

greater perseverance and success to useful establishments. It encourages the cultivation of the mulberry-tree, and improvements in the preparation of silk; and adjudges prizes to the inventors of new machines which simplify the processes of the art.

The commerce of Valencia has sustained considerable injury from the two successive wars between Spain and England. Its port has almost entirely ceased to be frequented, and the productions of this beautiful country have experienced a considerable diminution both in their price and in their sale. The price of a pound of silk, for instance, has fallen from five to three piastres, which proves the truth of what we have already observed, that, notwithstanding the prohibition, a great quantity of silk is, in time of peace, exported from Valencia.

C H A P. XIII.

Environs of Valencia. Benimamet. Burjasot, Carthusian Convents. Murviedro, the ancient Saguntum. Coast of the Kingdom of Valencia. Modern Establishment of San Carlos. Passage of the Ebro.

IN the fine season, which in the kingdom of Valencia lasts almost the whole year, the environs of its capital are truly delightful. Numberless handsome rural habitations attract the notice of travellers. I would recommend to them in particular to visit the village of Benimamet, half a league from Valencia, and among its country-houses, that which was occupied about twenty years ago by Don Pedro Mayoral, a canon of the cathedral. It stands upon an eminence, in the center of a garden where orange and lemon trees diffuse their fragrant perfumes through the purest atmosphere. The coolness of the alleys, the variety of prospects, the fertility which appears on every side, render it an enchanting retreat. Here, and in a hundred other places in the kingdom of Valencia, we are convinced of the truth of the

observation of a native of Sweden,* with whom I was acquainted at Paris, in the quality of am-

* I allude to the Count de Creutz, who arrived in Spain as minister from Sweden in 1764, and resided several years in that country. He was the writer of the letter dated Madrid, February 4th, 1765, and inserted in the last volume of the posthumous works of Marmontel. The Count de Creutz there describes Spain in a spirit of invective rather than in that of a judicious observer. His rude sketch even exhibits various features which are at least highly caricatured, if not utterly false. In proof of this assertion, I shall quote the following passage: "The inhabitants of this dreary region, plunged in darkness and the most disgraceful ignorance, are proud of their blindness. Freedom of thought and action appears to them an object of contempt. Their genius, parched up like their plains, produces nothing but shapeless embryos, and rises only by leaps and bounds. The common people, whose subsistence is consumed by the monks, crushed by the immense weight of superstition and of arbitrary power, stagnate in idleness and indigence, and have not even the courage to complain." Had a Frenchman expressed such an opinion respecting Spain, even in 1765, would he ever have been forgiven for it to the south of the Pyrenees?

Further on the Count de Creutz shews much less severity when speaking of the inquisition, which, just at the period when he wrote, was exposed to the most vehement attacks of philosophy. "This tribunal," says he, "which struck terror into kings themselves, is now a mere phantom, incapable of frightening even a child."

And it is a philosopher, a protestant who thus expresses himself concerning the inquisition! The truth however is, that this philosopher, this protestant, was guilty of a little exaggeration in 1765. The holy office was assuredly less formidable then than under Philip IV.: though its thunder-

bassador from his court, when he said: "In that highly-favoured region we forget every thing, even our native country, business and all. A person is no longer a husband, a father, or a friend; he is a being cut off from the rest of his fellow-creatures, feasting on the beauties of nature, and drinking deeply of the happiness of existence." In the garden which reminds me of this exaggeration, and which would justify it, if any thing could, I received, on my first visit to Valencia, such a welcome from the excellent Canon Mayoral, as I shall never forget. His soul and his countenance seemed to partake of the serenity which reigned around him. He was profuse in his attentions to me, as nature had been liberal to him of her blessings. He is no more. *Sit illi terra levis.*

A quarter of a league from Benimamet is Burjasot, another village, in a more elevated situation. Besides the tomb of Mademoiselle l'Advenant, a celebrated actress, the le Couvreur of Spain; but who, more fortunate than the latter, obtained without difficulty an asylum at the foot

bolts were launched at very few, it still continued to frighten children, and even a good many adults.

Ten or twelve years later, at the time of the confinement of M. Olavidé, the Count de Creutz would doubtless have altered his sentiments, but then he would have run into the opposite extreme. The Count was one of the best poets of his country; and poets, even when they write in prose, seldom pique themselves on a strict adherence to truth.

of the altar, travellers are shewn, as one of the curiosities of the country, the *Sichas* or *Silhos*, which are large excavations, from twenty-five to thirty-five feet deep, in the form of prodigious jars, lined internally with free-stone. They were constructed by the Moors, for the purpose of storing their grain in them. The modern Valencians apply them to their original destination.

Twenty other situations around Valencia are deserving of the notice of travellers. If they would wish to see a beautiful Franciscan convent, let them pay a visit to that of San Miguel de los Reyes. They may make an excursion to three Carthusian monasteries in the environs of Valencia, all of which are in charming situations. One of these, called *Porta Celi*, is worthy of particular mention; every thing there announces abundance; every thing tends to produce serenity of soul. Had we even vowed enmity to the monastic life, we could not help feeling a certain degree of interest for these silent recluses, who cannot be accused of neglecting the gifts which nature has poured forth around their habitation. Austere only in what regards themselves, their peaceful and laborious lives cannot justly be looked upon as useless to the community at large. I went into some of their cells, which are remarkable for cleanliness and elegant simplicity. I likewise paid a visit to their burial-ground,

the modest inclosure of which is formed by palm trees that overshadow their tombs. Rose-bushes were planted around them, as if to prevent their remains from infecting the air which is respired in this sacred spot. I regretted that men have not every where endeavoured, in the same way, to exhibit death under a less hideous form, and to banish from the grave those images which render it so frightful. Why, thought I, should we be at such pains to strew with funereal objects, and to surround with horrors, a path which we are all doomed to tread? Why not rather smooth this passage for each other, that we may descend to the tomb, if not with joy, at least with serenity? Far then from the bed of death, far from the graves of the departed, be every thing that is calculated to excite gloomy apprehensions in the minds of the survivors! Let us enjoy without excess, and consequently without remorse, the blessings which the earth affords; and when the organized dust, which for a few moments is animated by the breath of life, shall be required of us by that common mother of mankind, let it serve to fertilize her bosom, and, if possible, to embellish her surface!

But let us leave Valencia, and the beautiful scenery around it, and continue our journey to Barcelona.

After passing through Valencia, the first re-

markable place which the traveller comes to is the ancient Saguntum, now called Murviedro. The castles which command the town may be seen at the distance of two leagues. You would take them at first for the remains of the ramparts which the intrepid Saguntines defended with such obstinacy against the Carthaginian hero; but you afterwards learn that they were erected by the Moors. On the heights upon which these castles are situated, they built seven fortresses, communicating with each other by subterraneous passages, some of which are yet almost entire. It appears that Saguntum reached no higher than half-way up these hills, and stood chiefly in the plain towards the sea, extending considerably beyond the present site of Murviedro; since Livy informs us that it was only a thousand paces from it, and Murviedro is a long league from the Mediterranean. In confirmation of this opinion, it is remarked, that no relics of the Carthaginians and Romans have been found nearer to the Moorish fortresses than the foot of the hill upon which they stand.

Stones with Phœnician or Latin inscriptions are still found scattered through Murviedro. The latter are the most numerous. Some of them are introduced into walls, and five in excellent preservation may be seen in those of a church. A few are to be met with on the side of the hill, and even still higher, but they were probably carried

thither by the Moors, together with other stones for the purpose of building. Thus in one of the walls of their ancient fortresses we find an antique statue of white marble without a head, and some stones with inscriptions, but in an inverted position.

The monuments, whose ruins are still to be seen at Murviedro, were founded at the period when the Romans, after the valiant defence of the Saguntines and the destruction of their city, rebuilt the place, and made it one of their *municipia*, one of the most flourishing towns they possessed out of Italy. Among other edifices, it contained a temple of Bacchus, some relics of which are to be seen to the left, near the entrance of Murviedro. Its Mosaic pavement, which negligence had nearly suffered to be lost, has been taken up and deposited in the archiepiscopal library.

You may still discover the foundations of the ancient circus of Saguntum, upon which now stand the walls that serve to inclose a long succession of orchards. This circus, as it is easy to perceive, extended to a small river, the bed of which only remains, and which was the chord of the segment formed by the circus. When the Saguntines exhibited the mock sea-fights, called *Naumachia*; this bed was undoubtedly filled by the tributes of the neighbouring canals, which still exist.

But of all that remains of ancient Saguntum, nothing is in such good preservation as its theatre. You perceive very distinctly the different rows of seats occupied by the citizens according to their rank. At the bottom in the place allotted in our theatres to the orchestra, were the seats of the magistrates; next, those for the equestrian order; and then those for the body of the people. You may still see the two doorways, by which the magistrates entered; two others exclusively reserved for the knights; and almost at the top of this amphitheatre, which continues without interruption, from the bottom upwards; you observe the two passages by which the multitude withdrew, and which the ancients on that account denominated *vomitoria*. Lastly you find still entire the highest seats which were appropriated to the lictors and courtezans. The semicircular crest of the whole edifice is also perfectly entire. You may even perceive, on the outside, the projecting stones, in which were inserted the bars that served to spread the horizontal covering of cloth, which sheltered the spectators from the sun and rain; for the ancients, in their public exhibitions, foresaw and provided for every contingency. Every person had a seat, and was screened from the weather. All possible precautions were taken to prevent disorder. A place, which may still be seen, was set apart for the judges. If any spectator drew upon him-

self their animadversion, they directed the lictors to seize and conduct him to a particular chamber, to which they had access by a private staircase. Here they interrogated him, and if they found him culpable, he was confined till the conclusion of the exhibition in a prison under the chamber in which he was examined.

Dean Marti, who has given a minute description of the ancient theatre of Saguntum, computes the number of spectators which it was capable of containing, at nine thousand. Many persons will find it difficult to conceive how the actors were able to make themselves heard in the open air by so numerous an audience. I however ascertained in 1783, that this was possible, by going to the top of the amphitheatre, while certain sentences were repeated by a lad stationed on the spot formerly occupied by the stage.

Of this place no vestiges then remained. Beyond the amphitheatre, in which some of the stages of seats towards the centre are considerably decayed, scarcely any traces of the part occupied by the actors was to be found. It exhibited nothing but a few trees and ruins. The front of the ancient stage had been converted into an alley of mulberry-trees, where rope-makers were carrying on their walking business. No care whatever was taken to preserve this valuable monument of antiquity. A keeper, it is true, had a habitation there, which he enlarged

or changed as he thought fit. Some families of poor mechanics had built within it wretched huts, for which the Romans, almost twenty centuries before, had constructed walls and a roof. Never was Time better assisted, nay even anticipated, in his ravages.

At length, in 1787, a beginning was made to retrieve them. The corregidor of Murviedro restoring animation, if I may so express myself, to this skeleton of a Roman theatre, caused the principal injuries it had sustained to be repaired, and restored it for a few hours to its ancient use by the representation of a Spanish comedy within its walls.

Don Louis de Urbina, one of the last captains-general of the kingdom of Valencia, had in 1796 carried these repairs still further. Under his auspices, workmen were employed to render the theatre of Saguntum fit for the purpose for which it was originally designed. Doñ Francisco Bamahonda, a poet of Valencia, had composed a tragedy, the subject of which was worthy of the country and of the theatre: it was the siege of Saguntum, that noble spirit of independence which covered with ashes, blood, and glory, this spot so dear to honour and to liberty. But this praiseworthy plan has been relinquished; at least we are assured that all thoughts of restoring the theatre of Saguntum are given up.

and that it is abandoned as before to the observations of antiquaries.*

From the theatre, you climb to the ancient fortresses of the Moors, which crown the hill, and on the platform on the summit is an humble hermitage, the inhabitant of which enjoys one of the finest prospects in Spain. It commands the fertile plains between Murviedro and Valencia. He beholds the steeples of that capital rising from amidst the orchards by which it is surrounded. Before him he has the Mediterranean, the whole coast of which from Murviedro to the sea-side is covered with vines, olive and mulberry trees. To the left a chain of hills bounds the horizon, and gradually sinks to the Mediterranean, leaving no other interval between them than that occupied by the road to Barcelona.

The wine produced in the environs of Murviedro is strong and of a good flavour; but most of it is converted into brandy, which is conveyed in barrels to the small port, which is about a league from the town; there it is shipped for the north, for some other parts of Europe, especially France, and for Spanish America, which, since the establishment of a free trade, affords a ready market for the brandies of the coast of Valencia.

* It was Townsend, an English traveller, who chiefly contributed to excite the transient attention that was bestowed on his monument of antiquity.

After leaving Murviedro, the road, which was excellent, led through prodigious plains, shaded with olive and carob trees, fertile vineyards, and scenes of the most enchanting fertility, to Castellon de la Plana, a village seven leagues from Valencia.

At the distance of one long league from Murviedro, we halted at Almenara, a town agreeably situated on an eminence. Here I found five French clergymen expelled from Roussillon, to whom the Spanish government had given an asylum in a convent of Dominicans. It was natural for these expatriated ecclesiastics to seek refuge in preference in a neighbouring country, and that country the catholic kingdom, by way of eminence. Accordingly, during a journey of eighteen days, I came to very few places but what contained some of them. They at first fixed their abode in the capitals and the chief cities of the peninsula, hoping to find in them more numerous means of subsistence than elsewhere. Here they excited the twofold interest inspired by pity and persecuted religion. The staunch catholics carried their blind veneration for these victims of orthodoxy to such a length as to prefer them to their own priests; so that want obliged the latter to retail at a lower price the spiritual blessings entrusted to their care. The cause of man, however, soon triumphed over that of heaven. The Spaniards took umbrage at

the success of these intruders ; and, either in consequence of their remonstrances, or because the government deemed it dangerous to suffer delicate questions relative to the rights of sovereigns and subjects to be discussed by the mass of the people, it resolved to disperse the French ecclesiastics. Orders were issued that they should not in future remain either in the metropolis, in the royal residences, or in the capitals of the provinces. The court assigned them abodes at the convents in the country, and fixed the number of emigrants that each of them was allowed to admit.

But to return to Almenara. From this handsome town to Castellon de la Plana, the country is not quite so pleasant, though it is still populous, and enlivened by industry. We went through Nulis and Villa-Real, two considerable towns, and on quitting the latter we passed, by means of a very fine new bridge, over a broad river that was almost dry : a circumstance which frequently occurs in Spain, especially in summer.

At Castellon you come to the end of the good roads. Nothing can be more abrupt than the transition. After you have descended an extremely rugged declivity, you approach the sea, which you keep in view for a league. You then pass through a very steep defile, and are dreadfully jolted till you arrive at the foot of the

eminence, close to the shore of the Mediterranean, on which is situated the castle of Oropesa. You then proceed more smoothly for a league and a half to the venta de la Sinieta. From Castellon the fertility of the soil perceptibly decreases. The country all around about the defile of Oropesa, is utterly destitute of inhabitants, and exhibits a most dreary spectacle. Beyond this place it displays some marks of cultivation; but the rugged roads continue without intermission to Alcala de Sibert, a kind of town situated on the side of a hill in a country neither agreeable nor fertile.

You now again approach the Mediterranean, and come to the last sea-port towns of Valencia.

The first that you reach, by a rough road which winds among the mountains, is Benicarlo, chiefly inhabited by fishermen. Here begin the flat roofs and the dialect of Catalonia, a corrupt kind of Spanish, which bears a considerable resemblance to the *patois* of Roussillon, and without some knowledge of which a traveller would find it almost impossible to make himself understood in Catalonia.

A long league from Benicarlo is another port of greater consequence, that of Viñaroz, a large handsome town, containing eleven or twelve hundred houses. The environs of Benicarlo and Viñaroz are covered with vineyards, the pro-

duce of which is partly converted into brandy for exportation.

The wines of Benicarlo are exported to foreign countries, and especially to Bourdeaux, where they are mixed with the French wines, for the purpose of adapting the latter to the taste of the consumers in England and Ireland. It has been calculated that of late years no less than eleven thousand hogsheads of these wines of Benicarlo are sent to Bourdeaux; and it would be impolitic to throw any impediments in the way of this trade, since it is not less profitable to France than to Spain.

Viñaroz is not, strictly speaking, a sea-port; nevertheless, I found there about fifty vessels, which, instead of being moored along the shore, were drawn out of the water upon the beach. Many of these vessels are employed in the coasting trade to Cadiz, and even to Marseilles, and some of them venture as far as the Havannah.

A league beyond Viñaroz the good road again began in 1793, at a small bridge recently constructed on the spot which forms the boundary between Catalonia and the kingdom of Valencia; and it continues for three leagues to San Carlos, a modern settlement which deserves some notice.

San Carlos is situated close to the sea. It is the chief place of the establishment of the Alfaqes, the appellation given to a kind of port formed by the mouth of the Ebro. The Alfa-

ques are, properly speaking, a long narrow neck of land of a semicircular form, which is nothing but a prolongation of the right bank of the river. San Carlos stands opposite to the point of this neck of land, and it is the landing-place for this part of the coast. It consists of two handsome edifices which border the high road. A large oblong space separates them from another row of uniform houses, one of which is one of the best inns in Spain. It is very clean, well furnished, and affords good accommodation in respect to provisions; but the traveller is inclined to ask why this inn, like so many others in Spain, is kept by natives of Milan? The Mediterranean washes the foot of its walls. At the time of my visit in 1793, the works for the new port were still in hand. The object of this establishment, begun in 1780, was to people a peninsula, before deserted and abandoned; and to render the mouth of the Ebro useful to commerce and navigation. In this narrow peninsula there were more than two thousand acres of land to be distributed; but few colonists had settled there, because great part of these lands belonged to the inhabitants of Amposta and the neighbouring villages, who cultivated them without forsaking their homes. It was the intention of the government to form in this place a spacious port, and to facilitate the passage of the Ebro, which is much impeded below Amposta. To this end a canal was begun

at the latter place, and was designed to be carried on in a direct line to San Carlos. This work was so far advanced in 1793 that all the building materials necessary for the new establishment were conveyed in barges upon it. By making this canal deeper it is intended to render it fit for the navigation from Amposta to San Carlos, so as to make the Ebro navigable to its mouth. The want of money produced some relaxation in the prosecution of this plan. In 1793 a battery was begun to be erected in front of San Carlos. All these works were under the direction of a native of Parma, named Nodin, a skilful engineer, to whom all their success is owing. But once more let us repeat the question, why do the Spaniards leave to the Italians the task of embellishing, of enlivening, and of fortifying their coasts?

For the rest no great progress had been made with this establishment in the spring of 1793, and will probably never answer the expectations of the court.* The largest ships may, however, come to anchor within a musket-shot of San Carlos; and here, during my stay, were disembarked most of the regiments proceeding from different parts of the coast of the Mediterranean to Catalonia. But the air of San Carlos is unhealthy; and it is not at the mere intimation of

* This prediction is accomplished; since 1793, large sums have been expended on this settlement of San Carlos, but it is still in a very unfinished state.

any government, that commerce, the most capricious of despots, changes the places which it has been accustomed to frequent.

On leaving San Carlos we traversed a wild and uncultivated country. At first we had the sea and the peninsula of the Alfaques on our right; we then turned off from them and approached the Ebro, which we reached at Amposta, a village where we crossed that river in a ferry-boat, and where the canal which runs to San Carlos commences.

CHAP. XIV.

Entrance into Catalonia. Passage of the defile of Balaquet. Cambrils. Tortosa. Reus. Tarragon. Roman Antiquities. Montserrat.

HAVING crossed the Ebro, the traveller passes through an immense tract of country destitute of inhabitants, and covered almost entirely with heath. This whole district is intersected by ravines, which render the travelling through it in a carriage extremely troublesome. In this manner we proceeded five dismal leagues before we alighted at the wretched village of Perellos, at the bottom of a valley surrounded with a double rampart of mountains. We there hired two asses, which joined us at the place where we put up for the night. This precaution we were induced to take by the terrible description that had been given us of the road which we should have to travel the following day.

One of the most striking phenomena that a traveller meets with in Europe, is to find, in a country so well known as Spain, between two

cities so considerable as Valencia and Barcelona, so near to the sea-coast, and to the mouth of a large river, on a road so much frequented by people of every description, and even of every nation; to find, I say, extensive districts so totally destitute of resources, and of all the conveniences and comforts which in every other country are the inseparable companions of civilization and luxury. This is a reflection which the most superficial observer cannot help making, especially from the banks of the Ebro to the vicinity of Barcelona. I question whether a person in the center of Siberia, or in the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Bothnia, would think himself more completely cut off from the rest of the world.

Attempts have, it is true, been made of late years, to render the road by which we are conducting our readers more passable. In 1802, the king and queen having paid a visit to Barcelona, for the purpose of meeting the princes and princesses of Naples and Etruria, in order to contract a double marriage, orders were given to repair the road from Valencia to Barcelona; but the hurry with which the work was executed, was incompatible with the necessary solidity. This road is nevertheless one of the best in Spain; nay, in summer, it may even be pronounced excellent, from Valencia to the frontiers of France; but a week of rainy weather is sufficient to render it not only difficult but dangerous, especially

from Tarragon to Barcelona. The Spaniards are still almost total strangers to the art of paving; neither are they very expert in the construction of roads, which require covering to a certain depth according to the nature of the ground and of the materials that are employed for the purpose. Though there are few places where these may not be found of excellent quality, as very hard flints, coarse gravel, and granite, all they do is to spread over the middle of the road stones of all sizes, among which the strongest carriages run the risk of being broken to pieces; or if their rugged surface is covered with a little sand, the winds and rain soon blow and wash it away. Such, notwithstanding the recent repairs, is the road from Valencia to Barcelona; but let us continue to shew what it was in 1793, and what it remained till 1802.

From Perellos it is but two short leagues to the venta del Platera, a lonely inn embosomed in woods at the foot of the mountains. We there met with some merchants who gave us no great encouragement in respect to the journey of next day, especially when they saw our numerous company, of which two young children formed not the least troublesome portion.

We set out before six o'clock to encounter the hardships of the day, myself on foot, my wife on one of the animals which we had hired at Perellos, and our two children, one on either side of

the other, in panniers, where we wrapped them up as well as we could against the severity of the north-east wind. We thus proceeded at first for two leagues and a half through a dreary country, and then climbed in a spiral direction, the steep mountain of Ballaguet, the base of which is washed by the sea. On reaching its summit, we found ourselves at the foot of a fort, which is garrisoned by a detachment of Walloon guards.

Four leagues further, after we had passed through a village on the sea-shore, with a tower and the remains of an ancient castle, and several very rugged defiles, we arrived at Cambrils, a town containing three or four hundred houses, near an incommodious beach, where a few vessels take in cargoes of the wines of the country. Its situation is unhealthy, and renders tertian fevers very frequent on this coast. This disease had shortly before swept away all the inhabitants of a convent of Augustines, whose solitary walls were pointed out to us.

At Cambrils was the home of an unfortunate family of pilgrims, in whose company we ascended the mountain of Ballaguet. They had been in quest of health to a miraculous image at Viñaroz, and returned more wretched than they went. A mother, four or five young girls, barefoot, and covered with rags, and two small children, benumbed with cold, and exhausted by want, with difficulty pursued their homeward course, imploring by the way the compassion of travellers, some-

times more easily moved than that of heaven. With what melancholy reflections did these victims of fortune and of superstition inspire us ! These forlorn objects returned on foot, without relief, from a fatiguing and fruitless journey, and yet appeared resigned ; while I presumed to complain of the rugged ways which jolted my carriage, closely shut up from the cold, well hung, and stored with what was necessary, useful, and even agreeable. I could not forbear reproaching myself both for these conveniencies and for my murmurs ; nay, I had nearly done the same in respect to the modest way in which my children and their mother travelled. I pacified my remorse by a donation which was at first received with gratitude and joy ; but the principal pilgrim soon cooled my sympathy, by her importunities, and her want of feeling for the poor little creatures whom she carried or dragged along with her, and above all by offering to tell me my fortune. I had taken her for a religious woman, and an affectionate mother, and my heart was chilled to find that she was nothing but an artful gipsy. How often would the warm glow of compassion give place to harsher sentiments, if it were always aware of the character of its objects. But it is perhaps an ordination of heaven in favour of the unfortunate, that it frequently acts with the unreflecting promptitude of instinct.

Cambrils has a bad port, which is frequented only by a few vessels, which there take in freights for Cadiz, Genoa, and other places. When they are overtaken here by tempestuous weather, they run for shelter into the little harbour of Salo, only half a league distant.

From Cambrils we proceeded four leagues, by a very narrow and rugged road, and after passing through the pretty town of Villaseca, we arrived at Serafina, where we put up for the night.

We quitted the Ebro, on the left bank of which river we left Tortosa, situated on the side of a mountain, four leagues from the sea. It is an episcopal city, containing sixteen thousand souls. The circumjacent country is highly cultivated, and from its position on the Ebro, which is deep enough to be navigated by large vessels, it carries on a considerable trade in corn. At the distance of less than a league from this place are the quarries of marble, known by the name of Tortosa jasper. Nothing can be more dreary and desert than the fifteen leagues which separate this city from the town of Cambrils, and the road from Tortosa to Tarragon remained till 1782, one of the worst in the universe.

Beyond Cambrils the plain becomes wider, and is enlivened with numerous plantations of olives, carob-trees, and vines.

A league beyond Serafina, you come in sight

of the steeples of Tarragon, an ancient city, in a picturesque situation, on a steep and craggy eminence. Founded by the Scipios, it was long the seat of the Roman government in Spain. The sea washes its walls, and forms a small port, which has lost much of its trade since that of Reus began to be frequented.

Reus is a small modern town, which industry has in a short space of time raised to a high degree of prosperity. It is an inland place about four leagues to the north-west of Tarragon, from which it is separated by one of the most fertile and best cultivated plains in Spain. The trade carried on by the inhabitants of Reus, is considerable, and principally consists of commissions from houses at Barcelona for goods to send back in return for the commodities which they receive from the north. Besides this, some Swedish, Danish, and American captains go themselves to Reus to purchase wine and brandy for exportation. The inhabitants of this town convey to the little port of Salo, and there ship the productions of their industry, and a plan has lately been proposed for digging a small canal to facilitate the communication between those two places. Reus is one of those wonderful creations, which a traveller cannot help making a circuit of a few leagues to see and to admire. He will there find, under the direction of an English firm, one of the finest distilleries in Europe, a

very handsome theatre, some beautiful barracks, and a general appearance of activity and abundance. Great quantities of leather are also made here, as well as at the town of Bails or Valls, which is only three leagues to the north-east of Reus.

The inhabitants of the ancient Tarragon are not idle spectators of the success of these youthful rivals. In the hope of restoring to their port its primitive prosperity, they have undertaken to improve it at their own expence, by moles which will render it more safe and commodious. The court has encouraged them to accomplish this design by certain concessions, and an exemption from various duties. The wars in which Spain has been almost uninterruptedly engaged for thirteen years, have not deterred them from the prosecution of this patriotic work. It has not yet been crowned with all the success that might have been expected from it; but the port of Tarragon nevertheless displays a renewed activity, and its trade cannot fail to become still more brisk. In the course of the year 1805 it was visited by one thousand seven hundred and fourteen vessels of all sizes, 208 with square, and 1506 with lateen sails. Out of this number 1515 were Spanish. By this channel Catalonia received upwards of 130,000 *fanegas** of grain,

* It will be recollected that the *fanega* is a corn-measure, the contents of which weigh between 90 and 100 pounds.

pulse and other provisions. At this port the Danes, Swedes, and Americans ship part of the wines produced by the adjacent country, and particularly of the brandy distilled there. The wines for which there is the greatest request abroad, are those grown in the extensive tract denominated *Campo de Tarragona*, and in the vineyards of Reus; and it is in these districts that the greatest quantity of brandy is made. The inhabitants of Tarragon are likewise about to open another channel of prosperity, the benefit of which will be felt throughout Arragon and part of Catalonia. They have recently obtained permission to make a road from their city to Lerida, which will shorten by two days journey their communication with the interior of Arragon.

Just before you enter Tarragon, you are obliged to ford the Francoli, which, very near this spot discharges itself into the sea. Tarragon was formerly a fortified place. Part of its ancient walls are still standing. When I passed through it in 1793, a fort with thick embrasures had just been erected, for the purpose of defending at least the approaches from the sea. The traveller may pursue his way to Barcelona, without entering Tarragon. Wishing to have a near view of that celebrated city, I climbed up to it by a rugged path. I was struck with the beauty of its situation, but the interior of the place seemed dull and

desert. The avenues on every side are encumbered with rocks and the approach is extremely difficult for carriages. The cathedral is a handsome edifice, but gloomy, and supported by columns of prodigious size.

Tarragon abounds in relics of Roman monuments. Such are the remains of a circus, and of an amphitheatre, the ruins of a palace of the emperor Augustus, a great number of Roman inscriptions, and in particular the vestiges of an aqueduct, between six and seven leagues in length, which it was proposed to repair in 1782.

On quitting the city by the gate which leads to Barcelona, you return by an abrupt descent into the high road. The environs of Tarragon are nevertheless agreeable and populous. Handsome houses extend in almost uninterrupted succession from the city to the hamlet of La Figaretta, which is a short league distant from it.

Two long leagues further, you pass under a beautiful triumphal arch, which though doubtless formerly designed to commemorate some exploit, in a frequented spot, stands at present quite detached in the midst of a lonely country. It is in good preservation, except the capitals, which seem to have been of the Corinthian order, and which some attempts have been made to restore. The Spanish antiquaries have no hesitation in ascribing it to the time of Trajan. A league to the right of the road is another monument much

more decayed, and known by the appellation of the tower of the Scipios, because tradition asserts that two Romans of that name were there interred. Though all its figures are defaced by time, the spectator may still distinguish two slaves in the attitude of grief.

A little beyond the triumphal arch, you come to the handsome village of Altafolla, in a charming situation and to another called Torre del Embarr, seated on an eminence by the sea-side. The latter has a kind of road which is visited by a few vessels.

All this country through which we travelled in the beginning of March, which, in Catalonia, is the most agreeable season of the year, was particularly pleasant on account of the mildness of the air, the variety of cultivation, and the beauty of many situations. We had nothing to find fault with but the roughness of the roads. This cause of complaint has been, in a great measure, removed by the works undertaken in 1802.

A few leagues beyond Torre del Embarr, is the large village of Vendrell, where Aubert, the French consul at Barcelona had some possessions. With pleasure I observed in its neighbourhood, a handsome newly built mansion, that really deserved the name of a country-house, agreeably situated on the side of a hill. I was informed that it had been recently erected, and was constantly inhabited by M. Pera de Soulès, who, unlike most