

me not only proper and rational, but absolutely so much in the common course of things, that I have wondered how I came to put them down as extraordinary. The mistakes I have found myself guilty of in several little remarks made in the first part of my journey, have rendered me very cautious of deciding upon matters, where I could not come at a knowledge of their causes. I therefore very early learned to mistrust my senses, and applied where I expected to have my doubts resolved, and the reasons of modes and usages explained to me. Accordingly I omitted no opportunity of drawing information from the natives of all ranks; from strangers long established in Spain, and from those who having resided but a few years here, were more likely to be sensible of the singularities of the national disposition. I cannot say my endeavours have been crowned with much success. Were I to draw the picture of the Spaniards from the manifold sketches traced by their countrymen, every province in the kingdom would in its turn appear a Paradise, and a Pandæmonium, a seat of holy spirits, and a receptacle of malicious devils; the most contradictory accounts, enforced by the most positive asseverations, have been repeatedly given me of the same places. I have often found the virtue one province prides itself in, as being the specific mark of its inhabitants, not only refused
them

them by a neighbouring country, but the very opposite vice imposed upon them as their characteristic. The English, French, and other foreigners, living in Spain, are in general but indifferently qualified to decide upon these matters: as long as they retain the prejudices they brought from home against every thing that clashes with their native customs, they are but partial judges; and when once they fall into the ways of the place where commerce has fixed their lot, they become such thorough-paced Spaniards, that they can neither perceive the particularities you speak to them of, nor assign reasons for uses that are grown habitual to them.

As I am not ashamed to acknowledge my insufficiency, I frankly confess it is not in my power to give what you may think a satisfactory character of the Spaniards. Were I inclined to flatter my self-love, I might add, that I do not esteem any of those who have already written on the subject, much better qualified than myself. What I can venture to say, amounts to very little.

The Catalans appear to be the most active stirring set of men, the best calculated for business, travelling, and manufactories. The Valencians a more sullen, sedate race, better adapted to the occupations of husbandmen, less eager to change place, and of a much more timid, suspicious cast of mind than the former.

The Andalusians ³⁴ seem to me the great talkers and rodomontadoes of Spain. The Castilians have a manly frankness, and less appearance of cunning and deceit. The new Castilians are perhaps the least industrious of the whole nation; the old Castilians are laborious, and retain more of ancient simplicity of manners; both are of a firm determined spirit. I take the Aragonese to be a mixture of the Castilian and Catalan, rather inclining to the former. The Biscayners are acute and diligent, fiery, and impatient of controul; more resembling a colony of republicans, than a province of an absolute monarchy. The Galicians are a plodding pains-taking race of mortals, that roam over Spain in search of an hardly-earned subsistence.

The listless indolence equally dear to the uncivilized savage, and to the degenerate slave of despotism, is no where more indulged than in Spain; thousands of men in all parts of the realm are seen to pass their whole day, wrapped up in a cloak, standing in rows against a wall, or dozing under a tree. In total want of every excitement to action, the springs of their intellectual faculties forget to play; their views grow

³⁴ Andalusia is derived from the Arabic, and means a *dark evening western country*. It was a name generally given by the Saracens to all Spain, and agrees with that of Hesperia, which it was known by among the Greeks.

confined within the wretched sphere of mere existence, and they scarce seem to hope or foresee any thing better than their present state of vegetation; they feel little or no concern for the welfare or glory of a country, where the surface of the earth is engrossed by a few over-grown families, who seldom bestow a thought on the condition of their vassals. The *poor* Spaniard does not work, unless urged by irresistible want, because he perceives no advantage accrue from industry. As his food and raiment are purchased at a small expence, he spends no more time in labour, than is absolutely necessary for procuring the scanty provision his abstemiousness requires. I have heard a peasant refuse to run an errand, because he had that morning earned as much already as would last him the day, without putting himself to any further trouble.

Yet I am convinced that this laziness is not essentially inherent in the Spanish composition; for it is impossible without seeing them, to conceive with what eagerness they pursue any favourite scheme, with what violence their passions work upon them, and what vigour and exertion of powers they display when awakened by a bull-feast, or the more constant agitation of gaming, a vice to which they are superlatively addicted. Were it again possible, by an intelligent, spirited administration, to set before their eyes, in a clear and forcible manner,

manner, proper incitements to activity and industry, the Spaniards might yet be roused from their lethargy, and led to riches and reputation; but I confess the task is so difficult, that I look upon it rather as an Utopian idea, than as a revolution likely ever to take place.

Their soldiers are brave, and patient of hardships; wherever their officers lead them, they will follow without finching, though it be up to the mouth of a battery of cannon; but unless the example be given them by their commander, not a step will they advance.

Most of the Spaniards are hardy; and when once engaged, go through difficulties without murmuring, bear the inclemencies of the seasons with firmness, and support fatigue with amazing perseverance. They sleep every night in their cloaks on the ground; are sparing in diet, perhaps more from a sense of habitual indigence, than from any aversion to gluttony; whenever they can riot in the plenty of another man's table, they will gormandize to excess, and not content with eating their fill, will carry off whatever they can stuff into their pockets. I have more than once been a witness to the pillage of a supper, by the numerous beaux and admirers which the ladies lead after them in triumph, wherever they are invited. They are fond of spices,

and scarce eat any thing without saffron, pimento, or garlic ; they delight in wine that tastes strong of the pitched skin, and of oil that has a rank smell and taste ; indeed, the same oil feeds their lamp, swims in their pottage, and dresses their sallad : in inns the lighted lamp is frequently handed down to the table, that each man may take the quantity he chooses. Much tobacco is used by them in smoking and chewing. All these hot drying kinds of food, co-operating with the parching qualities of the atmosphere, are assigned as causes of the spare make of the common people in Spain, where the inn-keepers are almost the only well-fed, portly figures to be met with.

The Spanish is by no means naturally a serious, melancholy nation : misery and discontent have cast a gloom over them, increased, no doubt, by the long habit of distrust and terror inspired by the inquisition ; yet every village still resounds with the music of voices and guitars ; and their fairs and Sunday wakes are remarkably noisy and riotous. They talk louder, and argue with more vehemence than even the French or Italians, and gesticulate with equal, if not superior eagerness. In Catalonia, the young men are expert at ball ; and every village has its *Pelota* or ground for playing at fives ; but in the south of Spain, I never perceived that the inhabitants used any particular exercise. I am told,

told, that in the island of Majorca they still wield the sling, for which their ancestors, the Baleares, were so much renowned.

Like most people of southern climates, they are dirty in their persons, and over-run with vermin.

The very mention of horns is an insult, and the sight of them makes their blood boil. As their constitution may be said to be made up of the most combustible ingredients, and prone to love in a degree that natives of more northern latitudes can have no idea of, the custom of embracing persons of the other sex, which is used on many occasions by foreigners, sets the Spaniards all on fire. They would as soon allow a man to pass the night in bed with their wives or daughters, as suffer him to give them a kiss; and indeed, I believe the ladies themselves would look upon that favour as a certain prelude to others of greater consequence. Next to accusing a Spaniard of wearing horns, nothing can give him such offence, as to suspect him of having an issue.

I was surprized to find them so much more lukewarm in their devotion than I expected; but I will not take upon me to assert, though I have great reason to believe it, that there is in Spain as little true moral religion as in any country I ever travelled through, although none abounds more with provincial protectors,

tors, local Madonnas, and altars celebrated for particular cures and indulgences : Religion is a topic not to be touched, much less handled with any degree of curiosity, in the dominions of so tremendous a tribunal as the Inquisition. From what little I saw, I am apt to suspect, that the people here trouble themselves with very few serious thoughts on the subject ; and that, provided they can bring themselves to believe that their favourite Saint looks upon them with an eye of affection, they take it for granted, that, under his benign influence, they are freed from all apprehensions of damnation in a future state ; and indeed, from any great concern about the moral duties of this life. The burning zeal, which distinguished their ancestors above the rest of the Catholic world, appears to have lost much of its activity, and really seems nearly extinguished. It is hard to ascribe bounds to the changes a crafty, steady, and popular monarch might make in ecclesiastical matters. The unconcern betrayed by the whole nation at the fall of the Jesuits, is a strong proof of their present indifference. Those fathers, the most powerful body politic in the kingdom, the rulers of the palace, and the despots of the cottage, the directors of the conscience, and disposers of the fortune of every rank of men, were all seized in one night, by detachments of soldiers, hurried like malefactors to the
sea-ports,

sea-ports, and banished for ever from the realm, without the least resistance to the royal mandate being made, or even threatened. Their very memory seems to be annihilated with their power.

We found the common people inoffensive, if not civil; and having never had an opportunity of being witnesses to any of their excesses, can say nothing of their violent love, jealousy, or revenge, which are points most writers on Spain have expatiated upon with great pleasure. I believe in this line, as well as in many others, their bad as well as good qualities have been magnified many degrees above the truth.

The most furious example of passion and cruelty that I heard of, happened a few years ago at San Lucas. A Carmelite friar fell desperately in love with a young woman, to whom he was confessor. He tried every art of seduction his desires could suggest to him; but to his unspeakable vexation, found her virtue or indifference proof against all his machinations. His despair was heightened to a pitch of madness, upon hearing that she was soon to be married to a person of her own rank in life. The furies of jealousy seized his soul, and worked him up to the most barbarous of all determinations, that of depriving his rival of the prize, by putting an end to her existence. He chose Easter week for the perpetration of his crime. The unsuspecting

pecting girl came to the confessional, and poured out her soul at his feet; her innocence served only to inflame his rage the more, and to confirm him in his bloody purpose. He gave her absolution and the sacrament with his own hands, as his love deterred him from murdering her, before he thought she was purified from all stain of sin, and her soul fit to take its flight to the tribunal of its Creator; but his jealousy and revenge urged him to pursue her down the church, and plunge his dagger in her heart, as she turned round to make a genuflection to the altar. He was immediately seized, and soon condemned to die; but lest his ignominious execution should reflect dishonour on a religious order, which boasts of having an aunt of the king of France among its members, his sentence was changed into perpetual labour among the galley-slaves of Portorico.

The national qualities, good and bad, conspicuous in the lower classes of men, are easily traced, and very discernible in those of higher rank; for their education is too much neglected, their minds too little enlightened by study or communication with other nations, to rub off the general rust, with which the Spanish genius has, for above an age, been, as it were, incrustated. The public schools and universities are in a despicable state of ignorance and irregularity.

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Some feeble hope of future reformation is indulged by patriots; but time must shew what probabilities they are grounded upon ³⁵.

The reigns of Charles the fifth and Philip the second, were the times of great men and good authors, the Spanish Augustan age; and perhaps continued a few years under Philip the third. Since those days, it is difficult to point out any original work of learning or merit, except those of Cervantes and la Vega, who survived the rest of the geniuses of that period.

Hitherto the academies, and societies of *friends to*

³⁵ Since I left Spain, a reform has taken place in the great colleges, notwithstanding a strenuous opposition. In 1771 Cédulas had already been issued out for visiting and examining the great foundations; as his majesty had been informed of the decline of the Universities for above a century, of the great disorders that had crept into their constitutions, and of the contagion which had spread among other literary bodies, to the great prejudice of public education, and of the state. The Cédula for the reformation is signed in April 1777. The colleges to be reformed are, Santa Cruz in Valladolid, Saint Ildefonso in Alcala, Saint Bartholomé, San Salvador de Oviedo, Santiago de Cuenca, and Santiago del Arzobispo, in Salamanca. These six colleges were linked together in a strict union, and formed a more powerful and compact body than the Jesuits. They had sufficient interest to procure for their own members most of the good things in church and state, and had a majority in every council and tribunal of Spain. Instead of maintaining poor scholars and professors, their immense rents, tythes, and dues, were portioned out among themselves. They are reduced to their original institutions: their old statutes are confirmed, or new modelled to the times; and poverty, which for many years had been a sure plea for exclusion, is restored to its primitive claim.

their country, the *Amigos del pais*, have gone on but slowly in their improvements in literature and agriculture. I doubt they have not yet got into a proper method; for they undertake many things, and finish none. Their great dictionary is a glaring proof of my assertion. They have now in hand an edition of Don Quixote, with prints taken from original drawings of the dresses and landscapes of the country, which has employed all their engravers for some time past; but they will, in all probability, be called off to some new scheme before this be ready for publication. The works of Calderon have been lately reprinted; and they have begun a new edition of Lopez de la Véga, on excellent paper, and with very fine types; Printing seems of late, to be the branch they most excel in.

The catalogue of living authors is confined to a very small number.

Don Francisco Perez Bayér, preceptor to the infants and archdeacon of Valencia, may be placed in the first line of Spanish literati. He is author of a dissertation on the Phenician language, added to the translation of Sallust by the infant Don Gabriel. He is a man of learning, a very good Greek and Latin scholar, well acquainted with the Hebrew and Arabic tongues, and moreover a modest man, of a friendly and communicative disposition; he has travelled through Italy,

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