

of water produces a most refreshing margin of luxuriant vegetation. In the course of an hour we arrived at Ribeira Grande, and were surprised at the sight of a large ruined fort and cathedral. This little town, before its harbor was filled up, was the principal place in the island: it now presents a melancholy but very picturesque appearance. Having procured a black Padre for a guide, and a Spaniard who had served in the Peninsular war as an interpreter, we visited a collection of buildings, of which an ancient church formed the principal part. It is here the governors and captains-general of the islands have been buried. Some of the tombstones recorded dates of the sixteenth century.¹ The heraldic ornaments were the only things in this retired place that reminded us of Europe. The church or chapel formed one side of a quadrangle, in the middle of which a large clump of bananas were growing. On another side was a hospital, containing about a dozen miserable-looking inmates.

We returned to the Vênda to eat our dinners. A considerable number of men, women, and children, all as black as jet, collected to watch us. Our companions were extremely merry; and everything we said or did was followed by their hearty laughter. Before leaving the town we visited the cathedral. It does not appear so rich as the smaller church, but boasts of a little organ, which sent forth singularly inharmonious cries. We presented the black priest with a few shillings, and the Spaniard, patting him on the head, said, with much candor, he thought his color made no great difference. We then returned, as fast as the ponies would go, to Porto Praya.

Another day we rode to the village of St. Domingo, situated near the centre of the island. On a small plain which we crossed, a few stunted acacias were growing; their tops had been bent by the steady trade-wind, in a singular manner—some of them even at right angles to their trunks. The

¹ The Cape de Verd Islands were discovered in 1449. There was a tombstone of a bishop with the date of 1571; and a crest of a hand and dagger, dated 1497.