



jecture has been made why he ordered by his will this monument to be erected, or what was the use of it when built. Some think it was the entrance of the Campus Tarraconensis, and that a wall ran from the sea, which is about half a mile distant to the south-east, through the olive-grounds quite up to the hills. There appear some remnants of a wall in that direction, but I won't pretend to say they are of so ancient a date.

The next day was the most delightful of our whole journey. The sun shone out in all his splendor; the sea was smooth and calm; the prospect was incessantly varying as we moved on, sometimes along the rich level on the shore, where the bushy heads and glossy leaves of the lowest trees, contrasted with the pale green of the olive-woods, made it appear quite a summer scene; sometimes over gentle eminences, from which we commanded views of numberless bays and promontories, crowned with towers and antique fortifications. The little river Gaya distributes its waters in stone channels to all parts of the valley, and gives vigour to its productions, which otherwise would be parched up by the drought. Here the tender olive-tets are nursed up in long baskets, till they get out of the reach of goats and other enemies. As we descended the hill of Bara to the beach, Tarragona presented itself to our view, like a ruined fortress, on a round point projecting into the sea; and a little further on we turned off the road to the right, into a wood of pines

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and shrubs, to visit a monument that tradition has named the tomb of the Scipios. They were the father and uncle of Scipio Africanus, both killed in Spain.

This building is small, being about nineteen feet square and twenty-eight high. In the front, facing the sea, are two statues of warriors in a mournful posture, roughly cut out of the stones of the sepulchre, and much worn away by the sea air. The inscription is so much defaced, that it is hard to make any thing of it: what remains is as follows:

ORN...TE...EAQVE....L..O...VNVS...VER..BVSTVS...I..S..NEGL.  
VI...VA..FL...BVS..SIBI..PERPETVO REMANERE.

I think it has been erected by some priest, for himself and family, as the fragments of the last line may be interpreted in that manner. Some take the first word of the first line to have been Cornelius, a name belonging to the Scipios. The top of the monument, which probably ended in a pyramidal form, is fallen off<sup>5</sup>.

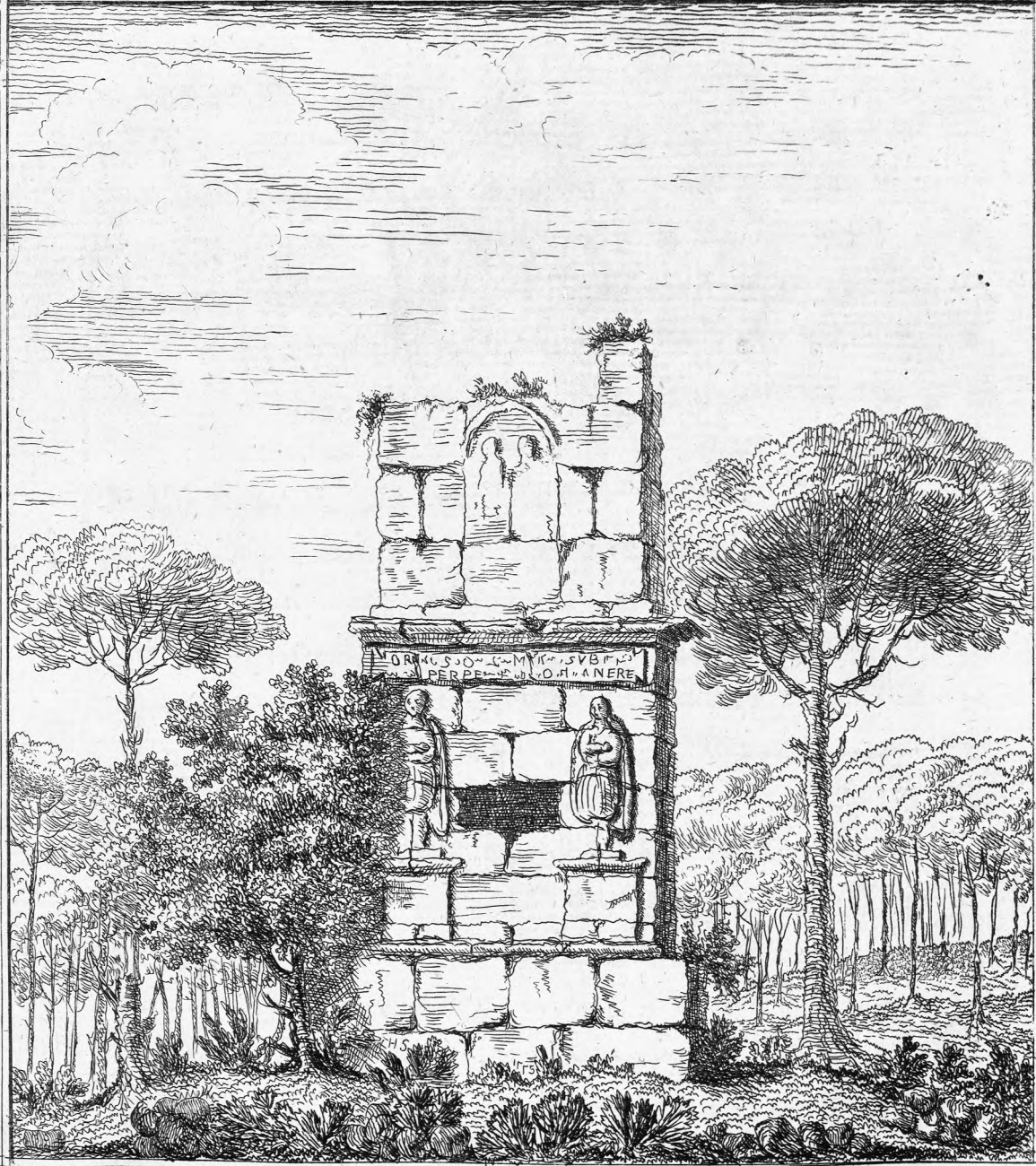
From the heavy sands of the sea-shore, where a great many fishermen were hauling in their nets, we ascended the naked rock of Tarragona. It produces nothing but the dwarf palm or palmeto. This plant grows among the stones to the height of one or two feet: the leaves are stiff and sharp, spread out like fingers, or the sticks of a

<sup>5</sup> The tomb of Theron, at Girgenti in Sicily, resembles this in form:

fan,

Place. VI.

TOMB of the SCIPIOS near Tarragona 1775







fan, and very much resembling the leaves of the date palm. This also produces fruit, and the insipid pith of its root is a favourite eating of the peasants. The leaves make good brooms and ropes, and are a great fattener of cattle.

The ancient Tarraco is now contracted to a very trifling city, that covers only a small portion of the Roman inclosure, and is an ill-built, dirty, depopulated place. Many antiquities have been found, and are still to be seen in the town, and almost all round the walls. A few vestiges remain of the palace of Augustus, and of the great circus: an arch or two of the amphitheatre, and some steps cut in the solid rock, still exist, impending over the sea. About three miles from the city, is the Puente de Ferriera, an ancient aqueduct, which we did not go to see, not having heard of it till we had passed too far on to turn back. Father Flores has given a plate of it. The cathedral, dedicated to Saint Thecla, is ugly, but the new chapel of that tutelar saint is beautiful. The inside is cased with yellow and brown marbles, dug up in the very center of the town, and ornamented with white foliages and bas-reliefs. The architecture is accounted heavy, but I confess I did not think that fault very glaring. The whole together has a very pleasing effect.

In Queen Anne's war, the English were in possession of this post, and intended to keep and fortify it, by bringing the river Francolis quite round it. For this purpose



they threw up vast outworks and redoubts, of which the ruins are yet very visible. Having secured Minorca and Gibraltar, they renounced the project of fixing a garrison in Tarragona.

From this city we descended into the Campo Tarragonés, a plain of about nine miles diameter, one of the most fruitful spots in Europe: there is not an uncultivated part in the whole extent. The abundance and excellence of its productions have induced all the foreign houses settled in Barcelona to establish agents and factors at Reus, the principal town, pretty near the center of the plain.

Here we have again been loaded with civilities by our friends, and detained some days in feasts and amusements. Indeed the crazy vehicle our servants travel in, contributed much toward the facility with which we yielded to their entreaties; for, about an hundred yards before we reached this place, both its shafts snapped in two, so that very little, except the hind wheels and some braces, now remains of the original carriage that left Pascal's coach-house, in the Rue Guenegaud, at Paris.

It has blown for three days a most bitter north wind; the frost is pinching and the ice thick, but no kind of vegetation seems affected by it, and the sun shines out burning hot every day.

Reus increases daily in size and population; the number

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ber of its inhabitants has within these fifteen years risen above two thirds, and now amounts to twenty thousand souls. The suburbs are already twice as large as the old town. They have begun to build a very pretty theatre, and have engaged a company of comedians.

Wines and brandies are the staple commodities of Reus: of the former, the best for drinking are produced on the hills belonging to the Carthusians; those of the plain are fittest for burning. The annual exports are about twenty thousand pipes of brandy, all very pale, but afterwards, by mixtures in Guernsey and Holland, brought to the proper colour for our market. There are four degrees of proof or strength—common, oil, Holland, and spirit. Brandy of common proof froths in the glass in pouring out, and remains so. Oil proof is when oil sinks in the brandy. Five pipes of wine make one of strong brandy, and four make one of weak. The king's duty is ten pesettas a pipe on the high proofs, and twelve on the low: the town dues come to three sols, and both duties are paid by the exporter. This branch of trade employs about one thousand stills in the Campo, of which number the town contains an hundred and fifty. It is all carried in carts, at half a crown a pipe, down to *Salo*, an open but safe road five miles off. Here it is left on the beach till it pleases the Catalan sailors to float it off to the ships: as they are paid by the year, they only work when they choose, and in fair pleasant weather.



weather. Nuts are likewise an article of exportation, upwards of sixty thousand bushels from the woods at the foot of the west mountains having been shipped off last year. Every thing here wears the face of business, but it is greatly at the expence of the inland villages, many of which are left almost destitute of inhabitants.

Not far behind the mountains that surround this plain stands a rich convent of Bernardine monks. Had the weather been milder we should have paid them a visit, there being many fine views and natural curiosities in its neighbourhood. As they are far removed from the eye of the world, we have been assured that they lead a most dissolute life: the immense lordships they possess are said to serve as so many nurseries and seraglios for them, where the wives and daughters of their vassals are humbly devoted to their pleasures. A modest woman would run great risk of being insulted by the lusty friars, should she venture within their territories without proper attendance. Some years ago, a set of wild young officers, who owed the holy fathers a grudge, carried thither a bevy of common strumpets dressed out like ladies, and contrived matters so, that while the men of the party went up the hills to see prospects, the females were left to be comforted by the Bernardines. The hot-livered monks employed the time of absence to the best advantage, but smarted so severely for the favours they obtained from the good-humoured nymphs, that for many months afterwards

wards the chief dignitaries of the house were dispersed about in the neighbouring towns, under the care of the barber-furgeons.

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## L E T T E R XI.

Nules, November 29, 1775.

**Y**OU will not find upon the common maps the name of the place I date this from, though it is a considerable town, inclosed with walls and towers *alla morisca*, with two handsome suburbs. This is all I can tell you of it, as we are just arrived by moon-light. I am now melting with heat, and sitting close to the window for air, but I fear the twanging of a wretched guitar will soon drive me away. How wonderfully fortunate we have been in the weather! not a drop of rain on the road from Perpignan hither, and we are to reach Valencia to-morrow.

Last Saturday we took an affectionate leave of our friends, and left Reus loaded with provisions of all sorts. The road through the plain hollow and bad, the view confined on every side by groves of locust and olive trees, till we entered the defart near the sea-shore, at  
a ruined



a ruined tower called the *Casa yerma*. In the afternoon we came through a rocky pass under the fort of Balaguer, lately built to command the defile and the coast. The evening journey lay among bleak uncomfortable hills, covered with low shrubs, where nothing but the prospect of the sea, and watch-towers placed as beacons along the shore, afforded the least variety; the road most abominably rough and trying for carriages. The approach of night, and the danger of venturing in such broken ways in the dark, obliged us to stop at the Venta del Platero, a hovel that *beggars all description*; so superlatively wretched, that I thought an exact drawing of its outward appearance would be a real curiosity. We were lodged in part of a ground-floor, the remainder of which was occupied by the mules and pigs; the servants slept in the carriages. A pool of water behind the house, and above the level of our floor, made our apartment so damp, that the next morning our cloaths might have been wrung. Thanks to the wholesomeness of the climate, we felt no bad effects from it. Several companies of fishermen, that hawk their fish about these scattered cottages, kept all night a perpetual knocking at the gate of our court, and brought to my mind very lively ideas of the enchanted castles of Don Quixote.

As soon as it was light we left our inn, and found the waste grow more and more barren. The steepness and roughness of the descents made the road excessively jolting

ing and dangerous; the chaises cracked and groaned, and we either rode on horseback, or walked, all the way. Torrents that rush from the adjoining ridge of mountains, after every heavy shower, have swept away all bridges and causeways, and washed the road to the very rock. We passed through Parillo, a small village, which is the usual baiting-place, and seems, by the ruins near it, to have been formerly a place of greater consequence than it is at present.

In a few hours we emerged from this desert, which is at least ten leagues long. In some places it produces locust and olive trees, which, when the underwood is cleared away, and the earth moved about the roots, become productive of good fruit. A little turn of the road to the west brought us in sight of the mouth of the Ebro, which appears to waste itself before it reaches the sea, by running through various channels, in a tract of flat lands containing near one hundred thousand acres. This land is very capable of improvement, and the ministry have actually before them a plan for draining these grounds, and properly distributing the waste water for the purposes of cultivation. There are two good harbours at the mouth of the river, which is navigable for vessels of fifty tons, up as far as Tortosa, and for small craft much higher, into the kingdom of Arragon. The waters of the Ebro, though muddy, are constantly drunk by the inhabitants; the slime they leave after great floods is esteemed