

ing to give him time to repent, condemned him to live at Porto Rico as a presidiary or galley-slave.

In order to form a proper idea of the manners or laws of any country, an observer should collect and compare facts, and examine the different judgments pronounced in similar cases. A canon of the cathedral of Seville, affected in his dress, and particularly curious in his shoes, could not find a workman to his liking. An unfortunate shoemaker, to whom he applied, after quitting many others, having brought him a pair of shoes not made to please his taste, the canon became furious, and seizing one of the tools of the shoemaker, gave him with it so many blows upon the head as laid him dead upon the floor. The unhappy man left a widow, four daughters, and a son, fourteen years of age, the eldest of the indigent family. They made their complaints to the chapter; the canon was prosecuted, and condemned not to appear in the choir for a year. The young

young shoemaker having attained to man's estate, was scarcely able to get a livelihood, and overwhelmed with wretchedness, sat down on the day of a procession at the door of the cathedral of Seville, in the moment the procession passed by. Amongst the other canons he perceived the murderer of his father. At the sight of this man, filial affection, rage and despair got so far the better of his reason, that he fell furiously upon the priest, and stabbed him to the heart. The young man was seized, convicted of the crime, and immediately condemned to be quartered alive. Peter, whom we call the Cruel, and whom the Spaniards, with more reason, call the Lover of Justice, was then at Seville. The affair came to his knowledge; and, after learning the particulars, he determined to be himself the judge of the young shoemaker. When he proceeded to give judgment, he first annulled the sentence just pronounced by the clergy; and, after asking the young man of what profession he was, "I for-

bid

“bid you,” said he, “to make shoes for
“a year to come.”

The Spaniards never carry light into an apartment without saying, *Blessed be the holy sacrament of the altar.* The bystanders answer, *For ever.* Their salutation is, *God keep you.* Their farewell at separating, *Go with God, with the Virgin.* When they enter a house, the first words are, *Deo gratias, Ave Maria.* The company answer, *Sin pecado concebida,* conceived without sin. This subject of so many disputes is made a form of compliment in Spain. Never were God, the virgin, and the saints so much spoken of as in that kingdom.

Easter week is the source of a thousand sacrileges, which are the consequence of billets of confession. The priests of Spain have a maxim equally false and cruel; they say, that men should, by every possible means, be accustomed to do their duty, and that persuasion comes sooner or later. A few days before the
holy

holy-week, the vicar of each parish, accompanied by a register, makes a visit to his flock, and carefully takes down their names; fifteen days afterwards he repeats his visit, and all his parishioners are obliged to produce to him, not only a billet of confession, but another of communion. How many abuses result from this monstrous custom! The holy-days are scarcely begun before a sacrilegious traffic is made of that for which religion teaches us the highest veneration. Prostitutes are seen to communicate in every parish church, and sell to their impenitent lovers the billets they have received. Priests, unworthy of the name, pay with the same money the favours of these wretches. Many persons, to spare the expence of a billet, become sacrilegious; and if any one, led astray by his passions, has preserved piety and decency enough to forbear having recourse to these horrid means, and on the day the curate makes his visit has not a billet of communion to present, he becomes the object of ecclesiastical

cenfure; his name is fhamefully pofted up in the moft public places; and if, in the time given, he does not fulfil the precept, he receives corporal punishment. Thus the man, perhaps the moft religious amongft his brethren, is the moft defamed; and falls a victim to his fcruples and love of truth.

Few of the Spaniards, the women efppecially, are bled in the arm: this operation is generally performed in the hand or foot. They are all very partial to bleeding. It is common to hear them fay, fuch a one has been indifpofed; he has been bled four times and is now better. Moft of the women are bled three or four times a month, by way of precaution. I am perfuaded that the great number of blind perfons in Spain is produced as much by the frequency of bleeding, as by the burning fands with which feveral parts of that kingdom are covered.

Persons whom you see but seldom when in health, fail not to make you frequent visits when you are confined by illness. A Spaniard seldom neglects exterior social duties. You will receive his visit on your birth-day; but during the rest of the year you must not expect to see him.

Such are the observations I have made on the character of the Spanish nation; were I to say more upon the subject, I should but repeat what others have said much better before me.

LITERATURE.

AT present I mean only to give a slight sketch of Spanish literature, as I intend to treat that subject more fully in a distinct work, in which I shall speak of all the ancient books printed in Spain, and give a catalogue of the men of letters who have distinguished themselves in that country, and rendered it illustrious by their works. I have already collected such materials as are necessary to enable me to treat of Spanish poetry, history, comedies, romances and mystical authors. These strictures shall soon follow my essays.*.

I must here observe, that the Spaniards had translations of Plutarch, Seneca, and the best Greek and Latin historians before the end of the fifteenth century, which was sooner than these authors were translated in France: their lan-

* M. Peyron died before these were finished.

guage had already made a considerable progress, and was become copious, full of harmony and poetical. Spain owed this advantage to Alphonso, surnamed the Wise, who, in 1260, ordered all the charters, privileges, and public acts to be translated from the Latin into the Castilian tongue. It was in this language that he digested and had composed the *Las Partidas*, which were and are still in a great measure the laws of the kingdom. He had several foreign manuscripts translated, and as Toledo was at that time the center of fine taste, and the city in which the best language was spoken, when any difficulty arose, either relative to the pronunciation or meaning of a word, he ordered recourse to be had to the purists of Toledo.

The Spaniards have written history with sufficient exactness and simplicity, and are scarcely to be reproached with any thing, but rather too much national vanity and partiality.

One of their best historians is father Mariana; his style is admirable, and his narration ornamented without being turgid: he flatters neither kings nor his nation; but he is accused of having sometimes departed from truth, and of appearing too credulous relative to certain prodigies. He is nevertheless a good historian, but his history goes no farther than the reign of Ferdinand the Catholic. The continuation of it by father Miniana has acquired some reputation, but the obscurity and dryness which reigns throughout the whole work, renders it disgusting.

The chronicles of Ferreras de Saavedra are in great estimation. The history of Catalonia, by a bishop of Lerida, is written in the style of Livy.

The best memoirs which Spain has produced, are those of the Marquis of Saint Philip, on the war of the succession; they are accurate, and written in an agreeable

agreeable style; the French translation of them is greatly inferior to the original.

The history of Mexico, by Antonio Solis, is translated into every European language. The Spaniards accuse him of being too florid and affected in his style, and he sometimes departs so far from truth that his book may be considered as a romance. This author did not speak like a philosopher, when he said, the massacres committed by the Spaniards were so many means made use of by God to convert the infidels. However partial the reader may be to Fernando Cortes, the hero of the history, and to the Spanish nation, he cannot peruse the work of Solis without shuddering with horror.

The conquest of Peru, by Garcilasso de la Vega, is dry and uninteresting; but more exact than the former.

The general history of the Indies, by captain Gonzalo Hernandez de Oviedo y Valdes, governor of the fortrefs of Saint Domingo, printed at Seville in 1535, is written with an admirable simplicity, of which there is no other example in the same century. The fourteenth chapter of his history begins with these remarkable words :

“ Since a great part of the gold of the
 “ Indies has been carried into Italy and
 “ France, and some of it fallen into the
 “ hands of the Moors, and the enemies
 “ of Spain, it is but just that, after hav-
 “ ing profited by the sweat of our brows,
 “ they should partake of our pains
 “ and fatigues, to the end that, whe-
 “ ther because of gold, or by means of
 “ their sufferings, they may not forget
 “ to return thanks to God, and that
 “ either in pain or the midst of plea-
 “ sures, they may have recourse to the
 “ patience of Job, who, when rich,
 “ was not proud, nor impatient when
 “ sick and poor, but always gave his
 “ humble

“ humble thanks to God his Sovereign
 “ Lord. I frequently laughed, when,
 “ in Italy, I heard the Italians speak of
 “ the French disease, and the French
 “ of the Neapolitan; they would have
 “ given it its true name by calling it
 “ the disease of the Indies *.”

A very curious work is that entitled,
*De los veinte y un libros rituales, y monarchia
 Indiana con el origen, y guerras de los Indios*

* Pues que tanta parte del oro de estas Indias ha
 pasado a Italia, y Francia, y aun a poder assi mesmo
 de los Moros, y enemigos de Espana, y por todas
 las otras partes del mundo: bien es que como han
 gozado de nuestros sudores les alcance parte de
 nuestros dolores y fatigas, por que de todo o alo
 menos por la una, o por la otra manera del oro, o
 del trabajo, se acuerden a dar muchas gracias a Dios.
 Y en lo que le diere plazer o pefar se abracen con la
 paciencia de Job; que ni estando rico fue sobervio,
 ni seyendo pobre y clagado impaciente: siempre dio
 gracias a aquel soborano Dios nuestro. Muchas
 vezes en Italia me reya, oyendo a los Italianos
 dezir el mal Francez, y a los Francezes clamar el
 mal de Napoles: y en la verdad los unos, y los otros
 le acertaran el nombre si le dixeran el mal de las
 Indias.

Occidentales, de sus poblaciones, descubrimiento, conquista, conversion, y otras cosas maravillosas de la misma tierra. i. e. Twenty-one books of Indian rites, and the monarchy of the Indies, with the origin and wars of the West Indians; and the population, discovery, conquest, conversion, and other wonderful things of the same country. This work is by F. Jean de Torquemada, of the order of Saint Francis. It is in three volumes folio, and is extremely curious on account of its treating of the Dynasties anterior to the conquest, and of the Mexican kings who preceded Montezuma. If we possess but little knowledge of that interesting and long unknown part of mankind, the fault rests with the monks, and the first bishop of Mexico, Don Juan de Cumarraga, who burned the Indian hieroglyphical books which were taken by these ignorant priests for the depositories of idolatry.

The number of mystical authors which Spain has produced is prodigious; one
of

of the most esteemed of these is Fray Luis, of Granada. All these pious reveries were collected in Holland under the following title; *Dialectica y Eloquencia de los Salvages de Europa*: Logic and Rhetoric of the Savages of Europe.

The Spaniards have been particularly successful in compositions of gallantry, in fables, and ingenious fictions. The Arabians taught them the art of narration, and their imagination supplied the rest; they excelled before we did in this kind of writing, which we have since improved, whilst they have made no farther progress. Don Quixote will be read with pleasure as long as men possess wit, taste, and judgment.

Spain has produced many poets, but most of them are unknown, because their works were never printed, and those which have been published are become very scarce. The most esteemed amongst the poetical writers of this country are, Ercilla, Garcilasso de la Vega,

Vega, Fray Luis de Leon, Quevedo, Lopes de Vega, and Villegas.

The most ancient Castilian poet known, is Gonzalo Berceo, born at Berceo, and a monk in the monastery of Saint Millan; he flourished in 1211. The subject of one of the poems he has left us, is the life of the glorious confessor Saint Dominic of Silos. His style may be judged of by the two first stanzas of this poem.

*En el nombre del padre, que fizo toda cosa,
El de Don Jesu-Christo, fi de la Gloriosa,
El del Spiritu-Santo que equal dellos, posa
De un confessor sancto quiero fer una prosa.*

*Quiero fer una prosa en Roman Paladino,
En qual suele el pueblo hablar a su vecino,
Ca no son tan lettrado por fer otro Latino,
Bien valdra, come creo, un vaso de buen vino*.*

Velasquez, and the famous father Sarmiento, wrote on the origin of Castilian

* In the name of the Father who made all things, and of Jesus Christ, Son of the Virgin, and of the Holy

tilian poetry, and have left, on that subject, some curious details. I shall give an account of them when I come to treat of Spanish literature at large, the productions of which are considerable in quantity, and display perhaps more imagination than that of other European nations, but little reasoning, taste, or profundity: these necessarily depend upon a certain degree of liberty and will return with it.

Holy Ghost who is equal to them, I will make verses on a holy confessor.

I will make verses in the style of the romance, the same as is used in speaking in the city, for I am not scholar enough to employ other Latin, and for this purpose I think a glass of good wine will be sufficient.

OF THE SPANISH THEATRE.

THIS theatre was the first which had any success in Europe; the Italians, the French, and the English imitated and pillaged it for a considerable time without indicating the source whence they drew improvement. The Spaniards had about twenty-four thousand comedies: it is true they laid sacred and profane history, miracles, fable, and prodigies, all under contribution. Every thing beneath the pen of their authors, but little confined by taste or rules, became a subject for comedy. The least probable incidents, the whole life of a hero, sieges, battles, gallantry, and the means it inspires in a jealous nation to enjoy the beloved object, furnish the subject of most of the Spanish theatrical pieces. The Spaniards are commendable for having represented, on the stage, the principal events of their history; a merit they have in common with

with the English, but which the rules of the French theatre prevent that nation from imitating.

The Spaniards have felt and expressed all the degrees of most of the great passions; they have described ambition, anger, jealousy and revenge in the most energetic manner. But they had too much imagination to speak the language of love; to this passion they have mostly substituted gallantry, and we owe to them the infipidities which for a long time have vitiated our theatre; those love scenes which disfigure Corneille, and sometimes Racine. The language of their lovers is mere jargon, a confused heap of ridiculous figures and comparisons, equally cold and exaggerated. Their tender declarations, are besides, in general, of such a length as to exhaust the most exemplary patience.

The artlessness and variety of their intrigues, and some of their *dénouements* have

have been justly admired; these *Imbroglios* are the result of ancient Spanish manners. The imagination of comic authors must have been exhausted in bringing two lovers together, and uniting them in a country where women were very difficult of access; whilst in France, where society is in general more at liberty, authors have employed their whole art in prolonging delicate and tender conversations. The difference of manners therefore has produced too much action and intrigue in Spanish comedy, and too many words without action, in that of France. A Spanish woman of quality reading the romance of Calprenede, and fatigued by the too long and languishing conversations, said, throwing down the book, *What a deal of wit ill employed! To what purpose is all this dialogue since they are together?*

The father of the Spanish theatre was Lopes de Rueda, a native of Seville, and a gold-beater by profession. Cervantes, who

who in his youth had seen him perform, speaks highly of his pieces. " My taste, says he, was not then sufficiently formed to judge of his verses; but by those which have remained in my memory, and upon which I reflected at a maturer age, I am not afraid to assert, that Lopes was as good an author as he was an actor. We were not then acquainted with the machinery now necessary, nor with the challenges the Moors gave to the Christians, and which are now so common; we saw no figures rise from under ground, by means of a hole in the stage, nor angels borne upon clouds, to come to visit us; the simple ornament of the theatre was an old curtain, behind which, two or three musicians sung with accompaniments some ancient romance."

Lopes de Rueda imitated, in his pieces, the satirical manner of Plautus, and the simplicity of Terence; he was highly applauded by his co-temporaries, and dying at Cordova, was interred, as
a man

a man of distinguished talents, in the cathedral of that city. I have four of his comedies printed in 1567: the editor observes, that several passages, which gave offence by their freedom, have been erased from them; which, with some other circumstances, seems to prove this impression of his works to have been given a few years after his death.

There was but little art in these first pieces of the Spanish theatre; but the language is natural, and is remarkable for a pleasing softness and simplicity.

The titles of the four comedies of Lopes de Rueda are, *Eufemia*, *Armelina*, *Los Enganados*, (the deceived) and *Medora*. The same volume contains dialogues and pastorals, the place of which is now occupied by what is called *el entremes*, or the interlude;

Juan Timoneda, and Alonso de la Vega, were the successors and imitators of Lopes de Rueda. They also wrote with
simplicity,

simplicity but admitted too much intrigue, and too large a portion of the marvellous, into their comedies. Timoneda introduced several allegorical persons into his *Marie*, in which he treats of the birth of Christ, and the conception of the Virgin. The poet Vega employed enchantments. Their works are very scarce, and those I saw of them were imperfect.

The four comedies entitled, *Florinea*, *Selvagia*, *Celestina*, and *Eufrosine* had already appeared. The two last I have read, the others are very scarce. *Celestina* has been translated into Latin, and into French under the title of *Calisté et Melibée*. These pieces were not written for representation; *Celestina* has twenty-one acts, and contains scenes admirable for their simplicity, truth of character, and morality; the latter would be excellent were it not sometimes expressed in too free a manner. *Eufrosine* was translated from the Portuguese into Castilian; the edition I saw was of 1735,

in which the piece is corrected. It wearied me by the great number of proverbs with which it is filled. The best edition is that of 1566, and extremely scarce.

After Lopes de Rueda, Cervantes names Naharro, a native of Toledo, as one of the restorers of the theatre. He was especially famous in the character of a poltroon or a knave. He added a variety of embellishments to the stage, and brought the music from behind the curtain by which it was hidden, and placed it in front of the theatre; he made the actors lay aside their masks, and the false hair and beards with which they covered their heads and chins; he invented machinery, decorations, clouds, thunder and lightening, and was the first who introduced battles and challenges into theatrical representations. Comedy then lost its primitive simplicity. Cervantes acknowledges that he himself was one of the first to adopt this vitiated taste; he had nevertheless written several
pieces

pieces which might have served as models to his countrymen, and were more perfect than any by which they were preceded. Complicated intrigues, and an unexpected *dénouement*, were the delight of the people, and Cervantes saw, when it was too late, that a corrupted taste had taken very deep root.

He had corrected his nation of its eagerness for extravagant adventure, and by his Don Quixote had thrown an indelible ridicule upon the knights of chivalry: perhaps he may be reproached with having enervated the heroic sentiments, energy of character and greatness of mind, by which the Spanish nation was distinguished. It is sometimes a misfortune to open the eyes of a people and deprive them of their enthusiasm. He wished to correct the theatre also. He composed several pieces quite unconnected, and without the least regard to the rules which probability requires, but so similar in every thing to the pieces which were then represented, that they were

received with applause. The irony and instruction were lost to the age in which he lived. The theatre was, at that time, in high reputation, and the poets in vogue had such powerful protectors, that Cervantes dared not to explain himself in terms less equivocal; he was already persecuted for possessing sense and judgment, and so poor that he was afraid truth, too frequently repeated, should aggravate his misfortunes.

The theatre is no unimportant object; it is a general and national taste which, on one hand, is furiously attacked; and, on the other, obstinately defended. We have seen music at first produce witticisms, and afterwards libels and abuse. Sounds, more or less, grave or acute, have filled the too susceptible mind of a philosopher with bitterness, and produced endless disputes. There is not an Englishman who would not defend Shakespear as he would his household gods; and the French, worthy of eulogium, for the good reception they have
always

always given to strangers, did not receive, as they ought to have done, this hero of the English stage, when he appeared amongst them, cloathed in all the graces of the French language, to take his place by the side of their tragic poets. Our tastes and pleasures are a part of our manners: they must be suffered to sink into disuse before they can be successfully combated, and then they are no longer dangerous.

Cervantes seeing that his indirect attack had not succeeded, chose rather to palliate what he could not correct. He introduced in one of his pieces two allegorical personages, Comedy and Curiosity. A part of the dialogue between these was as follows:

Curiosity. "Comedy.

Comedy. "What desirest thou of me?

Curiosity. "I wish to know why thou
"hast quitted the sock, buskins and
"mantle?"

“ mantle? For what reason hast thou
 “ reduced to three, the five acts which
 “ formerly made thee so grave, noble
 “ and stately? I see thee pass in the
 “ twinkling of an eye from Spain into
 “ Flanders; thou confoundest time and
 “ places, and art no longer the same
 “ person. Give me some account of thy-
 “ self, for thou knowest I was ever thy
 “ friend.

Comedy. “ I am a little changed by
 “ time, which wished to improve me.
 “ I was formerly a good creature enough :
 “ and, if thou considerest me well, thou
 “ wilt find I am not now a bad one, al-
 “ though I may have wandered a little
 “ from the paths traced out for me by
 “ Plautus, Terence, and all the ancients
 “ with whom thou art acquainted. I
 “ describe a thousand events, not by
 “ my words as formerly, but in action,
 “ and for this purpose it is sometimes
 “ necessary for me to remove from one
 “ place to another. I am like a map of
 “ the world, in which London is within
 “ a fin-

“ a finger’s breadth of Rome. It is of
“ little consequence to persons who see
“ and hear me, whether or not I go
“ from Europe to Asia, provided I do
“ not leave the theatre. Thought is
“ agile, and can follow me wherever I
“ lead without being fatigued or losing
“ fight of me.”

Beneath this irony Cervantes endeavoured to convey instruction to his contemporaries: but the necessity he was under of pleasing, and especially of living, forced him to compose as others did. Bad taste was perpetuated, for that *Monster of Nature*, as Cervantes calls him, the famous Lopes de Vega, who filled the world with comedies, then made his appearance. He wrote upwards of eighteen hundred theatrical pieces; but the most whimsical and incongruous incidents, the most extravagant language, a jargon almost unintelligible, and the most disgusting bombast compose the greatest part of the whole. However, the facility of certain thoughts, and

the happy manner in which they are expressed, are astonishing; yet still the offences committed against true taste in every line, renders the reading of this author difficult, and makes us pay dearly for a few strokes of genius.

It must not be imagined that all the Spaniards are enthusiasts in their admiration of Lopes de Vega. He has, amongst his countrymen, more than one learned and judicious critic, who has endeavoured to circumscribe within the rules which Nature seems to dictate, the invention of comic authors, and the taste of the public. There never was a more fertile pen than that of Lopes de Vega. According to a calculation made of his works, what he wrote amounted to five sheets each day, counting from the day of his birth to that of his death.

Calderon, although extravagant, seems to me less so than Lopes de Vega: his intrigues are more simple, and his style purer and less embarrassed; he wrote
only

only about six or seven hundred theatrical pieces; so that he could bestow more care on his compositions.

Notwithstanding the glaring defects of Lopes de Vega and Calderon, they merit some eulogiums. Nature endowed them with a very uncommon imagination.

Augustin Moreto holds the third rank among the Spanish dramatic poets: had his genius been as fertile as that of his predecessors, critics might have been tempted to place him above them. He has shewn more judgment in the management of his pieces, which are thirty-six in number, and all contain great beauties. After these three poets, the most esteemed comic authors are Guillen de Castro, Francis de Roxas, and Anthony de Solis. Their pieces are in general more regular, and have neither the great defects nor the striking passages of those of Lopes de Vega, Calderon and Moreto; but the public will
still

still prefer the latter. Regularity will always please men of taste; and they who are amused by the flights and extravagance of genius will join in opinion with the people.

At present the Spaniards have none but translators; they have turned into prose several good French comedies. They represent *Nanine* under the title of the *Affected Margaret*, but it produces no effect. As the name of Voltaire is odious in Spain, they give his piece to an Italian. The *Legataire* of Regnard has had more success, because it is more comic. They have also translated a few French tragedies.

OF THE MILITARY AND
RELIGIOUS ORDERS INSTI-
TUTED IN SPAIN.

THE kings of Spain, during their continual wars against the Moors, created a great number of orders of knighthood to reward or encourage their subjects. Most of these orders are become extinct, but I think it necessary to give some account of them before I speak of those which at present exist. Among the former are;

The order of the *Green Oak*, founded by Garcia Ximenez; that of the *Fleur de Lys*, by Sancho IV. king of Navarre, and the order of the Holy Saviour, by Alphonso VII. king of Arragon: these short lived orders are scarcely worth remembrance. But the order of the *Flambeau* is more deserving of notice: it was instituted in 1150, by Ramon Berenger, last count of Barcelona, in favour of the women of Tortosa, as a recompence of the valour they shewed in 1149, in defence