

their ancient privileges have been gradually restored; and this is at present one of the most flourishing provinces of Spain. Their taxation is still very high. All trade is assessed according to the business you are supposed to transact in the course of the year, without regard to your loss or gain. One mode of collecting the revenue is somewhat singular;—the intendant (who manages all the finances, and, besides numberless emoluments and secret profits, receives one third of all seizures of contraband goods) has a certain number of clerks or apprentices, with a stipend for each allowed by the king. These young men are sent out into the villages to gather the taxes; an operation which they spin out to the utmost, as their profits, and those of their master, are increased by every delay, the communities being obliged to find them food, lodging, and two pesos a day. When the peasantry of a place proves refractory or dilatory in its payment, an order is given by the treasurer to an officer, who goes with his soldiers to the spot, to receive his own and his regiment's pay, and live at discretion upon the poor wretches until full satisfaction be made.

Amongst other restrictions, the use of slouched hats, white shoes, and large brown cloaks, is forbidden. 'Till of late, they durst not carry any kind of knife; but in each public house there was one chained to the table, for the use of all comers. The good order maintained by the police, and the vigilance of the thieftakers, supply the

the place of defensive weapons, robberies and murders being seldom heard of; you may walk the streets of Barcelona at all hours unarmed, without the least apprehension, provided you have a light; without it you are liable to be carried to prison by the patrol.

The minones, or thieftakers, are men of trust and consideration, and of approved courage; their dress is that of the miquelets or mountaineers, who so cruelly harassed the French armies in the wars at the beginning of our century. They wear their hair in a net; a broad silver-laced hat, squeezed flat like those of the English sailors, hung on one side of their head; an handkerchief loosely tied round the neck; a short striped waistcoat, and over it a red jacket, with large silver buttons like bells dangling from it; a blue skirt, bound with yellow tape, rolled several times round their waist, in which they carry their knife, handkerchief, &c. Over this jacket they wear two cross belts, one for an ammunition-pouch, the other for their broad sword and pistols; on the left shoulder hangs a blue great coat embroidered with white thread; their breeches are blue and white striped; their stockings, rolled below the knee, and gartered with an enormous buckle, and bunch of black ribbons, reach only down to the ankle, where they tie several rounds of blue fillet very tight, to keep on their packthread sandals, that seem scarce to cover their toes.

The



The common dress of a Catalan failor or muleteer is brown, and the distinctive mark by which they are known in Spain, is a red woollen cap, falling forwards, like that of the ancient Phrygians. The middling sort of people and artificers wear hats and dark cloaths, with an half-wide coat carelessly tossed over the shoulders.

The dress of the women is a black silk petticoat over a little hoop, shoes without heels, bare shoulders, and a black veil stiffened out with wire, so as to arch out on each side of the head, something resembling the hooded serpent.

The Catalans are excellent for light infantry, on the forlorn hope, or for a *coup de main*; but tho' brave and indefatigable, they are averse to the strictness of regular discipline, unless it be in their own national regiments. They cannot brook the thoughts of being menial servants in their own country, but will rather trudge it all over with a pedlar's pack on their shoulders, or run about upon errands, than be the head domestic in a Catalan family. Far from home they make excellent servants, and most of the principal houses of Madrid have Catalans at the head of their affairs. They are the general muleteers and caleffieros of Spain; you meet with them in every part of the kingdom: their honesty, steadiness, and sobriety, entitle them to the confidence of travellers, and their thirst after lucre makes them bear with

with any hardships. With good words, you will always find them docile, but they cannot bear hard usage or opprobrious language.

Those that remain at home for the labours of the field, are exceedingly industrious. Their corn-harvest is in May or early in June; but, as those crops are liable to frequent burstings and mildews, they have turned their attention more to the vine, which they plant even upon the summits of their most rugged mountains. In many places, they carry up earth to fix the young set in; and in others, have been known to let one another down from the brow of the rock by ropes, rather than suffer a good patch of soil to remain uselefs. Their vintages are commonly very plentiful. This autumn, there was such a superabundance of grapes in the valley of Talarn, in the neighbourhood of Pallas, that whole vineyards were left untouched for want of vessels to make or hold the wine in; notice was pasted upon the church-doors, that any one was at liberty to take away what quantity he pleased, on paying a small acknowledgment to the proprietors. The best red wine of Catalonia is made at Mataw, north of Barcelona, and the best white at Sitges, between that city and Tarragona.

The scarcity of corn is sometimes very great, the principality not producing above five months provision. Without the importation from America, Sicily, and the north of Europe, it would run the risk of being famished.



From four hundred thousand to six hundred thousand quarters of wheat are annually imported. Canada alone sent this year about eighty thousand quarters. There are public ovens, where the bakers are bound by contract to bake every day into bread one thousand bushels of flour, or more, at a stated price, and, in case the other bakers should refuse to work, they are under the obligation of furnishing the city with bread.

The number of the inhabitants of Barcelona is made to amount to one hundred and fifty thousand souls, and those of Barceloneta to ten thousand; but, although trade and population have increased surprizingly in the course of a few years, I doubt there is some exaggeration in this reckoning.

The great export-commerce consists in wine, brandies, salt, and oil, which are mostly taken in by foreign ships at the little ports and roads along the coast, and not brought to be shipped off at the capital.

There are mines of lead, iron, and coal, in the mountains, but they are ill wrought, and turn to poor account. The manufactures are of more importance. Barcelona supplies Spain with most of the cloathing and arms for the troops. This branch of business is carried on with much intelligence; they can equip a battalion of six hundred men compleatly in a week.

A great trade is driven in silk handkerchiefs, stockings, &c.; in woollens of various qualities; in silk and thread

thread lace; in fire-arms. The gun-barrels of Barcelona are much esteemed, and cost from four to twenty guineas, but about five is the real value; all above is paid for fancy and ornament: they are made out of the old shoes of mules. Several manufactures of printed linens are established here, but have not yet arrived at any great elegance of design or liveliness of colour.

The imports are, besides corn, about eighty thousand hundred-weight of Newfoundland cod, which pays three pesettas per hundred-weight duty, and sells upon an average at a guinea; beans from Holland, for the poor people, and an inferior sort from Africa, for the mules; salted conger eel from Cornwall and Britany, sold at forty or fifty shillings per quintal; this is an unwholesome, luscious food, which they cook up with garlick and spices: English bale goods, and many foreign articles of necessity or luxury. House-rent and living are dear; provisions but indifferent: the fish is flabby and insipid; the meat poor; but the vegetables are excellent, especially brocoli and cauliflower. I believe their meat and fish are much better in summer than at this season of the year.

The devotion of the Catalans seems to be pretty much upon a par with that of their neighbours in the southern provinces of France, and, I am told, much less ardent than we shall find it as we advance into Spain; but they still abound with strange practices of religion and local worship. One very odd idea of theirs is, that on the 1st



of November, the eve of All Souls, they run about from house to house to eat chefnuts, believing that for every chefnut they swallow, with proper faith and unktion, they shall deliver a soul out of purgatory.

The influx of foreigners, increase of commerce, and protection granted to the liberal arts, begin to open the understanding of this people, who have made great strides of late towards sense and philosophy.

There are now but one or two churches at most, in each city, that are allowed the privilege of protecting offenders, and murderers are excluded from the benefit of the sanctuary. The proceedings of the Inquisition are grown very mild. If any person leads a scandalous life, or allows his tongue unwarrantable liberties, he is summoned by the Holy Office, and privately admonished; in case of non-amendment he is committed to prison. Once a year you must answer to that tribunal for the orthodoxy of your family, and of every servant you have, or they must quit the country; but the foreign protestant houses are passed over unnoticed. Avoid talking on the subject of religion, and with a little discretion you may live here in what manner you please.

Every Jew that lands in Spain must declare himself to be such at the Inquisition; which immediately appoints a familiar to attend him all the time he stays ashore, to whom he pays a pistole a day. Were he to neglect giving this information, he would be liable to be seized. Yet I  
have

have been assured by persons of undoubted credit, that a Jew may travel incognito from Perpignan to Lisbon, and sleep every night at the house of a Jew, being recommended from one to another; and that you may take it for granted, that wherever you see a house remarkably decked out with images, relics, and lamps, and the owner noted for being the most enthusiastic devotee of the parish, there it is ten to one but the family are Israelites at heart.

If a stranger is desirous of becoming acquainted with Spain, the manners and disposition of its inhabitants, he must proceed further; for I am told this province bears so little resemblance to the rest of the kingdom, that he will derive no real knowledge on that score from travelling in Catalonia. Here it is not uncommon to hear them talk of a journey into Spain, as they would of one into France; and their language is not understood by the Spaniards, being a dialect of the ancient Limosine tongue, a kind of Gascon.

I cannot close this sketch of the character of the modern Catalans more properly, than with the epitaph of their countrymen who served under Sertorius, and after the murder of that great man, disdaining to obey another leader, sacrificed themselves to his manes. It is taken from the annals of Catalonia.

*Hic*



<sup>4</sup> *Hic multæ quæ se manibus  
 Q. Sertorii Turmæ et Terræ  
 Mortalium omnium Parenti  
 devovere dum eo sublato  
 superesse tæderet et fortiter  
 pugnando invicem cecidere  
 Morte ad præsens optata jacent.  
 Valetè Posteri.*

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## L E T T E R X.

Reus, November 24, 1775.

**W**E left Barcelona on Sunday the 19th instant. Our first day's journey was very short; the road good, but made upon too expensive a plan to be continued far. The bridge over the Llobregat is grand, but unluckily so placed as never to be seen by travellers in an oblique direction.

<sup>4</sup> Here lie the bones of many companies of soldiers, who devoted themselves to the manes of Q. Sertorius, and to the common mother Earth, as loathing all thoughts of surviving him. Fighting bravely with each other, they fell, and met the death which they then wished for. Farewell Posterity.

We

We stopped at Cipreret, a neat house in a wild mountainous country, with a few pines scattered about, seldom enough to form a grove, much less a wood. We here for the first time saw a true Spanish kitchen, viz. an hearth raised above the level of the floor under a wide funnel, where a circle of muleteers were huddled together over a few cinders.

Next morning we passed a broad glen or hollow, over which they intended to convey the high road in a strait line, by means of a bridge of three rows of arches one above the other. Had they turned a little to the left by a gradual slope, the descent had been trifling, and a single arch sufficient for the passage of the water. This great work has failed, and seems abandoned. I should suspect they built here for the diversion of future antiquaries, not for the use of the present generation, which feels all the weight of the expence, without reaping any benefit from such ill-calculated undertakings. In the present state of things the pass is very dangerous, and further on the road grows worse, in a large forest of pines, where the rocks and gullies render it next to impossible for a carriage to get through without damage. On account of the great number of bridges necessary among these broken hills, and of the obstinacy with which the engineers (whose profits increase by delays and difficulties) persist in carrying the road strait through rocks and torrents, the work  
advances



advances so slowly, that before a second mile be finished, the first is ruined for want of repairs.

The country at the foot of the mountains is fertile and populous. About Villa Franca de Panades the soil is remarkably light. The husbandmen shovel up the stubble, weeds, and tops of furrows, into small heaps, which they burn, then spread them out upon the ground, and work them in with a plough, which is little more than a great knife fastened to a single stick, that just scratches the surface. In this country all the corn is trod out of the sheaf by means of horses and mules driven backwards and forwards over it on a stone or stucco area.

In the evening we passed by torch-light under a Roman arch, which I returned next morning to examine, our inn not being more than a mile beyond it. This arch is almost entire, elegant in its proportions, and simple in its ornaments; the gateway lofty; the entablature is supported on each side by four fluted Corinthian pilasters. All I could read of the inscription was EX TEST; which Flores, in his *Espana fagrada*, makes out to be part of

EX TESTAMENTO L. LICINII. L. F. SERGII. SURAE  
CONSECRATUM.

This Licinius was thrice consul under Trajan, and was famous for his extraordinary wealth. No reasonable con-  
jecture

