CASTLE of SEGOVIA or ALCAZAR.

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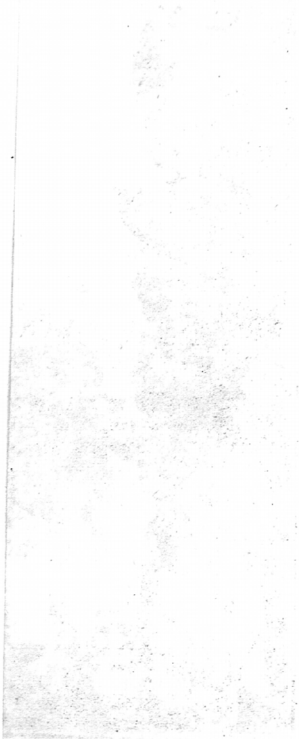


left he plunges into a valley, which a rivulet waters, and clothes with verdure. For the sake of some picturesque points of view, he forgives the parched and naked country he has traversed, and which he meets with again on leaving Segovia.

This city, formerly celebrated by more than one title, is still worthy of the traveller's attention, in spite of its dirtiness and want of population. Its principal edifices are the cathedral and the castle, or *Alcazar*.

The cathedral exhibits a mixture of the Gothic and Arabic style; the interior is vast, and of majestic simplicity; the great altar, recently rebuilt, is decorated with the finest Grenada marbles.

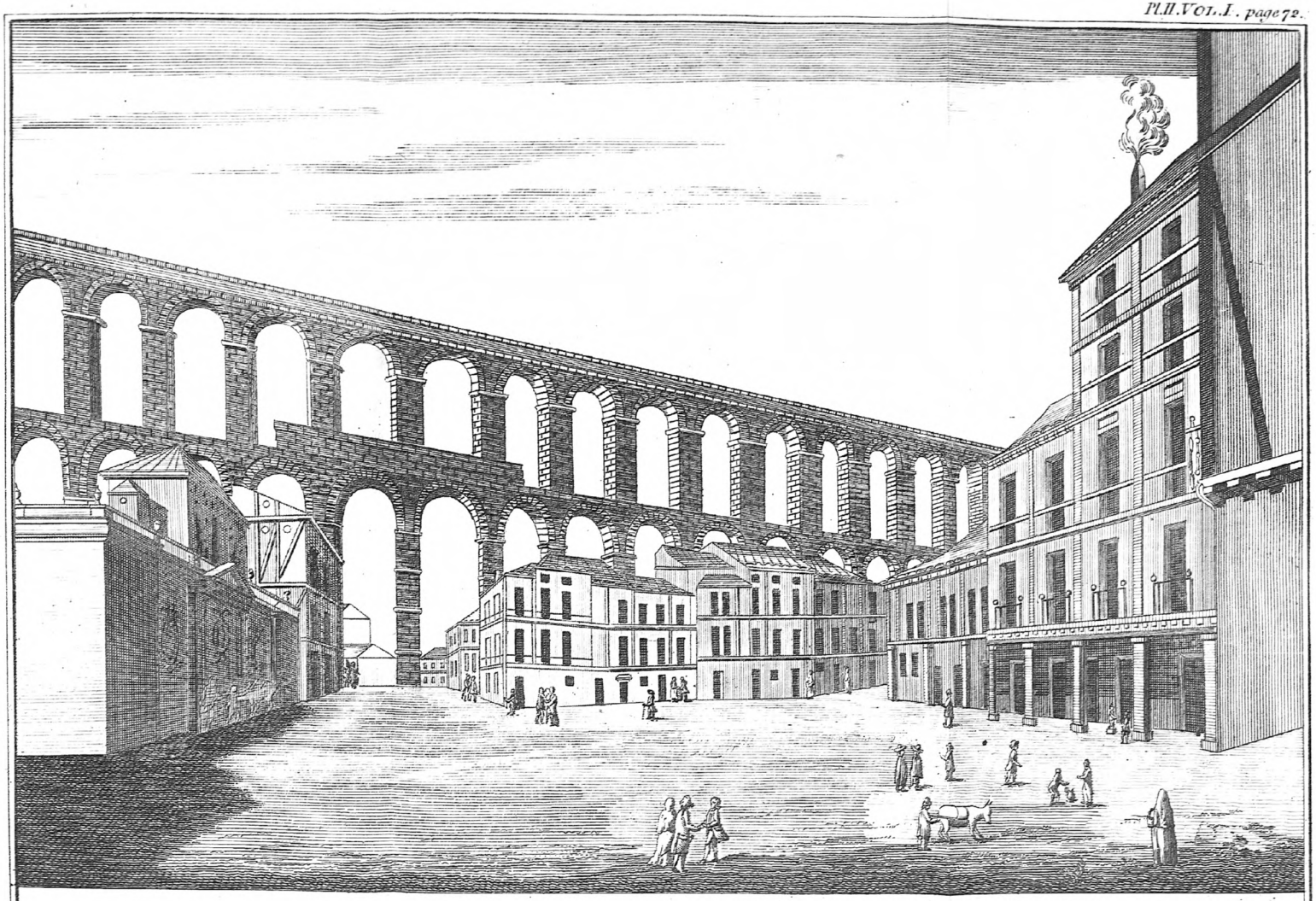
The Alcazar, formerly inhabited by the Gothic kings, is an edifice in good preservation. Charles III. established a military school here for artillery officers; they receive a very good education under the inspection of the director-general of the artillery.

The Alcazar was long used as a prison for the Barbary corsairs who fell into the hands of the Spaniards. No person could see without compassion these robust Mussulmen condemned to a state of idleness, more painful to them than their captivity; they were occupied in sedentary employments, unworthy of men destined for other purposes; never, however, were they treat-

ed with rigour. About twenty-five years ago the court of Spain restored them to their country, having concluded an alliance with the Emperor of Morocco.

Segovia contains nothing else worthy of notice except its aqueduct.

This city is built upon two hills, and in the valley which separates them, a situation by which a great part of the inhabitants are deprived of water. With this useful article they were supplied at a very distant period (said by the learned to have been in the reign of Trajan) by an aqueduct, which is still one of the most astonishing and best preserved Roman antiquities (See Plate II.). Upon a level at its origin with the rivulet which it receives, and supported at first by a single stage of arcades, which are only three feet high, it proceeds to the summit of the hill, at the other extremity of the city, and gradually rises in height in proportion as the ground sinks over which it runs; in its highest parts we think we perceive a bridge thrown across an abyss; it has two branches which form an obtuse angle relatively to the city. At the commencement of this angle the aqueduct becomes truly grand; its two rows of arcades rise majestically above each other, and the spectator is terrified on comparing their diminutive base with their height. The solidity of the aqueduct, which has braved the effects of more than sixteen centuries, seems in-



AQUEDUCT of SEGOVIA seen from the SQUARE del AZOGUEJO.

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explicable, when the simplicity of its construction is more closely observed; it is built of square stones resting upon each other, without external appearance of mortar, either from having in reality been united without it, and solely by the art with which the stones are shaped and placed, or from the cement having mouldered away through the effects of time. We are shocked with the appearance of miserable houses fixed against the pillars of the arcades, seeking in these proud ruins a support for their own weakness, and repaying the obligation by degrading the monument which supports them; they are scarcely raised however to one third of its height, and serve at least to exhibit to still greater advantage the grandeur and nobleness of its forms. A small convent has had the presumption to exhibit some pitiful architecture at the angle formed by its two branches: but in what country do we not meet with similar profanations? Frenchmen, ye who revolt at such scenes, it is not long since you were guilty of similar outrages against the amphitheatre of Nismes!

The inhabitants near whose mansions this bounteous aqueduct passes, lay it under contribution on paying a certain tax. It was of great benefit to the houses, formerly more numerous than at present, when it was used for washing and dyeing the woollens of Segovia, the most valuable in Spain, as will be seen from the following chapter.

CHAPTER III.

Wool of Spain. Attempts to naturalize it in France. Details respecting the Mesta. Exportation of Spanish wool. Manufactories at Guadalaxara and Segovia. Journies of the Sheep. Sheep-shearing. Washing of the wool.

The best wool in Spain is that furnished by the country round Segovia, by the district of Buytrago, seven or eight leagues to the eastward; by Pedraza, to the northward of Segovia; and by the lands towards the Douro. The connections which I formed,* as well with the people of

* Among those whose names I ought not to omit is M. Le Blanc, an eminent farmer at Mareuil-le-Port, near Epernay, lately deceased, to whose care were entrusted forty-five sheep, sent from Spain to Rambouillet, and who was zealously occupied in the breeding of animals for the sake of their wool; M. de Cramayel, near Lieursaint, M. Flamen d'Assigny, of Sury, near Nevers; M. Frenilli, proprietor of a prosperous flock of Spanish sheep at Bourneville, near Fertè-Milon; and M. Chabert, who on one of his farms near Charenton keeps a flock of Spanish sheep. All these gentlemen are gratified in being able to refute every objection of scepticism or malevolence; and can vouch for the success of the Spanish breed in France. To the members of the commission of agriculture and the arts the country is also under great obligations on this subject; but a particular praise is due to Gilbert, who had the management of the flock at Rambouillet, for the intelligence, zeal, and assiduity with which he managed the department committed to his care.

Spain as with my own countrymen, who have for several years prosecuted the breeding of Spanish sheep in France, have enabled me to collect some details on the subject, which the most frivolous of my readers will consider as at least interesting; those of a different turn of mind will give me thanks for my trouble.

At first there was an opinion, and it is still credited although opposed by several intelligent Spaniards, that the wool of Spain is indebted for its fineness and other qualities, not so much to the temperature, climate, or nature of the pasture, as to the custom they have of making the sheep travel from place to place; but what incontestibly proves that the Spanish sheep do not only furnish fine wool without the assistance of periodical migrations, or even of the soil or climate, to which their precious fleece has been ascribed, is, that the flock which came originally from Spain, and was kept for upwards of thirty years by M. Daubenton, and sent by his Catholic Majesty in 1785, through my means, to Louis XVII, for his possessions at Rambouillet, have constantly furnished wool which the connoisseurs have not been able to distinguish from real Spanish wool, taken from sheep which had never left their own country.

The flock of Rambouillet suffered from their change of climate and regimen in another way: of 360 sheep sent from Spain under my care about 60 perished on the road, although the Spanish

shepherds to whom I had entrusted them had driven them by very short journies, and although they passed the winter near Bourdeaux, in order to inure them insensibly to the climate of France. But this great mortality is the common effect of all the emigrations which take place from south to north, and mankind are not less exempt from it than animals.

In the first year after the flock had reached Rambouillet forty of them perished; this was attributed to the sheep-rot, which appeared soon after their arrival. The loss was inconsiderable the following years, if we except one season, in which about a twentieth part of the flock perished; but this ought to be ascribed to some particular cause, since almost all the flocks in the country were that season attacked, and fell off in a still greater proportion.

The flock at Rambouillet, so well preserved, experienced no care but that which every intelligent cultivator, prompted by self-interest, is able to bestow. At first it was attempted to keep them constantly, as in Spain, in the open air; it was then that the influence of the change of climate was observable. These animals, brought from a much warmer country, were sensible of the cold, the winds, and particularly the rains, with which their close and greasy wool was in truth with difficulty impregnated, but which was also long in drying. Without prolonging this experiment, they hastened to remedy the evil; the

flock was confined in large and well aired sheep-cots; and much advantage was derived from the change. Some lambs perished with cold during the rigorous winter of 1793-1794, even in these cots. This arose from a circumstance in which Spain has an advantage over France, and in which the latter can never participate: in Spain the lambs are born in the month of October, while in our climate they come into the world in the month of January; but we can infer nothing from an excess of cold which does not occur perhaps more than four times in a century.

The change of food has not deteriorated the flock at Rambouillet, or its progeny. The soil on which sheep usually feed in Spain, both in Castile and Estramadura, is in general dry and stony, and the grass is short and fine. It would be difficult to find a country the climate and herbage of which forms a more striking contrast with those of Spain than Rambouillet: the greatest part of the park is covered with wood; the soil is almost every where clayey, tough, watery, and cold. The fortunate results of this first trial have deceived the predictions of all the cultivators of the country, and proved that flocks of the Spanish breed may succeed any where. Besides, we know that in Saxony, Wirtemberg, Denmark, and Sweden,* where they have tried to naturalize

* Of this I was convinced, both from occular demonstration and from authentic reports, during my residence in the two latter kingdoms. I saw at Fredericksburg, a palace of the king

them, they have never degenerated. But with respect to France, it has only been very lately that these attempts have been followed up, so as to insure a future national benefit from the breeding of Spanish sheep.

of Denmark, a flock of the Spanish breed, which was then in the fourth generation, and had not degenerated. It is true that the original flock was chosen in Spain by a Dane who was well versed in agriculture, and in the management of cattle, and who was as experienced on the subject as the best Spanish shepherd. This was M. Nilson, inspector of the king of Denmark's stud, and one of his majesty's most useful subjects. I was also assured in Sweden that some proprietors have had, for these several years past, sheep of the Spanish race under their care with equal success. I ought to mention in particular the respectable name of Dr. Schultzenheim, whose flock of pure Spanish sheep I have seen a few leagues distant from Upsala, consequently in the 60th degree of north latitude. This gentleman allowed me to take from one of his rams (a descendant of those sent from Cadiz in 1795) a lock of wool which does not yield, in point of length, fineness, and elasticity, to any other taken in Spain itself from an animal of the country.

Those who desire to be better informed as to the Spanish sheep transplanted into northern countries, are referred to a work published by M. Lasteyrie in 1802, upon his return from Denmark and Sweden; it is entitled *Histoire de l'introduction des Moutons à laine fine d'Espagne.* More recently Messrs. Violet and Lullin, of Geneva, have published two books on the same subject. These three works, and that of M. Landrin, which preceded them, should be read by all who wish to become acquainted with the economy of the Spanish sheep; they will remove every uncertainty, and set aside all prejudices on the subject.

For some years past success has attended all the undertakings of this kind made with rams and ewes bought at the sale annually made by government at Rambouillet. These animals have always brought a very high price,* as well as their wool; and this circumstance is a security for their preservation. We find proofs of this among all those intelligent farmers who have attended to this branch of industry—a pacific conquest, much more precious than any acquisition which can result from our military successes against Spain; a conquest also which our treaty of peace with this power has embraced, by securing to us a new flock of these valuable animals, which are rigorously prohibited by the government from being exported to other coun-

* With the exception of the year 1797, when a taste for simplicity, dictated by the necessity of economy, and some other more afflicting and less temporary causes, lowered the price of sheep, and even that of wool, the dealers in which offered but twenty sols for the pound uncombed, while in 1792, it was sold for eight livres ten sols, and our common wool sold for thirty sols. In 1795, the wool dealers would give no more than one hundred sols for the former. Within these eight or ten years, reason and experience have triumphed over prejudice and jealousy. The price of the wool of these newly introduced Spanish sheep, now called *Merinos*, has been fixed at a medium between the two extremes. During the years 1803 and 1804, it has constantly kept between forty-five and fifty sols for the pound uncombed, and wool from the Rambouillet flock even sold for fifty-four sols. The manufacturers in France have now no hesitation in purchasing the wool of the French Merinos when it is equally fine with that which they import from Spain.

tries.* The only measure which could ultimately secure these advantages to France, has been adopted: it has been agreed that the Rambouillet flock shall be freely sold at high prices. Every other method would have been of no avail: the French being more the slaves of custom than is

* Various obstacles have retarded for more than three years, the execution of the treaty of Basle, by which the King of Spain granted the French Government permission to export five thousand ewes and five hundred rams. It was not until 1798 that Gilbert was instructed to proceed to Spain for the purpose of buying and choosing these animals. He succeeded in procuring about twelve hundred; but he sunk under the fatigues of the journey. After his death a committee of thirty merchants was charged with the fulfilment of the work thus began. In each of the two subsequent years, they brought from Spain about a thousand sheep, which they divided among themselves, or sold in the various departments. During the year following the government took the charge of the greatest part of the Merinos imported from Spain, but the above committee claimed its privileges, and towards the end of 1804, they expected to obtain on their own account the thousand sheep still remaining to complete the original number agreed upon. This is the precise state of the undertaking at the moment of my writing this (1805). Its success, although slow, is of infinite importance to France. The number of Merinos thus procured is already considerable; the quantity of wool they produce is, however, far from being sufficient for the consumption of our manufacturers. It must be several years before the naturalization of the Merinos will be well established in France; but as it is sufficiently proved that they do not degenerate, and have preserved their race pure in more than a hundred places, subsequent importations will perhaps be unnecessary to secure to us the possession of this advantage.

generally imagined. The country people in particular are averse from innovations. The rams and ewes of Spain distributed gratuitously, as at first attempted, would have infallibly perished for want of care, in the hands of ignorant and prejudiced persons. These animals have nothing attractive in their first appearance. Their dirty, compact, and frizzled wool, their small stature and uncouth form, presents to the simple inhabitants of the country nothing which in their ideas is the characteristic of beauty. The resolution of selling these animals at a high price has been judged the most certain of all methods, because it places them in the hands of true amateurs, and of connoisseurs, whose interest and pleasure it is to preserve them. With respect to interest, the most aukward or the most obstinate cultivator will soon be convinced that his advantage will be great from the adoption of these Spanish sheep, whether pure or crossed in the breed. They require no more care than what is necessary for the sheep of France when we wish to keep them healthy and clean. They accommodate themselves to the same climate, the same soil, the same food, and merely require a little more attention on account of their fleece being thicker and more greasy; it however sells for double the price, and is at least twice the weight of common wool. We know that the medium weight of our common wool is from

three to four pounds for each sheep;* that of the Spanish breed whether pure or crossed is, however, from seven to eight. Some well attested examples prove the extreme difference between the weight of the fleeces of the wool of our common sheep and that of the original Spanish sheep. In one of his last shearings, M. de Lamerville, near Bourges, found one of his fleeces from a Spanish sheep to weigh eleven pounds and a half, and six years ago, M. Chabert shewed me one which weighed nearly twelve pounds,† and came not from a sheep of the pure Spanish breed, but from one of a crossed breed of the third generation. The proprietor of the same flock has even had two rams of the pure race, which for three years successively, yielded him from thirteen to fourteen pounds of the finest wool, possessing if not the same degree of fineness, at least all the elasticity and other qualities of that of Spain. Here then is a double profit secured to those cultivators who renounce their

* I do not speak of some districts where sheep of even a middling quality give from ten to twelve pounds of wool.

† The medium weight of the fleeces of the Merinos introduced into France was from seven to eight pounds. Such, for instance, was the result of the shearing at Bourneville, in 1804. The wool produced sold for 47 sols per pound in its grease. The price of horned rams from fifteen to eighteen months old, was from 250 to 300 livres, and the ewes averaged 100 livres.

prejudices, and it is not easy to reply to such an argument.

There are in a word, few departments where these Spanish breeds have not been introduced. Since they have sold at high prices, they have succeeded every where, because they have met with that attention which animals imported always require at first. That part of France where the climate and pasture seems to agree best with the Spanish sheep, Roussillon, was the very province where this happy innovation was adopted with most difficulty. They thought that their wool required no amelioration; but experience has triumphed over prejudice here as well as in other parts; and there is now at Perpignan a very fine flock of Merinos, which the government has formed out of a part of those brought by Gilbert from Spain.

But it may be asked if these transplanted animals, and their progeny produce wool equally fine as in their native country? To answer this question with scrupulous fidelity, it must be confessed that at first, for about fifteen years, when the government caused the wool of a small flock of Spanish sheep to be manufactured at Abbéville by Van Robais, the cloth was then neither so fine nor so beautiful as that made from the Spanish wool; in short, it did not possess that softness and pliability which characterises the true Spanish kind. This experiment is perhaps less favourable

from having been made on this particular flock. However it results from all the other experiments, that if the French wool of this pure Spanish race is not quite so pliable as that of Spain, it is equally fine; that it acquires a little more length without losing its principal quality, and that this additional length renders the wool peculiarly fit for the manufacture of cloth. In short, specimens which have been presented every year since the arrival of the flock at Rambouillet, will prove to the most incredulous, that it has undergone no alteration for the last eighteen years.

It cannot be said that the experience of eighteen years is not sufficient for affirming that the wool of the Spanish sheep does not degenerate after a lapse of time. If this degeneration must take place, we should have perceived some indications of it before now. Besides, the flock of M. Daubenton removes all doubt, since it has been kept up in all its purity for thirty years upon a most ungrateful soil, and this worthy man has published certificates from our chief manufacturers, who attest, that having indiscriminately used wool coming directly from Spain, and that of his flock, they found not the smallest possible difference. M. Le Blanc, of Mareuil-le-Port, assured me, in the latter end of 1796, that for ten years past, he had cloth manufactured with wool from his own flocks of the pure breed, out of the Rambouillet flock, and the ma-

nufacturers he employed made no distinction between this wool and that of Spain, observing only that the latter had *a little more nerve.* We may here remark, that this slight inferiority, as to the pliability of the wool, is perhaps the only effect which results from the change of climate; this quality, arising chiefly from the great perspiration which the climate of Spain favours, and hence arises the very unctuous grease with which the wool of the transplanted sheep is impregnated. It is also to be observed, that it is not the transplanted sheep alone which give these results: those which are produced from them by crossing with French breeds furnish, down to the fourth generation, a wool as beautiful as that of the absolutely pure breed, provided they remove all the males belonging to the crossings, and admit of the *mixed* females to have intercourse with rams of a pure breed only, and well chosen; it being ascertained that the rams influence more than two thirds of the propagation; provided also that these delicate animals are not squeezed into narrow, low, and suffocating sheep cots; and taking care that they are entrusted to vigilant and intelligent shepherds, like those of M. Chabert, at Maisons, who is a pattern in that respect. It seems that the ewes thus managed, produce the same offspring in whatever part of France they are. The government has for some time kept a flock at Sceaux, expressly

for comparative experiments upon the crossing of rams of the true Spanish breed with ewes from the various provinces. But these trials have not as yet been sufficiently multiplied to serve as a basis of positive assertion. We can only assert that the Spanish race, crossed with our coarse woolled ewes, yield even further down than the fourth generation, productions equal to the pure race; that if we couple this race with ewes of a large make, and well covered with wool, we attain much more slowly the degree of purity desirable, but we have a breed well covered with wool; that if we make the crossing with fine woolled ewes, like those of Roussillon, Sologne, and Berry; we have in fact superfine fleeces, but much lighter the Spanish wool.

It seems therefore to be well ascertained, that the so much boasted quality of the Spanish wool, does not exclusively depend upon soil or climate. It is not less proved, that the wandering sheep, called *tras humantes*, or *ganado merino*, are not in the least improved by their periodical journies. The Spaniards need not seek in France for a proof of these assertions, they are well known in their own country. It is incontestible that there are permanent flocks in Estramadura, the wool of which does not sensibly differ from the best of these wandering sheep. It is equally certain, that in the environs of Segovia there are small flocks which never

leave the spot, the wool of which is also equally fine. I was assured in that province, that out of twenty thousand arrobas of fine wool collected there, one third is furnished by the stationary flocks. Whence arises the custom, therefore, so troublesome in every respect, of constantly driving through all parts of the kingdom several millions of these animals ?* It proceeds from every thing that causes, propagates, and consolidates these abuses which have originated in Spain, the ruinous privileges of the *Mesta.*

The Mesta is a society of large proprietors of flocks, composed of the heads of rich monasteries, grandees of Spain, and opulent individuals, who find their advantage in feeding their sheep at the public expence at all seasons of the year, and who have sanctioned, by short sighted regulations, a practice at first introduced by necessity. In distant times, the

* In the sixteenth century, the number of wandering sheep exceeded seven millions. Under Philip the third, this number fell to two millions and a half. Ustariz, who lived at the beginning of the last century, computed them at four millions. The general opinion at present is, that they do not excecd five millions. If we add to this eight millions of these animals always stationary, we shall have an aggregate of thirteen millions of sheep conspiring against the prosperity of Spain for the advantage of a few individuals; for the proprietors of the stationary flocks have privileges nearly similar to those of the members of the Mesta.

mountains of Soria, and of Segovia, condemned by their precipices, and the nature of their soil, to eternal sterility, were, during the summer, the asylum of some of the neighbouring flocks; before the approach of winter, their temperature was no longer supportable by these delicate animals. They went in search of a milder climate in the neighbouring plains. Their possessors soon converted this convenience into a right, and formed a community, which after some time was increased by all those who, upon acquiring flocks, became desirous of enjoying the same prerogatives. The theatre extended as the actors became more numerous, and the excursions of the flocks gradually stretched towards the plains of Estramadura, where they found a temperate climate and abundant pasture: the abuse at length became intolerable, but it was too deeply rooted to be easily overthrown, and all that was powerful in the kingdom was interested in its continuance. For more than a century, a constant struggle took place between the associates of the Mesta on the one hand, and the *Estremeños*, or inhabitants of Estramadura, on the other, the latter having on their side all those who felt an interest in the public good.

How indeed could they repress their indignation on seeing, in the month of October in each year, millions of sheep descending from the mountains of Old Castile upon the plains of Estrama-

dura and Andalusia, where they continued until the following May, feeding both on their coming and returning upon the fields of the inhabitants; and the ordonnances of the Mesta fixing a breadth of forty toises as a road through which they were to pass, while the pasturages kept on purpose for them were let at a very low rent, which the proprietors sought in vain to increase. Thus the unfortunate province of Estramadura, which is about fifty leagues in length by forty in breadth, and which could provide subsistence for two millions of men, scarcely contains an hundred thousand inhabitants. Nor can it be doubted that this depopulation must be ascribed to the scourge of the Mesta, since the provinces which are not visited by these baneful privileges, such as Galicia, the Asturias, Biscay, and the mountainous parts of Burgos, are very populous.

This shameful abuse has been attacked by several enlightened Spaniards as well in our days as in the preceding centuries; by Leruela, Ustariz, Arriquibar, and even by the laughing philosopher Cervantes, who under the mask of amusement has given such profound lessons to his fellow-citizens and to mankind. The subject has also been recently taken up by Don Antonio Ponz, by Count Campomanes, &c. &c. but their voices have hitherto been "crying in the desert." The abuse does not rest solely with those in power; it may be ascribed to idleness, and to

the miscalculations of interest, in preferring the feeding of sheep to the encouragement of agriculture. Within these hundred years wool has doubled its value, while corn, which is so troublesome and so precarious, has very little increased in price. Ten thousand sheep will produce in a common year five thousand arrobas, or five hundred quintals of wool, at the rate of five livres for each fleece. On valuing the arroba at one hundred reals only, or twenty-five livres tournois, these 10,000 sheep will be worth 50,000 francs, from which must indeed be deducted their food, the expence of their journies, the hire of pasturage during winter, the salary of the shepherds, and other small expences: this leaves a *net profit*, however, sufficient to render this kind of property very desirable.

As to the practice of making the sheep travel from place to place, besides being rendered sacred by the laws and by long custom, it is excusable from the necessity of existing circumstances. Either they must diminish the number of sheep, or they must travel a little. Those which feed in the fine season upon the mountains of Soria, Cuenca, Segovia, and Buytrago, would die with hunger there in winter; and where would they find a better asylum than Estramadura, a province thinly inhabited, poor in other respects, its pastures being its only resource? I know well that this argument may be consi-

dered as begging the question, but government has always held it to be conclusive.

There are some among the members of administration who would excuse the custom, even from the long tolerance which has perpetuated the practice. Despotic as they are, they feign some scruples in attacking by violent reforms the property of the breeders of sheep. And how is it possible to bring them voluntarily to renounce a benefit, the management of which is neither very complicated nor very expensive; and the produce of which constantly finds a ready market in the avidity with which the wools of Spain have been hitherto bought up by manufacturing countries. Besides, the royal exchequer itself is interested in the support of this branch of industry; for the taxes levied upon the export of wool form an important branch of the revenue. They have produced within these five years from twenty-seven to twenty-eight millions of reals. Such a source could not be checked, without having at hand a certain and very speedy method of supplying its place.

There is a slower but more certain method by which Spain will succeed, perhaps, in spite of herself, in getting rid of this innumerable host of animals which devour her, if we may so express ourselves when speaking of animals, the name of which alone awakens ideas of innocence and peace; this method will be the same with what

has begun to be pursued in France, and to which the success of that nation may successively attract others, who have hitherto thought that wool from Spain was an indispensible commodity. Then will the slothful and greedy proprietors of these immense flocks be obliged to give their industry and their opulence a turn, less profitable, perhaps, for themselves, but more advantageous to their country. Happy Spain, if foreseeing the effects of such a revolution, she prepares beforehand her territory for a new destination, by multiplying and improving the roads, canals, and other means of amelioration which are still wanting!

In the state in which things are at present, and in which they may too long continue, their wool is the principal source of riches, apparently at least, in Spain. Before the war of 1793, they exported annually from Bilboa, from 20 to 22,000 bales of wool, most of them weighing two hundred pounds, and some 250 pounds each; and from St. Andero about one third of this quantity was exported. Now these are the two ports from which by far the most considerable part of the wool of the north of Spain is exported. If we may judge from the exports of 1792, England received the greater part of this commodity, Holland next, and France the least. There were exported at Bilboa, 16,176 bales for England, 6,180 for Holland, 186 for Rouen, 654

for Ostend and 356 for Hamburgh; and from St. Andero, there were exported 2,634 for London, 2,314 for Bristol, 1,909 for Amsterdam, and 1,200 for Rouen.

But the year 1792 ought not to be taken as an average. At this period the commerce of France felt the effects of the revolution, and of the war which broke out in May that year. In ordinary years France consumes more than four times the quantity of Spanish wool, that is to say, from eleven to twelve hundred bales, and consequently more than one half of what comes from the northern ports. Valuing the bales on an average at 1400 reals per quintal, (taking into the estimate the price of some very fine *leoneses*, which in 1792 were at the price of eighteen or nineteen hundred reals, and the price of the common wool which was from 1100 to 1150), and taking the weight of each bale as at two quintals, we shall find that annually, before the revolution, we received fine wool from Spain to the amount of upwards of 32,000,000 of reals.*

* As in this calculation every thing is taken in a reduced way, since the superfine *leoneses* are those of which the greatest number is exported, and as several of the bales of this description weigh 250 pounds, it will not be an exaggeration of the value to add 8,000,000 to this 32,000,000 of reals. This agrees with the statement of our balance of trade furnished by M. Flandrin, from which it appears, that in 1782 we received wool from Spain to the value of 13,600,000 livres. See M. Flandrin's work *Sur l'Education des Moutons*, p. 213.

Our manufactories at Louviers, Elbeuf, Reims, Abbeville, Sedan, and that of Decretot in particular, could not exist without Spanish wool for their fine cloths; the wool of Champaign and of Berry, of which they consume a great quantity, is only used to mix up for common cloths, and never in any great proportion entering into the composition of the finer sorts. There are some also, as the casimirs, which do not admit of any mixture, and should be woven with very pure superfine Leonese. If we succeed, therefore, in sufficiently extending the propagation of sheep in France, perfected by the crossing of the true Spanish breed, we shall free ourselves from an annual tribute to Spain of twelve or thirteen millions of livres. Let us hope, therefore, that the return of public spirit into our companies of merchants and others, will find in this argument a motive for turning the speculations of our cultivators towards this amelioration: it is a speculation which indeed requires attention and industry, but very little employment of capital. But to return to the subject of the wool trade in Spain itself.

It is probable that from 32 to 33,000 bales are exported, weighing from 200 to 250 pounds each. This was the amount of the exportation in 1792 from the ports of Bilboa and St. Andero, without reckoning five or six hundred bales of uncombed wool; for at present almost all the

Spanish wool is washed. Before the increase of the customs upon unwashed wool, which took place in 1787, almost all the fleeces of the Leonese and Segovian sheep, and those called *Sorias caballeros,* were exported unwashed,* forming a mass of from 1800 to 2000 bales, of 11 or 12 arrobas, or from 275 to 300 pounds weight each. Within these thirty years the poverty of the exchequer, and the persuasion that manufacturing nations could not exist without Spanish wool, whatever might be its price, have induced the Spanish government to increase the duties on exportation.

From 1766 to 1787 these duties rose from 42 reals 12 maravedis for each arroba of washed wool to 66 reals 28 maravedis, and from 21 reals six maravedis for wool in the grease to 50 reals four maravedis.

Notwithstanding these successive augmentations, the exportation of wool has rather increased than diminished. This operated as one of the causes, although not the principal one, for the rise in the price of cloths. The rise was chiefly owing to the advance of the materials. For about thirty years the price of wool in the *grease,* or in *surge,* as it is called, rose from 75 to 80 reals for the arroba of the finest of all the *Le-*

* Washing greatly diminishes the weight of Spanish wool. By the operation it always loses one half in weight. In general the loss is nearly two thirds.