

AT VALENTIA likewise, in the year 1568, were published the CONSTITUTIONS of the Archbishop of VALENTIA, the Bishop of SEGORVE, the Bishop of DERTOSA, the Bishop of ORIHUCLA, the Commissary General for Profelytes, the Inquisitor of VALENTIA, the Count de BENAVENTE, Viceroy and Captain-General of VALENTIA: And by these Constitutions it was ordered, that whenever the Moors should make a *Will*, it should be written in the Valentian or Castilian tongues; if it was made in any other language, it should be void and of no force. Besides this, LEWIS BERTRAND, a man of a very severe disposition, writing in 1579 to JOHN RIBERA, Patriarch of ANTIOCH, and a man of the highest prudence; BERTRAND, speaking of the best method of converting the Moors to Christianity, says, that the Arabic tongue ought to be prohibited in the kingdom of VALENTIA, as it had before been in the kingdom of GRANADA: For says he, the women and children continue in their unbelief, only because they do not understand the sermons of our Spanish Monks and Confessors. See the Letter at the end of *the Life of John Ribera, printed, Rome, 1734, and written by John Ximenez.*

BUT it is certain, that other men of great piety and discretion, were of a different opinion in this matter. FERNANDO TALAVERA, Archbishop of GRANADA, as we are told by FR. BERDE PEDRAZA, part iv. c. 10. of his Hist. of GRANADA, seriously said, That he would very willingly lose both his eyes, provided he could be such a master of Arabic, as to teach and preach the word of GOD with skill: And he advised the parochial priests to learn that language, in order to instruct the Moors. See *Jos. de Siguenza, Part. iii. of the Hist of the Jeromites, c. 34.* The Archbishop too persuaded PETER DE ALCALA, a Franciscan, to compose an *Arabic Vocabulary*, from which most excellent book you can only learn the *Arabisms* in our language. Concerning the scarcity of this book, see *Antiquit. Hisp. pr. Bern. Aldreti, Lib. I. c. 10.* and my *Origenes.*

BESIDES, *Martin Perez de Ayala*, Archbishop of VALENTIA, a man of uncommon learning and rare piety, in order to instruct

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new converts to Christianity in VALENTIA, ordered to be printed, in 1566, Institutes of the Christian Religion in the *Arabic* and *Castilian* languages; in two columns, one in the common, the other in the Italic character, that priests, who were ignorant of the Arabic, might know how to pronounce the Arabic words. Observe only, what a general ignorance of the Arabic prevailed in SPAIN at that time. That the Spanish clergy knew as little of it in the beginning of the seventeenth century, appears from the testimony of JAMES BLEDA, in his *Moorish Chronicle of SPAIN*, page 84. In the time of RODRIGO CARO, who published the *Antiquities of SEVILLE* in 1634, there was no one there who understood the Arabic tongue, as he tells us, Book I. chap. 23.

WHEN there were discovered some plates at GRANADA, with Inscriptions on them, in the year 1595, PEDRO DE CASTRO, Archbishop of SEVILLE, when he came to that *See*, invited thither THOMAS ERPENIUS, who was reviving the Arabic learning at that time: His design was, that ERPENIUS should have interpreted those *plates*; but he would not accept of the invitation, as JOHN VOSSIUS tells us in his panegyric on the death of that great man.

FROM such a total ignorance of the Arabic tongue, you may easily conjecture the contempt it lay under at that period. The Christians always burnt, in those days, whatever they found written in that language. If you look into the *Scaligerana*, page 30 and 144, you will find some account of this matter, given upon the authority of B. A. MONTANUS, who says, that the Arabic MSS. burnt in those days, in the several branches of learning, such as Philosophy, Divinity, Phycic, and Mathematics, were then valued at above 100,000 *crowns*. The Moors fearing this, carefully hid their Arabic MSS. in the cavities of walls, or other obscure places.

THE *Manuscript-Burners* seemed to have been possessed with the same spirit, as OMAR, the Saracen Caliph, who burnt the Alexandrian Library. See ALBUPHARAJUS, in his *History of the Saracenic Dynasties*, page 181, and POCOOCK's Translation, p. 119.

These Book-burning Bigots seem to have imitated the example of JOHN ZUMARAGA, the first Bishop of MEXICO, who commanded every body to burn all the *Indian Histories* they could meet with, because he thought all the symbolic figures in those Indian MSS. were idols. See JEAN TURRECREMATA'S *Hist. of the Indian Monarchy*, Book III. chap. 6.

THE MOORS, as I said before, carefully hid their MSS. in the cavities of walls, or other obscure places. By this means some of them now and then appear, which have been found in the ruins of old houses. This hath very often happened in my time, and particularly at *Bugarra*, which is a little town in VALENTIA, where, about twenty-six years ago, were found some Arabic MSS. covered over with spartum, a Spanish plant, to preserve them from the wet; and the whole was concealed by layers of bricks. Two of these MSS. I sent elegantly bound to JOHN V. King of PORTUGAL: Another I have by me, damaged by the wet, and wanting the beginning and ending, but I will send it to DAVID MICHAEL, if he pleases, to shew him how willing I am to oblige him.

IN the year 1754, in a little town belonging to the Bishopric of ALBARRACIN, a large city in ARRAGON, they found in the cavity of a wall, upon stone shelves, above 144 volumes of Arabic MSS. That these might be preserved, I desired Don FRANCISCO RAVAGO, the King's Confessor, to acquaint his Majesty with the discovery. The King immediately ordered them to be sent for; and that part of them which could be found, has been taken care of. The common people in SPAIN imagine, that these Arabic MSS. contain some secret verses, and that they are a sort of Magic Charm, by the help of which you may discover hidden treasure; therefore, whenever they find these MSS. they hide them, and set a great value upon them. Whenever they try the virtue of this charm, they always get a *Moor*, who can read the Arabic, and who pretends to milk a goat with a *ieve*. This custom the Spaniards learnt from the Moors, as you may see in JOHN LEO'S *Description of AFRICA*, Book III.

You see that the Christians in SPAIN ceased to speak the Arabic tongue, when they began to govern the Moors and hold them under subjection: The Moors were then forbid the use of their own language, so that in the end, the Arabic tongue became in this country a dead language. See ALDRETI'S *Origin of the Castilian Tongue*, Book I. chap. 13.

MANY of the Arabic MSS. were burnt; and many were transported out of SPAIN into AFRICA. Three thousand Arabic MSS. were carried thither by one Ambassador only, who came from ALGIERS to the Court of MADRID. See JOHN LEO'S *Description of AFRICA*, Book IV. p. 523.

ADD to all this, the want of Arabic types in the Printing-houses in SPAIN, as you may see in the royal licence prefixed to ALDRETI'S *Spanish Antiquities*, and that in a time too, when I may say, without any injury to the present, that there was more sound learning studied than there is now. Besides, we have no Arabic Professor in any of our Universities. You cannot find, I do not say an Arabic MS. but not even an Arabic printed book, in any of our booksellers shops: In no private library that I know of, is there an Arabic MS. to be seen. Nor do I remember to have read of any in the printed catalogues of our most celebrated *Spanish Libraries*; such as those of DON ANT. AUGUSTINO, DON GABRIEL SORA, LORENZO RAMIREZ DE PRADO, the Marquis MONTALEGRE, EMMANUEL PANTOJA, ANDRES GONZALEZ BARCIA, all which I have by me. The only person in SPAIN in my memory, who had any considerable number of books in the Eastern Languages, was DON LUCAS CORTEZ: His library was, after his death, sold by auction for a trifle.

BUT to say the truth, nothing so much prejudiced the study of the Arabic and the Eastern Languages in this country, as that pride with which gentlemen of the court have always treated the Professors of those tongues. RODRIGO GOMEZ, of the house of SYLVA, when somebody was praised in his company for his great skill in languages, asked if the man understood the *Castilian* tongue likewise? Yes he does, replied the other. Very well, says

says GOMEZ, that's enough; it is the only language we speak at court; and as for all the rest, they are not worth puzzling one's head about them. And yet for all this, there are a great number of *Hebrew and Arabic* MSS. in the ESCURIAL Library. For the most learned men in SPAIN, out of compliment to PHILIP II. presented him with the best and rarest books, to adorn that collection. But that I may confine myself to such books only as belong to my subject, DID. HURTADO DE MENDOZA left his books by will to PHILIP II. which books were carried into the ESCURIAL Library in 1575, as JOS. DE SIGUENZA tells us, in his *History of the Jeromite brotherhood*, Book III. page 3. who says, that there were among them many Greek, Arabic, and Latin MSS. There were of *Arabic* alone, in this legacy of MENDOZA's, about 400, relating to science and history, as MENDOZA himself says, in a letter of his to JEROM SURITA, which you may read in *The progress of History in the kingdom of ARRAGON*, published by Don DID. JOS. DORMER.

BUT here let me take notice of three mistakes made by JAMES AUGUSTUS DE THOU, or him who wrote the *Thwana*. It is there said, that DIDACO MENDOZA wrote *the History of the INDIES*, whereas ANTONIO DE MENDOZA wrote it. He confounds DIDACO with FERNANDO MENDOZA, the last of whom died mad; for DIDACO died by the amputation of a leg, as ANTONIO PEREZ tells us.—Lastly, DE THOU says, that the Spaniards are wont to die mad, which is a notorious falshood.

B. A. MONTANUS gave also to the ESCURIAL Library many MSS. in Hebrew, Arabic, and Greek, as SIGUENZA tells us. I pass over others, who gave fine Oriental MSS. to the same Library. Besides, LEWIS FAXARDO, who was High Admiral to PHILIP III. took from the Turks, in one engagement, 3000 Arabic MSS. which were all placed in the ESCURIAL, as FR. DE LOS SANTOS tells you in the history of that Convent.

BUT, to the irreparable loss of the republic of Letters, the greatest part of the Oriental MSS. and particularly the Arabic, were burnt in the year 1674, as NIC. ANTONIO tells you in the preface

face to his *Spanish Bibliotheca*. The fire began June the 7th, and lasted fifteen successive days, as LOS SANTOS relates. FAX-ARDO'S MSS. were all burnt, except the *Alcoran*, and some few others.

YET still a great number of Oriental MSS. and particularly *Arabic*, remain there. And to speak of the Arabic only, there are in the ESCURIAL Library above 200 Arabic Grammarians, many more Rhetoricians, Orators, Poets, &c. MICHAEL CASIRI, a Syrian, the Royal Librarian, hath printed a catalogue of these, of which only the first volume is published. The title of it is, SPECIMEN BIBLIOTHECÆ REGIÆ, ARABICO-HISPANÆ, ESCORIALENSIS; the first sheet of which I now send you, which I received from the King's Confessor. When this work comes out, the republic of Letters will know what vast treasures lie hid in that monastery. So that the words of Master LEO, related by ANT. PEREZ, will seem almost prophetic; who said, that "the ESCURIAL collection of books would become hereafter a noble monument of royal magnificence; but that it would not be a library, but a sepulchre."

MANY learned men have complained loudly of this burying books alive, if I may be allowed the expression. MARIANA, in his tract *de Rege et Regis institutione*, Lib. III. Cap. 9. says, "The ESCURIAL Library is built over the *Vestibulum*, in length 185 feet, and 30 feet broad: it contains many Greek MSS. most of them of a venerable antiquity, which were brought from all parts of EUROPE in great abundance. These treasures, which are more valuable than gold, deserve to have a freer access of the learned, to inspect and examine them. For, what advantage can be derived to the public from such captives as these, imprisoned as it were by royal authority?"

I pass over the complaints of others. Monsieur BAUTRU, when he came into SPAIN, and had seen the ESCURIAL Library, went to the King, and talked with his Majesty about it; and said, among other things, that the Librarian of the ESCURIAL was a very fit man to be entrusted with such a royal treasure.

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Why so? says the King. Because, replied BAUTRU, as it is plain he has stole none of the books, you may be sure he will never diminish your Majesty's treasure.

THE collecting those books together, was, in one respect, very providential; for, where would they have been now, if they had not been preserved there? They are of no great use indeed, because the custody of them is given to a set of illiterate monks, who, as DEAN MARTI said, envy others what they make no use of themselves. JOHN BAPTIST CARDONA, Bishop of DERTOSA, when he wrote to PHILIP II. concerning this library, advised him "to chuse a Librarian for it, who was well skilled in the Latin and Greek tongues, and who should know thoroughly the classical writers; for, as to the Hebrew and Oriental tongues, your Majesty may easily procure *Rabbins* for that purpose. There are now at ROME some *Rabbins*, who are converted to Christianity, men of piety and learning, such as ANDREW, JULIUS, and PAULLUS, men of note there. Your Majesty must likewise send for a PERSIAN, and a TURK, and so on for each foreign language.—There is now living one STEPHANUS, brought up in SOLYMAN'S court, and a great favourite of his. This man, who commanded two galleys, was taken in an engagement at sea, and is now supported by a pension from the king at NAPLES. He would be a very proper person, and would certainly be of more use to your Majesty, than to the King of NAPLES, for his singular knowledge of Turkish affairs."—No one would certainly say, that the ESCURIAL Library was of no use in the time of MONTANUS, who was Librarian there. But such men as he are still wanting, to make that collection truly useful.

THE *Hebrew* and *Arabic* MSS. in SPAIN are written either on *Parchment*, or on *Paper*; the antiquity of which latter you may gather from an *Instrument*, still preserved in the Chamber of Royal Archives at BARCELONA. This instrument was drawn in 1178, and, from the nearness of the two periods, I conjecture, that this fine Spanish writing-paper was made at the famous SÆTABIS,

TABIS, afterwards called XATIVA, and now SAN PHILIPPE*. The GEOGRAPHUS NUBIENSIS, who wrote about the year 1150, or perhaps a little before, says, "SÆTABIS is a most beautiful city, and its environs are so delightful, as to be made a proverb of; they make their paper of a most incomparable fineness."—It is no wonder this city should be so celebrated for its *Paper Fabric*, for CATULLUS has taken notice of its fine handkerchiefs, the *Sudaria Sætaba*, as he calls them: And PLINY tells us, *Lino Sætabi tertia in Europa dabatur palma*. SILIUS ITALICUS too, and GRATIAN, have sung its praises.

FROM MSS. the transition to *Medals* is very easy. Count MIGAZZI, now Archbishop of VIENNA, when he was at MADRID, Ambassador to the court of SPAIN, obtained, by my means, 320 Silver Coins, 11 Brass Coins, and one Gold Coin, all of them *Arabic monies*, struck in SPAIN, and in good preservation: The interpretation of these, if published, would be a new thing, and highly acceptable to the learned.

YOU will not be permitted to collate any of our MSS. without the King's leave. We have, besides, no Spaniard able enough to assist DAVID CLEMENS in collating an Oriental MSS. but CASIRI, and he has no leisure for it.

From OLIVA, in VALENTIA, December 23d, 1758.

* This city, which is so often mentioned by the Roman poets and writers, was in VALENCIA, and stood on the banks of the river XUCAR: It was very finely built, and the situation of it was delightful. Unfortunately it declared, in the year 1706, for the Arch-duke CHARLES. The year following, the Count D'ASFELDT besieged and took it, and put all the inhabitants to the sword that bore arms; few escaped but women and children. The citadel capitulated soon after, where they made 800 English prisoners of war. PHILIP ordered the city to be razed and levelled with the ground, and, on the spot where it stood, they erected a column, with this inscription—"HERE WAS ONCE A CITY NAMED XATIVA, WHICH, AS A PUNISHMENT FOR ITS TREASON, AND ITS REVOLT AGAINST ITS KING AND COUNTRY, HAS BEEN LEVELLED EVEN TO THE GROUND. In the year 1707, they rebuilt, by PHILIP's order, a new city on the same spot, and it is now called SAN PHILIPPE.