone crosses, where some local saint is reputed to have performed a miracle. These pilgrimages keep up interest in religious observances, but unluckily there is often much superstition connected with them.

There are two places which, above all others, attract vast crowds of the devout, as many as 30,000 to 35,000 people being often present. One is "Bom Jesus do monte" (Good Jesus of the mountain), near Braga; and the other "Bom Jesus dos boucas" (Good Jesus of the barren sands), at Mathosinhos, a village on the sea-coast not far from Oporto. Here, in an unpretentious church, is enshrined a crucifix reputed to possess the most wonderful miracle-working powers.

The legend runs that long, long ago, so far back that date and year have been forgotten, this figure of our Lord was washed ashore and placed by the priest in the village church. It had been much buffeted by the waves, and had lost one arm, but some little time after, the missing limb was discovered in the following miraculous way. A poor old woman was trudging along the beach one day, picking up driftwood wherewith to light her fire. She saw a piece which she thought was the very thing required, and returned home with it, only to find that do what she would, she could not get it to burn. She put it out in the sun to dry, but all to no purpose; so at length she decided to cut it up into little splinters, to see if in that way it would more readily catch fire. No sooner was her chopper lifted ready to strike than the wood jumped to one side! The faster the blows rained down the more nimble did it become, till at last, in alarm, the old dame sought a priest, to whom she related her strange story. He examined the piece of wood, and was inspired to recognize the missing arm, which was soon restored to its proper position.

The pious folk for miles around still firmly believe that this sacred image, coming to them thus wonderfully from the sea, must have power to help the toilers of the deep, and must be the very special protector of seamen and fishermen. When the storms are wildest, and their boats are in danger of being wrecked, it is to our Lord of Mathosinhos that the sailors cry in their distress. They ascribe their preservation to His miraculous powers, and the church is full of the quaintest votive offerings given in humble gratitude for answered prayers. Extraordinary wax models of legs and arms hang near the shrine, and also numberless pictures, crudely painted by the mariners themselves. These depict ships in every conceivable peril, and generally the figure in the church is prominently portrayed, stilling the raging waves, or rescuing the drowning men. Terrible daubs they are, but they hang there, a pathetic witness to the faith which, in the hour of danger, could seek for help where alone help was to be found. They are presented with a gift of money at the great yearly pilgrimage at Whitsuntide.

A large fair is held at the same time, where whole stalls are devoted to the sale of whistles. They are made of red, yellow, and brown pottery, and are the very oddest-looking things, in the shape of grotesque birds, beasts, and figures. Everyone buys one, and everyone whistles. It is the right thing to do at Whitsuntide in Mathosinhos.

The pilgrimage to "Bom Jesus do monte" also takes place at Whitsuntide, and lasts for three days. The church stands on a high hill. Leading up to it are broad flights of steps, zigzagging from terrace to terrace, and flanked by walls and overhanging trees. The terraces are ornamented with statues, obelisks, and fountains carved in granite, and all the

way up, at regular intervals, are small shrines or chapels, in which stand groups of life-sized figures representing different scenes in the Passion of our Lord. Up these steps toil the pilgrims in their thousands, men and women, young and old, reverently worshipping at each shrine before passing on. Some few in their devotion, weighed down by their burden of sin and sorrow, perform the entire ascent on their knees. Masses are chanted and sermons preached in the church; solemn processions pass to and fro, with banners and crucifix borne aloft. All knees are bent, all heads are bowed, as priests in gorgeous vestments, bearing the Host, move slowly along.

Children dressed like fairies take a great part in the processions, with spangled wings, or the soft feathered pinions of a bird fixed to their shoulders. I have seen weary little pilgrims, so small and so tired that the men who marched beside them picked them up tenderly and carried them along, fast asleep, in their arms.

There have to be great preparations made for so large a gathering. For days beforehand the creaking of ox-waggons may be heard, wending their way slowly up the hill, with their loads of food and casks of wine. Decorations are put up, poles, and flags, and strings of Chinese lanterns. The people begin to arrive on the Saturday. Some go to one or other of the three hotels, which on these occasions are packed to overflowing; but they mostly camp out in the woods in tents, or rough huts made of branches. They also build fireplaces with stones and clay, and ovens in which to bake their bread.

Here and there an idle youth brings out his guitar, or someone bursts gaily into song. It is like a scene in a theatre, only that it is all real—a huge, happy picnic party, come together for prayer and praise, and after that to enjoy themselves as much as they possibly can.

All are dressed in their very best. The men wear tight trousers, white shirts, sashes round the waist, broad-brimmed felt hats, and short coats much tagged and braided. The women look very gay with blue, orange, or red silk kerchiefs crossed over the breast, snowy-white blouses, tight-fitting bodices, black or coloured, and thickly-pleated skirts of every conceivable hue, cut short at the ankles. They wear bright embroidered aprons, and a sort of pocket hanging round the waist, very elaborately ornamented with beads or sequins. Embroidered muslin handkerchiefs cover their heads, surmounted by round black hats edged with floss silk made to curl and look like ostrich feathers. Added to all this, they are decked out with a great deal of gold jewellery—necklaces, heavy earrings, and huge heart-shaped lockets of strange, intricate design.

A rich farmer's wife will sometimes have her whole bodice covered with gold ornaments, and should she happen to be the proud owner of three pairs of earrings, will wear them all, to the great envy of her neighbours.

The women also delight in possessing a great many petticoats. The more they have the more important do they consider themselves, for it shows how wealthy they must be, and on such an occasion as a pilgrimage they don them all. Sixteen or eighteen on one woman! Just think of it in warm weather! On festive occasions a rich peasant woman will be so be-petticoated that she can scarcely walk, and will have to move slowly along in a rolling, ungainly manner; but she will be a proud woman, and will gladly endure the discomfort for the sake of the importance and dignity conferred upon her by her many skirts.

CHAPTER XIII

FARMS AND VINEYARDS

The best tilled farms in Portugal are in the north, in the rich province of Minho. They are quite small, and are worked like well-kept gardens by the farmer and his family, with perhaps the help of one or two hired hands.

The chief crop grown there is maize, and many different things are sown with it, such as dwarf kidney-beans and gourds. Young cabbages are also planted among the maize, and in the winter, after the grain has been garnered, they grow to a great height, when their leaves are plucked off one by one, the top being left to grow taller still.

June and July are very busy months. Besides the wheat and rye harvests, the maize, which is not cut until September or October, gives endless work. First it has to be hoed, and then earthed up. Later on it is gradually thinned out, some of it being taken as fodder for the cattle, and all the time it has to be carefully and regularly watered. This is generally done by irrigation. A farmer's whole prosperity depends on his water-supply, and no trouble is too great to insure a good one. Sometimes it is brought for miles in underground channels, or along a groove cut in the top of a broad wall. Another method is to raise it from a well by means of an old-fashioned water-wheel, worked by oxen. Many buckets are set about a foot apart on an endless chain, which passes over the wheel. With each turn these buckets dip into the well, and as they come up again empty the water into little channels, which carry it in all directions to irrigate the growing crops.

As the maize ripens to harvest the golden cobs have to be cut from the straw, husked, dried, and finally threshed.

The husking or removing of the outer sheath is a tedious business, so the farmers often give a kind of harvest home, to which they invite the neighbouring peasants. They provide food and wine in plenty, and their guests work far into the night, to the accompanying music of guitars and violins.

There are many different kinds of beans grown—black, white, grey, and yellow, mottled beans and striped beans, large and small. Flax, too, is widely cultivated, and in the north the farmers' wives and daughters spend the long winter evenings spinning and weaving it into linen for their clothes. In the marshy land near the sea we find rice, and most of the onions that are sold in England as Spanish onions in reality come from the North of Portugal.

From the north, too, comes the wine we call port. Vineyards flourish, and wine is made in all parts of the kingdom; but that which is imported so largely into England, and which is handed with dessert in so many English houses, is made only from the grapes grown on the steep hillsides of a tract of country on the banks of the River Douro, some sixty miles above the old seaport town of Oporto. It extends a long way up the river, and for a few miles to the north and south, through the valleys and gorges of many small tributary streams. It is a mountainous country, and from the water's edge to the high hill-tops there is nothing to be seen but vineyards, rising terrace above terrace in dull, unvarying monotony. The vines are grown as bushes, and have none of the beauty of those in many other parts, where they are trained over trellises, or allowed to ramble at will up pollarded trees.

You may have often seen the rich tawny red wine on the dining-room table, but I wonder if you have ever thought of all the labour that went to produce it. The construction of the terraces where the vines are to grow is in itself a mighty piece of work. Each terrace has its strong retaining wall, built with the stones taken from the soil, and when the vines have been planted, they require constant care and attention. In the autumn the low-growing shoots have to be removed and the roots uncovered. Pruning begins at the same time, and occupies the whole winter. The ground has to be dug in

March, when all weeds are cleared away, and the earth is hoed into little mounds to protect the roots from the hot rays of the sun. Next comes the training and propping of the branches, which are secured by willow or rush ties to stakes driven into the ground. A second digging takes place in May, when the earth is once more levelled, and during the summer the vines have to be sprayed with sulphur to keep off a dreadful blight called *oidium*, which would otherwise do great damage.

At last, towards the middle or end of September, the vintage begins, and this brings with it the hardest work of all. Bands of men and women arrive from far-away villages in every direction to help with the work, singing and dancing as they come, as though out on a holiday jaunt.

A LONELY FARM.

The women gather the great clusters of grapes into baskets, and empty these into other larger ones, which the men carry away on their shoulders, passing from terrace to terrace right down the hill to the wine-presses. These are large granite tanks, into which the grapes are thrown, and men are employed to tread out the juice with their bare feet. It is very tiring, and is performed by relays of workers, trampling steadily, their hands placed on each other's shoulders to steady themselves. This goes on for many hours. The pulp is then left to ferment for some time, and bubbles and heaves as though it were boiling. When the stalks and skins rise to the surface the liquor gradually begins to cool down, and the time has come for running it off into the huge vats in the cellars below. The following spring the wine is put into casks, and sent in large boats down the Douro to Oporto, where it is stored in the merchants' "lodges" till required for export.

CHAPTER XIV

OPORTO

How am I to give you an idea of the quaint picturesque old town of Oporto? It dates back to Roman times, when it was already a busy seaport, and it is now only second in importance to Lisbon itself.

It does not at first sight present such an imposing appearance as Lisbon, that dazzling white city throned on its seven hills and looking down in calm dignity on the bright blue waters of the Tagus. But whereas the southern capital is disappointing when you see it nearer, Oporto grows on you more and more, with its steep, dark alleys and old-fashioned balconied houses, its gardens and fountains, and busy, bustling wharfs. The heart and soul of Oporto are to be looked for by the riverside, the narrow green-watered Douro flowing swiftly along between high granite cliffs, to which cling the white and yellow houses with their many-tinted, red-tiled roofs.

The river is always crowded with shipping, from full-rigged ocean-going merchantmen to dugouts shaped from a single tree; broad-beamed boats, with graceful lateen sails, and narrow boats, with high peaks at bow and stern; large flat-bottomed wine-boats from the vineyards far up the river; rowing-boats, sailing-boats—in fact, boats of every size and shape and colour.

The quays swarm with people hard at work loading and unloading cargo. Women pass up and down along narrow planks from shore to ship with baskets full of coal balanced on their heads. Longshoremen and idlers look on, contentedly smoking. Groups of boys may be seen playing cards or throwing dice, and younger urchins, of similar tastes but fewer possessions, gambling excitedly with buttons. Here also are barefooted, brightly-dressed fishwives, and girls selling fruit, children at play, chestnut-sellers with their little charcoal stoves, rough brigand-like men rolling barrels of wine ashore, strings of pack-mules, and ox-carts waiting to be loaded, each with its pair of pretty browny-yellow oxen, under their high, elaborately carved yokes.

It all forms the most charming medley of movement and colour against a background of tumble-down overhanging houses with projecting gables and painted balconies. There are vine-trellises offering leafy shade, clothes hanging out to air, rows of fine old trees, and here and there glimpses of the ancient river-wall. In this wall are many deep recesses used as wine-shops, or as general stores, where the sailorman may satisfy his numerous requirements in the way of oilskins, ropes, blocks, and all the many articles smelling of tar, so dear to the seafarer's heart.

This is Oporto as seen from below, down by the water's edge; but the best view of the whole town is to be had much higher up, where the great bridge of Dom Luiz spans the narrow gorge. From this point of vantage you may look straight down on the river and on the busy wharfs far below; you may see the narrow, rough-paved streets that lead by flights of steps up the hillside, the many churches, the solid square towers of the cathedral on the hill, the old Moorish walls, and the odd little gardens—bright patches of colour in unexpected nooks and corners.

Beyond the bridge, on the south side of the river, stands the ancient convent of Nossa Senhora da Serra do Pilar, Wellington's headquarters in May, 1809, when he so successfully drove the French army under Marshal Soult out of Oporto.

Six weeks earlier, after a three days' siege, Soult had assaulted and taken the brave old city, which had gallantly, if foolishly, refused to surrender. Its fall was followed by hideous scenes of rapine and slaughter. The French gave no quarter, and the hunted people fled down to the river in thousands, hoping to escape by a bridge of boats that stretched

across to the other bank. So great a crowd proved more than the bridge could bear. It sank under the weight, and over 18,000 men, women, and children were drowned, or butchered by the French soldiers.

It was, however, a short-lived triumph for the arms of France. Three weeks later Sir Arthur Wellesley, the future great Duke of Wellington, landed at Lisbon, and before he had been in the country ten days he was on his way north to retake Oporto.

On the morning of May 12, 1809, he was already on the south bank of the Douro, but without bridge or boat by which to pass over. So safe did Soult believe himself to be, with the steep cliffs and the swift-flowing river between himself and the English, that he never contemplated the possibility of a crossing, and Sir Arthur was able to carry out one of the most daring plans in the annals of war.

By the aid of the inhabitants two boats were at last secured, and twenty-five British soldiers rowed across in broad daylight, just above the town. Under cover of artillery fire three companies of the Buffs were next ferried over. They climbed by a track up Zoo or 300 feet of rock, seized an unfinished building, and held it with great bravery while more troops were hurried across. Gradually the tables were turned. The English became the attackers, the French slowly retreating, till after some two hours' fighting Soult and his army took to their heels, leaving bag and baggage, guns and ammunition behind them. Sir Arthur Wellesley is reported to have said on the evening of the 11th that the next day he would breakfast in Oporto. He did breakfast in Oporto and dined there too, on the food that had been prepared for the French general!

The markets of Oporto are very attractive. The chief one is the Mercado do Anjo, which lies just to the north of the fine church of the Clericos, whose lofty tower may be seen from most parts of the town. It is a picturesque spot, and presents a busy scene in the early mornings; but as I write it is another market-square that rises before my mind's eye. It was the first I saw after landing in Portugal. I could not drag myself away from it, and the fascination of it seems to hold me still.

There were low, shady trees in the middle of that little square, and white booths beneath them, covered with fruit and flowers, cakes and vegetables. The open-doored shops at the sides were windowless, and had piles of goods heaped on the pavements in front of them, and spreading out well into the road: shining pots and pans; gay coloured kerchiefs—red and yellow, blue and green; rolls of sombre woollen material and lighter-coloured cottons; and, most inviting of all, the many heaps of pottery. What may not be purchased here for a penny, or even for a half-penny? Jugs and jars, mugs and plates, basins, bowls and dishes, all of a dull cream-coloured ware, with simple brightly painted designs boldly splashed upon them. Next to them, and more tempting still, are the unglazed, red-brown earthenware vessels used all over Portugal for carrying water. Beautiful in shape and colour, they are of Moorish or Roman design; some with quaint twisted handles, others with long narrow necks, some few with spouts, and all so cheap that the smallest coin in your pocket will pay for two or three of them.

CHAPTER XV

COIMBRA AND THREE OLD MONASTERIES

Another town that has filled an important position in Portuguese history is Coimbra. A charming old place it is, built on a hill, the River Mondego flowing at its foot, and the University buildings crowning the summit. Its steep, narrow streets are full of picturesque peasants and of students clad in long black cloaks, of the selfsame pattern as the togas worn by the Romans of old.

This ancient city witnessed the days of the Gothic occupation; saw the Goths supplanted by the Moors, and the Moors by the Christians; was for many years the capital of Portugal; and ever since 1306, when King Diniz founded the University, it has with but short intermission been the seat of learning and culture.

The University buildings are grouped round a large quadrangle, at one side of which is a terrace commanding a view that may well have inspired the ardent souls of poets and scholars. Looking out over the town, the eye wanders up the silvery waters of the Mondego, and round the bends and turns of a beautiful and fertile valley to the blue mountains in the distance.

Across the river stands the great white convent of Santa Clara, "once the glory of Coimbra and the cloister of Queens," but now used as a factory. Lower down are the ruins of another convent, in which the Porta de Rosa recalls the pretty legend of the miracle of the roses. St. Elizabeth, the wife of King Diniz, spent all her time and money in ministering to the poor, till at length her husband remonstrated with her and forbade her to continue her good works. The Queen was very unhappy; she was loath to disobey, but her kind heart bled for the hungry women and little children who would look in vain for her coming, and one day she again sallied out with a basketful of bread on her arm. As she was passing through a doorway, who should she meet but the King.

MONASTERY AT COIMBRA

"What have you there?" cried he in anger.

"Roses," faltered the trembling Queen, not daring to tell the truth.

"Let me see them!" thundered the King, lifting the cover of the basket. And lo and behold! to the good St. Elizabeth's joy and wonder, it was full of beautiful roses.

This story is also told of her aunt, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, but I like to think it was true of the sweet Portuguese Queen.

To the right of the old convent lies the Quinta das Lagrimas—the Villa of Tears. The tragic history attached to this is no legend, but records the sad fate of a beautiful woman, Inez de Castro, who was a maid of honour at the Court of Portugal in the middle of the fourteenth century.

Dom Pedro, the King's son, was desperately in love with her; but his father and the nobles deemed her no fit mate for the heir to the throne, and at length, in their hatred, caused her to be foully murdered beside the waters of a deep spring which gushes out of the rock—"The Fountain of Love in the Garden of Tears," as it is called to this day.

Dom Pedro's grief was deep and bitter. He rebelled, and raised an army to fight against his father. Two years later, when the old King died, and Pedro in his turn came to the throne, he made a solemn declaration that he had been privately married to the fair Inez. To punish the haughty courtiers and nobles who had helped to bring about her death, he had her body removed from its grave, crowned, arrayed in royal robes, and placed on the throne. All had to vow fealty to her as to a Queen, kneeling and kissing her hand in homage. Loyal to the last, this most constant of royal lovers is buried in the old cathedral church of Alcobaca, and close by, in another beautifully carved tomb, lies his beloved and long-mourned wife.

The Monastery of Alcobaca was founded by King Alfonso Henriques in 1148, as a thank-offering for the capture of Santarem from the Moors. It grew to be one of the wealthiest in Europe, and the monks—all men of noble birth—ruled with kindly, despotic sway over the tenants and peasants who tilled their broad acres.

Though living in the greatest luxury, and entertaining exalted guests with more than royal splendour, they did not ignore the claims of charity, but dispensed food and clothing to hundreds of poor people at their gates.

The years passed by, war and desecration stripped the abbey of its magnificence, and now that the religious orders have been suppressed in Portugal, and their lands confiscated by the State, the monks and friars are to be seen no more. The church where the French soldiers stabled their horses is once more used for holy service; but only visitors and tourists now frequent the bare and deserted cloisters, and the remaining portion of the vast old building is used as a cavalry barrack.

Some fifteen miles from Alcobaca lies Batalha, another huge deserted monastery, the finest in Portugal, or perhaps in any other European country. The road from Alcobaca leads through vineyards and cultivated fields to the village of Aljubarrota, where in 1385 John the Great gained his famous victory over the Spaniards. The story is still told of a brave baker's wife who sallied forth during the fray armed only with her "oven-peel "—a sort of long wooden shovel—and slew seven Castilian soldiers with this homely weapon.

Farther on we reach a high, narrow ridge, where silvery-grey aloes grow in the sandy soil, and many high, weather-worn stone crosses stand by the way-side.

The road then passes through dark pine-forests, carpeted with heather, and down to the little hamlet of Batalha. In its midst rises the vast old abbey, a perfect dream-abbey of grandeur and beauty, with its glorious west front and its fretted pinnacles and spires. The church inside is severe in character, but the light which streams through the richly coloured windows, stains the grand, simple columns with many hues, and the wealth of carving in the chapels and cloisters is a revelation of grace and lightness in the airy delicacy of its exquisite tracery. If Alcobaca, with its great kitchen and hospitable traditions, carries one's thoughts back to the time when monks made merry there on the best of good cheer, Batalha, on the other hand, conjures up a vision of pious brethren living in sanctity and poverty, the dim aisles of their beautiful church echoing to the sound of holy chant and psalm.

It was Philippa of Lancaster, Portugal's English Queen, who first thought of building this beautiful monastery as a perpetual memorial of the victory of Aljubarrota. She and her husband, John the Great, are buried in the Founders Chapel, their stone figures lying hand in hand, beneath a canopy bearing the joint arms of England and Portugal.

The Convent of Mafra, built by John V. as a thank-offering for the birth of a son, is another great monument of the past. It is some twenty or thirty miles to the north of Lisbon, and is less remarkable for its beauty than for its immense size. Even after gazing at its long facade, and wandering for hours through its endless courts and halls, you find it difficult to realize how huge it is. It is said to contain 2,500 doors and 5,200 windows; it took thirteen years to build—from 1717 to 1730—and at one time as many as 45,000 workmen were employed on it.

Statues and busts adorn the building inside and out. Towers and pavilions rise above the roof, which is crowned by a dome, and the floors, walls and columns are of the most costly materials—rare marbles, porphyry, jasper, and other stones collected from all parts of the kingdom. It comprises a church, a monastery, a palace, and barracks, and cost over £4,000,000. This sum was raised by extra taxation, and put the final touch to the ruin and poverty of the country.

Mafra is no great distance from one portion of the celebrated lines of Torres Vedras, the double range of hills which runs from the town of Alhandra on the Tagus in a north-westerly direction to the sea, and which was fortified and held by Wellington to protect Lisbon from the French.

It was during the gradual retreat of the English and Portuguese army on this strong position that the Battle of Bussaco was fought. Bussaco is a name for English people to be proud of, for it was there that on September 27, 1810, Wellington defeated the French under Massena, "the spoilt child of victory," as Napoleon called him.

The British headquarters were at a little monastery hidden away in the heart of a beautiful forest on the side of a hill, where giant cedars and other trees and plants, collected from every corner of the globe, grew and flourished under the fostering care of the good Carmelite Fathers. Above the wood lies the battlefield, a steep, bare rock-strewn ridge, which was held by the English and their Portuguese allies against the much larger army of Massena. It was a desperate hand-to-hand struggle, beginning at break of day, and both sides fought with the utmost gallantry. At one moment the French actually gained the crest of the hill, but a timely bayonet charge drove them back again, and by midday the battle was over.

CHAPTER XVI

BULL-FIGHTING

We in England have many sports, such as hunting, shooting, fishing, racing, cricket, football, and countless other games and pastimes. In Portugal, beyond a very little shooting, there is only one real sport, and that is bull-fighting.

It is very exciting indeed, and the Portuguese take great delight in watching it.

Most of us think of bull-fighting as terribly cruel, and as degrading to those who witness it, and so it is in Spain. The audience there expect to see bulls killed, horses gored to death by cruel horns, and many other horrors too revolting to think of.

In Portugal, however, it is altogether different, although it is still such a dangerous amusement that a slip or a false move may cause a man's death. The main object is to show great skill and agility in teasing and playing with the infuriated bull, without giving him the chance of retaliating. Anyone who gets either himself or his horse injured is looked on as a very clumsy fellow.

I will try to tell you all that Pedro, a little bullet-headed Portuguese boy saw, one fine Sunday afternoon, when his father and mother took him for the first time to see a bull-fight.

It was at Lisbon, where there is an enormous bull-ring, a great round building standing on a hill to the north of the city, and big enough to hold

10,000 or 12,000 people. Large crowds were trooping towards it, some in carriages, some on foot.

Pedro was all excitement, and was quite bewildered when he got inside at seeing so many faces, row upon row, and the boxes and stalls packed with gaily-dressed ladies.

The building had no roof, and was divided into two parts called sol and sombra—"sun" and "shade." Those who could afford it sat in the shade, those who had less of this world's goods took cheaper seats in the sun, which beat down fiercely on them, and until the commencement of the sport, the sunny side was one vast sea of parasols and umbrellas. Water-sellers with glasses and large red earthenware jars plied a busy trade, as they passed up and down crying with shrill voices: "Water, cold water!"

Pedro was one of the lucky ones who sat on the shady side. He was quite cool and comfortable, so he had nothing to distract his attention from all that was going on. A band played some preliminary music, but the little boy could hardly listen to this, so anxious was he for the show to begin.

At last a flourish of trumpets and the applause of the company proclaimed that the Director of the Corrida had entered the tribune, just below the royal box, which was empty on this occasion, though royalty may often be seen at the bull-fights.

A bell rang, and Pedro could have screamed with delight as a gateway facing the tribune was thrown open for a horseman and twelve men on foot to enter. The horse was a beautiful animal, caparisoned in silk and gold. The rider, or *cavalheiro*, was young and handsome, with powdered hair, and dressed in a most becoming costume, such as might have been worn by Dick Turpin or Claude Duval. He had on a dark green coat, richly laced with gold, and with deep cuffs, broad lapels, and ruffles at the wrists; a frilled shirt, lace cravat, a three-cornered hat with feathers, white breeches, and high boots up to the knees. The stirrups were of the old-fashioned, square, box-like variety common to the country, and were of shining silver.

On either side of him stood three *banderilheiros*—men who attack the bull on foot. They, too, had three-cornered hats, and wore tightly-fitting jackets and breeches of bright-coloured silk, embroidered with gold or silver lace, and gaudy coloured scarves were wound round their waists.

Behind these were six other men, called *mocos de forcado*, or fork-men, so named from the pole, with a small blunt iron fork at one end, which they sometimes carry. They were peasants from the plains of Alemtejo, where the bulls are bred, and on this occasion were clad in gay-flowered chintz jackets, drab breeches, bright sashes, white stockings, and long green bag caps.

Whilst all these remained standing, the *cavalheiro* rode round the ring. He was a most finished horseman, and as he bowed gracefully, hat in hand, making his horse caracole and amble, little Pedro quite lost his heart to him, and thought he was the most beautiful person he had ever seen.

After this all withdrew, and then the *cavalheiro* returned, accompanied by two of the *banderilheiros* carrying red cloaks, with which to irritate the bull. They were all provided with darts—sticks about a foot long, with very fine barbed points, and ornamented with floating ribbons. These have to be stuck in the upper part of the bull's neck, about 6 inches behind the horns, and on a spot less than 4 inches square. It is the one part of the sport that might be considered cruel, but the skin in that place is about 2 inches thick, and very hard and callous, and it is said (let us hope with truth) that the bulls hardly feel the prick.

As the feat of placing the darts is generally performed while the animal is actually charging, it demands the utmost daring, agility, and sureness of eye.

At a given signal a door was thrown open, and while Pedro held his breath with excitement and terror, a fierce black bull rushed bellowing in, and charged straight at the bold *cavalheiro*. Galloping past it, he plunged his little dart into the animal's neck, at the very moment when the small spectator felt that nothing on earth could prevent both horse and rider being thrown to the ground. For an instant the bull turned aside, only to renew its mad rushes again and again. The rider flew before it, or galloping alongside, and forcing his now terrified horse to close quarters, placed his darts and wheeled away once more with marvellous quickness to escape the horns of the enraged beast.

The performance lasted for ten minutes, and then eight or nine tame oxen, with bells round their necks, were driven in through a large doorway. They surrounded the wild bull, and got him to trot quietly out with them.

All this time Pedro had been held spellbound, but the moment had now come when his hero was to receive the reward of his prowess in the shape of applause, clapping of hands, shouting and stamping. Caps and hats were thrown in the air, ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and Pedro joined with the others till he had shouted himself hoarse. After this another bull was let in, and this time he was tackled by two *banderilheiros*. He tossed his head, pawed up the ground, and bellowed so loudly that it sent a cold shiver down poor little Pedro's back. How was it possible, he thought, for unarmed men on foot to escape?

The bull charged straight at one of them, who stood like a statue, holding his scarlet silk cloak in front of him. As the bull seemed almost in the act of tossing him, he bounded lightly to one side, striking with his dart at the same moment, and throwing the cloak into the animal's face. It was torn to ribbons in a few seconds, for the enraged beast lowered his great muscular neck, and gored and tossed it, trampling and stamping on it as though he were killing some living thing. The next moment he was once more charging his enemy, who escaped this time by leaping nimbly over one of the barriers which separated the audience from the ring.

Later on a great commotion was caused by the bull himself jumping the first barrier in pursuit of his tormentor—

no mean feat, for it was five and a half feet high. The people in the front seats were terrified lest he might take it into his head to clear the second also, and get in among them, and the relief was great when he was safely back in the ring.

Another item of the programme consisted of what might almost be called a romp with the bull, carried out by the *mocos de forcado*.

One of them walked boldly forward shouting, hooting, whistling, and throwing his arms about to attract the animal's attention, and, finally, leaning down with his hands on his knees, stared him straight in the face. A furious charge followed, and quick as lightning the man leapt upwards right between the lowered horns, which he grasped firmly with both hands, resisting every effort made to toss him. Loud was the applause as the maddened beast tore round the ring with his enemy borne aloft and unhurt.

His companions now rushed forward to rescue him. With foolhardy daring they seized the bull by the tail, the horns, the legs; pushed against his sides, and so bewildered and overpowered him, that the man was able to jump down in safety from his dangerous position.

The performance was divided into two parts, and there were ten bulls in all. Several times the whole audience went, what we placid English people would call quite "off their heads "with enthusiasm over some special act of skill or daring, and on one occasion, not content with shouting, stamping, and clapping, they flung gloves and handkerchiefs, flowers and cigars into the ring at the hero's feet.

Pedro joined in the applause, feeling quite hurt at not being allowed to throw something himself, not even his mother's fan, which he wanted to do very badly indeed. He was determined that when he grew up, he, too, would be a handsome *cavalheiro* on a beautiful prancing horse, and would receive the plaudits of the multitude with becoming grace. In this happy frame of mind let us say "Good-bye" to him, and to Portugal.