

which, in the present circumstances sufficiently command the entrance of the harbour. Their alliance with England, however, is the best bulwark of Lisbon against an attack by sea; yet they talk of their navy as being second to that of Great Britain, if not in numbers, at least in courage and manœuvres. Untried merit when much boasted of, may always be suspected, and of all the nations that I have yet seen, the Portuguese appear to have the smallest reason for boasting; yet it must be allowed that their frigates are handsomely modelled, and have every exterior appearance of excellence.

Among the peasantry who come in from the country, especially on Sundays, it is easy to observe a number of particulars in dress and manners which must be referred to a Celtic origin. Instead of hats they frequently wear caps or bonnets; the ancient plaid, too warm to be carried in this climate as a cloak, is converted into a party-coloured sash, which they wear

round the middle, and in which they uniformly carry a dirk or long knife; and their favourite instrument of music is the bagpipe, adorned with ribbons, exactly similar to that used in the highlands of Scotland. To the sound of this very ancient instrument, two or three of them together dance a kind of reel, or if the tune be slow and solemn, the piper walks backward and forward amidst a silent and attentive crowd. In their lively dances they raise their hands above the head and keep time with their castanets. The Scottish highlanders observe exactly the same practice, and I am fully persuaded that their strong snapping of the fingers is in imitation of the sound of the castanet. But perhaps we shall find more of this in our further progress.

It now becomes us, reader, to deliberate how we are to get to Madrid. Seated at your ease, you throw all the burthen upon my shoulders, and indeed since I have made a kind of promise to convey

you there, I find I must bestir myself. Upon inquiry I am informed that there are three modes of travelling. Firstly, on horseback with post horses, but then we must be acquainted with the Spanish language; and that I understand as yet but imperfectly: or we may hire a calèche and agree with the muleteer to be set down at Madrid for a certain sum; or thirdly, we must wait till some traveller arrives from that city, and return in the same carriage. They further add that travelling in Spain is very dangerous, both robbery and murder being frequent on their highways, and that in consequence, travellers always endeavour to form as large parties as possible with many servants, and every individual well armed. I must own this information puzzles me how to proceed; but after waiting several days in vain, I at length learn that two gentlemen are about to go post to Madrid, one of them a Swiss perfectly well acquainted with the language and customs of Spain; the other a young

man of a good family, settled in that country, and who though born in Madrid, was educated in Ireland, and had been one of my fellow passengers in the packet. On application I am received into the party. Each one provides himself with a saddle, a portmanteau, and a case for his pistols, and on the 18th July, the day appointed, having met together at the water side, we put our luggage and ourselves on board of a boat in order to cross the Tagus, and so bid adieu to Lisbon.

CHAP. II.

Journey from Lisbon to Madrid.

BEING first of all provided with an order from the postmaster, we cross the water in a slanting direction from Lisbon to Aldea Gallega. The view in crossing is delightful, the west bank of the river far above Lisbon consisting of a succession of small rounded hills, covered with verdure to the summits, and studded with farms and country seats. Aldea Gallega is a miserable village of fifty or sixty houses or huts; placed at the head of a small creek on the south-east side of the Tagus, and distant from Lisbon about ten miles. It is the first post, and here, after some delay in inspecting our orders, we are all mounted and ready to begin our journey. Our postillion or guide, carries at least

fifty pounds weight of our baggage before him on his saddle, and every thing being ready, he gives us strict orders never to go a head of him, and then cracking his long whip we all set off together at a full gallop. Scarcely are we out of the village when the road becomes a deep white sand, and although the sun be on the decline, it reflects the heat with great violence. Presently we come to a large plain, bounded on the south by the hills towards St. Ubes, but extending before us in long prospect. The soil is mostly sand; in some parts gravelly, and covered with shrubs, bushes, and low pine trees, but scarcely a house is to be seen in any direction. Having just commenced our journey, and not yet feeling fatigued, we accuse our guide of loitering, but he assures us that the first post from Aldea Gallega is five leagues distant; and a Spanish post league may be calculated at fully equal to four English miles. It was accordingly long after sunset before we arrived at los Pregones.

This is merely a small hamlet, and at the post-house we had the first sample of what entertainment we were likely to meet with on the road; not being able to procure any refreshment except a little sour wine with water, and having it at our option either to sit down on the ground, or on the straw in the stable. We were not however long detained here. A new guide and new horses awaited us, our saddles and luggage were arranged, and with many loud cracks of our postillion's whip, as if he had been in the heart of a populous city, instead of a few huts, we set off at a gallop as before. The road continued level for some distance; but we had not proceeded far when the night became quite dark, and precluded all further observation on the surrounding country.

From los Pregones to las Ventas Nuevas, or New Inns, is three Spanish leagues, or upwards of twelve English miles, and we arrived there at ten o'clock at night.

Amidst a collection of poor huts stood a long barn, and this was the post-house. Every body was asleep, but the sound of our guide's whip soon procured us admission, a half extinguished fire was rekindled, and after much trouble, some wine was brought, so sour as to be hardly drinkable. Seated round the embers however, we determined to accustom ourselves to every inconvenience, and recalled to mind the story of the traveller, who complained to his Spanish landlord, that his wine was sourer than his vinegar. "I wonder at that," replied mine host, with great coolness, "for they are both out of the same cask." Satisfied, therefore that others had been treated at least as badly as ourselves in these countries, we passed round the bottle, and in spite of wry faces quenched our thirst with large potations of this miserable liquor. After an hour's delay however, fresh horses were ready, and we started from our barn at eleven o'clock, with as much uproar as

we had done from los Pregones and Aldea Gallega. To our great satisfaction it was now moonlight, but a slight fog prevented our deriving much advantage from the circumstance, beyond the pleasure of not travelling in darkness. I regretted that I had not been able to discern from the plains the form and direction of the hills which we now began to ascend. They were of no great height, but there was a succession of them with rugged roads, and the descents very steep, and requiring caution to hold up our horses from falling. In the mean time our guide, who had set off in such a hurry, fell fast asleep, and although he rocked from side to side, stuck to the saddle instinctively. We trusted however to our horses, and after many slips, arrived about two in the morning at Montemor Novo. This had more the appearance of a town, even by moonlight, than any place we had passed through since leaving Lisbon. It is four leagues from las Ventas Nuevas, decently built

and paved, and standing on the first break of a tolerably high hill, on the summit of which are the remains of an old Moorish castle. Here, notwithstanding all the noise we could make, we stood a long time before we could gain admission to a Venta or inn; and when a door was unwillingly opened to us, we beheld two men stretched out upon straw, covered with ragged quilts, one of whom had let us in, and having done so, absolutely refused to move again in our behalf. At length an old woman, whom the noise had awakened, appeared with a light, and conducted us into a room. Considering we were now sixty miles from Lisbon, after a short deliberation, we agreed to take a few hours repose; three straw mattresses were unrolled upon the floor, and hardly giving ourselves time to throw off our coats, or wish one another good night, in five minutes we were all sound asleep.

Before six o'clock we were again on

foot, and our kind Duenna having brought us some conserve of honey, wine and fruit, we strengthened ourselves against the approaching fatigues of the day. From Montemor Novo to Arrayolos the distance is marked three leagues; but we found it to be fully fourteen miles, so inaccurately are the posts calculated, for measured they certainly are not. The country was agreeably diversified by hills and vallies, but badly wooded, and still worse cultivated, until we came near Arrayolos, a small village pleasantly situated on the top of a hill. Here was by far the best post-house we had yet seen; the family was decent and neat in dress and appearance; the master seemed to consider himself as a Portuguese country gentleman, and treated us with great politeness. It was ten o'clock before we could leave Arrayolos, and the sun began already to be very hot. We descended the hill, and after riding a few miles, the country assumed a different aspect from

what we had yet seen; the mountains rising in a rounder form, and beginning to be covered with trees to their summits. It was past mid-day before we reached La Venta del Duque, a distance of three leagues. We found it to be a single house, without a village or hamlet near it, and upwards of a mile from the post-house which also stood alone on the top of a hill. As the heat however was now excessive, without the smallest breeze, we determined to remain a few hours, and accordingly entered the house which I will describe. A single room or hall occupied all the lower part, unfloored, and serving as a retreat both to the family and their poultry, which were perched all round. At one end a seat was built along the wall, and corresponding to it, a low table like that which hermits are represented as using, but formed of bricks and mortar instead of turf. On the opposite side of this immoveable table great pieces of cork supplied the place of stools, which,

when we tried to lift them, surprized us by their lightness. On a large open fireplace stood two or three small narrow-necked earthen jars, which formed the whole kitchen apparatus, and this completes the furniture of the lower room. The space above stairs was divided into several apartments, furnished with mats, and one or two mattresses for strangers to sleep on; and one room locked up contained the wealth of the family. Having signified our wish to eat, two fowls were instantly killed, stripped, cut into pieces, and put into one of the narrow-necked jars with a little water and other ingredients. The jar was then placed on the hearth, and hot embers swept round the bottom of it, and this was the whole process of cooking. Meantime we lay down to sleep, and when called to our meal found all the riches of the house displayed. Our table was spread with a clean napkin, two earthen plates, one silver and some wooden spoons, and a pitcher of tolera

ble wine. Hunger made us perhaps esteem the Portuguese cookery more highly than we might otherwise have done, for we finished the contents of our jar and agreed in calling them excellent. The heat of the day being past we prepared to mount our horses, and greatly exhilarated by a comfortable meal, and a draught of wine where we had expected to find little or nothing, pursued our journey towards Estremoz.

Shortly after leaving la Venta del Duque we had a view of Estremoz, on the top of a high hill distant about twelve miles. The country all round affords many views of deep valleys, and mountains crowned with forests; but it is reckoned the most dangerous part of Portugal to travellers, on account of the frequent robberies which take place in it. The Portuguese affirm that these robberies are generally committed by Spaniards, who easily find means to escape to their own frontiers with their booty, where they are

safe from pursuit. Be that as it may, we held ourselves prepared, and certainly passed many gloomy spots well adapted for scenes of villainy, in the bottom of glens, and in narrow passes in the woods. The sun had already set before we reached Estremoz, but we had still light enough to discern its fortifications, and that it was by far the largest town we had seen since leaving Lisbon. Here it was necessary to wait upon the governor, who received us politely, addressed us in French, and understanding our wish to proceed farther that night, gave orders that we should be allowed to pass the gates. Of this we availed ourselves, and proceeded on our road three leagues, to Aloravizas, a miserable inn, where we with great difficulty procured a light repast, without wine, and two straw pallets for beds. In travelling however, we soon learn to accommodate ourselves to every thing, and although we had not ridden above forty miles that day, we were yet sufficiently fatigued to

have slept on the bare ground, had it been necessary.

We were at day-break pleased with the prospect of being out of Portugal before night. Although the whole country, to the south of the Pyrenees had been formerly one kingdom, we yet expected to find some striking differences of manners and customs; nay, even that the mountains and trees of Spain should have a different character from those which surrounded us. These ideas would alone have shortened the four leagues to Yelves, or Elvas, the frontier town of Portugal towards Spain, even without the additional variety of hills and valleys, wide plains, and forests of oak, and cork trees. About nine o'clock we arrived at Elvas, upon the top of a steep hill, and commanding a delightful prospect of that rich slip of country on the banks of the Guadiana, which marks the frontiers of the two kingdoms. As I contemplated from the heights of Elvas the wide spread pros-

pect of mountains, forests, and fertile plains, I could not help contrasting it with the borders of England and Scotland, where the long and inveterate hostility of two nations, now closely united, has produced such extensive tracts of bare hills and barren heaths. Portugal seems to have exerted all her strength to render the fortifications of Elvas formidable, and to garrison it with her best soldiers, as if by this outward rind she could conceal the weakness of her interior. Exclusive of the situation, and the fortifications, the place itself has nothing worthy of notice, except a Moorish aqueduct in some parts of several rows of arches, which still conveys water to the town, being in general not so well built as Estremoz. To our great satisfaction, however, we discovered a coffee-house, where we procured some excellent coffee and milk, and delicious figs, upon which we breakfasted. Thus refreshed, we bade adieu to Elvas without

regret, and prepared to quit the dominion of Portugal.

Presently after descending the hill, we came into an even country, which however by no means answered the idea which we had formed of its fertility from the heights, the soil being sandy, and miserably cultivated, and that only in spots. About nine miles from Elvas we came to a sandy flat, on which, to the right of the road, some tents were pitched; under their shade a dozen soldiers, stretched out at full length, formed the advanced guard of Portugal. At a little distance a small stream which quickly falls into the Guadiana is the line of demarcation. It was now nearly dry, and we crossed its bed at full gallop, and, waving our hats, striving who should be first on the Spanish territory. Here we congratulated each other, but as might be expected, found as yet no difference in the soil or cultivation. The Spaniards, however, to judge by the

first glance, have too great a contempt for their neighbours, to take the trouble of setting up a few scarecrows in soldier's clothes on their side of the brook.

As we approach Badajoz, the country becomes more fertile, and better cultivated; which indeed ought to be the case near a populous town, and on the banks of the Guadiana, one of the great rivers of Spain. We cross this fine stream, which however is not yet navigable, upon an excellent stone bridge, and immediately pass under the gates of Badajoz, where our passports are examined, and after the necessary ceremony of paying a trifling sum to custom-house officers, we are left free to find our way all over the kingdom.

Badajoz (pronounced Badahoz) is the frontier town of Spain on this frontier, as Elvas is of Portugal, and is therefore strongly fortified and garrisoned. The Spanish soldiers who throng the gates are stouter, and have a more martial look than those we have just left behind

us; but I seek in vain for that honest freedom which marks the soldier of England. One of my companions having business to transact here, we remain the rest of the day, and have time to observe, that even in the frontier towns, a strong line of distinction is drawn between the two nations. The Spaniard is more determined in his gait and manners; his cloak thrown over his shoulders gives him something of the air of a man of courage, whilst the same custom with the Portuguese manners, gives only the look of an assassin. But if we notice the difference between the men, it is still more apparent in the women of the two countries. The air, the dress, the walk of the Spanish ladies is not only superior to that of their neighbours, but perhaps of any European nation. The lower part of their dress is black, with deep fringes; the upper consists simply of a white muslin veil, which, without covering the face, falls down on each side of the head, crosses over the

bosom, and is fastened behind the back. They walk with freedom; their eyes are dark and expressive, and their whole countenances have that bewitching air which an Englishman likes well enough to see in any woman except his wife, his sister, or the woman he truly loves and respects.

Having spent the afternoon in viewing Badajoz, we prepared for an early departure on the ensuing morning. We were on horseback before sunrise, and arrived at the gate leading toward the country just as it was opened. A number of peasants with their horses, mules, and asses loaded with fruits and vegetables, who had been long in waiting, rushed in like a torrent, and almost carried us away with them. We had no resource but to spur up our horses, and force our way through with no small detriment to many a panier of figs and apricots. For some time after leaving Badajoz, the road is confined, but we soon came to immense uncultivated plains,

bordered all round by distant mountains, except close upon our right, where were small hills with a gentle slope. At a distance in the plains lay Talavera la Real, three leagues from Badajoz, and our next stage. These plains are kept from cultivation by the express interference of government for the benefit of the Spanish sheep, which certainly derive from such pastures the superior excellence of their wool. Not only Estremadura, but all the inland provinces, abound with these commons, with respect to which the prejudices of the inhabitants are insurmountable. "Why do you not plough up these fertile deserts?" said I to a Spaniard, "encourage agriculture, the real basis of the greatness of kingdoms, and your country may yet rank with the first in Europe." "I see," replied he: "That you have the prejudice common to most foreigners. These deserts, as you call them, are the glory of Spain, for it is from their pastures that is formed the finest wool in the

world." It is needless to expose the ignorant fallacy of this reasoning, which however is here universal, and it is not without regret that an Englishman beholds the finest plains in Europe abandoned and uncultivated.

Talavera la Real, although thus distinguished by the name of Royal, presents nothing worthy of notice; unless perhaps one or two stone crosses at the end of the village may for a moment attract attention. Soon after leaving Talavera, our road leads us close along the Guadiana, whose banks are here high and crumbling, large portions of earth having recently fallen in, and not being yet washed away by the current. Where such is the nature of the soil, the bed of the river is wide and irregular, with banks of sand and gravel in the middle. On the contrary, when the nature of the ground opposes more resistance, the channel is narrower, but the current more rapid. The country immediately near the river is cultivated;

but in a miserable manner ; having neither farm-houses, trees, nor inclosures on its banks. The Guadiana presented a very different picture from what Spanish descriptions had led me to expect ; and its smooth waters, instead of affording the idea of coolness, seemed to reflect the heat of the sun like a gliding mirror. In this manner we pursued our journey to Perales, three leagues distant from Talavera la Real, and situated still closer to the river. It is merely a post-house where we changed horses, and thence set off for Merida, another stage of three leagues. The ground now begins to wear a different appearance, rising into small hills with mountains to the Eastward. The ruins of an aqueduct mark the approach to Merida ; the ancient Merita Augusta, situated close upon the Guadiana, over which we pass upon a noble Roman bridge, in admirable preservation. Besides the bridge, Merida contains many monuments of the Roman power ; such as an

amphitheatre almost entire, a circus or chariot course, and a naumachia or aquatic theatre. There are also the remains of a triumphal arch; a subterraneous passage leading to the river, for watering the cattle in times of siege; a small temple dedicated to Mars, and various columns and broken arches. It may give satisfaction to know that this temple is now cleansed of all its impurities by holy water, and holy tapers, and holy priests; and a wooden image of the Holy Virgin has supplied the place of the frowning God of war. The whole is attested by a fair inscription on the front of the edifice, and which, as if to spite the Manes of the long departed founder, is in Latin. The walls appear also to be of Roman construction, although they formerly extended further into the river, as great masses of ruins in its bed sufficiently testify.

In the market place the Spaniards have erected a singular monument of their ig-

norance. Three ancient altars are piled one above another to form a pillar; a stone with a Latin inscription declaring that it is dedicated to Concord forms the base; and a modern statue of a female saint stands upon the summit. When we examine these altars, the beautiful workmanship of which shews the hand of a Grecian sculptor, we are tempted to exclaim against this barbarism which has thus perverted their use, until we reflect that this has perhaps been the very means of preserving them for a nobler purpose, and that they yet may one day grace a national collection, or the museums of Princes.

Surrounded by so many interesting objects, we heard without much regret that it was impossible to procure horses that day, and having finished our Spanish olio, we spent the afternoon in examining them. In the evening we bathed in the Guadiana, a luxury which cannot be conceived except by those who have previously ridden many hours under a scorching sun.

We walked below the town over beds of smooth stones, like the shingly beach of Sussex, yet even here we found some small bushes, from beneath whose covert we plunged into the river. It here formed a wide basin, bottomed with pure sand, and fordable all over, as we found to our great surprize, not being above five feet in depth in the middle. Above and below this noble basin, the river, more confined, rushed with a murmuring noise over its gravelly bed, and this was the only noise that we heard. Pardon me reader; travellers have described with enthusiasm even the ruins of ancient baths, why then should I pass over in total silence a natural one which far transcends them all?

It was eight o'clock the ensuing morning, before we bade adieu to Merida, and the banks of the Guadiana. Hitherto we had travelled from Lisbon in a direction nearly due west, but now our road turned to the northward, and became more varied and interesting, although we had no

longer a view of the river. A ride of two leagues brought us to San Pedro de Merida, a small and trifling village, situated in a plain, where we changed horses, and proceeded three leagues further to la Venta de la Guia. This is a small town, and contains one of the few good, or at least tolerable inns, to be met with on the whole road. Here we passed two or three hours during the heat of the day, but in the afternoon, when we were preparing to set out, one of my companions received a kick from the postillion's horse, which obliged us, however unwillingly, to remain there the whole of that evening and night. At day-break however our friend was able to mount once more on horseback, and we took the road to Meajadas, distant three leagues. This is a small town containing nothing worthy of notice, and from whence a ride of six leagues brought us to Truxillo, a small town situated upon a hill, and famous for being the birth place of Pizarro. A

great number of stone crosses stand at the entrance of the town, but we could not learn the particular causes of their erection. As many of them are of very ancient date, perhaps they were built to propitiate Heaven by those adventurers whom the success of their fellow citizens attracted to South America. At present Truxillo is in a state of great decay, and the entrance is through narrow streets, almost choked up with filth. In honour of Pizarro, we dined here, and the same evening pursued our journey six leagues farther, through Carrascal and Jaraycejo to Miravete. Between Truxillo and Miravete the country is reckoned favourable to robbers, being full of deep forests, vallies overgrown with trees, and high grounds, from which they can observe the approach of travellers. These circumstances however tend to render it a romantic ride, especially between Jaraycejo and Miravete, where the road crosses a high mountain, approaching to a chain of hills,

branching from the Great Sierra Morena. The ruins of an old Moorish castle crowned the brow of a distant hill, which we had constantly in view. The idea of danger, slight as it was, by keeping us silent, and as it were, compressing our thoughts, gave a double interest to the romantic scenery around us. It was nearly dark when we reached the summit of the mountain, the steep descent of which was formerly one of the most difficult passes of Spain. Now however an excellent winding road leads to the bottom, where we found a few houses; and a small post-house, honored with the name of *las Casas del Puerto de Miravete*, and where we willingly agreed to pass the night. A family, consisting of a decent matron and several handsome girls, were all presently engaged in preparing our evening repast, to which their smiles and jokes whilst they waited on us, gave a greater relish. A pitcher of good wine crowned the supper, over which we laughed at the

fatigues of the day, and talked of the pleasures of home. To our great comfort we found clean beds to rest on; and a small metal crucifix, and a picture of the Holy Virgin at the head of each, effectually guarded our nightly slumbers.

Before day-break on the ensuing morning, we left Miravete. The path continued rugged and uneven for some distance, till we came to an excellent road along which we had not travelled far, before we came to the Tagus, which we soon after crossed over upon an excellent bridge. That river runs here at the bottom of a steep and narrow valley, which is its general character throughout the whole of its long course. It always runs with considerable rapidity, which shews a constant descent from whence it takes its rise among the mountains on the borders of Arragon. From Miravete to the post-house of Almaraz is a distance of two leagues, and two leagues more brought us to Naval moral de Plasencia, a small

and tolerably rich town, where we breakfasted. From Naval moral, another post of four leagues brought us to la Calzada de Oropesa, a small town where we were again detained the remainder of the day for want of horses, several government couriers going different roads, having met here shortly before our arrival. We had not as at Merida the consolation of reflecting that our detention was well repaid by the inspection of curious and interesting objects, for this place contained so little worthy of regard, that we were scarcely tempted to stir abroad. Early the next day, a stage of four leagues brought us to la Venta de Pelavenegas, consisting of two or three houses in the middle of a wood, through which we had been riding the greater part of the morning. Here we could obtain nothing but a little dry bread, which must have formed our breakfast, had we not been provided with a little chocolate which they prepared for us. The woods here

abound with game, as we could observe by several peasants coming in with their guns, and loaded with hares, rabbits, partridges, and wild pigeons.

From this lonely Venta we rode four leagues to Talavera la Reyna, a city once very populous, and noted for its manufacture of silk, and which still maintains a considerable number of looms. It is well situated upon the Tagus, and exhibits in the public buildings marks of departed prosperity. Near the town, the road toward Madrid leads under fine avenues of trees, but the country soon becomes open and sandy, over which, as it was now the heat of the day, our horses could go but slowly. Not far from Talavera, we crossed the sandy bed of a large river (the Alberche) upon a magnificent stone bridge of many arches, under only one or two of which a small stream of water crept slowly along. Nothing at first sight can appear more ridiculous to a stranger than similar bridges which abound in Spain. They appear as

if placed to shew that a river ought to be there. But though nearly dry in the midst of summer, these channels, after the rains, pour down immense torrents of water, and it is then that the traveller perceives their utility, and blesses the name of their founder. On our arrival at the post-house of Sotocochinos, two long leagues from Talavera, the heat became so excessive that we agreed to remain there a few hours, and with some difficulty procured a scanty meal. Toward the evening we again mounted, and rode five leagues to Maqueda; having stopped to change horses at the little village of Bravo. Maqueda is only a small town: but there are already symptoms of our approach to the capital. At our posada or inn, we noticed more attention to cleanliness and little civilities, neater furniture, and a table better served in a long hall. Early in the morning we resumed our journey. After changing horses at la Santa Cruz del Retamar, five leagues from Maqueda brought

us to Palmojado, a miserable village, where we with difficulty procured a little chocolate for our breakfast. Four leagues farther brought us to Mostoles, after passing through the village of Naval carnero, where we changed horses. As we were now within three leagues of Madrid, it was determined not to make our entry before the evening.

The heat of the day was spent at Mostoles, and about six o'clock we set out. A heavy storm of thunder and lightning, which clouded all the country to the North of us, served to add interest to our approach to this capital. We had not proceeded far from Mostoles before we perceived its domes and spires, and could determine exactly the whole extent, which by no means corresponded with the ideas we had formed of the metropolis of so great a kingdom.

The lamps were already lighted before we arrived at the gates, to which we approached by a fine stone bridge over

a sandy rivulet, called here the river Manzanares. All the capitals of Europe stand upon great rivers, or arms of the sea, and therefore the Manzanares shall pass for a river; although in winter it can only be a torrent, and in summer a bed of sand. Be that as it may, the entrance to Madrid is noble. We passed under a grand arch of stone adorned with warlike trophies, and enter at once upon a wide street, each side of which is composed of the palaces of the grandees of Spain. After many windings, we arrive at the market place, where stone crosses, numerous lights, and a thousand different cries, assure us that we are once more arrived at a metropolis.

In a short time we arrive at la Cruz de Malta, or the cross of Malta, one of the most famous inns of Madrid, and where I desired our postillion to stop. Each of my travelling companions has houses and friends to repair to; but I am a stranger, and alone, and I go to la Cruz de Malta.

After a journey of four hundred miles on horseback, under so warm a sun, we naturally wish for a quiet night's rest; but in the first moments of leisure, I begin to meditate upon the tract of country through which we have passed, and the manners of the people whom we have seen. As Lisbon stands upon the mouth of the Tagus, and the sources of that river lie still farther to the North East of Madrid, it necessarily follows that we have been gradually ascending from the western shores of Europe to nearly the centre of Spain. Wherever we have passed the Tagus, it flows with a considerably rapid current toward the Atlantic. But independantly of that consideration, the ascent has been constantly obvious to us. Not only the Tagus, but every smaller river or brook met us, if I may so say, on the road either running toward the Tagus on the one side, or on the other, into the Guadiana, and so to join the Atlantic to the Southward, between Cape St. Vincent and the

Straits of Gibraltar. From the Gulph of the Tagus, travelling to the North East we first meet with large sandy plains, bordered with mountains of no great height. As we approach Montemor Novo, we find ourselves in a country of hills, but it is not till we reach the frontiers of Portugal that they can be termed mountains, and even then perhaps doubtfully. From these heights the mountains of Spain become visible, together with the wide extent of country between them, covered in most parts with forests, and through which runs the Guadiana, and the smaller streams that fall into it. Arrived at Merida, we look back upon the hills, and think how the Romans must have felt when they compared these natural ramparts of the unconquered Lusitians with their own stone walls, and the broad river between them. As we recede from the banks of the Guadiana, we approach a lofty branch of the mountains of Sierra Morena, and having crossed this

branch soon arrive at the deep channel of the Tagus. These mountains, therefore, by separating the two rivers, serve to give them their different directions; for it may be observed that they run nearly parallel to each other for more than two hundred miles, until the Guadiana reaches Badajoz, when it makes a sudden bend, and continues the rest of its course due south. From the banks of the Tagus the ground constantly rises in terraces to Madrid. The casual declivities bear no proportion to the ascents; a truth which we never lose sight of, although sometimes the road lies over immense plains, or through thick forests. When we have reached Madrid, standing upon several hills of a sandy stone, we still observe the high ridge of the Guadiana mountains to the northward, and their summits must be amongst the highest ground in Spain.

Retracing again our route, we find that the roads in Portugal are in a most ne-

glected state, whilst in Spain, no sooner have we passed the frontiers than we see them excellent from Badajoz to Madrid. The Portuguese do not scruple to avow their reason for thus not merely abandoning their roads toward Spain, but absolutely leading them over the most difficult and rocky ground: "We do not wish," say they, "to make a road to Lisbon for the Spaniards." The Spaniards, on the contrary, construct excellent roads, in all directions from their metropolis to the frontiers, and even toward France. A generous spirit reduced to extremities disdains to owe his safety to concealment; on the contrary, he bares the road to his heart, and calls on his enemies to strike. In the same spirit the Spaniards affect no concealment with respect to their fortifications and harbours: Any person may obtain at Madrid excellent plans of Cadiz, Ferrol, Barcelona, &c. published by the government, and greatly superior in accuracy to those executed in other countries.

The French, on the contrary, are exceedingly jealous on these points. As we have yet a further journey to make, if we ever wish to leave Spain, I shall at present say nothing of the mode of travelling until we reach the port, whatever it may be, of our embarkation. In the mean time let us turn our attention to this city, which, notwithstanding all its misfortunes, is still perhaps the metropolis of one of the greatest empires, in point of extent, existing.

Madrid, like Petersburgh, owes its origin to political considerations; its site being nearly in the centre of Spain, and therefore considered as the best adapted for the foundation of a capital. It however possesses no other local advantages, and serves to display the Spanish idea of greatness of mind, which consists in choosing advantageous mathematical points, without regard to other circumstances, and then forcing nature to bend to their views. By going only thirty-five miles to

the southward, many advantageous and beautiful situations might have been chosen on the banks of the Tagus, either on the fine plains near Aranjuez, or on the hills of Toledo. As if in contempt of this noble river, Madrid is built on the banks of the Manzanares, which is only one of its tributary streams, and which in summer presents a rivulet creeping through a wide bed of sand. If, however, we lose sight of this absurdity, it presents an imposing appearance, the houses being lofty, and built of stone; the streets well paved and clean, and the public edifices not being blacked with smoke, as in London, look as if they were newly erected. The great ornaments of Madrid, exclusive of its palaces and churches, are its gates, resembling so many triumphal arches, and the Prado or public walk. The erection of these gates was the glory or the weakness of Charles the Third, who has taken due care to record his name upon them in

long inscriptions ; but he forgot to add walls to them, which, in my opinion, would have greatly increased the effect. Beautiful gates are placed here and there in a miserable wall, which a few three pounders would batter down in an hour ; so strangely are magnificence and poverty here blended together. The Prado, on the contrary, is admirable in all its parts, being a broad walk, adorned with handsome fountains, and divided into avenues by rows of trees ; it bounds the whole of one side of the town, being terminated at each end by one of the gates of the city. The streets leading down to it are the broadest and finest in Madrid, and on the opposite side are the gardens, pleasure-grounds, and palace of the Retiro, worthy of the residence of a prince, although at present only used by the King as a shooting ground during his stay at Madrid. The fountains of the Prado are in general formed after antique models, and the water of one of them is the purest in the whole city,

and the only kind of which the present King drinks, water being his sole beverage. One very broad walk adorned with these fountains, is thronged every fine evening with the best company, and on Sundays, the King, Queen, and royal family, ride up and down the carriage road, and salute the people constantly as they pass. It is on the Prado that the stranger may study with advantage the dress, the air, and the gait of the Spaniards; for then all pass in review before him, from the prince to the beggar. The nobleman alights from his carriage, and saunters among the throng, seemingly careless about his fine dress, and the ornaments at his button-hole, although nobody glances at them so often as himself; the citizen dresses in the mode general throughout Europe thirty years ago; whilst the lower classes that venture on the Prado, still wear their cloaths thrown over the shoulder, and thus preserve the last reliques of the ancient toga. All the men

wear large cocked hats, and all smoke cigars; for this latter purpose boys run up and down the prado with a kind of slow torch, which burns without flaming, and serves to light the cigars. In opposition to them, water carriers, with their porous, earthen vases and goblets vend the cool water of the neighbouring fountains; and the various cries of fire, fire, and fresh water, water, are heard above the buzz of the mingled crowd. But the women principally attract the eyes of the stranger. Their simple and elegant dress, their veils, which serve any purpose but that of concealing their faces, the freedom of their walk, and their looks attractive, but not immodest, tend to make an Englishman forget for a moment that they are greatly inferior in point of real beauty to the women of his own country.

There is one custom which pleased me much, and which no where produces so striking an effect as on the prado. Ex-

actly at sunset the bells of the churches and convents give the signal for repeating the evening prayer to the Virgin. In an instant the busy multitude is hushed and arrested, as if by magic. The carriages stop, the women veil their faces with their fans; the men take off their hats, and all breathe out, or are supposed to breathe, a short prayer to the protecting Power which has brought them to the close of another day. After a short, a solemn, and not an unpleasing pause, the men bow and put on their hats, the women uncover their faces, the carriages drive on, and the whole crowd is again in motion as before. This is one of the few Catholic customs which appears to partake of piety without superstition, and divested of altars, candlesticks, tapers and images. I felt no reluctance to uncover my head among the crowd under so noble a canopy as the vault of Heaven, where some of the stars already begin to appear. Those around me mutter a petition