

LETTER XIX.

On the introduction of the Moors into this peninsula, the following ode has been written by Father Luis de Leon, one of the best poets which Spain has produced.

Folgaba el Rey Rodrigo
 con* la hermosa Caba en la ribera
 de Tajo sin testigo :
 el pecho sacó fuera
 el rio, y le habló de esta manera :

En mal punto te goces
 injusto forzador, que ya el sonido,
 óyo ya y las voces,
 las armas y el bramido
 de Marte, de furor y ardor ceñido.

* In printing this ode, two peculiarities of Spanish printing are preserved. One is the beginning a verse with a small letter, though the stanza begins with a capital one. The other is a mode of punctuation, confined I believe to the Spaniards, and among them only of late invention. To every sentence that requires either a note of interrogation or admiration, this mark is prefixed as well as placed at the

¡ Ay esa tu alegría,
 qué llantos acarrea ! y esa hermosa,
 que vio el Sol en mal día,
 a España ay cuán llorosa,
 y al ceptro de los Godos cuán costosa !

end, but at the beginning of the sentence it is reversed. The construction of our language renders such punctuation unnecessary ; but in the Spanish it is very useful. The following curious sonnet exemplifies this custom, though the constant use of the interrogatory word *como* renders it here of less obvious utility.

SONETO,
 DEL FR. LUIS DE LEON
 AL PROPIO ASUNTO.

Si pan es lo que vemos, ¿ cómo dura
 Sin que comiendo del se nos acabe ?
 Si Dios, ¿ cómo en el gusto á pan nos sabe ?
 ¿ Como de solo pan tiene figura ?
 Si pan ¿ cómo le adora la criatura ?
 Si dios, ¿ cómo en tan chico espacio cabe ?
 Si pan, ¿ cómo por ciencia no se sabe ?
 Si Dios, ¿ cómo le come su hechura ?
 Si pan, ¿ cómo nos harta siendo poco ?
 Si Dios es, ¿ cómo puede ser partido ?
 Si pan, ¿ cómo en el alma hace tanto ?
 Si Dios, ¿ cómo le miro yo y le toco ?
 Si pan, ¿ cómo del Cielo ha descendido ?
 Si Dios, ¿ cómo no muero yo de espanto ?

Llamas, dolores, guerras,
 muertes, asolamientos, fieros males,
 entre tus brazos cierras,
 trabajos immortales
 a ti y a tus vasallos naturales.

A los que en Constantina
 rompen en fertil suelo, a los que bañan
 el Ebro, a la vecina
 sansueña, o Lusitana
 a toda la especiosa y triste España

SONETO
 ON THE REAL PRESENCE.

If this we see be bread, how can it last,
 So constantly consum'd, yet always here ?
 If this be God, then how can it appear
 Bread to the eye, and seem bread to the taste ?
 If bread, why is it worshipp'd by the baker ?
 If God, can such a space a God comprise ?
 If bread, how is it, it confounds the wise ?
 If God, how is it that we eat our Maker ?
 If bread, what good can such a morsel do ?
 If God, how is it we divide it so ?
 If bread, such saving virtue could it give ?
 If God, how can I see and touch it thus ?
 If bread, how could it come from heav'n to us ?
 If God, how can I look at it and live ?

Ya dende Cadiz llama
 el injuriado Conde, a la venganza
 atento, y no a la fama,
 La barbara pujanza
 en quien para tu dano no hay tardanza.

Oye que al cielo toca
 con temeroso son la trompa fiera,
 que en Africa convoca
 el moro a la vandra
 que al ayre desplegada va ligera

La lanza ya blanda
 el Arabe cruel, y hiere al viento,
 llamando a la pelea:
 innumerable quento
 de esquadras juntas vide en un momento.

Cubre la gente el suelo:
 debajo de las velas desaparece
 la mar, la voz al cielo
 confusa y varia crece,
 el polvo roba el dia, y le obscurece.

¡ Ay que ya presurosos
 suben las largas naves! ¡ ay que tienden
 los brazos vigorosos
 a los remos, y encienden
 las mares espumosas por dó hienden!

El Eolo derecho
 hinche la vela en popa, y larga entrada
 por el Herculeo estrecho
 con la punta acerada
 el gran padre Neptuno da a la Armada.

¡ Ay triste y aun te tiene
 el mal dulce regazo, ni llamado
 al mal que sobreviene
 no acorres ! ¿ ocupado
 no ves ya el puerto a Hercules sagrado ?

Acude, acorre, vuela,
 traspasa el alta sierra, ocupa el llano,
 no perdones la espuela,
 no des paz a la mano,
 menea fulminando el hierro insano.

¡ Ay cuánto de fatiga !
 ¡ ay cuánto de dolor esta presente
 al que biste loriga,
 al Infante valiente
 a hombres y a cabellos juntamente !

Y tú Betis divino,
 de sangre ageno y tuya amancillado,
 darás al mar vecino
 ¡ cuánto yelmo quebrado !
 ¡ cuánto cuerpo de nobles destrozado !

El furibundo Marte
 cinco luces las haces desordena
 igual a cada parte :
 la sexta,—¡ Ay ! te condena.
 ¡ o cara patria, o barbara cadena !

Rodrigo, from the world apart,
 Retir'd where Tagus flows,
 Clasp'd the fair CABA closely to his heart,
 When lo! the Spirit of the Stream arose,
 And pour'd the prophet song of Spain's impending woes.

In evil hour, tyrannic King,
 Thou dalliest here! he cried;
 Even now I hear the shout of battle ring!
 Vengeance even now stalks on with frantic stride,
 And from his giant arm he scatters ruin wide.

Ah me! what anguish, what dismay,
 Rise tyrant from thy lust!
 And cursed CABA be thy natal day,
 Whose violated charms provoke the All-just
 To tread the Gothic powers and Gothic crown in dust.

Ah me! thou claspest in thine arms
 Dread danger and disgrace:
 What shrieks, what ills, what horrors, what alarms,
 Proud King! thou foldest in thy hot embrace,
 War, Desolation, Death, the ruin of thy race.

Woe to the sons of Leon! woe
 To fair Castilia's plain?
 And where the pleasant waves of Ebro flow,
 The conquering infidel shall fix his reign,
 And Lusitania yields.—Woe, woe to wretched Spain!

The vengeful Count, in evil hour,
 The impious aid shall call:
 Swift o'er the ocean swarms the swarthy power,
 Vain the strong bulwark, vain the massy wall,
 The bulwark soon shall shake, the fortress soon shall fall.

Hark ! hark ! even now on Afric's coast
 I hear the trumpet's blair !
 From every quarter rush the robber host,
 They rush the battle and the prey to share,
 And high their banners wave, & bright their crescents glare.

The Arab, eager for the fight,
 Leaves his waste sands behind ;
 Swift is his steed, and swift his arrows flight ;
 The burning thirst of battle fires his mind,
 He lifts his quivering lance ; he wounds the passing wind.

Their warrior myriads hide the ground,
 And now they spread the sail :
 Hark to the multitudes impatient sound !
 And now their louder shouts mine ear assail,
 For now they mount the bark, and catch the favouring gale.

On moves the death-denouncing load,
 The dark deep foams below ;
 And swift they sweep along the wat'ry road,
 And with strong arm the sinewy captives row,
 And fairly blows the wind, ah me ! the wind of woe !

Still onward moves the hostile host ;
 Still blows the breeze aright ;
 Now rises on their view the distant coast :
 The mountain rocks now brighten to the sight,
 And nearer now they view Calpe's majestic height.

Still wilt thou clasp her in thine arms ?
 Rise, rise, Rodrigo rise !
 The affrighted shore now echoes with alarms ;
 They reach the port, hark to their eager cries !
 Triumphant there aloft the impious banner flies.

They pass the mountain's craggy bound,
 They rush upon the plain;
 Far o'er the realm their swift steeds scour around.
 Rise, rise Rodrigo, yet thy right retain,
 Rodrigo, rise! revenge thy desolated Spain!

Ah me! ah me! what toils, what woes,
 What ills are still in store!
 Wide o'er the country sweep the furious foes,
 Vain the strong horse, and vain the warrior's power,
 For horse and warrior fall beneath the victor Moor.

Woe Tyrant, to Iberia woe!
 Her best blood gluts the plain!
 Then Betis black with blood thy waves shall flow,
 And clogg'd with many a Moor and Christian slain,
 Thy tainted tide shall roll pollution to the main.

And now at Death's triumphant feast,
 The bowl of blood shall flow!
 Five fights shall rage ere yet the war has ceast;
 Then, then, Rodrigo, shall thy head lie low.
 Woe Tyrant! woe to thee! to poor Iberia woe!

The adventure of Rodrigo, in the Enchanted Tower is alluded to by all the historians who have touched upon his reign, yet none of them have thought the wild Arabian fiction deserving a place even in their notes. I have met with it in an old account of Spain, translated from the French, of the date 1693. This little book

gives it from Abulcacim Tariff Abentarique, who declares he had the relation from the Archbishop Oppas, one of the persons who was with Rodrigo when he entered the tower, in search of a treasure supposed to be hidden there.

“ This tower was built between two steep rocks, half a league to the East of Toledo ; and above the story next the ground was to be seen a very deep cave, parted into four different vaults, to which a very narrow mouth or opening led cut out of the rock, and was closed with an iron door, which, as the report went, had a thousand locks and as many bolts. Over the door were certain Greek characters which admitted several significations, but the most prevalent opinion was that it was a prediction of the misfortune of him that should open it.

“ Rodrigo caused certain flambeaux to be made, which the air and wind of the cave could not put out ; and having forced open the door, he entered first of all himself, being attended

by a great many persons. He had not gone many steps before he found himself in a very fair hall, adorned with sculptures, and in the middle stood a statue of brass, representing Time upon a pedestal, three cubits high, who held in his hand a battle-axe, with which the Image ever and anon struck upon the ground, and every blow resounding through the cave, made a most dreadful noise. Rodrigo was so far from being terrified, that he assured the Phantom that he came not to commit any disorder in the place of his abode, and promised to be gone so soon as he had viewed all the wonders in the place ; and then the Statue ceased to strike upon the earth.

“ Thus the example of the King encouraging his followers, he took an exact view of the Hall, at the entrance into which stood a round Vatt, whence issued a water-spout that made a dreadful thundering noise. Upon the breast of the Statue was written in Arabic, I DO MY DUTY, and upon the back of it, TO MY SUC-COUR ! On the right hand, upon the wall, were to be read these words : “ UNFORTUNATE

PRINCE, THINE EVIL DESTINY HAS BROUGHT THEE HITHER ! and on the left hand, THOU SHALT BE DISPOSSESSED BY FOREIGN NATIONS, AND THY SUBJECTS SHALL BE PUNISHED, AS WELL AS THOU THYSELF, FOR ALL THEIR CRIMES !

“Rodrigo having thus gratified his curiosity, returned ; but he had no sooner turned his back, before the Statue began to strike upon the ground again : however the King caused the door to be shut fast again, and ordered the narrow passage to be stopped up with earth, to the end that nobody should ever enter for the future ; but in the night there were heard on that side several loud shrieks and shrill cries, which preceded a most dreadful noise, not unlike a great thunder clap, and the next day there was no more of a tower to be seen, nor almost any footsteps of what had rendered that place so remarkable.”*

* A different account and of inferior sublimity perhaps, is given by the Abbé de Bellegarde in his history of Spain. “ Il sembloit que la prudence, le bon conseil et la raison

The introduction of the Moors furnished Luis de Leon with the subject of his best ode, and the expulsion of their descendants occasioned a very curious sermon, preached by Juan de Ribera, Archbishop of Valencia : it is translated by Geddes ; but as the valuable tracts of this author are now rare, I shall transcribe a few extracts.

abandonnoient le Roy que ses crimes rendoient odieux au Ciel et à la terre ; s' étant imaginé qu' il y avoit des tresors immenses dans le fort Château de Toledé, qui auroit pû servir de rempart contre les ennemis de l'etat, il en fit démolir les fortifications pour y fouiller, contre l'avis & les remontrances de tous les ordres du Royaume, qui respectoient ce Palais, comme un azile sacré ; mais le Roy sans avoir aucun égard à leurs raisons ni à leurs prieres, en fit rompre les serrures et enfoncer les portes, croyant que les Roys ses prédecesseurs y avoient caché de grandes richesses ; tant il est vray que les desirs et les volontes des Rois sont violentes, et qu' il est bien difficile de les faire démordre de ce qu' ils ont resolu de faire, quelque injustes que soient leurs resolutions & quelque dangereuses suites qu'elles puissent *avoir. Après toutes les recherches que fit le Roy,

* One would not have expected such a reflection from a French Abbé in 1723. Yet it appears to have been a favourite one by being so unnecessarily and awkwardly introduced.

His text is from Galatians v, 12. "I would they were even cut off that trouble you;" and he dwells much upon the emphatic earnestness implied in the word "utinam."

"Who among us (said this Arch-Priest) has had the zeal of Matthias, of whom the Holy Scripture saith, that when he beheld one of the people of Israel offering sacrifice to idols, at the commandment of the perverse King Antiochus, he was so set on fire by the zeal of the Lord that his bones trembled; and flying upon him

il ne trouva point les tresors qu'il s'étoit flatté de trouver. On aperçut seulement un coffre où il y avoit un linceul, lequel ayant été développé, on y remarqua plusieurs figures, extraordinaires avec des habits barbares, et des paroles latines qui pronostiquoient la ruine entiere d'Espagne, qui devoit bien-tôt être renversée de fond en comble par une nation que cette peinture designoit. Ces habits parurent semblables à ceux que les Maures portent vulgairement: voilà pourquoy le peuple et les grands Seigneurs de la cour, qui se trouverent presens à l'ouverture de ce coffre fatal, demeurant entirement persuadez que les malheurs dont l'Espagne étoit menacée, viendroient du côté de l'Afrique, on se repentit, mais trop tard, d'avoir voulu penetrer dans des mysteres, qui avoient été tenus cachez si long temps, et que l'on avoit reverez jusqu'alors avec tant de religion.

that sacrificed, and him that commanded him to do it, he killed them both. This is the zeal of a servant of God, and which is so acceptable to the divine Majesty, that Phineas for the doing the same was commended of God; and Moses saith, that though he was determined to have inflicted a severer punishment upon the people, he was appeased and did remit his wrath, for the zeal of Phineas, who killed the transgressor of the law of God.

So much in favour of persecution from the Old Testament; but his precedent for it from the New Testament is still more curious. "Our Lord Christ went into the temple, and seeing that what was done there was contrary to God's honour, the zealous God took the cords where-with the sheep and oxen were bound, and having made a whip of them he went about shaking it at all those cattle and men, driving them all out of the temple; and as to those that sold pigeons, he commanded them to be gone with them; and going up to the tables of the money changers, he threw them down upon

the ground, scattering about the money that was upon them. Now let us consider this fact, and we shall see that besides its being *the greatest miracle that Christ ever wrought*, for so St. Hierom saith it was, who affirms it to be greater than the raising Lazarus from the dead! The repressing of so many, and in the sight of so great a concourse of people, after such a manner, none of them offering to lay hold of him, or denying to obey him, notwithstanding they were at that time contriving his death, being a thing that nothing but the Almighty God could have done!"

One extract more.—Recollect that he is preaching on one of the most absurd and barbarous acts of oppression that the history of man, so full of absurdity and barbarity, records; and that to this expulsion of the Moriscoes is the decline of Spain in a great measure to be attributed, and you will find that as this precious Archbishop is a good Christian, he is no less excellent a prophet.

“ Through the mercy of God, and the paternal care of his Majesty, every thing will thrive with us, and the earth itself will grow more fertile, and will yield the fruit of blessing. It is a thing ye all know, that we have not had one fertile year since the Moriscoes were baptized, whereas now they will be all fertile, the land having been impoverished, made barren, and poisoned by their blasphemies and heresies; do not think that this is nothing but a fancy, since the divine Scriptures do every where affirm, that for sin God deprives people of temporal blessings. Let us but live in the service of our Lord, and observe his holy law, *without wronging our neighbour*, and we shall abound with all good things. Hear what the Lord himself hath said, “ Obey my commandments, and keep my laws, and I do promise that you shall live in the land without fear; and the land which you possess shall bring forth fruit in such abundance that ye shall eat and be full :” and that without any fear, but with an entire rest and security, and your harvests shall be so great that “ the Reapers shall work unto seed

time, and the makers of wine shall meet the sowers, and ye shall build in places which were deserts, and plant vines, and drink of the wine thereof, and sow gardens, and eat of the fruit of the trees you have planted, and ye shall never be turned out of your houses saith the Lord.”

A Monarch depopulating his country, a Minister of Christ preaching in praise of persecution, and a whole people witnessing with transport the banishment, the ruin, or the martyrdom of their neighbours, such were the effects of intolerance in Spain. The rage of persecution is of all vices the most maddening and the most dangerous, for it deludes us under the appearance of virtue. All other vices spring from the selfishness of our disposition, this alone, the most widely ruinous of all, arises from our regard to our neighbour. The beast Man grows lazy and will not work, unless he is goaded by the whip of Want and the spur of Necessity, and he would apply motives equally forcible to drive his fellows to their happiness hereafter. Under this pretext the most atrocious passions are

perhaps unknowingly, indulged, and the fury of the tyger becomes but a faint image of the ferocity of Man. To promote the general happiness is a great and dazzling idea, and with this view did Philip the Second condemn his child as a heretic, with this view Mary kindled the fires in Smithfield, and the Terrorists of France spread desolation over the Republic.

I am sick of intolerance ! Every man I meet is a Procrustes, who measures the worth of all besides by the standard of his own opinions. From the Atheist to the Franciscan Friar, through the links of the Deist, the Humanist, the Socinian, the low Arian, the high Arian, the orthodox Dissenter, and the high Churchman, all is intolerance ! and I can persuade no one that these opposite opinions may exist without affecting the moral character. The leader of one pack will cry out against the bigotted and gloomy Christian, and the leader of the other will cry out against the profligate and sensual Atheist, and a pack of curs will yelp in chorus after the one and the other, and

both the packs will set upon him who will not join in the chase of persecution.

It is not by his principles that I will judge of Man; it were as rational to describe the cameleon by his colour, or the mock-bird by his note. An honest man indeed can have but one character, but Diogenes sought in vain for one two thousand years ago, and the breed is not grown more common. As for the multitude, like a looking-glass they reflect the features of those in the room with them, and unlike the honest mirror, they will flatter you to your face.