

are exposed to no danger, in which the actors prove by the rarity of accidents*, that the hazard they run is not of a nature to excite much concern, and in which the wretched victims that are sacrificed have nothing to expect but a certain and painful death, as a reward for their courage and vigour. Another proof that this spectacle has no influence upon the mind is, that I have seen among the spectators, children, young women, the aged of both sexes, men of every age, class, and character, in whom the habit of frequenting these bloody entertainments corrected not their weakness or timidity, or changed the softness of

* Whatever may be said to the contrary, they are very rare. The cavaliers who are thrown sometimes receive contusions, but during almost four years that I was present at bull-fights, I knew but one *Torreador* who died of his wounds. A priest, however, provided with the viaticum and holy oils, is constantly present in a kind of latticed box, where he is not seen by the spectators; a precaution which, notwithstanding its inutility, has been preserved, like many other human institutions, merely by the force of custom.

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their manners. These diversions are very expensive, but very profitable to the undertakers. The price of the lowest places is two, or four reals, according as they are exposed to the sun or in the shade. The highest price is a great piastre. After the value of the horses and bulls, and the salary of the *Torreadores* have been deducted from the money received, the remainder is commonly dedicated to pious uses: at Madrid it forms the principal funds for the support of the hospital.

Bull-fights are mostly given in summer, because in this season spectators may remain in the open air, and the animals are more vigorous. Privileged breeds are condemned to this species of sacrifice. As soon as the bull appears in the circle, all the connoisseurs name the breed he is of. There are twenty benches round the circle, and that only which is most elevated is covered. The boxes are in the upper part of the edifice. In some cities, as in Valladolid,

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where there is no particular place set apart for the combat, the principal square is converted into a theatre for the purpose. The balconies of the different stories are continued across the ends of the streets which there terminate: the sight of the people of every class assembled round the square, expecting the signal for battle, and exhibiting in their countenances every sign of joy and impatience, has in it something interesting if not pleasing.

The exhibition begins by a kind of procession round the square, in which the champions, as well on foot as on horseback, who are to attack the fierce animal, make their appearance; after these come two alguazils on horseback, gravely advancing, in wigs and black robes, who go to the president of the combat (the governor or the corregidor) for an order to begin. The signal is immediately given. The animal, until then shut up in a kind of cabin, the door of which opens into the circle, makes his

appearance. The agents of Themis, who have no quarrel with him, prudently hasten their retreat, and their fear, but ill seconded by their horses, is the prelude to the cruel pleasure which the spectators are about to enjoy.

The bull is received and stunned with their cries and noisy expressions of joy. He has first to combat with the horsemen (*Picadores*) who, cloathed after the ancient manner of the Spaniards, and as it were fastened down upon their saddles, wait for him armed with long lances. This exercise, which requires address, strength and courage, has nothing in it degrading. Formerly the greatest among the nobility disdained not to take a part in it; at present, even some hidalgos solicit the honor of combating on horseback, and upon occasion are previously presented to the people under the auspices of a patron, who is commonly one of the principal persons of the court.

The Picadores, whoever they may be, open the scene. The bull, without being provoked, frequently attacks them, from which circumstance, when it happens, all the spectators conceive a great opinion of his courage. If, notwithstanding the pointed steel which repels his attack, he again returns to the charge, the cries are redoubled, pleasure then becomes enthusiasm: but if the animal be pacific, disconcerted, and cowardly runs round the circle, avoiding his persecutors, murmurs and hissings resound throughout the theatre. All those within whose reach he passes, load him with blows and execrations. It seems as if he were a common enemy who has a great crime to expiate, or a victim whose sacrifice is of consequence to all the people. If nothing can rouse his courage, he is judged unworthy of being tormented by men, and the repeated cries of *perros, perros*, bring on him new enemies.

Great dogs are then let loose upon him, who seize him by the neck and ears,

ears. The animal now finds the use of his natural weapons. The dogs thrown into the air, fall stunned, and sometimes lacerated, upon the ground; they rise again, renew the combat, and commonly end by overthrowing their adversary, who then perishes ignobly. On the contrary, if he has presented himself with a good grace, his career is more glorious, but longer and more painful. The first act of the tragedy belongs to the combatants on horseback; this is the most animated but the most bloody and disgusting part of the whole. The irritated animal braves the steel which makes deep wounds in his neck, falls furiously upon the innocent horse who carries his enemy, gores his sides and overturns him with his rider.

In this case, the latter upon the ground and disarmed, is in imminent danger, until the combatants on foot, called *Cbulos*, come to his assistance, and provoke the animal by shaking before him stuffs of different colours.

But it is not without danger to themselves that they save the dismounted horseman. The bull sometimes pursues them, and they then have need of their utmost agility. They frequently escape him by letting fall the stuff which is their only weapon, and upon which the fury of the deceived animal is exhausted. But it sometimes happens that he is not thus to be imposed upon, and the champion has no other resource than leaping over the barrier six feet high, which forms the interior of the circle. In some places there are two barriers, and the intermediate space forms a kind of circular gallery, behind which the pursued torreador is in safety. But when the barrier is single, the bull makes efforts to leap it, which he sometimes accomplishes. The alarm of the nearest spectators may easily be imagined; their precipitation in retiring, and crowding upon the upper benches, becomes more fatal to them than the fury of the animal, which stumbling at each step upon the narrow and uneven space, rather thinks of saving

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ving himself than fatisfying his vengeance; and besides, foon falls under the blows that are haftily and repeatedly given him.

Except in thefe cafes, which are rare, he returns to the charge. His difmounted adverfary having had time to recover himfelf, immediately mounts his horfe again, provided the latter be not too much wounded, and the attack is renewed; but the cavalier is frequently obliged to change his horfe. I have feen feven and eight horfes gored, or their bowels torn out, by the fame bull, fall dead upon the field of battle. No words can then fufficiently celebrate thefe acts of prowefs, which for feveral days become the favourite fubjects of converfation. The horfes, aftonifhing examples of patience, courage and docility, prefent, before they die, a fight at which I fhall willingly permit my gay countrymen to fhudder. They tread under their feet their bloody entrails which fall from their lacerated fides, and for fometime
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obey the hand which leads them on to new torments. Disgust then seizes such of the spectators as possess any sensibility and embitters their pleasure.

But a new act soon reconciles them to the diversion. When it is judged that the bull has been sufficiently tormented by the combatants on horseback, these withdraw, and leave him to the champions on foot, called *banderilleros*; who meet the animal, and the moment he attacks them, stick into his neck, two by two, a kind of arrow, called a *banderilla*, terminated like a fish-hook, and ornamented with little streamers of stained paper. The fury of the bull is redoubled; he roars, and his vain efforts render more acute the dart which has been lodged in him. This last torment gives a fine opportunity for a display of the agility of his new adversaries. The spectators at first tremble for their safety when they see them brave the terrible horns of the animal; but their skilful hands give the blow so surely, and they
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escape so nimbly from the danger, that after a few times they are neither pitied nor admired; and their address appears nothing more than a trifling episode in the tragedy of which the catastrophe is as follows.

When the vigour of the bull appears almost exhausted, and his blood, flowing from twenty wounds, and pouring from his neck, moistens his robust sides, the fury of the people, thus fatiated upon him, calls for another victim; the president then gives the signal for his death, which is announced by the sound of drums and trumpets. The *Matador* advances and is seen alone in the circle; in one hand he holds a long knife, in the other a kind of flag which he waves before his adversary. Thus together they stop and observe each other. The impetuosity of the bull is several times avoided by the agility of the *Matador*, and the pleasure of the spectators is rendered more lively by their suspense. Sometimes the animal remains immoveable; he scrapes the
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ground with his feet and seems to meditate vengeance. Those who are familiar with the beauties of Racine, may then perhaps recollect the two following lines of that admirable author.

Il le voit, il l'attend et son ame irritée,
Pour quelque grand dessein semble s'être arrêtée.*

The bull in this situation, and the Matador who discovers his intention and carefully observes his slightest motion, form a picture which an able pencil might not disdain to delineate. The silence of the assembly respects this dumb scene. At length the Matador gives the fatal blow; and if the animal immediately falls, the triumph of the conqueror is celebrated by a thousand exclamations; but if the blow be not decisive, if the bull survives and again strives to brave the fatal knife, the murmurs are not less numerous. The Matador, whose address was about to be extolled to the skies, is

* He sees and waits for him, and his irritated mind seems to be fixed on some great design.

considered only as a clumsy butcher. He instantly endeavours to recover from his disgrace, and disarm the severity of his judges. His zeal sometimes becomes a blind fury, and his partisans tremble for the consequences of his imprudence. At last he gives a better directed blow. The animal vomits streams of blood, and struggling with death, staggers and falls, while his conqueror becomes intoxicated with the applauses of the people. The bull is then tied by the horns which have betrayed his valour; and, although so lately furious and haughty, is ignominiously dragged from the circle he has just honoured, leaving nothing behind but the traces of his blood, and the remembrance of his exploits, which is soon effaced by the appearance of his successor. On each of the days dedicated to these feasts are sacrificed (at least at Madrid) six bulls in the morning and twelve in the afternoon. The names of the combatants of each are previously announced in the public prints. The three last of the animals are exclusively left to the Matador,

Matador, who, without the assistance of the Picadores, employs all his dexterity to vary the pleasures of the spectators. He sometimes suffers an intrepid stranger, mounted upon another bull, to combat them; at others he turns a bear against them. The last bull is particularly devoted to the entertainment of the populace. The points of his horns are covered with a round case, which diminishes the effect of their strokes.

In this state the bull, which is then called *Embolado*, loses the power of piercing and lacerating his adversary. The spectators descend in crowds to torment him, each according to his own manner, and often expiate their cruel pleasure by violent contusions. But the creature always falls at last under the blows of the Matador. The few spectators who partake not of the general fury, regret that these wretched animals purchase not their lives, at least, at the expence of so many tortures and efforts of courage. They would willingly aid them to escape from
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their persecutors. In the humane few, disgust succeeds to compassion, and weariness to disgust: the uniform succession of similar scenes throws a languor upon the amusement which the spectacle promised at the beginning.

But to the connoisseurs who have studied the artifices of the bull, the resources of his address and fury, the different methods of alluring, deceiving, and tormenting him (for in some provinces this is a study from youth to manhood) no scene resembles another, and they pity frivolous observers who know not how to distinguish their variety.

In this pursuit, as in others, the spirit of party confers reputation; and disputes or exaggerates success. When I arrived at Madrid, the connoisseurs were divided between two famous Matadores, Costillares and Romero, as people might be in other countries with respect to the merits of two celebrated actors. Each sect was as enthusiastic in its eulogiums
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and positive in decision as the *Gluckists* and *Piccinists* perhaps were in France. It is difficult to believe that the art of killing a bull, which seems to be the exclusive privilege of a butcher, should be gravely discussed, and extolled with transport, not only by the people, but by the most sensible men, and women of the greatest sensibility.

We can scarcely conceive how the chariot races in the olympic games could furnish Pindar with a subject for his sublime odes, which charmed all Greece, and conferred immortality on the conquerors. The bull-fights seem to be a subject still more sterile, and yet inspire enthusiasm. Every thing which pleases us in childhood, or that awakens in our minds violent emotions which are not abated by habit, may excite and excite that exalted sentiment. Nothing ought to be inferred against the morals of a nation from objects, whatever they may be, by which enthusiasm is inspired. The combats of gladiators, and the horrid

rid contests of criminals with ferocious beasts excited it in the Romans. Horse races produce in the English a kind of delirium. Shall we, on this account, refuse the title of a polished people to the former, or that of a philosophical nation to the latter? In like manner the Spaniards, notwithstanding their immoderate love of bull-fights, and the barbarous pleasure they take in seeing the blood of those innocent and courageous animals shed, are not therefore less susceptible of every amiable and delicate emotion. After leaving these bloody diversions, they enjoy not less the pleasures of domestic peace, the confidence of friendship, and the delights of love; their hearts are not less susceptible of pity, nor is their courage more ferocious. I am of opinion that in the ages when single combats and assassinations were more frequent, they were not more attached than at present to their favourite diversion.

They are become much more pacific. Their manners are softened without their passion for bull-fights being diminished; it still exists in all its fervour. The day on which they are celebrated is a day of rejoicing for the whole district, as well as for the inhabitants for ten or twelve leagues round the place. The artist who can scarcely provide for his subsistence, has always a surplus to expend on this spectacle. The very chastity of the poor girl, whose poverty should exclude her from it, would be in danger: her first seducer would be the man who should pay for her admission.

The Spanish government is well aware of the moral and political inconvenience of this kind of phrenzy; it has long been convinced, that for a people, among whom it would wish to encourage industry, it is a cause of disorders and dissipation; that it is prejudicial to agriculture by sacrificing, in such numbers, the robust animals which might be employed in cultivation, by destroying the source

source of cattle which would fertilize the country and feed the inhabitants, and by turning the pastures from their most valuable destination. But it is forced to have respect for amusements, which, perhaps, could not be openly attacked without danger; it, however, avoids encouraging them. Formerly the court counted the bull-fights in the number of entertainments it gave at certain times. The plaza-mayor, on such occasions, was the theatre of these exhibitions. The king and his family honoured the spectacle with their presence. His military household presided to keep order. His halbardiers formed the inner circle of the theatre, and their long weapons were the only barrier they opposed to the dangerous caprices of the bull. These feasts, which by distinction were called *Fiestas-reales*, are become more rare. There has been but one under the present reign. The reigning monarch, who endeavours to polish the manners of his nation and to turn its attention towards more use-

ful objects, wishes to destroy in it an inclination in which he perceives nothing but inconvenience ; but he is too wise to employ violent means.

He has, however, confined the number of bull-fights to those of which the produce serves to the support of some charitable institution, reserving to himself the power of hereafter substituting other funds. The combats; by this means rendered less frequent, will, perhaps, lose by degrees a part of their attraction, until more favourable circumstances shall permit them to be entirely abolished.

It is thus that, by successive gradations, more the effect of time than wisdom, the manners of a people are reformed and softened. Those of the Spaniards have within the last century undergone, in other respects, sensible revolutions. Formerly the point of honour, delicate to excess, occasioned among them frequent duels ; were other
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proofs wanting, their comedies and novels would furnish a sufficient number. At present their courage is not so restless, yet it is still sufficient in time of war to defend the country without disturbing its repose during the mild reign of peace. On the other hand the Spaniards have preserved their ancient virtues, patience and sobriety; the former renders them constant in their enterprizes, and indefatigable in their labours; the latter preserves them from the excesses too common in the other countries of Europe. I mean not to diminish their merit; besides of what importance is the cause of virtues in men, provided they are useful in their effects. I dare therefore assert, that the so much boasted sobriety of the Spaniards is, in a great measure, the consequence of their physical constitution, and of the quality of their food. Their robust and muscular bodies, dried and hardened by the active heat of a burning climate, support better the deprivation and superabundance of

nourishment. In the first case, the abstinence to which they may be compelled does not weaken them; in the second, their strength resists the excesses of intemperance. The flesh of animals, at least in the Mediterranean provinces of Spain, contains, in a given quantity, more nutritive matter than elsewhere. Their roots, less spongy than in countries where water contributes more than the sun to their growth, are of a more nourishing substance. Strangers who remain sometime at Madrid, soon perceive this superiority, and if they yield to the appetite they may have upon their arrival, an endemial disease, called *Entripado*, a kind of cholick, which the physicians of the country only know how to treat, painfully informs them of their change of food and climate. It is so true, that the power of eating little or much is a consequence of air and soil, that in the provinces, or in the kingdom of Valencia, for instance, where aliments contain less substance, a much greater indulgence of the appetite is
neither

neither proscribed by custom nor prejudicial to health. With respect to intoxicating liquors, the sobriety of the Spaniards proceeds in a great measure from Nature, which, always employing means proportioned to her end, has bestowed on them a constitution analogous to the strength of the wines produced by their soil, whilst strangers cannot with impunity drink of them to excess. Nothing is more uncommon than to see a Spaniard inebriated with wine, although that which he drinks is more spiritous than those of France; and if a drunken foldier be seen in the streets of Madrid, it is very probable he is a foreigner.

We may remark on this occasion, that sobriety seems to be the inheritance of the inhabitants of the South, as intemperance is that of those of the North. We may also observe, that the people who commit most excesses in drinking are not those whose soil produces the liquors by which they are inebriated, as

if Nature, which has given them the means of satisfying their thirst and appetite, and adapted their organs to the use of these means, intended to punish them for seeking, at a distance, the food and liquor she has created for others. These dispositions are undoubtedly changed by other combinations. Habit changes them in more than one climate; but it seems to me that with a little attention, it is easy to discover the traces of the primitive intentions of Nature.

However this may be, the Spaniards will pardon me for considering their sobriety as a virtue of climate; this is only resembling them to other nations, and even to all the individuals of the human species, who equally owe their qualities to their education, rank in life, habits, the examples they have before them, and a thousand other causes which depend not on themselves. It is still a great merit not to resist beneficial impulses.

The Spaniards have, besides, that of triumphing over those influences which dispose to certain excesses, for which they might have served as an apology. I have particularly in view a depraved taste, reprobated by Nature, injurious to the fair sex, and too common among the people of the south. This is absolutely unknown in Spain.

Jealousy, another outrage on the sex, the object of our homage, seems also to depend upon the influence of climate which communicates its ardour to the senses and imagination. This odious passion, formerly so injurious in its suspicions, cruel in its precautions, and implacable and sometimes atrocious in its resentments, is much weakened among the modern Spaniards. There are no people in Europe among whom fewer jealous husbands are to be found. The women, who were formerly hidden from the public, of whom it was scarcely possible to gain a glimpse through the openings of the lattices, which undoubtedly

owe their name to the vile sentiment which was the cause of their being invented *, now enjoy full liberty. Their rivals, the only remains of their ancient servitude, only serve at present to shelter their charms from a burning sun, and to render them more attractive. First invented by jealousy, they are now employed to very different purposes. Coquetry has converted them into one of its most seducing ornaments; and in favouring secrecy they insure impunity to the stolen pleasures of love. The lovers who, under the balconies of their invisible mistresses, sighed without hope, and had nothing but their guitar for witness and interpreter, are banished to comedies and romances. Husbands are become more docile, wives more accessible, and conquests, as it is said, less slow and difficult. In this respect it belongs not to me to pronounce the eulogium of Spanish manners. Were I to

* *Jalousie*, in the French language, signifies a lattice.

confine myself to the evidence of my own experience, there are no women in Europe more pure. Whether it was from scruple, want of address, or that I felt not in myself constancy sufficient for the affiduities to which those who render homage to the Spanish ladies must be devoted; or whether I was deterred by dangers still more to be feared, although in some respects, perhaps chimerical, to which lovers are exposed, I have no less reason to believe in their virtue, than to do justice to their charms. But not to advance any thing upon suspicious evidence, I shall speak of nothing relative to the Spanish ladies of which I have not myself a knowledge.

The women of every country have particular charms by which they are characterised. In England, by the elegance of their shape, and modesty of their carriage; in Germany by freshness of complexion, and in France by that amiable gaiety which animates all their features. The charm felt on approaching a Spanish lady,

lady has something of deception which is not easily defined. It owes but little to the aid of the toilet. The complexion of a Spanish beauty is never ornamented with borrowed brilliance: art supplies not the colouring which nature has refused by exposing her to the influence of a burning climate. But by how many beauties is she recompensed for her paleness? Where are finer shapes, greater ease in every motion, or softer delicacy of feature to be found than among the Spanish beauties? Grave, and rather melancholy, at first sight, yet, should one of these fair ones open on you her large black eyes, full of expression, should she accompany her glances with a smile, insensibility itself falls at her feet. But if the coldness of her reception discourage not her admirer from addressing her, she is as decided and mortifying in her disdain, as she is seducing in permitting him to hope.

In the last case she leaves him no room to fear a long cruelty; but perseverance,
which

which in other countries accelerates the *dénouement*, must survive it in Spain, and becomes a severe duty. The fortunate men whom she deigns to conquer, and who are called *Cortejos*, are less disinterested but not less assiduous than the cicisbei of Italy. A total sacrifice is required of them. They must give proofs of this at all hours of the day, accompany the lady to the public walk, the theatres, and even the confessional. But what is particular in this kind of intimacy, is that two persons thus united by a sentiment which seems inexhaustible, are frequently silent, melancholy, and appear not as in other places, happy in the happiness of each other's company. I know not if I injure the Spanish fair sex; but I am disposed to believe, their chains are not so easy to be borne, as difficult to avoid. The Spanish beauty is said to be very rigorous in many respects; her caprices are sometimes rather hasty, and too obedient to the impulse of an ardent imagination. But that which is not easy to conciliate with her eternally varying fancies, and concurs with

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with a thousand other observations to prove the incoherency of the human heart, both in male and female, is the constancy of Spanish women in their attachments. The intoxication they cause and experience, far different from all extreme agitations or affections of the mind, which continue but a short time, is prolonged greatly beyond the common term; and I saw, during my residence in Spain, more than one such passion continue constant till the parties expired with old age. I have frequently sought for the reason of this constancy; which disconcerted all my ideas, and have imagined it to be in a religious scruple, certainly ill understood, as most such scruples are. Perhaps, said I to myself, the conscience of a Spanish lady, sufficiently complaisant to permit her one gratification which offends her duty, would be terrified at a succession of infidelities. In the first she may possibly find an excuse in human infirmity, in the irresistible wish of the heart, which inclines her
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towards one object, destined by nature to fix her affections.

It belongs to those who are acquainted with the female heart and conscience to judge of this conjecture. It is certain, that in Spain, more than in any other country, both men and women appear to conciliate the irregularity of manners with the most scrupulous observance of religious duties, and even with the mockeries of superstition. In many countries these excesses alternately succeed each other. In Spain they are simultaneous; and the women, in consequence of this strange mixture of religion and frailty, seem to aim less to prevent scandal, or conceal their conduct, than to establish a kind of equilibrium between their faults and their merits; an incoherence in which both sexes appeared to me to participate. It is the consequence of error and weakness, and the most serious reproach I have to make that nation.

How

How many men have I known, who, though they led an extreme disorderly life, frequented publick worship with an assiduity, which even true christians do not consider as an indispenfible duty, carefully observed every injunction of the church relative to abstinence, and rendered to the ministers almost degrading homages? How many women abandoned to an attachment utterly inconsistent with their duty, are surrounded with relicks, cover themselves with a scapulary, oblige themselves by vows to the performance of actions indifferent in their own nature, and scrupulously fulfil them. I believe hypocrites to be very rare in Spain; but to compensate for this the ridiculous association of certain moral improprieties with superstitious practices, is more common there than elsewhere. Must this be attributed to a want of knowledge, or the criminal complaisance of the directors of conscience, who are thus prodigal of the indulgence of which they themselves stand in need? Or is it the climate which must serve as
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an excuse for some vices, as it is the cause of some virtues; does it command the gratification of certain frailties too imperiously for consciences, scrupulous in other respects, to be terrified from yielding compliance?

To endeavour to explain the dissoluteness of morals, is to acknowledge it exists, and, notwithstanding my favourable opinion of the Spaniards, I cannot but confess this charge. More faithful however, to the resolution I have formed to be impartial, I must add, that this depravity is not so general as libertines, who always exaggerate their indiscretions, are pleased to say it is; that there are even at Madrid families exemplary in their conduct, faithful husbands, and wives who in other countries would be models of modesty and propriety; that their daughters, although in general not reserved in their carriage, promise much more than they grant, and that nothing is more rare than their anticipation of the rights of matrimony; that if opportunities of purchasing pleasures equally shame-