

somely situated on a lofty eminence, sheltered to the north by mountains, planted with vines to their very summits, and overlooked on the south by heights, richly clothed with wood to the very edge of the grey and broken ridges of rock which crown them. To the eastward it commands a fine and boundless prospect over the undulating plains, which stretch in the direction of Badajos and Elvas. We were billeted for the night in this city, and, after dressing in a cool, retired apartment, which opened into a small orangery, I visited the cathedral: it is handsome, has a fine-toned organ, and the singing was sweet. It was the evening service, and afterwards I heard a requiem chaunted or sung over the grave of some deceased person of rank; there was a long procession, and several monks assisted, all bearing torches; surrounding the graven stone, under which lay the mouldering remains of this wealthy corpse, or rather once wealthy man, they broke forth into a fine and solemn strain. The number of deep and powerful bass voices, contrasted with the soft and feminine tones of the youthful choristers, pro-

duced a very grand effect, far superior to any thing ever heard in our cathedral service. I am free, however, to confess, that the singing of some individuals in our English choirs, is not easily to be surpassed; still, we never hear that astonishing bass which peals forth from a large assemblage of priests and friars, and which is, at once, so awful and so truly imposing. The light brigade, under General Robert Crawford, was quartered in Portalegre at this time. The regiments composing it were very fine, and in the highest possible order; they had had the mortification of joining Lord Wellington's army on the field of Talavera, the day after the battle. I here saw the parade of the 95th regiment, a corps as generally, as it is justly, admired. We continued our march the next day, halting at Arronches, a small, unimportant town, and from thence proceeded the following morning to a bivouack under the walls of Elvas. Near this last town two men in the column died on the line of march, from the joint effects of heat and fatigue. The thermometer rose, in the course of that day, to 100 in the open

air. Elvas is a frontier town of strength, and boasts the protection of an impregnable out-fort (La Lippe), which is looked upon as a *chef-d'œuvre* of skill in the art of fortification. The hospitals of our army were established in this town; and, in walking through the streets, or passing the convents appropriated to them, my eyes continually rested on men, who had been wounded in the late battle of Talavera. As I returned the salutes of these gallant sufferers, I felt my cheek glow like scarlet. What would I not then have given, for the proud privilege of being numbered with those officers, who had commanded them in the field of honour, and who now, their contracted limbs supported by crutches, or their shattered arms lightly suspended in black silk handkerchiefs, were moving indolently in the cool shade, with that contented look, which the sensation of returning health always bestows, and here doubly interesting from a consciousness of the noble cause, which had stretched them on the bed of pain. I followed a large group of them into the shop of a Moorish sutler, called

Tamet, and well known to all the British army as the Turk. This man sold almost every thing which could be useful to officers on service, and was civil and liberal, far more so than any one, in his situation, I ever met with. Here, while making a few purchases, I listened eagerly to the conversation around me. It was of a character to me deeply interesting; for they spoke of our political relations with Spain, of the military character of the Spaniards, and of the prospects of the war; but I confess I quite blushed for their want of information and liberality. The contempt with which they spoke of Spanish prowess, was not only uncharitable, but unmerited; the generous and fearless ardour with which the Spaniards first rushed to arms, and intrepidly threw down the gauntlet of defiance to that man, before whom Italy, Austria, Prussia, and Russia had successively bent the knee, and yielded up the palm of victory; the heroic perseverance with which they endured toil, privation, and defeat; the undying resolution with which, though daily routed, they still presented themselves

before the victorious legions of a brave and skilful enemy, and retired from one field, only to offer themselves as willing victims on another: the unexampled heroism with which Zaragoza, and some other towns, were defended by their inhabitants, without distinction of age or sex; all these were facts, which ought to have been known to my fellow-countrymen, and on the memory of which the impartial soldier, and the good man, will ever dwell with enthusiasm and delight.—I had evidently been unfortunate in the group; for, I believe, that in no army of Europe are so many gentlemen, and men of education and independent feeling to be found, as in our own. But, the British army must not be made responsible for the folly and ignorance of many, who have been too much honoured by admission into her ranks. We must not look to all who have fought our battles, in the vain hope of meeting heroes; we shall find *but men*.—*No*.—Scars and decorations can only effectually ennoble men of virtue, of sense, and of courage.—If, however, the romantic illusions of a youthful and heated fancy

have been destroyed by observation and inquiry, my attachment to the profession of arms has not deserted me; confirmed and happy in my choice of it, I now follow it with more silent devotion, more rational hopes, and less obtrusive zeal. I passed the evening of this day under a canopy of luxuriant and shady vines, which stretched their creeping stems over the trellis-work of a covered garden-path. Here, by the side of a well, our humble repast was spread; the green and purple clusters hanging over our heads, afforded us an excellent dessert; and, after drinking some fine well-cooled wine of Borba, I rolled myself in my cloak and slept soundly, till, roused by drums and bugles, I sprung up, and hastened to fall in with the column, which was on this day to enter Spain. After descending from Elvas, the road to Badajos lies over a brown and level plain, which, extending far beyond that city, seems only bounded by the horizon; though here and there in the distance, a few blue mountains may be seen; but these only rise like rocky islands in the ocean, and serve rather to mark more

strongly the dreary flatness, than to vary the fatiguing prospect, or relieve the aching sight.

A shallow and nameless rivulet marks the confines of Portugal, and, passing this strange limit, you enter the kingdom of Spain. A few miles beyond this, you traverse the city of Badajos, in front of which we bivouacked for the night. The town of Badajos is fortified, and though it certainly did not present the appearance of great strength, its defences were afterwards so much improved by the French, while they held it, as to cost us in the reduction of it, in 1812, a very heavy and murderous loss. Many a man smiled in those days at the insignificant appearance of its works, who was doomed to perish in the assault, which restored it to our arms. It is in the market-place, and the streets of Badajos, that the stranger soon discovers that he is among another people, and in a separate, and, were it not for the dust of Portugal still covering his dress, he might almost judge, in a remote kingdom.

A chain of mountains, or a spacious channel, could hardly prepare him for a

greater change. Features, carriage, costume, language, and manners, all proclaim a distinct race. The style of building, too, differs: fewer windows front the streets, and most of these are grated with long bars, curving outwards at the bottom. The larger houses have a small square court within, ornamented with a fountain, and embellished with plants in large pots, or frames of wood; round this court the building runs, putting forth a covered balcony, into which the windows of the residence look.

The countenance of the Spaniard is noble, his stature tall, his walk erect, his deportment haughty: his manner of speaking varies greatly; it is generally grave and solemn, but on points of *deep interest* and feeling, is animated beyond expression. There is very great variety in the costume of Spaniards, for the natives of each province are readily distinguished by their dress, and, when you see an assemblage of men from various parts of Spain, the effect is very striking. The market-place of Badajoz, which, at the time I saw it, was crowded with strangers, had all the appear-



ance of a picturesque and well-arranged masquerade. The different modes of dress, ancient, and not liable to daily changes, are, no doubt, the same they were four centuries ago.

The Estremaduran himself has a brown jacket without a collar, and with sleeves, which lace at the shoulder, so that they are removed at pleasure. The red sash is universally worn, and a cloak is generally carried on the left arm. A jacket and waist-coat profusely ornamented with silk lace, and buttons of silver filagree, the hair clubbed, and tied with broad black ribbon, and a neat cap of cloth, or velvet, mark the Andalusian. The ass-driver of Cordova, is clothed in a complete dress of the tawny brown leather of his native province.

The lemonade seller of Valencia has a linen shirt open at the neck, a fancy waist-coat without sleeves, a kilt of white cotton, white stockings rising to the calf, and sandals. Muleteers, with their broad body-belts of buff leather, their capitans or train masters, with the ancient cartridge-belts, and the old Spanish gun, were mingled in

these groups. Here, too, were many officers and soldiers of the patriot armies, which, raised in haste, were not regularly or uniformly clothed, if I except some of the old standing force. Of these, you might see the royal carabineer, with the cocked hat, blue coat faced with red, and, instead of boots, the ancient greaves, of thick hard black leather, laced at the sides. The dragoon, in a uniform of yellow, black belts, and a helmet with a cone of brass. The royal, or Walloon guards, in their neat dress of blue and red, with white lace: the common soldier in brown. Mingled with these was the light-horseman, in a hussar jacket of brown, and overalls capped, lined, and vandyked at the bottom with tan leather; here, again, a peasant with the cap and coat of a soldier, there, a soldier from Navarre, or Arragon, with the bare foot, and the light hempen sandal of his country. There was a pleasure I took in the contemplation of these scenes, which the deep interest I felt in the fate of the unfortunate Spaniards, very greatly enhanced. They are people of the most primitive, and un-

corrupted singleness of heart; a people, whose national character is very ill understood, and has been very often, and very cruelly misrepresented. Shut out from the rest of Europe by their geographical position, having long since ceased to be a commercial people, and their country, grand and beautiful as are its features, being little visited, from its utter want of convenience and accommodation for travellers, the Spaniards, until the late contest, had been long lost sight of. The rays of science and of truth, which had enlightened other nations, shone not on wretched Spain; the institutions for civil and religious liberty, which had given new dignity and value to existence, over half Europe, were there unknown, and the Spaniards themselves trembled at the march of improvement, of which they heard only, as of a spirit of destruction, from whose wrathful, though salutary visitations, they were happy to be spared. Such apathy was appalling, but it was not incurable; their energies lay dormant, but were not dead. Enervated by the conquest of America, a conquest achieved

by such high and heroic enterprize, as gives to historical detail all the charm and the splendour of romance, but which opened on them the floodgates of wealth, and its attendant miseries, the Spaniards neglected to promote domestic trade, manufactures, and husbandry. They had been a martial people; such are usually averse to daily labour and habitual exertion: the countries of Europe, however, had by successful leagues shaken their power, and circumscribed their means of indulging this restless passion for glory. Their swords might then have been turned into ploughshares, and they might have become peacefully industrious and prosperously happy. They were made, however, by the easy conquest of New Spain, suddenly, and without effort, wealthy, and from this misfortune they have never yet recovered.

Let us briefly examine the common charges now preferred against them. They are accused of being indolent, and it is true that they are not very laborious, for their wants are few, and these by the fruitfulness of their soil are readily supplied; but they

are not half so indolent as prejudiced travellers would pretend. It is objected, that, in many of their provinces, there are spacious tracts of land uncultivated. On enquiry you will find, that there is no water to assist in fertilizing many of these deserts, while others have been set apart as public sheep walks, by the authority of the government, for whose impolicy in sanctioning so absurd a custom, the wretched and powerless inhabitants must not be condemned. If, however, an appearance of cultivation is the true criterion of industry, in many of their mountainous districts, well supplied with water, we see vines and fruit trees on the steepest cliffs, and corn produced in small plots of ground, on the summits of precipitous and rocky mountains, inaccessible save to the active goat, and the laborious peasant.

The Spaniards are often despised for their ignorance. It is true, that, in the philosophy of nature and metaphysical inquiry, they are far behind most other nations in Europe; but, in such principles of moral ethics, as should regulate human conduct,

they are well versed, and their practice keeps pace with their knowledge. On such subjects they have a dignified and forceful eloquence, which would confound the mere scholar. Unpractised in schools, and little acquainted with books, experience, and observation form them, and they can boast of solid characters, and sound judgments.

The Spaniards are reproached with being very superstitious; and they are so. But superstition is not *always* the parent of crime. Those who would attribute to a willing and consenting nation, the establishment of that merciless tribunal, the Inquisition, *greatly err*; that barbarous institution originated in the wicked and detestable policy of cruel rulers and crafty ecclesiastics, who built up their iniquitous power upon the piety, reverence, and zeal of a devout and enthusiastic people.

The Spaniards, blessed with a fertile imagination and a lively fancy, are exalted, consoled, or awed, by the strange creations and idols of their subject minds. The arm is nerved with tenfold vigour, the heart steeled with tenfold courage, the tear of

affliction is dried, or the commission of crime averted by feelings of irresistible influence, the offspring of holy superstition. In a country where the laws are ill administered, this authority of conscience rules the heart of each individual, and with such success, that I do not hesitate to say, I think there are fewer atrocious crimes committed in Spain, than in the British islands: there is more manslaughter, but less murder, less deliberate assassination. There are bands of robbers in their mountain-passes, and their extensive forests, but, there are fewer villains in their towns and villages, and crimes are rarely heard of in the peaceful bosom of their inoffensive societies. The Spaniards are hospitable and generous, and *unaffectedly* so: they are good fathers, and husbands, humane, and considerate masters of families. They are patriotic and brave, temperate and honest. I am here speaking of the mass of the Spanish people, of her citizens, her yeomen, and her peasantry, not of the nobler and more wealthy classes; for among these, alas! many examples of degeneracy are to be found. Some of these

have lost all, which made the Spaniard respectable, without acquiring that which has given the more polished and enlightened inhabitants of other countries their admitted superiority. For myself, I look forward eagerly to that moment, when forced, by the loss of her American colonies, to examine her resources at home, and to learn the true value of her possessions in the Peninsula, Spain shall, once more, exhibit herself in greatness and in glory to astonished Europe ; — when she will forget her ancient maxim, that it is wiser to bear with the failings of kings, than to punish them ; — when she will have firmness enough to represent her grievances, and resolution enough to insist on their redress ; — when she will abolish the impious and hellish powers of the Inquisition, and secure to herself liberty without licentiousness, and religion without persecution.

These observations may seem perhaps misplaced. It may be so : but I do not follow the order either of a traveller or narrator. My travels and campaigns are over, and I am rather mingling past and pre-



sent reflections, than confining myself to the ordinary detail of first sights and first impressions.

I wandered about the town for some hours, and walked in the evening on their alameda, or promenade. Here I saw several fine and beautiful women. The dress of the Spanish lady is remarkably elegant, and generally adorns a very perfect shape. Black is the universal colour, and the robe is most tastefully worked and vandyked. A mantilla, or veil of black silk or lace, and sometimes of white lace, is thrown over the head, and, leaving the face uncovered, falls gracefully over the shoulders, and is confined at the waist by the arms of the wearer. They are both expensive and particular in dressing their feet with neatness, and their little shoes fit closely. The large black eye, the dark expressive glance, the soft blood-tinged olive of the glowing complexion, make the unwilling Englishman confess the majesty of Spanish beauty, and, he feels that though the soft blue eye, and delicate loveliness of his own countrywomen awaken more tender feelings of interest,

he would deny, or dispute in vain, the commanding superiority of these dark-eyed and fine-formed damsels. The gentlemen and noblemen who walked with them had nothing striking in their appearance: the cocked hat was universally worn, and their dress in other respects, resembled that which the French wore some thirty years ago. I turned with much satisfaction to a group of English officers then passing, who were all fine-looking young men; and I observed several Spaniards of the middling and lower classes (the true and proper samples of that people), drawing comparisons between them and their own degenerate hidalgos, very greatly to the advantage of my countrymen.

I left the town highly gratified with all I had seen and heard, yet somewhat disappointed that I had not, with all my watching and loitering near his quarters, succeeded in catching one glance at Wellington, whom at that time I had never seen. My comrades had again found a garden near the bivouack; and after a very delightful evening I lay down on a mat, spread for me