

joyed, and that commerce was never so much considered by the several European states, as it is in the present age.

THE great error of the SPANISH policy seems to be this; they never sufficiently attended to the truth of the following political maxim, That industry, manual labour, and the arts, are more beneficial, and truer sources of wealth to a state, than the richest mines of gold and silver. Dazzled with the spoils of AMERICA, they turned their whole attention to seize the exclusive possession of those seeming riches; they neglected agriculture and manufactures, and contracted a contempt for the mechanic, and even liberal arts; in consequence of which, the country becoming daily less populous, their maritime and military strength soon declined. Of late years the Spanish ministry hath been fully sensible of this fatal mistake, and hath endeavoured to raise a spirit of industry among the people, by promoting the establishment of manufactures, in various parts of the kingdom: But though they have tempted the people, by exemption from taxes, and many other privileges, yet the progress they have made is not so considerable as might have been expected.

THEIR most remarkable manufactures are the following; the woollen fabrics are carried on at SEGOVIA, where they made, in the year 1759, 7,400 pieces of cloth, of 30, 60, and 80 bars in length; also at *Valdemoro*, *Guadalajara*, *Saragosa*, *Agulada*, and *Barcelona*. The woollen manufactures owe much of their present establishment, as USTARITZ tells us, to the care and encouragement of the DUKE DE RIPERDA, who had the direction of them in the year 1724. The old silk manufactures are chiefly in *Andalusia*, *Valencia*, and *Murcia*. Those in *Catalonia* are more modern. The principal one of all is at *Talavera de la Reyna*, in NEW CASTILE, for the richest gold and silver tissues. At *Madrid* there is also a manufacture of tissues, lutestrings, and other slight silks. There is a manufacture of linen at *Corunna*, said to supply the King's table; another of linen at *Segovia*. At *Madrid* is lately set up a manufacture of porcelain, in the gardens of the King's palace of the *Retiro*, wrought by Artificers brought from SAXONY. There is likewise in that city a new manufacture of
good

good tapestry, and of cards, as the finest cards of all, which are made at *Barcelona*, are there prohibited. The fabric of glass is at *St. Ildefonso*, that of swords is at *Toledo*, and those of iron in *Biscay*; that of paper at *Segovia*. The pottery fabrics are very numerous and excellent, particularly that of *Talavera de la Reyna*. The looms of silk, wool, and linen, in all the kingdoms, are said to be 20,000; but whether that account be exact, I cannot presume to say.

THAT their manufactures are not now more considerable, is not *solely* owing to their indolence, and the other causes above-mentioned, but likewise to the oppressive spirit of that superstition which reigns there, under the mask of religion. This will be evident from the following extract of a memorial, presented by EMMANUEL DE LIRA, first secretary of state to CHARLES II. which breathes such a spirit of patriotism and toleration, that I persuade myself it will be very acceptable to the reader. DE LIRA having, in his memorial, proposed the establishment of a general company of commerce, in which all foreigners that pleased should be allowed to be sharers, adds,

“ THERE is only one obstacle on our side, that can prevent the establishment of the company. It is, I confess, great, but nevertheless very easy to be surmounted, especially by your majesty, when you are once informed, that the removing of that obstacle would be a means of remedying several abuses introduced among us, and also of preventing the daily profanation of our most sacred mysteries. This obstacle arises from the law established in these kingdoms, and from the decrees and edicts of the holy tribunal of the Inquisition, against the Jews, and against heresy!

“ I KNOW, Sir, that it is the greatest glory of SPAIN, that it is the only nation which keeps itself pure in the faith of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman church; it is this which gives your Majesty the just title of Catholic Monarch, which you so worthily possess. I likewise know, that there is not a more holy, nor a more salutary institution than that of the holy tribunal; but

I shall endeavour to make it appear, that by granting the liberty of commerce to heretics, and even to Jews, no prejudice could from thence result to SPAIN, nor to the glorious title of Catholic King, nor to the laws and prerogatives of the Inquisition.

“ MY reputation is unfulled, and I flatter myself that nobody will suspect me, as to my soundness in the Catholic Faith. I am evidently a zealous and true Catholic, by presuming to propose to your Majesty to grant liberty of conscience in these your kingdoms, as such a liberty would prevent a great many profanations that are daily committed.

“ Is it not a truth, Sir, that all the prisons of the Inquisition throughout all SPAIN are filled with Jews and heretics, who have profaned our sacraments, by receiving them as though they had been zealous and devout Catholics! Is it not likewise a truth, that an infinite number of others keep themselves concealed among us, and participate of those sacraments unworthily, and by way of derision. Such a thing never happens in countries where liberty of conscience is allowed to all. The greediness of foreigners after our wealth gets the better of their apprehensions of divine or human punishments.

“ WE might grant to the nations trading to CADIZ, or SEVILLE, or any other place where this company should be established, the free exercise of their religion for them alone, in the same manner as the Dutch, and many Protestant States and Princes, have allowed it to the Roman Catholics in their dominions, namely, not an open toleration. Thus foreigners, interested in, and members of the company, and their clerks and domestics, would have this advantage, which would render their abode in SPAIN very agreeable; foreign merchants who traded hither would be satisfied, and we should deliver ourselves from those enemies of our mysteries, who keep themselves concealed among us, and remove them from our temples and our altars; for as it is interest that inspires them with the courage to surmount all apprehensions and dangers, the same interest would draw them to that place, where they might in full security follow their superstitions.

“ THE example of the church of ROME for these several ages past may inform us, that it is not contrary to religion to tolerate a worship quite opposite to ours; for it has given a synagogue to the Jews, and it also allows the Greeks to worship according to their liturgy, without thereby forfeiting the name, or the sovereign title of being the immoveable seat of our religion. This example has been followed by the Grand Duke of TUSCANY, at LEGHORN, and by several other Princes in Christendom.

“ THE English merchants, notwithstanding their diversity of religion, have the liberty of trading in our ports, since the treaty concluded by the Constable of CASTILE, and the ministers of JAMES I. King of GREAT BRITAIN.

“ YOUR Majesty's father, of glorious memory, granted the same thing to the Dutch, and even engaged, by the treaty of MUNSTER, to furnish them with a convenient and honourable place for a burial ground.

“ THUS, the most difficult step is already surmounted. As to other points, just precautions might easily be taken to prevent the venom of heresy from infecting the heart of Spaniards.”

LETTER XIV.

AN ACCOUNT of the SPANISH MONEY.

*Pecuniam probant veterem, et diu notam.*TACITUS *de Mor. Ger.*

THE SPANISH MONEY is in itself not easy to be understood, especially by those who are not merchants. The Spaniards make up most of their accounts, and form their calculations chiefly in these *two* Species, the REAL DE VELLON, and the MARAVEDI.

THE MARAVEDI is the lowest of the denominations of their copper money, and in this the *King's accounts* are kept; consequently the revenues of SPAIN, and the wealth brought from PERU and MEXICO, are annually computed by an integer of copper, that is *three times less than our farthing*.

THE REAL DE VELLON is the smallest piece of their *silver* money, the ninetieth part of the pound Sterling, and equals our *two-pence-halfpenny, and two thirds of a farthing*.

BUT though it be the most usual way in SPAIN to compute by the *Maravedi* and the *Real de Vellon*, yet there are several other methods of calculation still in force. Thus, pensions from the court, payments of the army, navy, &c. are set down in the register of the Spanish finances, in *Escudos* and *Ducados*, (or copper

per crowns and ducats) reduced to *Reals Vellon*. Some accounts of merchants, and of private persons, are likewise kept in this way; but few things are bought and sold there, but by the former computation of *Maravedis* and *Reals*. There are, besides, provincial ways of calculation, and denominations of money peculiar to them, still subsisting, being the remains of the usages of the old kingdoms.

BUT our English merchants traffic chiefly in *Pieces of Eight*, and compute usually by the *Piastre*, or old disused Piece of Eight, consisting of fifteen Reals and two Maravedis: or, if they reckon by *Pistoles*, they mean the *Pistole* of sixty Reals, the common *Pistole*, not the gold one of seventy-five, and ten Maravedis, otherwise called the *Doblon efectivo de Oro*.

IN the office of *Decimal Rents*, as they call them, that is to say *Tythes*, belonging to the archbishop of TOLEDO, accounts are still kept in the obsolete denomination of *Dineros*, ten of which make a *Maravedi*. There are no less than fifty clerks in this office; and well there may: think only how voluminous accounts must be for above 30,000 pounds a-year, that are kept in a denomination; the value of which is more than thirty times less than our farthing!

THE different monies, and ways of reckoning, still subsisting in the provinces, make it necessary, that every province should have a separate office in MADRID for its own convenience: and though they live in the same street, the clerks of one office know no more of the process of accounting in the other, than a Chinese only a plander would do.

IN the REAL HACIENDA, or Royal treasury, accounts are kept only in *Millions of Maravedis*.

THE President QUERRY, who was distinguished for his great skill in all the offices in SPAIN, whether ecclesiastical or secular, computed some of the following denominations; either by *Dineros*, *Cornados*, *Blancos*, *Crowns*, or *Ducats*: but these are antiquated

antiquated divisions, those of the *Maravedi* and *Real* being most in use.

THESE small denominations, which the Spaniards love to compute by, must, as you will easily imagine, render their accounts very like themselves, slow, tedious, and elaborate; but then they have this advantage, that they make their accountants most minutely exact. An error is much more easily detected, where the sum is divided into such a number of equal parts, and perhaps into *fractions* infinitely nice.

OF their lowest denomination, called a *Maravedi*, three and one fifth make an English farthing. Thirty-four *Maravedis* go to a Real de Vellon, and ninety Reals Vellon are equal to the Pound Sterling.

THEIR money writers make mention of *Maravedis of plate*; but these, though they might exist formerly, are now no more in being.

THE different exigencies of government, and the various expedients to support expensive projects of ambition, under the preceding reigns, have occasioned more alterations in the value and in the currency of the Spanish money, than in that of any other nation in the world, I believe; particularly from the year 1642 to 1688, and during the confusion and necessities of the succession war. In PHILIP IV.'s time, in 1642, things were in such confusion, that the Piece of Eight in August passed for twelve Reals, the Doblón for forty-five; in October the Piece of Eight went at twenty-five Reals, and the Doblón at eighty-nine; in December the Piece of Eight was at twenty-four Reals, and the Doblón at eighty-seven.

THE President OURRY, who was so distinguished for his great abilities, was three times sent for from FRANCE by PHILIP V. to re-establish the disordered finances of the Spanish monarchy.

As the Spanish money hath been scarce ever recalled, there hath arisen a confused multitude of imaginary species of coin. They committed a great error, in not making, upon the union of the several kingdoms, *one general coin, solely current throughout the whole peninsula.* All these circumstances plainly shew how little the genius and disposition of this people is turned to trade. What could be more *uncommercial*, than a money standard perpetually fluctuating, and there being one sort of coin in CASTILE, another in CATALONIA, a third in ARRAGON, and so on?

THE *Mints* of SPAIN were formerly many, namely, that of MADRID, SEVILLE, SEGOVIA, CUENZA in NEW CASTILE, of SARAGOSSA, BARCELONA, and VALENCIA. Of these the two first only, I believe, are now remaining. It is said there are *four* American mints, that of LIMA, POTOSI, MEXICO, and GUATIMALA.

IN order to give the reader the clearest idea of this matter, I will first begin with the Spanish *copper* money, then go on to the *silver*, and close the account with the *gold*.

I. Of the SPANISH COPPER MONEY.

THE Spanish Copper Money is, for the most part, a very contemptible sort of coin; some of it stamped without either form or regularity; and what is even struck in a set dye, is far inferior to the worst of our halfpence.

THEIR Copper Monies are only four.

1. The Maravedi, 34 = to the Real Vellon.
2. The Ochavo, = 2 Maravedis, 17 = to the Real Vellon.
3. The Quarto, = 4 Maravedis, $8\frac{1}{2}$ = to the Real Vellon.
4. The Pieza de dos Quartos, = 8 Maravedis, $4\frac{1}{4}$ = equal to the Real Vellon.

IN 1718, PHILIP V. ordered they should coin milled Money of pure Copper, making out of each pound 51 Quartos, 102 Ochavos, and 204 Maravedis.

THERE

THERE is mention made of *Maravedis* in a grant of the site of the cathedral of SEGOVIA, by ALPHONSUS, in the year 1160, where they are called, as the grant is in Latin, *Morabetini*, which plainly shews, that the coin itself, as well as the word *Maravedi*, is Arabic, though COVARRUVIAS thought it was Gothic. See Colmenares Hist. Segov. p. 110. For, the word *Maravedi* is a corruption from *Almoravedi*. They dropped the *Al*, and called this little Copper Money *Moravedi*, now vulgarly stiled *Maravedi*. The English took only their *calculation-cyphers* from the Arabs, but the Spaniards took the Arabic numerals, and their manner of computation likewise.

SMALL denominations, and minute divisions of money, were in all countries at first probably owing to the great scarcity of specie. But, however small the *Maravedis* may appear to us, being 34 to the Real Vellon, those who are acquainted with the Roman writers will remember, that the Latin TERUNCIUS was very near as small a denomination, being $\frac{7}{10}$ of our Farthing.

THE Computation, indeed, by *Reals Vellon*, is almost the same as the Roman by *Sestertii*.

	l.	s.	d.
A Roman <i>Sestertius</i> was worth	-	-	0 0 2

The Real de Vellon,	-	-	-	0 0 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{2}{3}$
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What can be well nearer? Does not this similitude almost induce one to think, that the original of this computation of *Reals Vellon* came from ROME? and though the *Maravedi* is Arabic, the *Real* is Roman. So far is very certain, that the gold *Escudo* was for many ages called the *Aureus*, and was current under that name down to the time of DON FERNANDO.

THE most ancient Spanish money was made in imitation of the PUNIC. As the Carthaginians had been absolute masters of SPAIN, it is no wonder the Spaniards should copy from their models. This ancient money had *characters* stamped upon it, which no one has been able to explain to this day, and therefore they are called MEDALLAS DESCONOSCIDAS. Antonio Augustino, the learned archbishop of Tarragona, has taken infinite pains to

make