

BOOK III.

SPAIN.

CHAPTER I.

1. HAVING thus given a general view of Geography, it will now be proper to describe each separate country in detail, as we engaged to do. We fancy that the method which we have adopted in the division of our subject, up to this point, has been correct; and we now re-commence with Europe and the various countries into which it is divided, on the same principles as formerly, and induced by the same reasons.

2. The first division of this continent towards the west is Iberia, as we before stated. The greater part of this country is but little fitted for habitation; consisting chiefly of mountains, woods, and plains covered with a light meagre soil, the irrigation of which is likewise uncertain. The part next the north, which borders on the ocean, is extremely cold, and besides its rugged character, has no communication or intercourse with other [countries], and thus to dwell there is attended with peculiar hardship. Such is the character of this portion; on the other hand, almost the whole of the south is fertile, especially what is beyond the Pillars [of Hercules]. This however will be shown more in detail, but we must first describe the figure and extent [of the country].

3. In shape it resembles a hide stretched out in length from west to east, the forepart¹ towards the east, its breadth being from north to south. Its length is about 6000 stadia; the greatest breadth is 5000; while there are parts considerably less

¹ The neck, &c.

than 3000, particularly in the vicinity of the Pyrenees, which form the eastern side. This chain of mountains stretches without interruption from north to south,¹ and divides Keltica² from Iberia. The breadth both of Keltica and Iberia is irregular, the narrowest part in both of them from the Mediterranean to the [Atlantic] Ocean being near the Pyrenees, particularly on either side of that chain; this gives rise to gulfs both on the side of the Ocean, and also of the Mediterranean; the largest of these are denominated the Keltic or Galatic Gulfs,³ and they render the [Keltic] Isthmus narrower than that of Iberia.⁴ The Pyrenees form the eastern side of Iberia, and the Mediterranean the southern from the Pyrenees to the Pillars of Hercules, thence the exterior [ocean]⁵ as far as the Sacred Promontory.⁶ The third or western side runs nearly parallel to the Pyrenees from the Sacred Promontory to the promontory of the Artabri, called [Cape] Nerium.⁷ The fourth side extends hence to the northern extremity of the Pyrenees.

4. We will now commence our detailed account, beginning from the Sacred Promontory. This is the most western point not only of Europe, but of the whole habitable earth. For the habitable earth is bounded to the west by two continents, namely, the extremities of Europe and Libya,⁸ which are inhabited respectively by the Iberians and the Maurusians.⁹ But the Iberian extremity, at the promontory¹⁰ we have mentioned, juts out beyond the other as much as 1500 stadia.¹¹ The region adjacent to this cape they call in the Latin tongue *Cu-*

* *Note.* The pages of Casaubon's edition of 1620 are given to facilitate reference to various editions and translations of Strabo.

¹ The Pyrenees, on the contrary, range from east to west, with a slight inclination towards the north. This error gives occasion to several of the mistakes made by Strabo respecting the course of certain of the rivers in France.

² France.

³ The Gulfs of Lyons and Gascony.

⁴ Gosselin remarks that the distance between S. Jean de Luz and Tarragona, is rather less than that between Bayonne and Narbonne.

⁵ The Atlantic.

⁶ Cape St. Vincent.

⁷ Cape Finisterre.

⁸ Africa.

⁹ The Mauritanians.

¹⁰ Cape St. Vincent.

¹¹ Cape St. Vincent is about 1600 stadia west of Cape Spartel in Africa. Strabo imagined that beyond this cape the African coast inclined to the south-east. In reality it advances eleven degrees and a half farther west to Cape Verd, which is 8° 29' west of Cape St. Vincent.

neum,¹ which signifies *a wedge*. The promontory which projects into the sea, Artemidorus (who states that he has himself been at the place) compares to a ship; three little islands, [he says,] each having a small harbour, contribute to give it this form; the former island resembling the beak of the ship, and the two latter the beams on each side of the ship's bows. [He adds] that there is no temple of Hercules shown there, as Ephorus falsely states, nor yet any altar [to him] nor to any other divinity; but in many parts there are three or four stones placed together, which are turned by all travellers who arrive there, in accordance with a certain local custom, and are changed in position by such as turn them incorrectly.² It is not lawful to offer sacrifice there, nor yet to approach the place during the night, for it is said that then the gods take up their abode at the place. Those who go thither to view it stay at a neighbouring village over-night, and proceed to the place on the morrow, carrying water with them, as there is none to be procured there.

5. It is quite possible that these things are so, and we ought not to disbelieve them. Not so however with regard to the other common and vulgar reports; for Posidonius tells us the common people say that in the countries next the ocean the sun appears larger as he sets, and makes a noise resembling the sound of hot metal in cold water, as though the sea were hissing as the sun was submerged in its depths. The statement [of Artemidorus] is also false, that night follows immediately on the setting of the sun: it does not follow immediately, although certainly the interval is short, as in other great seas. For when he sets behind mountains the agency of the false light continues the day for a long period; over the sea the twilight is shorter, still darkness does not immediately supervene. The same thing may be remarked in large plains. The image of the sun is enlarged on the seas at its rising as well as at its setting, because at these times a larger mass of

¹ Herodotus is the first who speaks of a people of Iberia, to whom he gives the name of *Κυνήσιοι* or *Κύνητες*: he describes them as inhabiting the most western part of Europe, beyond the Pillars of Hercules.

² This passage of Strabo relative to the rocking-stones has occasioned much perplexity to the critics. We have attempted to render the Greek words as near as possible. Many curious facts relative to rocking and amber stones have been collected by Jabez Allies, F. S. A., in his work on the Antiquities of Worcestershire, now in the press.

exhalations rises from the humid element ; and the eye looking through these exhalations, sees images refracted into larger forms, as observed through tubes. The same thing happens when the setting sun or moon is seen through a dry and thin cloud, when those bodies likewise appear reddish.¹ Posidonius tells us that, having himself passed thirty days at Gades,² during which time he carefully observed the setting of the sun, he is convinced of the falsity of Artemidorus's account. This latter writer tells us, that at the time of its setting the sun appears a hundred times larger than its ordinary size, and that night immediately succeeds. If we attend to his account, we cannot believe that he himself remarked this phenomenon at the Sacred Promontory,³ for he tells us that no one can approach during the night ; therefore they cannot approach at sunset, since night immediately supervenes thereupon. Neither did he observe it from any other part of the coast washed by the ocean, for Gades is upon the ocean, and both Posidonius and many others testify that there such is not the case.

6. The sea-coast next the Sacred Promontory forms on one side the commencement of the western coast of Spain as far as the outlet of the river Tagus ; and on the other forms the southern coast as far as the outlet of another river, named the Guadiana.⁴ Both of these rivers descend from the eastern parts [of Spain] ; but the former, which is much larger than the other, pursues a straight course towards the west, while the Guadiana bends its course towards the south.⁵ They enclose an extent of country peopled for the most part by Kelts and

¹ We extract the following notice on this passage from Humboldt (Cosmos, vol. iii. 54, Bohn's edition). " This passage has recently been pronounced corrupt, (Kramer i. 211,) and *δι' ὑάλων* (through glass spheres) substituted for *δι' ἀυλῶν* (Schneider, Eclog. Phys. ii. 273). The magnifying power of hollow glass spheres, filled with water, (Seneca i. 6,) was, indeed, as familiar to the ancients as the action of burning glasses or crystals, (Aristoph. Nub. v. 765,) and that of Nero's emerald (Plin. xxxvii. 5) ; but these spheres most assuredly could not have been employed as astronomical measuring instruments. (Compare Cosmos i. p. 619.) Solar altitudes taken through thin light clouds, or through volcanic vapours, exhibit no trace of the influence of refraction."

² Cadiz.

³ Cape St. Vincent.

⁴ " *Αναζ*."

⁵ The Tagus, the Guadiana, and the Guadalquiver, pursue a course nearly parallel to each other, and all incline towards the south before discharging themselves into the sea ; the inclination of the Tagus is not equal to that of the other rivers.

certain Lusitanians,¹ whom the Romans caused to settle here from the opposite side of the Tagus. Higher up, the country is inhabited by the Carpetani,² the Oretani,³ and a large number of Vettones.⁴ This district is moderately fertile, but that which is beyond it to the east and south, does not give place in superiority to any part of the habitable earth with which it may be compared, in the excellence of its productions both of land and sea. This is the country through which the river Guadalquiver⁵ flows. This river takes its rise from the same parts as the Guadiana⁶ and the Tagus, and is between these two in size.⁷ Like the Guadiana, the commencement of its course flows towards the west, but it afterwards turns to the south, and discharges itself at the same side of the coast as that river.

From this river⁵ the country has received the name of Bætica; it is called Turdetania by the inhabitants, who are themselves denominated Turdetani, and Turduli. Some think these two names refer to one nation, while others believe that they designate two distinct people. Of this latter opinion is Polybius, who imagines that the Turduli dwell more to the north than the Turdetani. At the present day however there does not appear to be any distinction between them. These people are esteemed to be the most intelligent of all the Iberians; they have an alphabet, and possess ancient writings, poems, and metrical laws six thousand years old, as they say. The other Iberians are likewise furnished with an alphabet, although not of the same form, nor do they speak the same language. Their country,⁸ which is on this side the

¹ Lusitania occupied the greater part of the present kingdom of Portugal. It was from the countries north of the Tagus that the Romans caused certain of the inhabitants to emigrate to the south side of that river.

² The Carpetani occupied a portion of New Castile, where the cities of Madrid, Toledo, &c. are now situated.

³ These people inhabited the southern portions of New Castile, now occupied by the cities of Calatrava, Ciudad-real, Alcaraz, &c. They also possessed a part of the Sierra-Morena.

⁴ The Vettones inhabited that part of Estremadura, where the cities of Alcantara, Truxillo, &c. are now situated.

⁵ Bætis.

⁶ Anas.

⁷ The course of the Guadiana is longer than that of the Guadalquiver.

⁸ Viz. Turdetania.

Guadiana, extends eastward as far as Oretania,¹ and southward along the sea-coast from the outlets of the Guadiana to the Pillars [of Hercules]. But it is necessary that I should enter into further particulars concerning this and the neighbouring places, in order to illustrate their excellence and fertility.

7. Between this coast, where the Guadalquiver and Guadiana discharge themselves, and the extremities of Maurusia, the Atlantic Ocean forms the strait at the Pillars [of Hercules] by which it is connected with the Mediterranean. Here is situated Calpe,² the mountain of the Iberians who are denominated Bastetani, by others Bastuli. Its circumference is not large, but it is so high and steep as to resemble an island in the distance. Sailing from the Mediterranean into the Atlantic, it is left on the right hand. At a distance of 40 stadia from this [mountain] is the considerable and ancient city of Carteia, formerly a marine arsenal of the Iberians. Some assert that it was founded by Hercules; of this number is Timosthenes,³ who tells us it was anciently called Heraclæa, and that vast walls and ship-sheds are still shown.

8. Next to these is Mellaria,⁴ where they make salted provisions. After this the city and river⁵ of Belo. Here the merchandise and salted provisions for Tingis in Maurusia are principally shipped. There was a city named Zelis⁶ near to Tingis, but the Romans transferred it to the opposite coast [of Spain], and having placed there in addition some of the inhabitants of Tingis, and sent over also some of their own people, they then gave to the city the name of Julia Joza.⁷ Beyond this is Gadeira,⁸ an island separated from Turdetania by a narrow strait, and distant from Calpe about 750 stadia, or, as others say, 800. This island has nothing to distinguish it above others, but owing to the boldness of its people in

¹ The mountainous country in which the Guadalquiver takes its source.

² The rock of Gibraltar.

³ This Timosthenes was the admiral of Ptolemy II. Strabo mentions him repeatedly.

⁴ The place on which this town formerly stood is now designated *Val de Vacca*.

⁵ Rio Barbate.

⁶ Now Azzila.

⁷ Called by Pliny and Ptolemy *Julia Transducta*. It appears to have been situated at the western entrance of the Bay of Gibraltar, at the place now called Al-Gesira.

⁸ Cadiz.

their expeditions by sea, and their friendship with the Romans, has attained to that pitch of good fortune, that although situated at the farthest extremities of the earth, it possesses a greater celebrity than any other island. But we will describe it when we come to speak of the other islands.

9. Next after [Cadiz] is the port of Menestheus,¹ and the estuary near to Asta and Nebrissa.² These estuaries are valleys filled by the sea during its flood-tides, up which you may sail into the interior, and to the cities built on them, in the same way as you sail up a river. Immediately after are the two outlets of the Guadalquiver.³ The island embraced by these mouths has a coast of a hundred stadia, or rather more according to others. Hereabouts is the Oracle of Menestheus,⁴ and the tower of Cæpio,⁵ built upon a rock and washed on all sides by the sea. This is an admirable work, resembling the Pharos, and constructed for the safety of vessels. For the mud carried out by the river forms shallows, and sunken rocks are also scattered before it, so that a beacon was greatly needed. Thence sailing up the river is the city of Ebury,⁶ and the temple of Phosphorus,⁷ which they call *Lux Dubia*.⁸ You then pass up the other estuaries; and after these the river Guadiana, which has also two mouths,⁹ up either of which you may sail. Lastly, beyond is the Sacred Promontory,¹⁰ distant from Gadeira¹¹ less than 2000 stadia. Some say that from the Sacred Promontory to the mouth of the Guadiana there are 60 miles; thence to the mouth of the Guadalquiver 100; and from this latter place to Gadeira 70.

¹ An Athenian king, who led the Athenians against Troy. The port of Menestheus is now Puerto Sta. Maria.

² *Hodie* Lebrixa. ³ Bætis.

⁴ At or near the port of Menestheus, just mentioned.

⁵ Quintus Servilius Cæpio, a famous Roman general. Vide lib. iv. c. i. § 13.

⁶ This city is not to be confounded with others of the same name in Spain.

⁷ Strabo is the only writer who speaks of this temple of Phosphorus. It was no doubt a temple to Diana, who was named Ἄρτεμις Φωσφόρος. This temple, according to the Spanish authors quoted by Lopez in his translation of Strabo, corresponds to the present San-Lucar de Barrameda.

⁸ Strabo here gives the Latin *Lucem dubiam* in Greek characters, Λούκειμ δουβίαν.

⁹ The Guadiana at the present day has but one mouth.

¹⁰ Cape St. Vincent. ¹¹ Cadiz.

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