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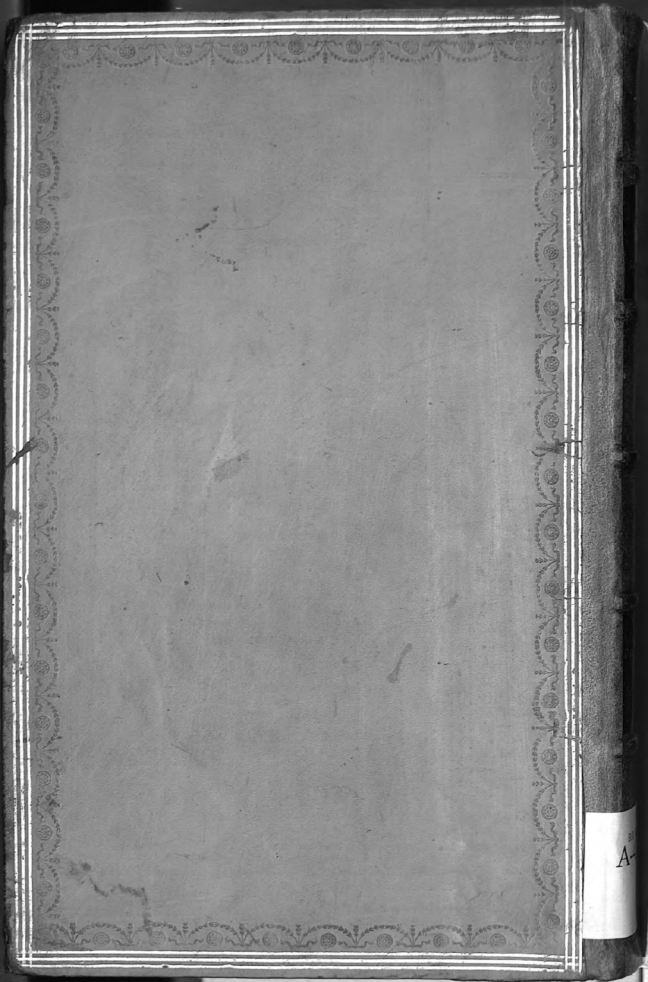
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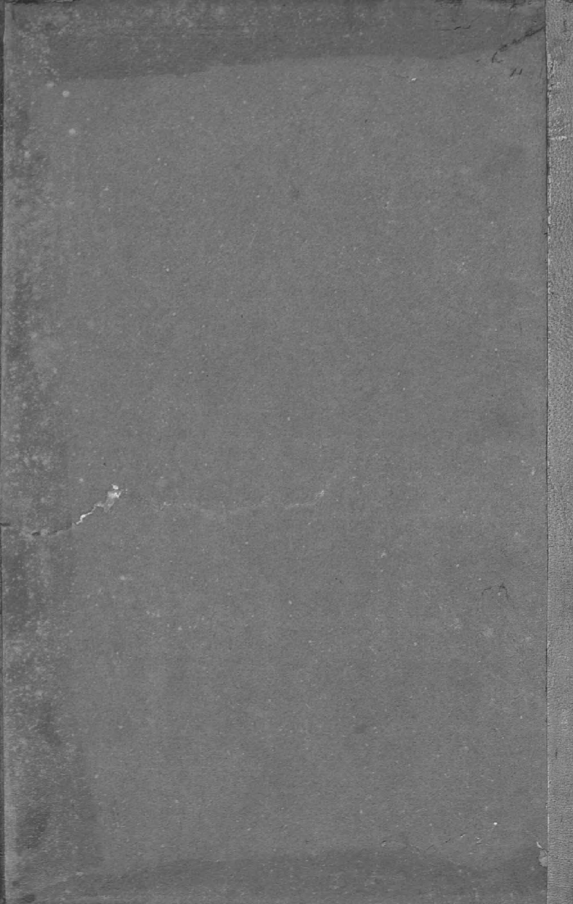
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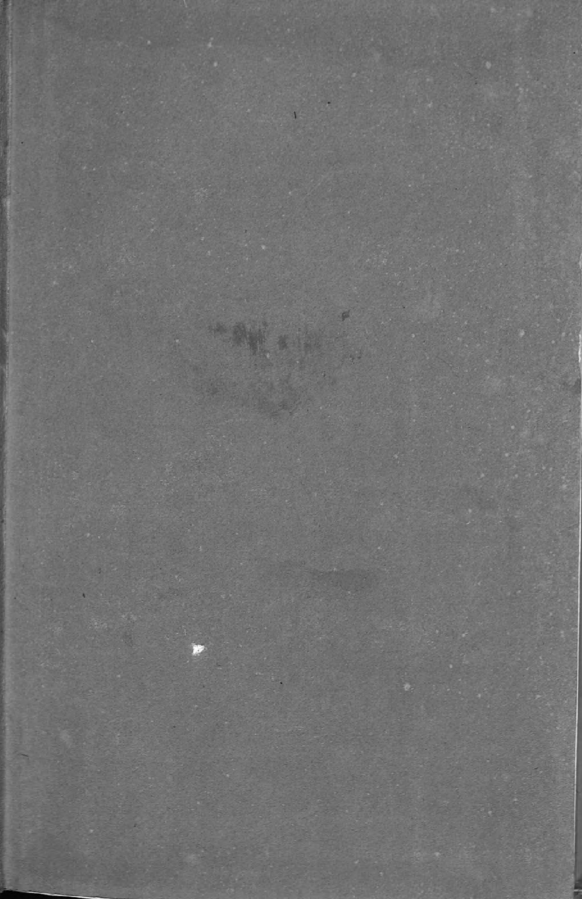
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J O U R N E Y

THROUGH

S P A I N

IN THE YEARS 1786 AND 1787;

WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION

TO THE

AGRICULTURE, MANUFACTURES, COMMERCE,
POPULATION, TAXES, AND REVENUE

O F T H A T C O U N T R Y ;

AND

R E M A R K S

IN PASSING THROUGH

A P A R T O F F R A N C E .

BY JOSEPH TOWNSEND, A. M.

RECTOR OF PEWSEY, WILTS;

AND LATE OF CLARE-HALL, CAMBRIDGE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

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J O U R N E Y

THROUGH

T H E A S T U R I A S.

OVIEDO, the capital of the Asturias, stands near the conflux of two little rivers, which pour their water into the Bay of Biscay, at Villaviciosa. It was built by Froila, or Fruela, the son of Alfonso I. surnamed El Catolico, and made the seat of his dominion. This city contains one thousand five hundred and sixty families, and has five thousand eight hundred and ninety-five communicants, besides children under ten years of age, who are computed to be about one thousand six hundred; so that the whole population being seven thousand four hundred and ninety-five, they are not five to a family. It has four parish churches, eight chapels, six convents, and a sufficient number of priests, with a bishop, his auxiliary, and thirty-six canons. The

bishopric is worth sixty thousand ducats, and the chapter is reckoned eighty thousand; the former being equal to £.6,591. 15s. 11½d. and the latter £.8,789. 1s. 3d. per annum.

The family where I took up my abode, was that of the auxiliary bishop. He is more than six feet two inches high, very stout, remarkably well made, handsome, youthful in his appearance, cheerful, active, and considerably more than threescore years of age. His manner is easy, and his conversation lively. The title given to him is, Most Illustrious; and upon the first approach to him, you bend the knee, and kiss his ring, having previously received his benediction, signified by crossing with his right hand.

His palace is far from elegant, yet by no means uncomfortable. You enter by the coach-house, and from thence pass through a door into the stable, or up the stair-case to the dwelling, which is over these. When ascended, you go through a kind of gallery, or lobby, to the bishop's apartments, consisting of a drawing-room of about thirty by eighteen, a little study, and a corresponding

sponding bed-room. The dining-room is about twenty-four by twenty-two, and not far from it is the little kitchen, with a few bed-rooms in the intermediate space. The whole has white walls, and ill-jointed floors. The chairs and the long table are of oak.

If the palace itself is plain; the stile of living is still more remarkable for its simplicity: enough for comfort, although little for luxury, and less for ostentation. Our dinner commonly consisted of a sopa, or bread stewed in broth, followed by an olla, composed of beef and mutton, a bit of bacon, and some saufages, with garvanzos, or large Spanish peas (*cicer arietinum*). At other tables they add veal and fowls. This was succeeded by some kind of roast meat, or game; and fish, in some shape or other, brought up the rear. Every morning and evening, instead of tea, chocolate, with Naples biscuits, was handed round.

The good bishop filled up his mornings with the duties and functions of his office; after dinner he took his *siesta*; then either rode or walked; and in the evenings conversed with his friends, who assembled round him. His family consisted of his

chaplain, his secretary, and two pages; besides these, his nephew, who is one of the canons, lived with him, and his great nephew, my travelling companion, was occasionally there. The pages wait at his table, and attend him when he goes from home. The remainder of their time is occupied with studies, and when qualified, they rise into the priesthood, and, admitted to the table, become companions, till a living offers to which the bishop can present them. The *padre cura*, that is, the rector of S. Andres de Aguera, had been one of these, and whilst I was at Oviedo, an amiable young page was ordained priest, said his first mass, and sat down with us at table.

Having been recommended by count Campomanes to the intendant, I sometimes, with the canon, frequented his *tertulla*, or evening assembly, where I never failed to meet the count de Peñalba, a friend of Campomanes. Here I found two apartments, one for cards, the other for conversation; both neat; the former spacious and well proportioned. The company assembled in the card room was numerous; their game was lottery, a game requiring neither
judg-

judgment nor memory; but the room for conversation was deserted. The count indeed was so polite as to quit the card-table; but as I felt that I had no right to expect such a sacrifice, I staid only a short time, and then either tormented the bishop, who was no Frenchman, with my miserable Spanish, or, when I thought that I had sufficiently trespassed on his goodness, I retired to my room.

A few days after my arrival, I was present at a grand procession of the bishop, with his canons, attended by the principal inhabitants, carrying torches, and preceded by the ashes of Santa Eululia, to implore rain from heaven. But this patroness of the diocese, deaf to their petitions, would not intercede for one refreshing shower, and in consequence the maize was scorched up, and produced but little grain. Being at the time in blossom, it required daily showers to prevent the blight.

From the frequency of processions, the consumption of wax becomes considerable in every part of Spain, more especially where the country is not watered, either by rivers or by the noria. But I am inclined

to think, that the same expence, if properly applied, would in most places secure a never failing supply of water, and pay good interest for the capital employed. Government is sensible of this, and with a view to watering, as well as to navigation, encourages the canals, not as with us, by leaving this most important work to private adventurers, but as a national concern, at the national expence.

After the procession, I went to visit the *Hospicio*, or general work-house, and found the numbers confined to be, men, sixty-five; boys, fifty-five; women, ninety; girls, seventy; not including infants out at nurse. The house is large and commodious, consisting of four spacious quadrangles, three stories high, and perfectly well fitted up, with comfortable work-rooms and dormitories. Some of these I found two hundred and fifty feet in length, lofty and wide. To support this establishment, the funds are thirty thousand ducats annually, arising from licences to sell brandy in the Asturias; three thousand from rents of land; and some other emoluments; being together equal to four thousand pounds sterling, besides the pro-

produce of their labour, which is stated at three thousand reales, or thirty pounds per annum, including what they make for their own consumption. Among the two hundred and eighty persons shut up in this hospicio, I saw no cripples, so that their labour may be fairly reckoned at two shillings and three halfpence each per annum. The expence of every pauper to the public is not so easily calculated, because they receive all deserted children. Here the mother has nothing to do but to put the child into the cradle, ring the bell, and then retire.

Besides this refuge for the poor, and for their children, the bishop causes seventy reales to be distributed every morning at his gates, giving either a quarto or an ochavo to all who come, and weekly pensions both to widows and to orphans. In addition to all this, the canons scatter their alms plentifully as they walk the streets; and the six convents administer bread and broth at noon, more especially the Benedictines, who, as the most wealthy, are most liberal in their donations. When sick, the poor have a commodious hospital always ready to receive them.

Notwithstanding all that has been done, and what more, in the way of charity, can be devised? beggars, clothed in rags, and covered with vermin, swarm in every street. Is it not therefore evident, that they have done too much, increasing both the numbers and the distresses of the poor by the very means, which have been employed to relieve their wants.

What incitement can we here find to industry? for, who will dig a well when he may draw water from the fountain? Is he hungry? the monasteries will feed him. Is he sick? an hospital stands open to receive him. Has he children? he need not labour to support them; they are well provided for without his care. Is he too lazy to go in search of food? he need only retire to the hospicio.

Dry up the fountain, and every man will instantly begin to dig a well; burn the hospicio, or dissipate its funds; give no relief but as a reward, that it may prove a stimulus to industry, and although at first the distress will be increased, and the population will be diminished, yet, as the fruit of that industry, which can spring only
from

from distress, the population will afterwards advance in a constant and regular progression; wealth will be diffused; and distress will be confined to the cottage of the slothful.

I was exceedingly pleased with the answer of the bishop, when I one day took the liberty to ask him, if he did not think he was doing harm by the distribution of alms. "Most undoubtedly," said he; "but then it is the part of the magistrate to clear the streets of beggars; it is my duty to give alms to all that ask."

Among the widows pensioned by the bishop, were many who had lived in affluence whilst they had husbands. These were the widows of lawyers, who are numerous, and spend all their gains.

I went afterwards with don Antonio Durand, and don Francisco Roca, to visit the hospital, of which the former is physician, the latter surgeon. The most remarkable cases were, tertians, dropfies, and a disease peculiar to this province, called *Mal de la Rosa*.

The tertians were only remarkable, as yielding to the lancet, followed by emetics, cathartics,

cathartics, and the bark. Perhaps the latter were the really efficacious remedies, and all the merit of the former might be merely negative. The dropfies were soon cured by cathartics, and abstinence from drink, allowing no liquid but half a pint of wine in twenty-four hours.

The *Mal de Rosa* has been considered as a species of the leprosy; but to me it appears to have no affinity with that disease. It attacks the back of the hands, the insteps, and the neck, where it descends the sternum, almost to the cartilago ziphoides, but the rest of the body is free. At first it appears red, accompanied with pain and heat, but ends in scurf. In the progress of this disease, vertigo and delirium succeed, with foul tongue, lassitude, chilliness, tears, and, according to the testimony of Dr. Durand, a peculiar propensity to drown themselves. It goes away in summer, and returns in spring. The disease may be cured by nitre and gentle cathartics; but, if neglected, it terminates in scrophula, marasma, melancholy, and madness.

At Oviedo, as in most of the great towns in Spain, an hospital for the lues is opened

three times in the year, to receive as many as the hospital will hold; but the surgeons all over the peninsula complain that patients are tardy in their application. This may arise either from the violence of their treatment, or from the mildness of the symptoms; but whatever cause may be assigned, the consequence is, the universal prevalence of that complaint.

The diseases which seem to be endemical in the Asturias, are, intermittents, drop-sies, hysteria, hypochondriasis, scrophula, bronchocele, glandular obstructions, cachexies, scurvy, leprosy, madness, epilepsy, attended with worms, apoplexy, and palsy, rheumatism, phthisis, and erisipelas, with the mal de rosa, and the farna, or the itch.

For the leprosy they have in the Asturias twenty hospitals, called *Lazaros*. It appears in various forms. Some patients are covered over with a white dry scurf, and look like millers; in others the skin is almost black, very thick, full of wrinkles, unctuous, and covered with a loathsome crust; others have one leg and thigh enormously swelled, and full of varices, pustules, and

and ulcers, sending forth a most abominable smell. All complain of heat, with most intolerable itching. Some patients, instead of the great leg, have a most enormous swelling of one hand, more especially the female subjects, or else have the features of the face swoln to such a degree, as hardly to retain the human form; others again have carbuncles, big as hazle nuts, all over the surface of their body.

The common itch (scabies) is little less disgusting than the leprosy, thus transiently described. It usually attacks the heads of children, and is attended with ulcers of the foulest nature, itching intolerable, and lice innumerable. It is commonly preceded by horripilation and a frebricula, which terminate in the expulsion of numerous little pimples like the small pox. These, in healthy subjects, are large, pointed, red, quickly suppurating; but at the end of nine or ten months they go away. Bad subjects have this disease for life. The females are more exposed to it than males.

Agues, fevers, and even pleurifies, are said often to terminate in scabies, and this frequently gives place to them, returning however

however when the fever ceases. In adults it takes possession of the hands and arms, with the legs and thighs; covering them with a filthy crust. In wet weather the itching becomes more troublesome, and towards midnight is insupportable. The patients, who labour under this disease, breed irones, a kind of vermin exceedingly minute, yet visible without the assistance of a lens, which form channels between the cuticle and the skin.

The predisposing cause of all these diseases may be sought for in humidity, arising from the peculiar situation of this province. This hilly country, bounded on the north by the Bay of Biscay, and to the south by snowy mountains, is always temperate, and generally moist. The N. E. wind indeed is dry, attended with a bright sky, and with a bracing air, but with every other wind the sun is obscured by clouds. The north wind always produces the most dreadful tempests, and the N. W. is little better; both bring rain in summer, and the west wind comes loaded at all times with moisture from the Atlantic Ocean. In May, June, and July, they seldom see the sun;
but

but then, to balance this, in August and September they as seldom see a cloud. The coast is temperate, and comparatively free from rain; but such is the moisture of the hills, that no care is sufficient to preserve their fruits, their grain, their instruments of iron, from mould, from rot, from rust. Both the acetous and the putrid fermentation here make a rapid progress.

Besides the relaxing humidity of the climate, the common food of the inhabitants contributes much to the prevalence of most diseases, which infest this principality. They eat little flesh; they drink little wine. Their usual diet is Indian corn, with beans, peas, chestnuts, apples, pears, melons, and cucumbers; and even their bread, made of Indian corn, has neither barm nor leaven, but is unfermented, and in the state of dough. Their drink is water.

This account, collected from gentlemen of the profession, is confirmed in the valuable work of don Gaspar Cassal, an old physician, of more than common observation and experience, who has given to the public a natural history of the Asturias.

Although

Although subject to such a variety of endemical diseases, few countries can produce more examples of longevity. Many live to the age of a hundred, some to a hundred and ten, and others much longer. The same observation may be extended to Galicia, where, in the parish of S. Juan de Poyo, A. D. 1724, the curate administered the sacrament to thirteen persons, whose ages together made one thousand four hundred and ninety-nine, the youngest of these being one hundred and ten, and the oldest one hundred and twenty-seven. But in Villa de Fofiñanes, one Juan de Outeyro, a poor labourer, died in the year 1726, aged more than one hundred and forty-six years.

When we consider the temperature of the climate, arising from its humidity, together with the cooling winds from the Atlantic, and from the snowy mountains, we must naturally expect to find instances of protracted age, with the prevalence of chronical complaints, and of such maladies as are seldom mortal: whereas in warmer and in drier climates, nature comes sooner to maturity,

is

is subject to more acute diseases, and, like combustibles, when burning with a vivid flame, is rapidly consumed.

The physician reported a case too singular to be easily forgotten: a young man, aged twenty-eight, complaining of a fever, was bled twice without relief; and having some symptoms which indicated a different treatment, they gave him a bitter purge, which brought from him, in one day, one hundred and seventy-three large worms, (the *teretes*). Five days after this he passed one hundred twenty-four, and the next day seventy-three, and died.

From the general hospital, I went with don Nicolas Trelles to visit an hospital for pilgrims, of which he is chaplain and confessor. It is a miserable building, with a wretched hall, and numerous cells, by way of bed-rooms. Here pilgrims from every quarter of the globe, who are going to prostrate themselves before the altar of S. Jago, in Galicia, are received and lodged for three nights. When they arrive in Oviedo, they present themselves before one particular altar, and receive every man ten *quartos*.

quartos. Should he chance to die here, he is buried with more pomp, than the first nobleman of the province, and is attended by all the canons to the grave.

The rage for pilgrimage is much abated; but there are people living, who remember when it was the fashion for all young men of spirit, both in Italy and France, before they married, to go as pilgrims to S. Jago; and even now it is not uncommon to see straggling some few old men, and many companies of young ones, pursuing the same route. We met twelve fine made fellows, who came from Navarre, singing the rosary, and hastening towards the next convent, where they expected to lodge, and receive more money for the journey.

S. Jago, if I am not mistaken, was the first who preached the gospel to the Spaniards; but however this may be, their devotion springs from gratitude; and the reverence of all surrounding nations, who are acquainted with his military fame, is the just reward of his undaunted prowess, when, mounted on a white horse, he appeared in the air fighting against the infidels, and putting them to flight before

Ramiro, at the battle of Simancas. (A. D. 927.)

The sight of pilgrims naturally reminded me of relics, and excited a curiosity to visit those of the cathedral; and for that purpose I made application to the bishop, who the next morning sent his nephew, the canon, to shew me every thing most curious among their treasures. Tradition says, but I do not undertake to vindicate the truth of its report, nor indeed would our good bishop; tradition says, and our good bishop, with becoming modesty, considers it as possible, that when Cosroes, king of Persia, pillaged Jerusalem, God, by his omnipotence, transported a chest of incorruptible wood, made by the immediate followers of the apostles, and filled with relics, from Jerusalem, by way of Africa, to Carthagenæ, Seville, and Toledo, and from thence, with the infant don Pelayo, to the sacred mountain near to Oviedo, and finally to the cathedral church of San Salvador. Upon its being opened, by the command of the sovereign Alonzo the Great, in the presence of assembled prelates, they found portions of all the following articles: the Rod of Moses; the

Manna which fell from heaven; the Mantle of Elias; the Bones of the Holy Innocents; the Branch of Olive which Christ bore in his hand when he entered Jerusalem; great part of the true Cross; eight Thorns of his Crown; the Sanctissimo Sudario, or napkin stained with his blood; the Reed, which he bore by way of sceptre; his Garment; his Sepulchre; the Milk of the Blessed Virgin; the Hood, which she gave to S. Ildefonso archbishop of Toledo; one of the three Crucifixes carved by Nicodemus; and a Cross of the purest gold, made by angels in the cathedral.

“ Whosoever, called of God, shall visit
 “ these precious relics, shall obtain remission
 “ of one-third of the punishment due
 “ to his sins, with indulgence for a thousand
 “ and four years, and six quarentines,
 “ &c. &c.” Thus at least runs the promise, in the name of the pope, and by authority of the bishop; yet I doubt much, if thus worded, the promise be agreeable to the faith of catholics. All their bishops and men of learning, with whom I have

had the honour to converse, have solemnly assured me, that without repentance, and a firm belief in the atonement, no power upon earth can absolve the guilty; and that the church claims no prerogative respecting indulgences, but that of remitting the punishment, which would otherwise be endured in purgatory by those, who shall not have performed the penance appointed by the church for each particular offence. When they promise forty days indulgence, or as many forty days as shall make one thousand and four years, they do not mean absolutely days and years, as if endless duration could be divided into portions, to be measured by the rotation of the earth, for they hold succession to be inconsistent with the idea of eternity; but they mean, if I understand them right, the remission of such a portion or quantity of punishment as shall be equal to forty days, or one thousand and four years penance, should their lives be protracted to such a period as would allow them to perform the whole. When the points of difference between protestants and papists shall be fairly and distinctly stated,

the

the subjects of dispute will vanish, or at least the contending parties will have the better chance of coming to agreement.

Some days after I had examined all these relics; the *Sanctissimo Sudario*, or sacred napkin, on which the Redeemer, during his passion, impressed his image, was exposed in the cathedral to eight or ten thousand peasants, collected from all the surrounding villages, most of whom had baskets full of cakes and bread, which they elevated as high as possible the instant the curtain was withdrawn, in the full persuasion that these cakes, thus exposed, would acquire virtue to cure or to alleviate all diseases. Many lifted up their beads, and every one had something or other to receive the divine energy, which he conceived to be constantly proceeding from the sacred image of his Lord. After a few minutes, one of the canons drew the curtain, and the multitude retired.

The monasteries in Oviedo are not highly interesting; yet two of them excited my curiosity; both of them belonging to the Benedictine order. The first was of monks, whom I visited for the sake of father Feyjoo,

whose fame has extended to the most distant nations. I went into his cell, and conversed with those, who had revered him living. I examined the features of his bust, but this having been taken when the clay was no longer animated, it was from his works alone that I could form any judgment of his mind. All who are conversant with these, will agree with me in thinking him, for general literature, the first writer of the Spanish nation.

The convent of the Benedictine nuns I visited chiefly on account of their great wealth. They are only fifty, and their revenue is allowed to be twenty thousand ducats, or £.2,197 5s. 3½d. a year. They invited us to tea. I went with the canon and my young friend to their parlour; and they assembled with the lady abbess at the grate. Their conversation was lively, and their behaviour perfectly easy. I ventured to solicit one of them to sing; she was young and handsome, genteel and delicate, and her countenance was highly interesting; but when she began to chaunt a portion of the litany, she made me start; for having long since forgotten all the songs of
 infancy,

infancy, and being accustomed to sing only in the choir, her voice was become harsh and grating on the ear. When we took our leave, they invited us to repeat our visit; but my curiosity was satisfied, and my time was short.

The building itself is worthy of attention for its vast extent, and for its elegance.

The person to whom I was chiefly recommended was the count of Peñalba, a man of good abilities, of gentle manners, and of uncommon information, for a nobleman of Spain.

I went with him to see the hot springs of *Rivera de Abajo*, at the distance of some miles from Oviedo. The situation is most enchanting, in a little valley every where shut in by lofty mountains, excepting only a small outlet for the stream. The rock is limestone, and the waters resemble those of Bath, both in temperature and in taste. The principal spring rises from the rock, and is near two inches in diameter. The baths are ill contrived, and separated by a cold passage from the dressing rooms.

The virtues of these waters have not been ascertained, nor have they been analysed;

conceive. The coulter is fixed in a beam by itself, with two oxen and one man to work it. This goes first; then follows the plough in the same tract, with no iron excepting at the point of the share. The handle is curved, to serve the purpose of sheets, and has a mortice to receive the tenon of the beam, and itself is morticed into the tail of the share. It has a retch to raise and to depress it. The whole is made in the most clumsy manner, and at best can only scratch the ground, which, being mostly strong land, requires to be well ploughed.

The harrows have no iron, and are only used for maize; the wheat and barley being always left unharrowed.

The cart wheel has no spokes, but consists of a wooden ring or felloe, composed of four quadrants, and is bisected by a plank of about eight or ten inches wide, to receive the axis, which, being fastened to the wheel, turns round with it, making what is called an axis in peritrocheo. Some of these, for heavy work, are bound with iron, and have spike nails with enormous heads. I had the curiosity to measure the axis, and
found

found it commonly more than eight inches diameter, but sometimes ten; yet, I must confess, that I was not surpris'd at finding this quantity of friction overlooked in the Asturias, having observed so little attention paid to it even in England, where, till within these few years, the large wooden axis was universal; and where, even in the present day, few farmers have adopted iron.

To set any matter in a proper light, it is often necessary to view it in the two opposite extremes. Now it must be evident, that were it possible to have the axis, of the same diameter with the circumference of the wheel; the friction would not be in the least abated, but would, as may be proved, and has been proved by the most accurate experiments, be equal to one-third of the whole weight moving on a smooth surface. Were it possible to reduce the axis to a mathematical line, friction would altogether vanish. Having found the two extremes, the imagination readily seizes a general idea of the proportions which lie between them. Let us however examine these proportions with a more
minute

minute attention. It is evident, that in the former case, always supposing the plain to be horizontal, a power more than equal to one ton would be necessary to move three tons; whereas in the latter case, a fly would give motion to ten thousand tons.

Stating the diameter of the wheels to be four feet, and that of the axis to be eight inches, which are the usual dimensions in the Asturias, something more than one ton would move eighteen tons; but, supposing the wheels to be five feet high, and the diameter of the axis to be two inches and an half, then something more than one ton would set in motion seventy-two tons, the friction being always directly as the diameter of the axis, and inversely as the diameter of the wheel. Here I must take occasion to observe, that in point of friction, to diminish the axis will be found more adviseable than to increase the diameter of the wheel, because the friction will be in proportion to the diameter; whereas, the degree of strength being given, the weight of the wheel will be nearly as the square of the diameter. Whilst the motion is horizontal on a plain, which is perfectly

perfectly hard; wheels which are high, and consequently heavy, will have no other disadvantage than the superior cost, but on soft roads, and in moving either up hill or down, the weight of the wheels must not be overlooked, nor must the diameter be disregarded. The weight in both cases tells against the horse; but, as to the diameter, a distinction must be made. Going up hill, in proportion as you elevate the axis above the horse's breast, so as for the line of draft to make an angle with the hill, in the same proportion you lose power. The truth of this proposition may be caught by moving in imagination the line of draft up and down in two opposite extremes. Elevate or depress it, till it becomes perpendicular; the whole force of the horse will tell for nothing, and he will act only like a log of wood equal to him in weight. Let the line of draft make an angle of 45° with the plain, on which the waggon is ascending, and one half of the force will be lost. In like manner by the composition and resolution of forces, the exact proportion of loss may be ascertained. In going down hill, the diminution of friction, which is directly

as

as the diameter of the wheels, makes it needful to create new friction by chaining the wheels, or by a sliding piece to prevent their rotation.

In the Asturias, not satisfied with the quantity of friction arising from a wooden axis of eight inches diameter revolving without greafe, they fix two wooden pins, which confine the axis in its place, so near together, that they bind hard against it; and this they do only for the sake of the noise arising from the friction, and which, whilst it appears to lull the oxen, and to incline both them and the driver to sleep, as they move slowly on, is considered as exciting them to labour, and thereby precluding the necessity of either speaking to them or pricking them with goads. This music, resembling the sound of a post-boy's horn, is heard from morning to night in every part of the Asturias, and, when at a great distance, is not unpleasant even to a stranger, but to the native peasant it appears to be the never-failing source of calm enjoyment.

In this country oxen supply the place of
horses,

horses, and consequently beef is cheap, being sold for ten quarts the pound of twenty-four ounces, which is $1\frac{7}{8}$ penny for a pound of sixteen ounces; mutton is fourteen quarts for the Asturian pound, or $2\frac{5}{8}$ penny for sixteen ounces, including the alcavala, millones, and arbitrio. The bishop tells me, that within his memory provisions were exactly half the present prices. Barley is twenty reales; maize or Indian corn, thirty; French beans, forty; wheat, from forty to fifty the fanega, which in the Asturias differs little, as I apprehend, from one English bushel and an half; wheat therefore is from 5s. 4d. to 6s. 8d. a bushel, or about 6s. on the average.

Monday, *August 21*, I went with my young friend to pay a visit for a few days to his father at *Aviles*, on the sea coast, about five leagues from Oviedo.

The occasion of this visit was to be present at the feria, or church feast, which in catholic countries all over the world, and even among protestants in a degree, gives occasion to much traffic, and is considered as a licentious season.

The road was over the mountains. This they

they are making at a vast expence, and in a most substantial manner, without the least attention to economy, or to any thing but their own ideas of utility and beauty. For some miles near to Oviedo, and likewise near to Aviles, the road is made perfectly straight, very wide, and rounded in the middle. The foundation is laid with large masses of limestone rock, covered with stones broken to a smaller size; and, to support the arch, which they apprehend would spread like the arches of an edifice, supposing them to have no lateral support, they absolutely build two walls the whole extent of way. This certainly contributes much to beauty, but not in the least to the principal purpose for which it is designed. The sides of the road being planted with trees, makes it a delightful walk for the inhabitants.

The ambition of Spaniards, in aiming at perfection, is no where more visible than near *Aviles*. The ancient road turned about two hundred yards, in order to avoid a low and swampy meadow; but now, at a vast expence, they are determined to have a straight and spacious avenue of near three miles,

miles, like those of other cities. From Oviedo to Gijon, a little sea-port to the east of Aviles, they are making another road in the same style, and at similar expence.

Aviles contains eight hundred families, with two parish churches, three convents, and two hospitals, of which one is for old women, the other for pilgrims going to San Jago. They have no manufactures, except of copper and brass pans for the surrounding villages, and of some thread for their own consumption.

Aviles is situated on the bank of a little river, about one league from the sea, but within reach of the tide. It is every where surrounded by hills, which, for the most part, are fertile to their summits, and are either covered with flocks or shaded by the roble and the chefnut; whilst the low lands are loaded with luxuriant crops of wheat and maize.

The house of my young friend is one of the most commodious I have seen. After the fashion of the country, it is built round a court, but with only half the usual corridor; for commonly this runs all round the

court, like that still seen in some of our great old inns. In this house the gallery is wide, and open to the south, and to the morning sun. The ground floor is given up wholly to the servants, except one corner occupied by a chapel. The apartments are, a dining-room, a drawing-room; both spacious and lofty; one to the west, looking to the street, the other to the east, commanding a lovely prospect, which is bounded by the sea; four principal bed-chambers, and others inferior. Of these, two only were single bedded; the rest contained, two, three, or upon occasion, four beds; for in Spain, even in respectable families, three or four gentlemen will occasionally occupy one room.

Custom reconciles to this; and, by the practice of Scotland, France, and Spain, I see clearly that other nations can be reconciled to that which is most disgusting to an Englishman; and certain it is, by what we see daily in our cottages of the poor peasants, that our olfactory nerves may be reduced to such a degree of torpid insensibility, as to be happy and contented in the midst of filth and nastiness.

In this respect, no nation can surpass the Spaniards; who, without disgust, without regard to decency, when lodging thus together in one room, conceal only by a napkin that, which the French shut up in boxes, and hide in the little closet, where they keep their clothes.

Upon occasion of the church feast or feria, which, by the by, marks the origin of our word *Fair*, the concourse of strangers to Aviles is considerable, and every gentleman opens his house for the reception of his friends. At this season the morning is spent in lounging about to view the shops, the cattle, and the people assembled in the fair; and the evening is closed by dancing. The balls are given by the principal person in the city, and such is the simplicity, which reigns in this distant province, that the servants and peasants are allowed to crowd about the entrance of the room to see the dance. The most favourite dances are the English, the minuet and the country dance; but sometimes they dance the cotillion, and, towards the close of the evening, the fandango.

Sunday, August 27, being the fourth day

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of

of the fair, and remarkably fine, the concourse of people, with the multitude of cattle, was surprising, and the market was brisk. As protestants, we must be allowed to wonder at this practice.

Beef here is sold for seven quarts and an half the pound of twenty-four ounces, and mutton eleven; bread, five quarts for the pound of twenty ounces; wheat, thirty-two reales the fanega, which weighs a quintal, and which, if supposed equal to the quintal of Catalonia, will be ninety-two pounds English; barley and maize, twenty-eight reales; beans, thirty-six.

It is striking to observe how corn finds its level all over Europe, whilst butchers meat, which is not of such easy transport, varies exceedingly in price. Thus, at Aviles, beef is under three halfpence; mutton is $2\frac{1}{8}$ pence for a pound of sixteen ounces, whilst bread is $1\frac{1}{8}$ penny for the same weight.

No distinction in price is made between the prime pieces and the coarse, nor between fat meat and lean, because the prices are fixed by the magistrate, without respect to quality. The consequence of this arrangement

rangement is, that the meat is never so good as it might be, were the market free.

The government of this city is in two corregidors, four regidors, and a syndic, who is annually chosen by the people to inspect the meat, to vindicate their rights, and take care upon all occasions, that justice shall be done to them.

Whilst I continued at Aviles, I discovered, for the first time, that the visit is always to the lady; that the master of the family is perfectly at liberty to come or go; that there is no necessity to take notice of him; and that, if the daughter is handsomer than her mother, she may, without offence, occupy the whole attention. This idea I found afterwards confirmed in the great metropolis, by seeing gentlemen introduced to ladies of the first fashion, and visiting them on the most familiar footing, without the least acquaintance, or even personal knowledge, of their husbands.

The science and practice of medicine are at the lowest ebb in Spain, but more especially in the Asturias. *Fiat venesectio* is still the favourite prescription, notwithstanding

the ridicule of Le Sage, and the serious reasoning of Feyjoo. When the fond husband meets the physician in the street, and urges him to step in to see his wife, *Sangrado* pulls out at once his list of patients and his watch, tells him that he can not stop one moment, orders him instantly to fetch the surgeon, and to have her blooded, promising faithfully to see her in the space of half an hour. Palsies most undoubtedly are frequent, but it is by no means clear, that these are always caused by plethora, although in many cases they certainly originate from fulness. *Sangrado* however has such a dread of palsy, that he bleeds his patient into a dropy, or leaves him to languish between life and death, a prey to the most gloomy of all diseases, to which humanity is subject.

At the request of the bishop, I visited a friend of his, an old canon, who was threatened with a palsy by his physicians. He had been twice blooded, and the question was, whether he should lose more blood. I went to him immediately, and found him surrounded by his friends, who all stood looking on, expecting every moment to see the fatal stroke, whilst he, sitting in his
 great

great arm chair, apparently in perfect health, yet with a gloomy and dejected countenance, seemed to be waiting for the awful moment, without one ray of hope to cheer his mind. Those of his friends, who could be spared from business, continued with him; his neighbours dropped in to look upon him; but all continued silent, excepting such of them as thought it needful to ask him from time to time how he felt. No one entered into conversation with him, nor would they suffer him to look into a book. Notwithstanding this repeated venesection, his pulse was remarkably full and strong. He was of a certain age, lived well, and took no exercise. I could not hesitate what advice to give. At my request the room was cleared; he adopted the vegetable diet, and took exercise. Thus by degrees his fears were dissipated, and he returned once more to join the little circle of his friends in their innocent amusements.

At the desire of my friend at Aviles, I went to visit a monk, who was related to the family, and found the good old man crying with agony of pain, arising from the stone. The physician ordered nothing but

Madame Stevens Solvent; but this was too slow in its operation, and could give no present ease from pain. I ordered the *Enema Moliens*, by way of warm fomentation, to be used immediately, and to be repeated, if occasion should require; but the first application gave relief, and all the monks crowded round me to consult, each for himself, what would be proper for his complaint. Among all those, who came to me, I did not find one, who was not afflicted either with the stone, the gravel, or with the hypochondriacal disease. For this I could assign no other cause, but their inactive life, and the want of animating hope; both common to the cloistered tribe.

From the monks I was sent for to a convent of nuns, where I was confirmed in my idea, that man is formed not only for social life, for that is found in convents, but for domestic cares. Without a pursuit the mind must languish, and the health will suffer. The two nuns, whose friends had requested my advice, were hectic, and I am satisfied that others, who consulted me, were running the same course. Nature certainly never intended them for nuns. Other considera-

tions apart; the severity of their discipline, their rising at midnight from a warm bed to go into a cold chapel, is ill suited to the delicacy of the female sex, and must be inevitable ruin to the tender constitution.

I was much pleased with the good sense, and flattered by the confidence of the lady abbess. When she was describing a diseased breast, and I had said, "If this young lady were my sister, I should desire to see the breast;" she answered, "Every lady is sister to the physician who attends her;" and immediately desired the nun to go with me to a parlour. On examination I found it was a cancerous case, and recommended them to make application to a surgeon.

After having passed ten days very pleasantly at Aviles, I went with the count Peñalba to stay as many at *Luanjo*, or, as we should pronounce it, *Luanco*.

Luanjo has three hundred and seventy houses, and one thousand eight hundred souls, of which one thousand three hundred go to confession and communion, the other five hundred are infants. It is a little sea port, and carries on a coasting trade.

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The ride from Aviles to Luanjo is chiefly on the sea coast. When we arrived, the sun was set, and the evening was shut in.

The habitation of the count is massive, chiefly calculated for strength, and to resist the waves, which always wash its solid base, and occasionally breaking against the house, send their foaming spray over the lofty roof into the street. Whilst I was there I was so fortunate as to be witness to this fight. To enter the dwelling, you pass through the coach-house, and find the ground floor given up to stables.

When we arrived, the great hall was already occupied, as usual, by the neighbours, who were amusing themselves with cards; but, as we were under no obligation to join the party, which was not of the genteelst cast, we went up stairs, and took possession of a room which occasionally serves for eating.

The family consisted of the count and countess, with their children, his two sisters, and her mother. His brother, a genteel young officer, was there upon a visit. The family being thus numerous, and the greatest portion of the house being occupied

pied with offices, little remained for bedrooms. These were few in number, and upon a contracted scale. The room, in which I slept, was about eleven feet by fourteen, yet contained two beds, one for me, the other for the brother of the count. The walls are white limed, the floors are smoothed with the addice, but not one is plained, and I do not recollect one ceiling. The beds have no curtains. The great hall where we dined is a double cube of about fifty by five and twenty; with these dimensions, if well fitted up, it would be elegant.

The stile of living resembled the old British hospitality; and the long oak table, surrounded by strong oak benches, was every day well covered.

I was at first surpris'd, and much disgust-ed, with a ragged and half naked visitor, who came up at dinner time, walked round the table, spoke freely to all the family, but in a manner to me quite unintelligible, sat down occasionally at the bottom of the table, and sometimes seized a bone, then laugh'd and chattered like a baboon; yet

with

with all this, appeared to give no offence. Upon enquiry, I found that this miserable object was the idiot of the village; and, as such, enjoyed the privilege of going where he pleased, and of doing what he pleased, without restraint.

Nothing can exceed their simplicity of manners in this distant province. Polished nations would be offended at their freedom, and the plainness with which they speak of things, which in the more advanced state of society must not be even hinted at; yet such language neither gives disgust, nor tends to excite the passions. But at the same time familiarities, such as in other countries are esteemed innocent, and, being rightly understood, neither imply nor lead to guilt, would here, and all over Spain, be highly offensive; would, if practised in public, excite universal horror, if in private, level every fence which virtue is engaged to maintain.

They use no paint, no powder, no curls, no cap; nothing but a bit of riband bound round the head. In this simplicity of dress, youth and beauty may enjoy their triumph; but

but the old women, for want of borrowed charms, have nothing which can please the eye. Yet gentlemen are not altogether void of attention to them, nor are they insensible to these attentions. A tradesman of Luanjo had cut his little portion of tobacco, and had rolled it up carefully in a strip of paper, making a cigar about the size of a goose quill; he had doubled back, and pinched carefully the ends; then with mature deliberation, taking up his steel, his flint, and his little bit of *amadou* (*boletus igniarius*) he struck a light, kindled his cigar, began to smoke, and finding it work well, he presented it to the countess. She bowed and took it, smoked it half out, and restored it to him again.

After the countess had done with the cigar, and had joined the conversation, in a few minutes she opened her mouth, and sent out a cloud of smoke. She saw my surprise, and asked the cause of it. I told her; and immediately the person who was smoking drew in some hearty whiffs, then opened his mouth to convince me that nothing continued there, and after many minutes he breathed out volumes of
 smoke.

smoke. This I find is their common mode of smoking; and without making it pass through their lungs they think it useless.

The government of Luanjo is in a corregidor, assisted by eight or ten regidores and two syndics, who are to protect the people from oppression. These magistrates once a year make a contract with the butcher, who will supply the market cheapest. In consequence of this agreement, beef sells for seven quarts; mutton, ten; bread, six per pound of twenty-four ounces. According to this, supposing the pound to be sixteen ounces, beef will be $1\frac{5}{8}$ penny; mutton, $1\frac{7}{8}$; bread, $1\frac{1}{8}$ per pound.

Labour is from three to five reales a day, or, without fractions, from seven pence to a shilling.

The land in all this province is estimated by the *dia de buyes*, or quantity which a yoke of oxen is supposed to plough in one day: but this differs in every district. About Oviedo they reckon the *dia de buyes* at sixty varas by thirty, or eighteen hundred square varas; at Luanjo it is sixty-four by forty-eight, or three thousand and sixty-

fixty-two ; and about Gijon they call it seventy by thirty-five, or two thousand four hundred and fifty varas square ; but in general the *dia de buyes* may be taken for about half an acre.

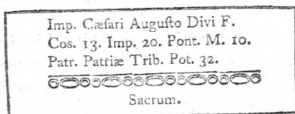
Near Luanjo the land produces, of wheat, ten for one upon the seed, and as it pays one fanega, or about ninety-two pound of wheat for every *dia de buyes*, we may reckon the rent at about sixteen shillings the acre.

After spending a few days at Luanjo, we went to *Carrío*, another country-house belonging to the count, or rather to the countess, because in Spain the property of the husband, and of the wife are perfectly distinct. As long as she lives no one can take it from her, and when she dies, it passes to her children ; or, supposing it to be entailed, it devolves immediately to her eldest son, who, at the age of twenty-one, or sooner if he marries, takes possession, even though his father should be living. If she has titles of honour, she carries them with her to her husband, and transmits them to her heir. Upon marriage, the husband makes a declaration of the effects belonging

belonging severally to himself and to his wife; and her property is so much vested in her, that, in case of her husband's bankruptcy, his creditors have no power to touch it; but if at his death it is found that he has prospered in the world, she may claim her proportion of all the savings. The latter provision is unquestionably wise, but it may be imagined that the former must give much scope to fraud, and certainly it does; but then there are not wanting considerations to make men honest. A tradesman of Oviedo, at marriage, gave in a false specification, with a view to defraud his creditors, should he unfortunately break. The wife died soon after, and her relations claimed all the effects of which he had delivered in his declaration, as her property; and he, who had been well to pass previous to marriage, was left destitute, and could find no redress.

Carrío is a commodious habitation, neat and comfortable, but without higher pretensions, situated in the midst of a fertile country, near to a little river, and not far distant from the sea. In the domestic chapel, the count
shewed

shewed me an altar, which is one solid block of marble, with the following inscription :



This block was found at Cape Tauris, near the entrance into *Gijon* (Jixa of the Romans) and is mentioned, together with two others, discovered near to the same spot, by Mariana and Morales.

From Carrio we rode into *Gijon*, a considerable port, to which the English resort for filberts and chefnuts. It contains about eight hundred families. This harbour, made and maintained at a vast expence, is not reckoned safe; but there is no other in the vicinity, which can stand in competition with it.

We were entertained with great hospitality by Don Francisco Paular Jove Llanos, a captain in the marine, who is retired from service. An old officer in every country is a pleasant companion, and in no country more so than in Spain. In this gentleman

I found all that a foreigner can wish for, good sense, politeness, and great information.

The next morning, we returned by Carrio to Luanjo; and, in the way, stopped in a beautiful meadow near *Candace*, to partake of a little fête champêtre.

At *Peran*, in this vicinity, in the limestone rock, I met with a rich variety of extraneous fossils, of corals, corallines, and coralloides, with cockles, exposed by the fretting of the waves; and, upon examination, I traced this stratum running up into the country much above the level of the sea.

During my residence at Luanjo, the count shewed me a royal ordinance, dated 22d October 1785, stating, That the principal cause of the decay in agriculture was the unlimited power of the landlord to eject his tenants at the expiration of their leases; and appointing, that, from henceforth, in the Asturias, the farmer, provided he cultivated well, and was not considerably behind hand with his payments, should neither be ejected at the expiration of his term, nor have the rent raised; reserving both to
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the landlord and the tenant, an appeal to skilful persons, who should regulate the value of the farm, and give a compensation to the occupier, on his quitting it, for any improvements made either by himself or by his ancestors. This provision, most undoubtedly, is both wise and just; because it not only stimulates the industry of the farmer, but encourages his parsimony, by shewing him where he can immediately make all his gains productive, and thereby promotes the highest improvement of the soil. But, as for wisdom or justice in the former provision, I must freely confess, I can discover neither. Every thing is worth what it will fetch; and if men, who wish to find employment for their capitals, are willing to advance the rent, why should not the landlord avail himself of this? In most countries, the ruling powers are too busy, and will be meddling, when things would naturally, and without their interference, much better regulate themselves.

September 11, I returned to Aviles, and the count went to spend a few days at another country-house, whither he pressed

me much to bear him company; but I had neither health nor spirits for this excursion.

The resemblance between the Asturias and many parts of England is very striking. The same is the aspect of the country, as to verdure, inclosures, live hedges, hedges-rows, and woods; the same mixture of woodlands, arable and rich pasture; the same kind of trees, and crops, and fruit, and cattle.

Both suffer by humidity in winter, yet, from the same source, find an ample recompense in summer; and both enjoy a temperate climate, yet with this difference, that as to humidity and heat, the scale preponderates on the side of the Asturias. In sheltered spots, and not far distant from the sea, they have olives, vines, and oranges.

The cyder of this country is not so good as ours; but I am not able to determine, whether the fault is wholly in the making, or whether there is not likewise some natural imperfection in the fruit. Certain it is, that they pay little attention to this article, neither suffering the apples to hang the proper time upon the trees, nor select-
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ing the best kinds, nor leaving them to sweat, nor picking out bad fruit, nor racking off the cyder when it is fine. The opposite of all this, both as to the liquor and the fruit, is the practice of our best cyder counties. Not contented with racking once, we draw it off three or four times, if needful, always observing to do this when the cyder is become fine. For this purpose, they, who are most curious, will even fit up with it, when the time draws nigh, that they may seize the proper moment. If the Asturians paid attention to this, their cyder would become a considerable article of export, and, together with their nuts, and other fruits, would bring great wealth into the country.—Yet, with the best information and the most minute attention, it is by no means certain, that they would ever be able to produce a liquor equal in strength to that of our best counties, because of the prevailing humidity; on account of which, every thing this principality produces is inferior in its quality to the productions of a warmer climate. The herbs here dry away to nothing; and the wood burnt upon the hearth, makes little or no ashes, yet produces

duces so much soot, that the chimneys are perpetually choked. Such is the humidity of this province, that the mistletoe grows not only on the oak, but on apples, pears, and thorns.

All the way from Aviles to Oviedo, we found the harvest over, and the people, men, women, and children, in the field threshing out the grain with flails; because, in this moist and temperate province, they cannot use the trillo.

Their flail is very heavy, and extravagantly long, not less than five feet in common, and the handstaff is nearly of the same length. In consequence of this, the motion of the flail is slow, and the exertions of the thresher turn to little account. To understand this subject, we must recollect the laws of motion. Now, when quick motion is communicated to the grain, whilst the straw remains unmoved, or when the straw receives the stroke, whilst the grain continues in a state of rest, a separation is the consequence. When either moves slowly, the other follows, and no separation is effected; but the greater the velocity of either, the more certain and speedy is the separation

separation of the grain: Supposing the straw and grain to be moved with different velocities, the same effect will follow in proportion to that difference. We must always remember, that the weight of impinging bodies being given, the magnitude of the stroke is directly as the velocity. This principle rightly understood and applied, would not only long since have banished heavy flails for threshing the lighter grains, but would, from the beginning, have led to the machine for coining now recently introduced at Birmingham.

Threshing is by no people better understood than by the Wiltshire peasants, who for wheat prefer a flail of three feet, weighing about twenty-four ounces, with a hand-staff of the same length.

In the Asturias, they depend upon the wind for winnowing, and have no idea of a machine for performing that operation in a barn. Were they to see the fan, formed after the model of a machine, first invented by Reifelius of Wurtemberg, called *rotatilis suctor et pressor*, but discovered by Dr. Papin, and from Holland introduced into this island, it is to be hoped, that, without either pre-

judice or scruples, they would immediately adopt it; and that no fanatic priest, as in North Britain, would condemn the use of it as impious, under the idea of not depending upon providence for a favourable breeze.

When I returned to Oviedo, a gentleman gave me a collection of amber and of jet, of which there is great abundance in this province; but the two most considerable mines of it are in the territory of Beloncia, one in a valley called *Las Guerrias*, the other on the side of a high mountain in the village of Arenas, in the parish of *Val de Soto*. The former is found in slate, and looks like wood; but when broke, the nodules discover a white crust, inclosing yellow amber, bright and transparent. Jet, and a species of kennel coal, abounding with marcasites, universally accompany the amber. The natural history of this curious substance is so little understood, that every fact relating to it should be treasured up. Till of late years, it was found only on the sea-shore, cast up by the waves; but even then the various insects inclosed in it, such as ants and flies, proved it to be a production
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of the land. But now we find it fossil, and hence trace a connection between bitumens and resins. We see it likewise as one link in a vast chain, the origin of which all philosophers are labouring to discover. We find it in a country, where the inclosing strata, and all the surrounding rocks, charged with marine shells and plants, shew clearly, that both it and they are the deposit of the ocean.—This subject will be frequently resumed, and, from its vast importance, merits the most minute attention.

When every one began to talk of winter, I thought it expedient to prepare for my return towards the south, before the mountains should be covered by the snow, which usually falls at the beginning of November, and sometimes even in the middle of October. I was not indeed in a condition to undertake the journey; but the fear of being shut up in the Asturias, till the return of spring, prevailed over all other considerations, and made me resolve to venture.

As the account of my indisposition may serve towards the natural history of the country, I shall briefly give it. The 21st of August, riding from Oviedo to Aviles,

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on a rainy day, I was wet through; and at the end of our journey, as I had nothing at hand to change, I suffered my clothes to dry upon my back. I had, however, no reason to think that I had taken cold, till I perceived that I was gradually losing the use of all my limbs, without either pain or fever. The physician, at the end of one month, confined me to my bed, and forbade me the use of wine, allowing me only water and vegetables, till he had reduced me to the lowest state of debility. I submitted; but, feeling evidently that I was going fast from bad to worse, I took my leave of him, and, by the use of the bark, with a generous diet, I regained some degree of strength, and, getting myself placed upon a mule, I ventured to set forwards on my way towards the south.

The bishop and his family expressed their concern at my departure; yet, considering the humidity of their climate, and the near approach of winter, they were kind enough to consent that I should undertake the journey, in hope that a warmer and a drier air might restore my health.

J O U R N E Y

FROM THE

ASTURIAS TO THE ESCURIAL.

OCTOBER 2, I left Oviedo, and passing through several little villages, came to *Mieres* in the middle of the day. At night I found a comfortable bed at *Campomanes*, having travelled ten leagues and an half over delightful hills, all either covered thick with wood, or highly cultivated.

In both these places I was much surprised at the moderation of their charges. At *Mieres*, for a dish of eggs, for dressing my fowl, and for the *ruido de la casa*, that is, for the noise of the house, or rather for attendance, the good woman required only a real, or something more than two pence farthing. At *Campomanes*, for the same and for my bed, the demand was two reales.

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As we approached the confines of the principality, the scene greatly changed; for, instead of soft and swelling hills, covered with grass or clothed with woods; scarcely any thing was to be seen but stupendous rocks of limestone, some in long ridges rising perpendicular to the height of two or three hundred feet, others cragged and broken into a thousand forms. In this route, the way winds chiefly by the side of little rivers, brooks, or torrents, till it has passed the summit of that vast chain of mountains, which separates the Asturias from the Old Castille: yet in the midst of these stupendous mountains, a few rich vallies intervene, each with its little village, in size proportioned to the extent of land susceptible of cultivation.

In the ravins through which we passed, I observed that all the mills have horizontal water wheels. These grind the corn very slowly, being fed by single grains; but then to compensate for this defect, they place many near together, and the same little stream having communicated motion to one wheel, passes in succession to the rest. These are well suited to a country abounding

abounding with stone for building, where water runs with rapidity down a steep descent, and where dispatch is not required.

October 4, as we descended towards Leon, we overtook a Merino flock, belonging to the monastery of Guadalupe, in Estramadura. These monks have sufficient land near home to keep their flock during the winter months; but in the summer, when their own mountains are scorched, they send their sheep into the north, where, having no lands, they are obliged to pay for pasturage. They were on their return towards the south.

The great lords, and the religious houses, to whom belong these *trashumantes*, or travelling flocks, have peculiar privileges secured to them by a special code, called laws of the Mesta; privileges, by many considered as inconsistent with the general good.

This institution has been traced back to the year 1350, when the plague, which ravaged Europe for several years, had desolated Spain, leaving only one-third of its former inhabitants to cultivate the soil.

But

But perhaps we ought to look for its origin in more remote and distant ages, when the whole country was occupied by shepherd nations, and when agriculture was but little known. These certainly were the first inhabitants, or if not the first, at least, as the votaries of Pan, that venerable protector of the fleecy tribe, they may claim precedence before the more modern worshippers of Ceres. Occupying the hills with their numerous flocks and herds, it was natural for them in winter to quit a country then covered deep with snow, and to seek the more temperate regions of the south; till these, burnt up by the returning sun, refused them pasture, and drove them back again to the mountains of the north, which, during the summer months, are covered with perpetual verdure by the gradual melting of the snow.

The numbers of the Merino sheep are continually varying. Cajaleruela, who wrote A. D. 1627, complained that they were reduced from seven millions to two millions and an half. Ustariz reckoned in his time four millions; but now they are near five. The proprietors are numerous, some having

only three or four thousand, while others have ten times that number. The Duke of Infantado has forty thousand. Each proprietor has a mayoral or chief shepherd, to whom he allows annually one hundred doblons, or £.75, and a horse; and for every flock of two or three hundred sheep, a separate shepherd, who is paid according to his merit, from eight shillings a month to thirty, besides two pounds of bread a day for himself, and as much for his dog, with the privilege of keeping a few goats on his own account.

The produce of wool is reckoned to be about five pounds from every ewe, and eight from the wethers; and to shear eight of the former, or five of the latter, is reckoned a good day's work. Some, indeed, allow twelve sheep to every shearer; but even this comes short of what we do in England, where a common hand will dispatch sixty in a day, and a good workman has been known to finish half as many more.

The wool of the Merino sheep is worth little less than twelve pence a pound, whilst that of the stationary flocks sells for only six pence; and every sheep is reckoned to yield

yield a clear profit of ten pence to the proprietor, after all expences are discharged.

When the sheep are travelling, they may feed freely on all the wastes and commons; but, in passing through a cultivated country, they must be confined within their proper limits in a way, which is ninety varas wide. Hence it comes to pass, that, in such inhospitable districts, they are made to travel at the rate of six or seven leagues a day; but where pasture is to be had, they are suffered to move very slow. When they are to remove, either in the spring or autumn, if the lord has no lands, where his flocks are to be stationed, the chief shepherd goes before, and engages agistment, either of those proprietors who have more than sufficient for themselves, or of the corporations, who, in Spain, have usually extensive wastes and commons round their cities.

It is to these claims of the Merino flock that some political writers have attributed the want of cultivation in the interior provinces of Spain.

On descending once more into the plains
of

of Old Castille, an observation, confirmed by all with whom I had any communication on the subject, occurred to me, that the wine on the south side of the mountains, being transported to the north, improves greatly in its flavour, precisely as other wines improve by being removed to warmer climates.

At the end of three days, when I arrived at Leon, I was so well satisfied with the attention of my guide, that we made a fresh agreement, and he accompanied me to Salamanca. For himself, and for his mule, I was to allow him a hard dollar, or about four shillings a day, both in going and returning, he being to pay all his own expences on the road, which, for a stranger, is the best plan, although the natives find it more advantageous to maintain their guides.

Having settled all preliminaries, and made provision for the journey; on the 6th of October, we turned our backs on Leon; and, being by this time tolerably acquainted with each others dialect, we began a conversation by the way. The honest fellow, taking a hearty swig at the *borrachito*, or leathern bottle, which contained our wine,

broke the silence, by telling me, that this was the skin of his most favourite cat; and then, continuing his discourse, gave me the history, both of the cat and of the countries through which he had travelled with her spoil.—This was to him, in all his journeys, a constant companion, a never-failing source of consolation; and he appeared to be as fond of her now dead, as it was possible for him to have been, whilst she was sensible of his caresses. The skin contained about a gallon, and usually served us, when filled, for more than half a day.

The way was over an extensive plain of sand and gravel, evidently brought from distant hills, all smooth, and rounded by the action of water. The crops are chiefly rye, with some wheat and barley. The trees are the ilex, the poplar, and the elm.

I was struck with the construction of their ploughs, not merely as having neither sheet, coulter, mould-board, fin (for to this defect I was become familiar), but as having the share morticed into the curved beam at least three inches above its heel, creating thereby a degree of friction, which must greatly increase the labour of the oxen.

Women

Women hold the plough. The cart-wheels are of plank, fixed upon the axis, like those in the Asturias, only they are better made.

The numerous villages contain from fifty to five or six hundred mud-wall cottages, but seem in general to be going to decay. The inns are more wretched than those of the Asturias, and are thought to be considerable, if they make up more than one bed.

At *Toral*, where we slept the first night from Leon, as soon as we arrived, I surveyed the premises, and made out my inventory of the furniture; finding in the chamber (for they had only one) two beds, two broken benches, one crippled table, and a little lamp dripping its oil, and smoking in the middle of the room. This circumstance is not uncommon, because they have no candles, and their lamps are of the most rude construction. I was, however, too much of a traveller to feel disgust, and was preparing to settle myself comfortably, when an old canon of Oviedo, with two school-boys, and a young friar, entering, told me, that they had bespoken this room some days before. I bowed submission, but

stopped one moment to enquire the age of this young friar. He informed me, that he was now in his seventeenth year; and that, two years before, at Aviles, in the Asturias, having accomplished his noviciate, he had bound himself by the irrevocable vows.

When I had retired, my faithful guide informed me, that he had procured a bed for me at the house of the curate, who was a friend of his, whither he instantly conducted me. Here I met with such a reception, that I had no reason to lament my disappointment at the posada.

The next morning we arrived at Benavente, and in the way had occasion to observe a change of dress. In this respect, every province has something peculiar to itself. The peasants, who attracted my attention, were from Astorga. They had round hats, leather jackets without sleeves, and trowsers somewhat resembling those of Dutchmen, perfectly corresponding with what were formerly worn by the *Brachati*.

Benavente is at present remarkable only for the palace of the dutchess, a vast and shapeless pile, possessing the marks of great antiquity,

antiquity, and commanding a most extensive property. This city seems to be going to decay, yet includes six convents. It is divided into nine parishes, and reckons two thousand two hundred and thirty-four souls.

Bread is here three quarts, or $\frac{27}{4}$ penny a pound of sixteen ounces; beef is seven quarts, or a small fraction under two pence; and mutton is two pence farthing a pound. The best wine is about five pence a gallon. These are the stated prices, when beef and mutton are to be had; but my guide having neglected to make provision for himself, must have been contented to pick the bones of my miserable fowl, had it not been for the bounty of a traveller, who had more than he could eat.

The road from Leon to Zamora is about eighteen Spanish leagues, all the way near the Esla, a little river whose water runs into the Duero below Zamora. From this circumstance the way is mostly level; the soil, to a great depth, is either granite sand, or clay of a weak contexture; and the villages are composed of mud-wall cottages.

At *Santa Oveña*, having the curiosity to

measure the room, which, like most in Spain, served the double purpose of bed-chamber and parlour, I found it to be twelve feet by ten; yet, in these contracted limits were contained, a bed, the treffels for another, a chair, a table, with two large chests for the king's tobacco, for barley, linen, and all the treasures of the family. The kitchen is nearly of the same dimensions: yet in this posada I counted thirty-five horses, mules, and asses, with their riders and drivers, who all found lodging for the night.

Whilst I was at supper, an old beggar entered. When I had given him bread, he kissed it, bowed his head, and left the room. Struck with his behaviour, I followed him instantly, and gave him money; he bowed, kissed it in silence, and left the inn.

Zamora, a city of great antiquity, is at present reduced very low, but formerly it must have been considerable, and will, I have no doubt, soon regain its consequence. Situated in a fertile country, on the confines of Portugal, watered by the Duero, and near the conflux of the Esla, it must always have invited plenty; and when the
communi-

communication shall be opened by the canal, for the transport of its productions, it will daily grow in wealth. The extent of its fortifications, twenty-three parish churches, and sixteen convents, inclosed within the walls, in some measure serve to shew what it was; and the recent decorations of the cathedral give a good specimen of what it may hereafter be. This building is old, but the altar is modern, and is much to be admired for the variety of its marbles, chiefly from the Asturias; for the elegance of its composition; and for the beauty of its hangings, which are made of crimson velvet, richly embroidered with gold.

The chief manufactures are, of hats, serges, coarse cloth, and nitre; but for the latter the climate is by no means favourable.

Beef is cheaper than at Benavente, being here only six quarts, or something more than three halfpence a pound; but pork is nearly three times as much.

From Zamora we travelled only three leagues, and rested for the night at *Corrales*, a village of three hundred and sixty cottages. It was not till next morning that I

fully comprehended for what reason we had made so short a journey the preceding day; but, upon our entering an extensive forest, my provident conductor told me, that he always chose to meet the morning, rather than to be overtaken by the night, whenever he was to pass through a forest, and that, by such precautions, he had frequently escaped unmolested, where others had been robbed.

From Corrales we ascended gently for three leagues, and then descending as many, at the end of seven hours we reached *Calzada de Valdeunciel*, having travelled for at least five hours through a forest, in which, as we proceeded, my guide told me the names of the eminences to be passed, all distinguished by one generic term *Confessionarios*; implying, that on these the traveller would stand in need of a confessor to prepare him for his fate. Considering the vast extent of this forest, and its vicinity to Portugal, no situation can be more favourable to robbers, or to the smuggler who, when he has been plundered himself, is apt to plunder others.

The soil here is most evidently decomposed

posed granite, with its quartz, feld spat, and mica. The trees are chiefly ilex, roble, and the cork tree.

All the way from Leon to Salamanca, for three and thirty leagues, or about one hundred and fifty miles, the country is so flat and open, that the Moorish horse, when they invaded Spain, must have met with nothing to impede their progress; because, in such extensive plains, an oppressed people, dispirited and disarmed, could have little inclination to make resistance; and had it not been for a more hardy race inhabiting the mountains of the north, the whole peninsula might at this moment have been numbered among the followers of Mahomet.

When I directed my course towards Salamanca, it was with a view of paying a visit, by appointment, to the marquis of Oviedo, but, unfortunately for me, on my arrival, I found that he was detained by illness at Madrid. This disappointment was the more vexatious, because I had no letters, nor any prospect of being introduced. I ventured, however, to present myself to Dr. Curtis, president of the Irish college, who

who received me with politeness, took me under his protection, and, during my ten days abode at Salamanca, considered me as part of his family.

His situation is respectable, and the convent, part of which he occupies, is one of the best in Spain. It was built A. D. 1614, by the jesuits, but, upon their expulsion, being found much too extensive for any one society, it was divided; the south side being given to the Irish, and the north to the bishop of the diocese for his students.

The wing, in the occupation of the former, is three stories high, and more than two hundred feet long. In the middle of each, through the whole extent, there runs a wide gallery to form a communication between a double range of bed-rooms. These long galleries having no light excepting at the ends, are well adapted to the climate: for even at noon, and during the most dissolving heats of summer, they afford a cool retreat. The whole building is covered with a terrace walk, commanding all the country; and here the young men take the air.

The wing devoted to the bishop's college

lege is nearly similar to this, with the addition of a cloister, and an elegant apartment of sixty feet by thirty, designed for conference and disputations.

The church is in common to both establishments, and is built upon such a plan as must do credit to the taste as well as to the wealth of the disgraced community.

In the Irish college, three-score students are received at a time, and when these are sent back to Ireland, the same number from thence are admitted, to be like them trained up for the ministry. Their course of education requires eight years. They are expected to come well founded in the languages; and of the time allotted to them in Spain, four years are given up to the study of philosophy, the remainder to divinity. The system of philosophy includes logic, metaphysics, mathematics, physics, and ethics. For these they read Jacquier; and for theology they follow P. Collet. They rise every morning at half past four, and have no vacations.

The mode of giving lectures is perhaps peculiar to themselves, but worthy to be followed in our universities. The students

have questions proposed for their discussion twice every day, and on these they are informed what books to read; then, supposing the subject to admit of a dispute, it is carried on by two of them under the direction of a moderator, who gives assistance when it is wanted, and guides them to the truth. Where this mode of proceeding is not admissible, the tutors, instead of giving formal lectures, employ themselves in the examination of their pupils, and the business of instruction is thus greatly expedited.

Dr. Curtis lives with his pupils like a father with his children; and, although in a state of banishment, seems happy in the discharge of his important functions. It is, however, much to be lamented, that he and they should be reduced to the necessity of seeking that protection in a foreign and distant country, to which they are entitled in their own. This kind of persecution is neither just nor politic. It is certain that ignorance and bigotry have a strong connection. Would you overcome inveterate prejudices, and are you anxious to banish superstition? let in the light. Would you conciliate the
 affections

affections of those who differ from you in their religious creed? no longer persecute. Embrace them, and from enemies they will become your friends; let in the light, and difference of opinion dies away. Catholics, in the more enlightened countries, are no longer papists; their whole system is going to decay; and, without claiming more than common sagacity, we may venture to foretel, that in proportion as the limits of toleration shall be extended, all that cannot bear the light will gradually vanish, till the distinction between catholics and protestants shall cease.

To hasten this event, the education of catholics in Ireland, for the purpose of the ministry, should not only be connived at, but should meet with all possible encouragement.

The university of Salamanca was founded in the year 1200, by Alfonso IX, king of Leon, and regulated by Alfonso, surnamed the Wise, (A. D. 1254) under whose protection flourished the greatest astronomers of Europe. This seminary soon rose into importance, and became eminent in Europe by acquaintance with the Arabian authors, and, through them, with the Greek.

Its professors translated Avicena, who took the lead in medicine, and Averroes, who had bestowed much time in studying Aristotle; but not satisfied with copying from the Arabs, they laboured much themselves, and became justly famous in their day for their knowledge in jurisprudence, and for their progress in all the sciences then cultivated in Europe. The reverence of the first professors of this university for Aristotle and for Thomas Aquinas, continues to the present day. The court indeed has long declared war against them both, and repeatedly commanded that they should be abandoned; but, not having adopted such methods as are practicable, to secure obedience, the old professors walk in the same path in which their fathers walked before them.

We are not however to imagine that Salamanca produces no men of liberal ideas. Far be it from us to entertain such a thought; because we know that even in the darkest ages, some men of science were hid in convents, who, had they lived in more favourable times, would have diffused light, and have been admired in the world. One such, and I doubt not there may be many, I met with in D. Joseph Diaz, a father of the Augustines;