

country,—elevated table-lands and lofty mountain ranges.

The table-lands are hot in summer; and they are dry, dusty, and barren, suited only for pasture-lands, except the river valleys, which are very fertile. In winter they are cold, and are swept by high winds.



579. CORK-TREES.

579. The lowlands of the south have a delightful climate, summer lasting all the year. They produce grapes, olives, oranges, sugar-cane, and the mulberry.

In the forests of the mountain slopes grows a kind of oak which yields the useful substance called cork. The cork is the thick bark of the tree.

580. Horses, mules, and sheep are numerous. The merino sheep of Spain yield wool of the finest quality.

581. Spain has rich *mines* of quicksilver, lead, iron, and copper.

582. The **Spaniards** are not generally as enterprising as the inhabitants of some of the countries of Europe. The common people are fond of amusement, and dancing under the orange trees is a favourite evening pastime.

583. **Madrid**, situated on the highlands of the interior, is the capital of Spain. A few miles distant is a noted old palace, called the *Escorial*, built in the form of a gridiron.

Barcelona is the most noted city for manufactures and trade. **Granada** was built by the Moors. Near the city is an old Moorish palace called the *Alhambra*.

584. **Cadiz** and **Malaga** are important ports. The islands of *Cuba* and *Porto Rico*, in the West Indies, belong to Spain.

PORTUGAL.

585. Portugal is a small country on the Atlantic coast west of Spain.

In former times Portuguese navigators were among the first in exploring unknown seas and discovering new lands. Like Spain, Portugal has lost most of its colonies, and is now a weak State.

586. A large part of the country consists of highlands; but its plains and mountains are not so elevated or so dry as those of Spain. The valleys and lowlands are very fertile. The **products** are similar to those of Spain. Wine and fruit are leading exports. Mules, sheep, and goats are numerous.

587. The **Portuguese** are polite and hospitable, and, like the Spaniards, they are fond of music and dancing. The *bull fight* is a favourite but cruel and dangerous amusement.

588. **Lisbon**, near the mouth of the Tagus, is the capital of Portugal. Over one hundred years ago the city was nearly destroyed by a terrible earthquake, and fifty thousand people were buried in the ruins.

Oporto exports large quantities of wine.

589. The *Madeira Islands*, famous for their wine; the *Canaries*, the home of the canary bird; and the *Cape Verd Islands*, belong to Portugal.