

VALENCIA.

MORE has been written upon Valencia than upon any other city in the kingdom of Spain; Escolano, Viciana, Beuter, Esclapes and Diago, all of the kingdom of Valencia, have left annals and histories of that capital, and I am not surpris'd at what they have done; Valencia was, for a long time, the city in which a greater number of books were printed than in any other in all Spain.

Its ancient name is unknown; but, it is said to have been taken and fortified by Scipio, destroyed by Pompey, and rebuilt by Sertorius. It was taken from the Romans by the Goths, and from the latter by the Moors, who, at twice, possessed it two hundred and thirty-nine years; for it was taken in 1094 by the famous Cid-Rui-Diaz de Vivar, and bore, during four years, the name of Valencia of the Cid. The Moors re-
took

took it, but it was finally conquered in 1238, by the king Don Jayme, and embellished as well as enlarged by Don Pedro IV. king of Arragon. It is about half a league in circumference, and the walls are built for ornament rather than defence.

Mariana the historian says, that in Valencia cheerfulness enters at the doors and windows; the description he gives of this city is in many respects devoid of truth, and such that the author proves himself more a poet than an historian. Several geographers who have had implicit faith in Mariana, have even exaggerated his account of Valencia, and said, the houses here are all palaces, on which account the name of *Bella* was given to the city, an epithet difficult to reconcile, with narrow, crooked and unpaved streets, impassable after rain; and in which there are but two or three houses built with taste, and a few churches distinguished by their architecture. In a word, it is a city built by the Moors, who, for

reasons of policy, jealousy or religion, associating but seldom with each other, and shut up with their women, considered streets as nothing more than necessary paths, little capable of embellishment, and gave their whole attention to the interior of their houses, which were airy and spacious, but in general inconvenient and badly distributed. Besides, the luxury of carriages had not yet been introduced. But the Spaniards, since their conquest of the kingdom, might easily have remedied a defect which at present is so considerable, and not have followed in their new buildings the injudicious plan traced by the Moors.

Burjasot, a village a league from Valencia, stands on an estate belonging to the College of Corpus Christi in that city.

Escolano derives the name of Burjasot from the Arabic words *borg* which signifies *tower*, and *sot* rendered by *wood*, whence the word *soto*, which in Castilian

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stilian means the same thing. In the middle of the wood that surrounded Burjasot was an oak, which with its branches covered as much ground as a man with a yoke of oxen could plough in a day; the branches, fourteen in number, each of which would have made a great tree, were eighty paces diameter. They were supported by pillars, which gave to the inclosure the appearance of a rural cloister. Escolano saw this tree and gave a description of it. In 1670, it was thrown down by lightning.

Burjasot still presents monuments much more important, and which the city of Valencia takes great care to keep in repair; these are the public subterraneous granaries, constructed by the Romans, and mentioned by Columella, Pliny, Varro, and Suidas, who call them *Silos*, or *Siros**; and which in the

Va-

* Sed id genus horrei quod scripsimus, nisi sit in sicca positione, quamvis granum robustissimum

Valencian language are now called *las Sichas* or *Siches de San Roque*.

The monument of Frances l'Advenant, the most famous actress Spain ever had, is in the old church of Burjasot. She died a few years since at the age of twenty-two, by the excess of her debaucheries: her epitaph, written by a priest, one of her friends, is silent upon this head.

O mors, quàm amara est
memoria tua!

corrumpit fitu: qui si nullus adfit possunt etiam de-
fossa frumenta seruari, sicut transmarinis quibusdam
provinciis ubi puteorum in modum, quos appellant
Siros, exhausta humus, editos à se fructus recipit.
Columel. lib. 1. cap. 6. n^o. 15.

Quidam granaria habent sub terris, speluncas quas
vocant Seiros, ut in Cappadocia ac Thracia; alii,
ut in Hispania citeriore putees, ut in agro Cartha-
ginensi & Oscensi. Varro de Re Rust. lib. 1. cap. 57.

Suidas, tom. ii. p. 734 and 744.

Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. 18. cap. 30.

Quint. Curt. lib. 7. cap. 4. n^o. 24, &c.

A qui jace
 Francisca
 l'Advenant
 de edad de veinte y dos annos
 y ocho dias, immortal
 por fu agudissimo
 talento, y admi-
 racion unica en
 fu profession, mu-
 rio en onze de abril 1772,
 dando especiales
 muestras de fer-
 vorosa contri-
 cion; ruegen a Dios
 por ella

Dum proceres,
 primi,
 fummi lacrymantur
 et imi;
 post vitam fumus,
 pulvis E umbra
 fumus*.

* O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee!
 Here lies Frances l'Advenant aged twenty-two years

From *Burjasot* the excellent figs, called at Marfeilles *Figues Bourjasotes*, derive their name, and not from Alexander VI. of Borgia, archbifhop of Valencia before he was pope, as Ménage pretends in his Italian etymologies under the word *Fico Brogiotto*: it is true they were tranfplanted to Italy by this luxurious pope, and there made known by him to the nice palates of that country.

A few years ago a ftone with the following infcription was found in the Guadalaviar, in the environs of Valencia :

SODALICIUM
VERNARVM
COLENTES ISID::::

and eight days, immortal by her rare talents, and the greateft prodigy of her profefion. She died 11 April, 1772, after having fhewn marks of the moft fervent contrition. Pray to God for her.

Whilst the great, the rich, the powerful, and the people fhall regret her lofs and fhed tears at her fate, let us not forget, that, after this life, we are but fmoke, fhadows and duft.

It

It is placed upon the road not far from where it was discovered: and has above it another stone, in the center of which is a crown of laurel, a cornucopia, and the following characters as a legend:

T
CO. IV. IT. VALENIA

After placing the two stones, the following inscription was put over them—
Siste, antiquitatis amator: diu focii in alveo sepulti lapides A.D. MDCCLIV. inventi, sequenti in hunc proximiorum locum positi, dic ubi, dic quando primum erecti.

Most of the historians who have written upon Valencia maintain it to have been the first city in Spain, in which the art of printing was known; and in the supposition that it was not introduced into that kingdom before the year 1474, they mention a Sallust printed at Valencia in 1475, and a Latin dictionary, intitled *Comprehensorium*, at the end of which is
read

read as follows: *Præfens hujus Comprehen-
forii præclarum opus Valentiaë impressum anno
MCCCCLXXV. Die vero XXIII mensis
februarii finit feliciter.* This work is in
the library of *Don Gregory Mayans*, who
resides at Valencia, and who has one of
the most valuable collections of books
in the kingdom. He may be called the
Nestor of Spanish literature. Although
eighty years of age, most of his time is
devoted to letters, and thus the last mo-
ments of a life, celebrated by a great
number of works, are consecrated to the
instruction of his countrymen. Voltaire
has justly given him the title of famous.
Dr. Robertson consulted him upon his
history of America, and he maintains a
correspondence with all the learned men
in Europe. He gives the most polite re-
ception to visitors, and was pleased to
place me in the number of those whom
he honours with his friendship. I was
not less satisfied with his brother *Don
Antonio Mayans*, a man well acquainted
with the antiquities of Spain, and who,
among

among other works, has given the history of Elche, formerly *Ilici*.

During my stay at Valencia, I was present at the celebration of a feast given by the society *de la Real Maestranza*, on the birthday of Charles III. This name is given at Valencia, Granada, Seville, Zamora, and some other cities, to a society composed of some of the first nobility of the country. The *Maestrantes*, in different cities, have a very rich uniform, and enjoy, by grant from his majesty, several honourable privileges. They march to the field under his banners, and are followed by several companies composed of their vassals. This presents an image of the feudal system.

ROAD FROM VALENCIA TO
ALICANT.

I LEFT Valencia about one o'clock on the 22d of January, in a *Volante**; the weather was extremely fine, the sun clear and very warm, and the country as beautiful as in the month of April. The road at first is good, and passes through several villages, but afterwards becomes such as it probably was at the creation; sand up to the axletree, and an immense desert full of the high thorny and strong plant which the people of the country call *Pita*; the aloe of America, of which the Spaniards make cordage. The Catalans spin it so finely, that the thread is used in making of blonde. Algemisi is the first town upon this road. The Spanish traveller says, the façade of the church is in a good taste, the great altar of fine architecture, and

* A light open carriage, as I may say, continually blown about by the wind.

that

that in the inside of the church there are several pieces of sculpture well executed, and some paintings by Ribalta. Alcire, two leagues from Algemesi, is a considerable town, well situated. The Moors call it *Algecira*, which signifies *Island*; and, in fact, it is one, being surrounded by the river Xucar, which you pass over a stone bridge. The country about Alcire produces rice, fruits, and grain: the sugar cane was formerly cultivated there with some success, but since sugar has been brought, cheaper and of a better quality, from America, this cultivation has been neglected.

The road from this town to San Felipe is, in general, tolerably good; sometimes commanded by high and barren mountains, at others crossed by different streams.

Three quarters of a league from San Felipe you pass over the widow's bridge. A mother who had the misfortune to lose her only son in the river over which the
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the bridge is built, caused it to be erected, that the same misfortune might not happen to any mother in future.

San Felipe was called *Setabis* in the time of the Romans; and, when in the possession of the Moors *Xativa*, a name still given it by the common people; it was destroyed at the beginning of this century for having resisted the arms of Philip V.

The castle was formerly the prison of the duke of Calabria*.

Between

* Ferdinand of Arragon, duke of Calabria, eldest son of Don Fadrique of Arragon, king of Naples, born in Andria in 1488. His father having been deprived of his states by Ferdinand V. called the Catholic, and Louis XII. of France; Ferdinand, who was his presumptive heir, shut himself up with some troops in Tarentesia, where, unable to defend himself long, he was obliged to surrender to the great captain Gonzalo Fernandez, who treated him well and sent him into Spain, whilst his father, mother and brothers were in France. King Ferdinand imprisoned him in the castle of Xativa, where he remained ten years, after which Charles V. gave him
his

Between San Felipe and Mogente, the traveller, in less than two hours, twelve times crosses a river called *Barranjo de Mogente*; the laurel rose, so carefully cultivated in our gardens in France, grows naturally upon its banks. He next arrives at Villena, a small town of new Castile.

Not far from Villena is the little village of Biar, called by the Romans *Apiarium*, on account of its excellent honey, which was as white as snow. It is still famous for the same valuable production.

his liberty, and received him at Valladolid, where the court then was; he married him to the queen Ursula Germaine, widow of his grandfather, daughter to the count de Foix, and niece to Louis XII. he afterwards named him viceroy of Valencia. Having lost his wife, he married Donna Mencia de Mendoza. He died at the age of 66 years and some months, and was interred by the side of his first wife in the church of San Miguel de los Reyes, near Valencia, in a monastery of Jeronimites, which he had founded.

To the left of Villena is Alcoy, a handsome little town, situated upon the river of that name. Iron mines were discovered in the neighbourhood in 1504; but it is more remarkable for a fountain called by the inhabitants *Barchel*; they say, that it throws up an abundance of water during the space of fourteen years; that it afterwards becomes exhausted, and that it runs and dries up periodically. The mountains in the neighbourhood of the village of Contentaina are famous from the great quantity of rare and medicinal plants found upon them.

Altea, rich in wine, silk, flax, and honey, is by the sea-side.

Denia, an ancient city founded by the people of Marfeilles in honour of Diana, lies to the north of Altea; it was called by the founders *Artemisium*, from the Greek name of that deity: the Romans gave it the appellation of *Dianeum*, whence the name it now bears. Sertorius made an advantageous use of this

this place, and it is not long since the inhabitants still called it *Atalaya de Sertorio*, the observatory of Sertorius. It stands at the foot of Mount Mongon, and has a commodious harbour; the soil is fertile, and abounds in corn, wine and almonds.

Between Denia and Altea, the land forms a promontory, called Cape Martin, but the inhabitants of the country still call it Artemus. This cape separates the Gulph of Valencia from that of Alicant.

ALICANT.

ALICANT was, for a long time, only a small village: Viciana says, that in 1519, there were but six houses upon the ground on which the city now stands; but in 1562 the number amounted to upwards of a thousand. The circumstances which most contributed to this prodigious increase, were the means made use of by the inhabitants to secure themselves from the enterprizes and ravages of the corsairs. They employed a part of their property in making strong fortifications by the sea-side. Several famous pirates, supported by the Moors, then cruized in the Mediterranean; Dragut and Barbarossa spread universal terror. Alicant, become a place of safety, and capable of defence, induced the merchants of Carthagená and the environs to establish themselves there. These were followed by several other merchants from Milan and Genoa; and the concurrence of natives and strangers soon gave both fame and prosperity to the city.

It is now well built and peopled; the bay is safe and much frequented; it is sheltered on the east by Cape de la Huerta, and to the west by Cape Saint Paul and the Island of Tabarca. Vessels anchor about a mile from the mole in six, seven, eight and ten fathom of water, and may enter and go out with any wind. The mole is large and commodious, but not yet finished. One of the circumstances which has most contributed to the riches and commerce of Alicant, is the duties of entry being less there than at Valencia and Carthagen; this diminished the commerce of these two cities in favour of the former, from which all the vessels that carry on the trade between Spain and Italy are fitted out.

The commerce of Alicant consists in barilla, antimony, allum, aniseed, cummin, and the wine much esteemed in Europe, called *Vino tinto* (tint wine).

Within four leagues of the city there is a kind of reservoir, or cistern, between two mountains, called *El Pantano*, in which the water that falls from all the neighbouring mountains is received; and which, in case of a want of rain, serves to supply the whole district for a year. The walls of the basin are two hundred feet high; and, at the base, upwards of forty feet thick.

The soil of the whole country between Alicant and Guardamar is entirely saline. Guardamar is said to be the ancient *Aloha*, so called on account of the great quantities of salt found in the environs.

These salt pits have been famous in history for two thousand years. The Genoese and the traders from Pisa and the Levant formerly came there to load their vessels, and took great care to insert in their treaties of peace, an article whereby full liberty was granted them to fetch salt from Guardamar.

The bay of Alicant is said to have formerly been the famous gulph of *Ilici*, a Roman colony, now the city of Elche, but the declining state of the port of *Ilici*, and the improvement of that of Alicant, gave to the bay the name it now bears: it begins at Cape St. Martin, and terminates at Cape Palos.

The waters of Bouffot, a village within a few leagues of Alicant, are said to be of use in obstructions and venereal cases; people go to drink them in the month of May, but they find there no kind of lodging, and the sick who remain are obliged to have small tenements erected for their accommodation. The rose-mary plant thrives so well in this neighbourhood, that it frequently grows to the height of six feet.

The situation of Alicant is too fine for that part of the coast to have been neglected by strangers who landed in Spain; and, it is supposed, not without some reason, that there was formerly a city,

of which the name is now unknown, in the environs of the spot on which Alicant now stands. Several fragments of inscriptions, and ruins of columns and statues, found towards that part of the bay called La Cala, support this conjecture. Some intire inscriptions, discovered in the same quarter, have been preserved in the neighbouring country-houses; amongst others are the following:

M. VALERIO. SOLANIA
 NO. SEVERO. MVRE
 NAE. F. MAG.
 M. POPILIUS ONYXS
 IIIII. AVG. TEMPLVM. D. S.
 P. R. I. Q. P

Mario Valerio Solaniano Severo, Murense familie magister, Marcus Popilius Onyxus sextum augur, templum, de sua pecunia restituit ipseque posuit.

VARRO. ANN XVIII
 H. S. E. S. T. L.

Varro annorum octodecim hic sepultus est: sit terra levis.

DIIS MANIBVS
PRIAMI GENIA
SINPONIACA
AN. XXV.

A seal or signet, of the form following, was found near the same place:

ABASCANTI

It had a strong little handle that it might be forcibly pressed: *Abascantus* is said to have been a Roman collector; and *Beuter* quotes an inscription in which mention is made of a person of that name.

Q. SERTORIUS. Q. LIB.
ABASCANTVS SE VIR AVG.
D. S. P. F. C. IDEM QVE
DEDICAVIT.

The inscriptions and coins, discovered in this neighbourhood, prove that the city or colony existed before, and in, the time of the emperors.

ROUTE FROM ALICANT
TO MURCIA.

TWO leagues from Alicant the traveller finds a forest of palm trees; a kind of tree which has a noble and simple, yet, in general, a melancholy appearance: however, when they are found in such numbers, as in the environs of Elche, their effect is very agreeable. I imagined myself transported to the plains of Alexandria or Grand Cairo: I saw, with a pleasure new to me, the golden and tufted grape and the date, suspended by the side of each other; an horizon infinitely varied, green valleys intersected by a thousand rivulets, and a clear and brilliant sky, which enlivened the scene, and rendered it one of the most interesting I had ever beheld.

Between Alicant and Elche there are several deep and covered cisterns, the water of which is excellent. They are the precious remains of the religion of the

the Moors, who neglected no means of facilitating ablutions and the observance of the salutary precepts of their law. The cisterns are now going to ruin, and in a few years will be totally filled up.

Elche, say antiquarians, is the ancient *Ilici*, a very famous colony, which had the surnames of *Julia*, *Casariana*, and *Augusta*; but all the remains of its ancient magnificence are a great number of ruins, and some inscriptions: one of the latter is engraved upon a piece of a jasper column in the convent of *Nuestra Senora de la Misericordia*: the words are:

AUGVSTO DIVI. F.
DECIVS. CELER
DEDICAVIT.

The column was brought from Alcu-
dia in the environs of Elche; and, by
the ruins found near that place, it ap-
pears to have been more considerable
than the latter.

The

The following inscription is also found in Elche.

D. M.
 VLP. MARIANAE
 VIXIT AN. XXX
 L. CASSIVS. IVNIANVS
 MARITAE *
 KARISSIMAE.

Elche had formerly a port called *Ilicitano*, from its name *Ilici*; it was still resorted to in 1418, but is, at present, abandoned, and not even a trace of the city, to which it belonged, is now to be found. The city was undoubtedly distinct from *Ilici*, because Elche is a league from the sea. There are yet some remains of a road from Carthagenæ to the port of *Ilici*, and the natives called it, by tradition, the Roman road.

It is also said, that the road made by the Grecian Hercules, when after con-

* The word *Marita*, instead of *Uxor*, is frequently found in Horace and Ovid.

quering Geryon, near Cadiz, he continued his way to the Pyrenees to go into Gaul and Italy, passed through Elche.

This city was early converted to the Christian faith; the name of the first bishop of it was John; there still remains a letter of compliment, written to him by pope Hormisdas in 517; but the see was destroyed by the invasion of the Moors.

Elche was famous in the time of the Arabs: the situation was delightful, the climate mild, and the environs fertile; it was for them a delightful retreat, in which they cultivated arts and letters in the midst of pleasures. It gave birth to several celebrated men, among whom one of the most distinguished was Isa Ben Mahomed Alabderita, a very pleasing poet; who flourished about the year 913 of our æra.

Mahomed Ben Abdalrhaman enjoyed the greatest consideration amongst his fellow

fellow citizens ; he deserved to be celebrated for his knowledge and piety. The Spaniards have his annals of Spain, and a history of the illustrious men of that kingdom ; he died in 1213.

Abu Abdallah Mahomed Ben Mahomed Ben Hefcham was so wise and just a judge, that the king of Granada, after receiving repeated proofs of his knowledge and equity, gave him full power to govern in his place : he died in this employment in 1304.

Elche was taken from the Moors by Peter the Cruel, in 1363, and has ever since remained under the dominion of the Spaniards ; it belongs to the house of Arcos.

Orihuela, four leagues from Elche, is an ancient and well situated town, surrounded by high mountains, and, like all this coast, enjoys a perpetual spring. The country is so fertile as to have become a proverb : *llueva o no llueva, trigo*

trigo en Orihuela; whether it rains or not there is always corn in Orihuela.

The Romans called it *Orcelis*, and Ptolemy reckons it among the cities inhabited by the *Bastetani*.

One of the first bishops of this city sent deputies to the second council of Arles, in the fourth century, the time of Constantine the Great. The see was afterwards united to that of Carthagena, and not separated from it until the middle of the sixteenth century.

Orihuela has an university, which was founded in 1555. The college, built upon a high mountain, has a magnificent prospect, and is in itself an object of curiosity.

The cathedral is dark, small, and ornamented in a bad taste.

The country, from Orihuela to the environs of Murcia, has the appearance of a vast desert.

OF THE KINGDOM OF
MURCIA.

THIS kingdom is the least of those which compose the monarchy of Spain; it is but twenty-five leagues in length, and about twenty-three in breadth. The most considerable cities are Murcia, the capital; Carthagena, and Lorca; Almacaron, six leagues from Carthagena, which is, properly speaking, no more than a fortress upon the sea coast, and principally distinguished on account of great quantities of allum found in the neighbourhood; Mula, situated in a fertile plain; Caravaca, famous for a cross presented to it by angels, and which cures all the sick within ten leagues round; Lorgui, Calaspara, and Cieza, which by some is thought to be the ancient *Carteia*.

The two principal rivers by which this kingdom is watered, are the Segura, formerly called the *Terebus*, and the Guadalentin, which, rising in the kingdom
of

of Granada, waters that of Murcia from west to east, washes the walls of Lorca, and falls into the Mediterranean near Almacaron.

The Kingdom of Murcia produces a great quantity of silk. The Moors, when they conquered Spain, are said to have brought thither the mulberry-tree, and to have taught the Spaniards the manner of cultivating it, as also how to prepare and weave the silk. The soil of Murcia is so favourable to this tree, that it more easily grows there than in any other part of Spain. The little kingdom of Murcia is said to contain three hundred and fifty-five thousand five hundred mulberry-trees, and to produce annually forty thousand ounces of the grain of the silk worm, the result of which is two hundred and fifty thousand pounds of silk.

The lands watered in the kingdom of Murcia are divided into seventy-three thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven *tabullas*.

tabullas. A *tabulla* is a square, each side of which is forty *varas*; and consequently contains sixteen hundred square *varas* *. Every kind of fruit produced in Spain is found in Murcia; it furnishes Castile, England and France with oranges, lemons, figs, &c. The mountains are covered with shrubs, reeds and odoriferous and medicinal plants.

M U R C I A.

SEVERAL volumes have been written upon the antiquity of this city. In the earliest ages it is said to have been called Tadmir, that is, productive of palm trees; that, afterwards, rebuilt by the Morgetes, it took the name of Murgis, and after these people was at different times called Bigastro, Oreola, and Ormela; but Cascales maintains it had never any other name than that of Murcia. These disputes are but of little consequence; its antiquity is sufficiently proved by inscriptions, some of which are quoted

* Thirty-two inches make one *Vara*.