

to Tetuan or to Tangiers. The boat-loads of fresh oranges brought over almost every morning from the coast of Barbary, and tumbled out into the streets, increase the eagerness we have long felt for that expedition: but the wind is very cruel, and I begin to have my fears about the possibility of it. The Barbary oranges are exquisite, but, as the summer advances, are apt to grow too luscious, though they preserve their juiciness.

Gibraltar, March 11.

We are wind-bound, but remain in hourly expectation of sailing to Africa. Our *settee*, or bark, and baggage, are ready, and we ourselves on the watch for an easterly breeze. Yesterday the wind came about to the east, and in a trice the bay was covered with Dutch men of war, and all sorts of merchantmen, crowding sail to get through the Gut before the wind should change: above fifty sail came from the Mediterranean, round Europa Point, but in less than an hour the wind shifted to its old corner again, and every one of them was driven back into the bay, or behind the rock, where they may beat about for weeks against wind and current. Never was there known so long a continuance of westerly winds at this time of the year.

Gibraltar,

Gibraltar, March 13.

Last night all the Jews were in masquerade, dancing and merry-making; a fine contrast with the gloominess of Lent, a few miles to the north of us. This place may literally be styled the Paradise of that dispersed nation; for here they seem to be at home, carry on a great retail trade, and supply the garrison with many common articles of consumption. They are Barbary Jews, a comely race of men, and much better featured than their Portuguese or German brethren. Their dress differs from that of the common Moors in nothing but the cap, which the latter wear red, the Jews black, though here they venture frequently to put on red ones.

All religions seem welcome to this town, and meet without animosity, as on some neutral ground. The Spanish church is served by a jolly priest, who, besides very ample emoluments and casualties, receives from the English government a stipend of fifty pounds: with this income he gives balls and entertainments to his parishioners, and lives in a very jovial manner. He seems perfectly well pleased with his Protestant neighbours, and quite reconciled to seeing the Cordelier convent converted into the residence of an English governor.

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The Barbary beef, furnished on contract by the Moors, is excellent, and the fish taken in the bay is the best I have tasted since I left Bourdeaux.

The mountain abounds with partridges, which breed in peace, and pass their lives undisturbed, as no body is allowed to shoot within the garrison. The young officers take the diversion of fox-hunting on the Spanish hills, where there is abundance of foxes, but little running: the great number of holes among the rocks prevents the game from being kept going, after the first burst.

That beautiful bird, the whoopoop, or March cock, is common on the mountain; and high up are herds of large monies, but I never was lucky enough to get a sight of them.

On the east side, in the most broken part of the precipices, is a *stratum* of bones of all sizes, belonging to various animals and fowls, enshaded in an incrustation of a reddish calcarious rock.

L E T T E R XXX.

Seville, April 8, 1776.

ALAS! all our schemes upon Africa came to nothing: the inflexible west wind continued blowing with uninterrupted fury, till the time fixed for our stay at Gibraltar was elapsed. At first we intended to cross over to Tetuan, and there hire horses or mules to carry us over land to Tangiers, which would have afforded us an opportunity of seeing a good deal of the country: but this project was dropped, in consequence of an order issued out by the emperor of Morocco, prohibiting all Christians from approaching, or even looking upon the holy city of Tetuan, where some English had lately committed an outrage upon the Moorish women. Being disappointed in our first plan, we pitched upon that of running over to Tangiers, and from thence making an excursion into the inland parts. Both these hopes were defeated by the contrary winds, and we were under the necessity of giving up so favourite a point, which, you may believe, was a most sensible mortification to us both.

We returned to Cadiz by our former route, some trifling deviations excepted; one of which was, to visit
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the almost imperceptible remains of the city of Carteia, where Cneius, son of Pompey the Great, took refuge after the battle of Munda. These ruins, of which scarce any thing but part of a wall is to be seen, stand on a rising ground at the mouth of a little river, which falls into the north-west corner of the bay. Writers have blundered strangely about the situation of this town, some placing it at Algeçiras, or Old Gibraltar, and others so far off as Tariff. The rubbish, and the quantity of its own coins found here, which are common enough among the Jews of Gibraltar, leave no room to doubt of the truth of the tradition which fixes it upon this spot. In passing the woods beyond *Los Varios*, we raised a prodigious eagle of the golden kind: our servants, who went before, took it for a boy muffled up in a yellowish cloak, and were so surprized when it took wing, that we could not prevail upon the man who carried the blunderbuss to fire at it, till it was got out of reach. Its colour was a dusky yellow shaded with green, its head very smooth and dark; about the belly it was of a muddy brown.

At nightfall we came to a farm-house belonging to the duke of Medina Sidonia, where the servants, in the absence of the master farmer, refused to give us leave to pass the night. One of our men being dispatched into the field, brought the farmer with him, very much out

of humour at his house being made an inn of, and fully determined to pack us off about our business, as he suspected us to be little better than rogues and smugglers; indeed the appearance of our messenger was not unfavourable to that opinion. S. G* exhibited a set of stern features, with a thick black beard; an old laced hat fiercely cocked hanging over his eyes; a military jacket, across which was flung a scimitar and a pair of pistols; dirty leather spatterdashes, a hoarse voice, strange language, and foreign accent. All this together could hardly, in such a country, convey the idea of any thing but a captain of banditti. When the farmer entered his court-yard, and saw such a formidable set of armed men in possession of his castle, he thought it advisable to alter his tone, and be very civil. We accepted his offer of a new barn or granary, where we pitched our tents, supped, and slept very comfortably, having previously stuffed with straw the holes which had been left in the wall for the free ingress and egress of the pigeons.

These farms are very extensive, and entirely unconnected with their neighbours. Each farm has its own baker, who twice a week distributes a certain quota of bread to each house-servant, herdsman, plough-boy, and shepherd. The plain about the house is a deep rich soil, the pasturage luxuriant, but in many places over-run
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with weeds and rank grass; a muddy rivulet winds through the flats, and is often a very troublesome pass for travellers.

We met with nothing remarkable on the road to Vegel; storks, whoopoops, and a fox, were the only living creatures we saw. The sun grew so extremely powerful, that we were glad to pass the noon-tide hours under a large tree before the door of one of the *siete molinos*, by the side of a brook. The miller and his neighbours were very civil, and furnished us with a table, chairs, glasses, and every thing necessary for our repast, one of the most delicious I ever made. The old and young formed a circle round us, while we devoured our cold ham and turkey. As I perceived one of the young fellows smile and look very arch, I told him I hoped he was not scandalized at our eating meat in Lent, as we were allowed that liberty, as travellers. "No, no," replied he, "not I indeed; for I know you belong to a happy set of people, with whom *to-day* is always the *holiday*, "and to-morrow the *vigil* and *fast*." His joke made us laugh, and set all his companions in a roar: in the height of our mirth and good-humour, a little old woman ventured to ask a taste of a bumper of Malaga, which being the bottom of a bottle I had given my man to drink, he endeavoured to put her off, with telling her that it was the wine of the Moors, consequently ungodly,

ungodly, and such as a zealous Spaniard would think himself poisoned were he to put it to his lips; however the old dame begged she might taste it out of curiosity, and having once got the glass into her hands, swallowed every drop of the wine at one gulp, to the great astonishment of poor S. G***; to comfort him, she assured him she should have a better opinion of the Moors as long as she lived, since they made and drank such excellent liquor.

In about three hours ride we got to Chiclana, and next day hired a bark to carry us to Cadiz. The rowing down the river was very pleasant, as by its continual winding we kept in sight of the pretty hill of Chiclana, till we passed through the arches of the bridge of Suaço into the bay. The channel through the shallows is very narrow and crooked. The king's dockyards at the Caraccas lie near the entrance; and farther down is the Trocadero, or magazines and docks for merchantmen. The approach to the city was beautiful; but the slowness of our motion, retarded by contrary winds and currents, made us heartily sick of our water party.

On the 3d of April we left Cadiz, and in less than an hour landed at Port Saint Mary, where we were received and entertained for three days by general count Alexander O'Reilly, with every possible demonstration
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of politeness and cordiality. This gentleman has been of late so much talked of, that I was eager to seize the opportunity of passing some time with him. To attempt to draw his character is far above my powers, or those of any three days' acquaintance. It would be unfair and presumptuous to decide upon the merits or demerits of any man on such slight grounds. He appears to be very active, intelligent, and severe, in the post of inspector-general of the Spanish infantry, an employment of great business. I believe him skilled in tactics; to have read a great deal in his more advanced time of life (for I don't imagine his education furnished him with any great stock of learning;) to have seen with a penetrating eye, and to have studied profoundly the characters and weaknesses of men. His intrepidity in facing, and steadiness in conquering, all difficulties, that may lie in his way to preferment, are sufficiently known and variously descanted upon: his memory is prodigious; his judgment of men and things quick and precise, perhaps too peremptory. He has much ready wit at command, especially when he has a mind to turn the laugh against any particular person, in which case he is accused of often carrying the joke too far; and I don't know but he may owe some of his many enemies to the ridicule he has sometimes thrown upon them. Some think him rather too fond of talking, and of making himself the subject of his

his discourse, but they must acknowledge he speaks with great eloquence in a variety of languages. His countenance and figure are rather comely; but a wound in his knee causes him to limp, an imperfection which has afforded his enemies great scope for raillery: the king's fondness for him bears him up against all their efforts to ruin him; his majesty, who thinks himself indebted to O'Reilly for his life, in the sedition of Madrid¹⁵, supports him with inflexible constancy. When the new road was making to the palace of the Pardo, a little, ugly ever-green oak was found to stand in the line marked out for the highway. This tree, by its oddity and solitary position, had attracted the notice and gained the favour of the king, who forbade the engineers to meddle with it. In spite of all the remonstrances of the minister and surveyors, the oak still remains standing in the middle of the road; the king often shews it to his courtiers, and, observing with a smile, that it has no friend but himself, calls it O'Reilly.

The only morning we had free from rain, we employed in a ride to Sanlucar, to see the mouth of the Guadalquivir, the ancient Bætis, where the fleets of Spain were wont to rendezvous, before Cadiz was made the

¹⁵ He rode into the crowd of rioters, and shot a fellow dead that had taken up a stone and was going to throw it at the king.

staple for Indian goods, and before the bar at the mouth became so considerable as to impede the navigation of large vessels.

The ground rises very beautifully west of Saint Mary's; it is a perfect garden: spring, which is now in full vigour, and every hedge and bush covered with flowers, rendered our jaunt delightful. The kermes or holme-oak is in great beauty, quite on fire with the scarlet gall-nuts of the little insect which produces the false cochineal. Near the Guadalquivir, the country is arable, with few inclosures. In times of remote antiquity Sanlucar was called *Fanum Luciferi*. It was once the port of Seville, and at the seasons for the arrival or departure of the fleets, the most stirring place in Europe: at present it is a neat, quiet town, without much business. The small ships that carry on its trade, lie half a league farther up in the Ansa, where the Indian flota used to moor. The river is wide and very rough at the bar; the opposite shore so dead a flat, that it is difficult to distinguish it from the water. I sauntered along the Playa de Sanlucar, without meeting a soul: how changed from what it was in the days of Cervantes; when it was crowded with the busy and the idle, the honest and the profligate.

On Friday evening we came to Xeres. I was much surprized to hear, from good authority, that this city

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contains no less than forty thousand inhabitants, of which a twentieth part are ecclesiastics. We went next morning to the monastery of Carthusian monks, a few miles off, remarkable for its breed of horses, and for a very fine view over the plains towards the bay and shipping of Cadiz. The day was sultry, and I could with pleasure have lolled it out in the prior's garden, under the shade of a noble lemon-tree, refreshed by the soft perfumes ascending on every side from the neighbouring orchards.

This convent, founded in 1482 by Alvaris de Val-leto, a citizen of Xeres, is grand, and well laid out: water is conveyed into every public hall and private cell. We were disappointed of the principal end of our journey, which was to see their fine stallions, but they were all out in the country at the covering-stables. The earth, in the cemeteries of Xeres, has the quality of preserving corpses incorrupted for years and ages.

Upon leaving Xeres, we found the roads much the worse for the heavy rains; and two days were spent in travelling a few miles through stiff, deep clays, where we expected to stick fast every instant, as the wheels were clogged to a great height. We saw some bustards in these plains.

This morning we arrived in Seville, which appears to great advantage from the hills, at the distance of a couple