

A Year's Journey through France and Part of Spain, 1777 eBook

A Year's Journey through France and Part of Spain, 1777 by Philip Thicknesse

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Title: A Year's Journey through France and Part of Spain, 1777 Volume 1 (of 2)

Author: Philip Thicknesse

Release Date: August 8, 2005 [EBook #16485]

Language: English

Character set encoding: ASCII

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A

YEAR'S JOURNEY

THROUGH

France,

AND

PART OF SPAIN.

BY

Philip Thicknesse.

VOLUME I

Dublin
Printed by J. Williams, (No. 21.) Skinner-Row.
M,DCC,LXXVII.

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| Transcriber's Note: The long-s has been modernized to s. |

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A

Journey, &c.

* * * * *

LETTER I

Calais, June 20th, 1775

Dear sir,

As you are kind enough to say, that those letters which I wrote from this kingdom, nine or ten years ago, were of some use to you, in the little tour you made through France soon after, and as they have been considered in some degree to be so to many other persons, (since their publication) who were unacquainted with the manners and customs of the French nation, I shall endeavour to bring together, in this second correspondence with you, not only some of the former hints I gave you, but such other remarks as a longer acquaintance with the country, and a more extensive tour, may furnish me with; but before I proceed any further, let me remind you, of one great fault I was then guilty of; for though your partiality to me might induce you to overlook it, the public did not, I mean that of writing when my temper was disturbed, either by cross incidents I met with upon the road, or disagreeable news which often followed me from my own country into this. I need not tell a man of your discernment, in what a different light all objects, whether animate, or inanimate, appear to those, whose temper is disturbed, either by ill health, ill treatment, or, what is perhaps

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more prevalent than either, the chagrin he may feel at not being rated in the estimation of others, according to that value he puts upon himself. Could Dr. Smollett rise from the dead, and sit down in perfect health, and good temper, and read his travels through France and Italy, he would probably find most of his anger turned upon himself. But, poor man! he was ill; and meeting with, what every stranger must expect to meet at most French inns, want of cleanliness, imposition, and incivility; he was so much disturbed by those incidents, that to say no more of the writings of an ingenious and deceased author, his travels into France, and Italy, are the least entertaining, in my humble opinion, of all his works. Indeed I have observed that most travellers fall into one extreme, or the other, and either are all panegyric or all censure; in which case, all they say cannot be just; for, as all nations are governed by men, and the bulk of men of all nations live by artifice of one kind or other, the few men who pass among them, without any sinister views, cannot avoid feeling, and but few from complaining of the ill treatment they meet with; not considering one of Swift's shrewd remarks; *I never said he, knew a man who could not bear the misfortunes of another perfectly like a Christian.*

Remember therefore, when I tell you how ill I have been treated either by *Lords* or *Aubergists*, or how dirtily served by either, it is to prepare myself and you too, to be content with neighbours' fare.

When a man writes remarks upon the manners and customs of other nations, he should endeavour to wean himself from all partiality for his own; and I need not tell you that I am in *full possession* of that single qualification, which I hope will make you some amends for my defects in all the others; for it is certainly unjust, uncandid, and illiberal, to pronounce a custom or fashion absurd, because it does not coincide with our ideas of propriety. A Turk who travelled into England, would, upon his return to Constantinople, tell his countrymen, that at Canterbury; (bring out of *opium*,) his host did not know even what he demanded; and that it was with some difficulty he found out, that there were shops in the town where *opium* was sold, and even then, it was with greater, he could prevail upon the vender of it to let him have above half an ounce: if he were questioned, why all these precautions? he would tell them, laughingly, that Englishmen believe *opium* to be a deadly poison, and those people suspected that he either meant to kill himself, or to poison another man with it.

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A French gentleman, who travelled some years since into Spain, had letters of recommendation to a Spanish Bishop, who received him with every mark of politeness, and treated him with much hospitality: soon after he retired to his bedchamber, a priest entered it,[A] holding a vessel in his hand, which was covered with a clean napkin; he said something; but the Frenchman understanding but little Spanish, intimated by signs his thanks, and desired him to put it down, believing, that his friend, the Bishop, had sent him a plate of sweetmeats, fruit, iced cream, or some kind of refreshment to eat before he went to bed, or to refresh his exhausted spirits in the night; but his astonishment was great indeed, when he found the priest put the present under the side of the bed; and more so, when he perceived that it was only a *pot de chambre*;—for, says the Frenchman, “in Spain, they do not use the *chaise percee*!” The Frenchman is surprized at the Spaniard, for not using so convenient a vehicle; the Englishman is equally surprized, that the Frenchman does;—the Frenchman is always attentive to his own person, and scarce ever appears but clean and well dressed; while his house and private apartments are perhaps covered with litter and dirt, and in the utmost confusion;—the Englishman, on the other hand, often neglects his external dress; but his house is always exquisitely clean, and every thing in it kept in the nicest order; and who shall say, which of the two judge the best for their own ease and happiness? I am sure the Frenchman will not give up his powdered hair, and laced coat, for a clean house; nor do I believe those fineries would sit quietly upon the back of an Englishman, in a dirty one. In short, my dear sir, we must take the world, and the things in it, as they are; it is a dirty world, but like France, has a vast number of good things in it, and such as I meet with, in this my third tour, which shall be a long one, if I am not *stopped* by the way, you shall have such an account of as I am able to convey to you: I will not attempt to *top the traveller* upon you, nor raise monuments of wonder, where none are to be seen; there is real matter enough to be found upon this great continent, to amuse a man who travels slowly over it, to see what is to be seen, and who wishes not to be seen himself. My style of travelling is such, that I can never be disturbed in mind for want of respect, but rather be surprised when I meet with even common civility. And, after all, what does it signify, whether Monsieur *ou Tel* travels in a laced coat *et tres bien mis*, attended by half a dozen servants, or, as Pope says,

“will run
The Lord knows whither in a chaise and one.”

I am, your’s &c.

[A] The Bishops in Spain are attended and waited upon by inferior clergy.

LETTER II.

June 25th, 1766.

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Before I leave Calais, let me remind you, that an English guinea is worth more than a *Louis d'or*; and observe, that the first question *my friend Mons. Dessein*, at the *Hotel D'Angleterre* will put to you, (after he has made his bow, and given you a side look, as a cock does at a barley-corn) is, whether you have any guineas to change? because he gets by each guinea, full weight, ten *Sols*. By this hint, you will conclude, he will not, upon your return, ask you for your French Gold; but in this too you will be mistaken, for he finds an advantage in that also; he will, not indeed give you guineas, but, in lieu thereof, he has always a large quantity of *Birmingham Shillings*, to truck with you for your *Louis d'ors*. I am afraid, when Lord North took into consideration the state of the gold coin, he did not know, that the better state it is put into in England, is the surest means of transporting it into France, and other countries; and that scarce a single guinea which travellers carry with them to France, (and many hundred go every week) ever returns to England: Beside this, the quantity of gold carried over to the ports of *Dunkirk*, *Boulogne*, and *Calais*, by the Smugglers, who always pay ready money, is incredible; but as money, and matters of that kind, are what I have but *little concern in*, I will not enlarge upon a subject no way interesting to me, and shall only observe, that my landlord, *Mons. Dessein*, who was behind-hand with the world ten years ago, is now become one of the richest men in *Calais*, has built a little Theatre in his garden, and has united the profitable business of a Banker, to that of a Publican; and by studying the *Gout* of the English nation, and changing their gold into French currency, has made, they say, a *Demi Plumb*.

Notwithstanding the contiguity of *Calais* to England, and the great quantity of poultry, vegetables, game, &c. which are bought up every market-day, and conveyed to your coast, I am inclined to believe, there are not many parts of France where a man, who has but little money, can make it go further than in this town; nor is there any town in England, where the fishery is conducted with so much industry.

Yesterday I visited my unfortunate daughter, at the convent at *Ardres*;—but why do I say unfortunate? She is unfortunate only, in the eyes of the world, not in her own; nor indeed in mine, because she assured me she is happy. I left her here, you know, ten years ago, by way of education, and learning the language; but the small-pox, which seized her soon after, made such havock on a face, rather favoured by nature, that she desired to hide it from the world, and spend her life in that retirement, which I had chosen only to qualify her *for* the world. I left her a child; I found her a sensible woman; full of affection and duty; and her mangled and seamed face, so softened by an easy mind, and

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a good conscience, that she appeared in my partial eyes, rather an agreeable than a plain woman; but she did not omit to signify to me, that what others considered her misfortune, she considered (as it was not her fault) a happy circumstance; “if my face is plain (said she) my heart is light, and I am sure it will make as good a figure in the earth, as the fairest, and most beautiful.” My only concern is, that I find the *Prieure* of this convent, either for want of more knowledge, or more money, or both, had received, as parlour boarders, some English ladies of very suspicious characters. As the conversation of such women might interrupt, and disturb that peace and tranquillity of mind, in which I found my daughter, I told the *Prieure* my sentiments on that subject, not only with freedom, but with some degree of severity; and endeavoured to convince her, how very unwarrantably, if not irreligiously she acted. An abandoned, or vicious woman, may paint the pleasures of this world in such gaudy colours, to a poor innocent Nun, so as to induce her to forget, or become less attentive to the professions she has made to the next.

It was near this town, you know, that the famous interview passed between Henry the Eighth, and *Francis* the First, in the year 1520; and though it lasted twenty-eight days, and was an event which produced at that time so many amusements to all present, and so much conversation throughout Europe, the inhabitants of this, town, or Calais, seem to know little of it, but that one of the bastions at *Ardres* is called the Bastion of the Two Kings.—There still remains, however, in the front of one of the houses in *Calais*, upon an ornamented stone, cut in old letter,

=God Save the King=;

And I suppose that stone was put, where it now remains, by some loyal subject, before the King arrived, as it is in a street which leads from the gate (now stopped up) which Henry passed through.

LETTER III.

In a very few days I shall leave this town, and having procured letters of recommendation from some men of fashion, now in England, to their friends in *Spain*, I am determined to traverse this, and make a little tour into that kingdom; so you may expect something more from me, than merely such remarks as may be useful to you on any future tour you make in France; I mean to conduct you at least over the *Pyrenean* hills to *Barcelona*; for, though I have been two or three times before in Spain, it was early in life, and when my mind was more employed in observing the *customs* and *manors* of the birds, and beasts of the field, than of their lords and masters, and made too, on the other side of that kingdom. Having seen as much of Paris as I desired,

some years ago, I intend to pass through the provinces of *Artois*, *Champagne*, *Bourgogne*, and so on to *Lyons*; by which route you will perceive, I

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shall leave the capital of this kingdom many leagues on my right hand, and see some considerable towns, and taste now and then of the most delicious wines, on the spots which produce them; beside this, I have a great desire to see the remains of a Roman subterranean town, lately discovered in *Champaigne*, which perhaps may gratify my curiosity in some degree, and thereby lessen that desire I have: long had of visiting *Herculaneum*, an *under-ground* town you know, I always said I would visit, if a certain person happened to be put *under-ground* before me; but the CAUSE, and the event, in all human affairs, are not to be fathomed by men; for though the event happened, the *cause* frustrated my design; and I must cross the *Pyraenean* not the *Alpian* hills. But lest I forget it, let me tell you, that as my travelling must be upon the frugal plan, I have sold my four-wheel post-chaise, to *Mons. Dessein*, for twenty-two guineas, and bought a French *cabriolet*, for ten, and likewise a very handsome English coach-horse, (a little touched in the wind indeed) for seven. This equipage I have fitted up with every convenience I can contrive, to carry me, my wife, two daughters, and all my *other* baggage; you will conclude therefore, *light* as the latter may be, we are *bien charge*; but as we move slowly, not above seven leagues a day, I shall have the more leisure to look about me, and to consider what sort of remarks may prove most worthy of communicating from time to time to you. I shall be glad to leave this town, though it is in one respect, something like your's,[B] everyday producing many *strange faces*, and some very agreeable acquaintance. The arrival of the packet-boats from Dover constitutes the principal amusement of this town.

[B] BATH.

The greater part of the English *transports* who come over, do not proceed much further than to see the tobacco plantations near *St. Omer's*; nor is their return home less entertaining than their arrival, as many of them are people of such *quick parts*, that they acquire, in a week's tour to *Dunkirk*, *Bologne*, and *St. Omer's*, the *language*, dress and manners of the country. You must not, however, expect to hear again from me, till I am further *a-field*. But lest I forget to mention it in a future letter, let me refresh your memory, as to your conduct at Dover, at Sea, and at *Calais*. In the first of these three disagreeable places, (and the first is the worst) you will soon be applied to by one of the Captains of the packets, or bye-boats, and if you hire the boat to yourself, he will demand five guineas; if you treat with another, it is all one, because they are all, except one, partners and equally interested; and therefore will abate nothing. Captain Watson is the only one who *swims upon his own bottom*; and as he is a good seaman, and has a clean, convenient, nay an elegant vessel, I would

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rather turn the scale in his favour, because I am, as you will be, an enemy to all associations which have a tendency to imposition upon the public, and oppression to such who will not join in the general confederacy; yet I must, in justice to the Captains of the confederate party, acknowledge, that their vessels are all good; *well found*; and that they are civil, decent-behaved men. As it is natural for them to endeavour to make the most of each *trip*, they will, if they can, foist a few passengers upon you, even after you have taken the vessel to your own use only. If you are alone, this intrusion is not agreeable, but if you have ladies with you, never submit to it; if they introduce men, who appear like gentlemen upon your vessel, you cannot avoid treating them as such; if women, you cannot avoid treating them with more attention than may be convenient, because they *are* women; but were it only in consideration of the sea-sickness and its *consequences*, can any thing be more disagreeable than to admit people to *pot* and *porringer* with you, in a small close cabin, with whom you would neither eat, drink, or converse, in any other place? but these are not the only reasons; every gentleman going to France should avoid making new acquaintance, at Dover, at Sea, or at *Calais*: many *adventurers* are always passing, and many honest men are often led into grievous and dangerous situations by such inconsiderate connections; nay, the best, and wisest men, are the most liable to be off their guard, and therefore you will excuse my pointing it out to you.

I could indeed relate some alarming consequences, nay, some fatal ones, which have befallen men of honour and character in this country, from such unguarded connections; and such as they would not have been drawn into, on the other side of the “*invidious Streight*.” When an Englishman leaves his own country, and is got no further from it than to this town, he looks back upon it with an eye of partial affection; no wonder then, if he feels more disposed to be kind to a countryman and a stranger he may meet in this.—I do not think it would be difficult to point out, what degree of intimacy would arise between two men who knew but little of each other, according to the part of the world they were to meet in.—I remember the time, when I only knew your person, and coveted your acquaintance; at that time we lived in the same town, knew each other’s general character, but passed without speaking, or even the compliment of the hat; yet had we met in London, we should certainly have taken some civil notice of each other: had the interview been at York, it is five to one but it would have produced a conversation: at Edinburgh, or Dublin, we should have dined, or gone to the play together: but if we had met at Barbadoes, I should have been invited to spend a month at your PENN, and experienced many of those marks of hospitality, friendship, and

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generosity, I have found from the Creoles in general. When you get upon the French coast, the packet brings to, and is soon boarded by a French boat, to carry the passengers on shore; this passage is much longer than it appears to be, is always disagreeable, and sometimes dangerous; and the landing, if the water be very low, intolerable: in this case, never mind the advice of the Captain; his advice is, and must be regulated by his *own* and his owner's interest, more than your convenience; therefore stay on board till there is water enough to sail up to the town, and be landed by a plank laid from the packet to the shore, and do not suffer any body to persuade you to go into a boat, or to be put on shore, by any other method, tho' the *packet-men* and the *Frenchmen* unite to persuade you so to do, because they are mutually benefited by putting you to more expence, and the latter are entertained with seeing your cloaths dirted, or the ladies *frighted*. If most of the packet-boats are in *Calais* harbour, your Captain will use every argument in his power to persuade you to go on shore, in the French boat, because he will, in that case, return directly to Dover, and thereby save eight-and-twenty shillings port duty. When we came over, I prevailed upon a large company to stay on board till there was water enough to sail into the harbour: it is not in the power of the Captain to deceive you as to that matter, because there is a red flag hoisted gradually higher and higher, as the water flows into the harbour, at a little fort which stands upon *stilts* near the entrance of it. When you are got on shore, go directly to *Dessein's*; and be in no trouble about your baggage, horses, or coach; the former will be all carried, by men appointed for that purpose, safely to the Custom-house, and the latter wheeled up to your *Hotel*, where you will sit down more quietly, and be entertained more decently, than at Dover.

LETTER IV.

RHEIMS, in Champagne.

Little or nothing occurred to me worth remarking to you on my journey hither, but that the province of *Artois* is a fine corn country, and that the French farmers seem to understand that business perfectly well. I was surprised to find, near *St. Omer's*, large plantations of tobacco, which had all the vigour and healthy appearance of that which I have seen grow in *poor* America. On my way here, (like the countryman in London, in gazing about) I missed my road; but a civil, and, in appearance, a substantial farmer, conducted us half a league over the fields, and marked out the course to get into it again, without returning directly back, a circumstance I much hate, though perhaps it might have been the shorter way. However, before I gained the high road, I stumbled upon a private one, which led us into a little village pleasantly situated, and inhabited by none other but

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the poorest peasants; whose tattered habits, wretched houses, and smiling countenances, convinced me, that chearfulness and contentment shake hands oftener under thatched than painted roofs. We found one of these villagers as ready to boil our tea-kettle, provide butter, milk, &c. as we were for our breakfasts; and during the preparation of it, I believe every man, woman, and child of the hamlet, was come down to *look at us*; for beside that wonderful curiosity common to this whole nation, the inhabitants of this village had never before seen an Englishman; they had heard indeed often of the country, they said, and that it was *un pays tres riche*. There was such a general delight in the faces of every age, and so much civility, I was going to say politeness, shewn to us, that I caught a temporary chearfulness in this village, which I had not felt for some months before, and which I intend to carry with me. I therefore took out my guittar, and played till I set the whole assembly in motion; and some, in spite of their wooden shoes, and others without any, danced in a manner not to be seen among our English peasants. They had “shoes like a sauce-boat,” but no “steeple-clock’d hose.” While we breakfasted, one of the villagers fed my horse with some fresh-mowed hay, and it was with some difficulty I could prevail upon him to be paid for it, because the trifle I offered was much more than his *Court of Conscience* informed him it was worth. I could moralize here a little; but I will only ask you, in which state think you man is best; the untaught man, in that of nature, or the man whose mind is enlarged by education and a knowledge of the world? The behaviour of the inhabitants of this little hamlet had a very forcible effect upon me; because it brought me back to my earlier days, and reminded me of the reception I met with in America by what we now call the *Savage* Indians; yet I have been received in the same courteous manner in a little hamlet, unarmed, and without any other protection but by the law of nature, by those *savages*;—indeed it was before the *Savages of Europe* had instructed them in the art of war, or Mr. Whitfield had preached *methodism* among them. Therefore, I only tell you what they *were* in 1735, not what they *are at present*. When I visited them, they walked in the flowery paths of Nature; now, I fear, they tread the polluted roads of blood. Perhaps of all the uncivilized nations under the sun, the native Indians of America *were* the most humane; I have seen an hundred instances of their humanity and integrity;—when a white man was under the lash of the executioner, at *Savannah in Georgia*, for using an Indian woman ill, I saw *Torno Chaci*, their King, run in between the offender and the corrector, saying, “*whip me, not him*;”—the King was the complainant, indeed, but the man deserved a much severer chastisement. This was a *Savage King*. Christian Kings too often care not who is whipt, so they escape the smart.

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LETTER V.

RHEIMS.

We arrived at this city before the bustle which the coronation of *Louis* the 16th occasioned was quite over; I am sorry I did not see it, because I now find it worth seeing; but I staid at *Calais* on purpose to avoid it; for having paid two guineas to see the coronation of George the Third, I determined never more to be put to any extraordinary expence on the score of *crowned heads*. However, my curiosity has been well gratified in hearing it talked over, and over again, and in reading *Marmontell's* letter to a friend upon that subject; but I will not repeat what he, or others have said upon the occasion, because you have, no doubt, seen in the English papers a tolerably good one; only that the Queen was so overcome with the repeated shouts and plaudits of her new subjects, that she was obliged to retire. The fine Gothic cathedral, in which the ceremony was performed, is indeed a church worthy of such a solemnity; the portal is the finest I ever beheld; the windows are painted in the very best manner; nor is there any thing within the church but what should be there. I need not tell you that this is the province which produces the most delicious wine in the world; but I will assure you, that I should have drank it with more pleasure, had you been here to have partook of it. In the cellars of one wine-merchant, I was conducted through long passages more like streets than caves; on each side of which, bottled *Champaigne* was piled up some feet higher than my head, and at least twelve deep. I bought two bottles to taste, of that which the merchant assured me was each of the best sort he had, and for which I paid him six livres: if he sells all he had in bottles at that time, and at the same price, I shall not exceed the bounds of truth if I say, I saw ten thousand pounds worth of bottled *Champaigne* in his cellars. Neither of the bottles, however, contained wine so good as I often drank in England; but perhaps we are deceived, and find it more palatable by having sugar in it; for I suspect that most of the *Champaigne* which is bottled for the use of English consumption, is so prepared. That you may know however, for the future, whether *Champaigne* or any other wine is so adulterated, I will give you an infallible method to prove:—fill a small long-necked bottle with the wine you would prove, and invert the neck of it into a tumbler of clear water; if the wine be genuine, it will all remain in the bottle; if adulterated, with sugar, honey, or any other sweet substance, the sweets will all pass into the tumbler of water, and leave the genuine wine behind. The difference between still *Champaigne*, and that which is *mousser*, is owing to nothing more than the time of the year in which it is bottled.

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I found in this town an English gentleman, from whom we received many civilities, and who made us acquainted with a French gentleman and lady, whose partiality to the English nation is so great, that their neighbours call their house "THE ENGLISH HOTEL." The partiality of such a family is a very flattering, as well as a very pleasing circumstance, to those who are so happy to be known to them, because they are not only the first people in the town, but the *best*; and in point of talents, inferior to none, perhaps, in the kingdom. I must not, after saying so much, omit to tell you, it is *Monsieur & Madame de Jardin*, of whom I speak; they live in the GRANDE PLACE, *vis-a-vis* the statue of the King; and if ever you come to Rheims, be assured you will find it a GOOD PLACE. *Madame de Jardin* is not only one of the highest-bred women in France, but one of the first in point of letters, and that is saying a great deal, for France abounds more with women of that turn than England. Mrs. Macaulay, Mrs. Carter, Miss Aikin, and Mrs. Montague, are the only four ladies I can recollect in England who are celebrated for their literary genius; in France, I could find you a score or two. To give you some idea of the regard and affection *Mons. de Jardin* has for his wife,—for French husbands, now and then, love their wives as well as we Englishmen do,—I send you a line I found in his study, wrote under his lady's miniature picture:

"Chaque instant a mes yeux la rend
Plus estimable."

This town stands in a vast plain, is of great extent, and enclosed within high walls, and a deep ditch. The public walks are of great extent, nobly planted, and the finest in the whole kingdom. It is, indeed, a large and opulent city, and abounds not only with the best wine, but every thing that is good; and every thing is plenty, and consequently cheap. The fruit market, in particular, is superior to every thing of the kind I ever beheld; but I will not tantalize you by saying any more upon that subject. Adieu!

P.S. The Antiquarian will find amusement in this town. There are some Roman remains worthy of notice; but such as require the information of the inhabitant to be seen.

LETTER VI.

DIJON.

You will laugh, perhaps, when I tell you, I could hardly refrain from tears when I took leave of the *De Jardin* family at *Rheims*,—but so it was. Good-breeding, and attention, have so much the appearance of friendship, that they may, and often do, deceive the most discerning men;—no wonder, then, if I was unhappy in leaving a town, where I am sure I met with the first, and had some reason to believe I should have found the latter, had we staid to cultivate it. *Bourgogne* is, however, a much finer province than Champagne; and this town is delightfully situated; that it is a cheap province, you will not doubt, even to English travellers, when

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I tell you, that I had a good supper for four persons, three decent beds, good hay, and plenty of corn, for my horse, at an inn upon this road, and was charged only four livres ten sols! not quite four shillings. Nor was it owing to any mistake; for I lay the following night at just such another inn, and was charged just the same price for nearly the same entertainment. They were carriers' inns, indeed, but I know not whether they were not, upon the whole, better, and cleaner too, than some of the town *auberges*. I need not therefore tell you, I was straggled a little out of *le Route Anglois*, when I found such a *bon Marche*.

Dijon is pleasantly situated, well built, and the country round about it is as beautiful as nature could well make it. The shady walks round the whole town are very pleasing, and command a view of the adjacent country. The excellence of the wine of this province, you are better acquainted with than I am; though I must confess, I have drank better burgundy in England than I have yet tasted here: but I am not surprized at that; for at Madeira I could not get wine that was even tolerable.

I found here, two genteel English gentlemen, Mess. Plowden and Smyth, from whom we received many marks of attention and politeness.—Here, I imagined I should be able to bear seeing the execution of a man, whose crimes merited, I thought, the severest punishment. He was broke upon the wheel; so it is called; but the wheel is what the body is fixed upon to be exposed on the high road after the execution. This man's body, however, was burnt. The miserable wretch (a young strong man) was brought in the evening, by a faint torch light, to a chapel near the place of execution, where he might have continued in prayer till midnight; but after one hour spent there, he walked to, and mounted the scaffold, accompanied by his confessor, who with great earnestness continually presented to him, and bade him kiss, the crucifix he carried in his hand. When the prisoner came upon the scaffold, he very willingly laid himself upon his back, and extended his arms and legs over a cross, that was laid flat and fixed fast upon the scaffold for that purpose, and to which he was securely tied by the executioner and his mother, who assisted her son in this horrid business. Part of the cross was cut away, in eight places, so as to leave a hollow vacancy where the blows were to be given, which are, between the shoulder and elbow, elbow and wrist, thigh and knee, and knee and ancle. When the man was securely tied down, the end of a rope which was round his neck, with a running noose, was brought through a hole in and under the scaffold; this was to give the *Coup de Grace*, after breaking: a *Coup* which relieved him, and all the agitated spectators, from an infinite degree of misery, except only, the executioner and his mother, for they both seemed to enjoy the deadly office. When the blows were given, which were made with a heavy piece of iron, in the

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form of a butcher's cleaver without an edge, the bones of the arms and legs were broke in eight places; at each blow, the sufferer called out, O God! without saying another word, or even uttering a groan. During all this time, the Confessor called upon him continually to kiss the cross, and to remember Christ, his Redeemer. Indeed, there was infinite address, as well as piety, in the conduct of the Confessor; for he would not permit this miserable wretch to have one moment's reflection about his bodily sufferings, while a matter of so much more importance was depending; but even those eight blows seemed nothing to two dreadful after-claps, for the executioner then untied the body, turned his back upwards, and gave him two blows on the small of the back with the same iron weapon; and yet even that did not put an end to the life and sufferings of the malefactor! for the finishing stroke was, after all this, done by the halter, and then the body was thrown into a great fire, and consumed to ashes. There were two or three executions soon after, but of a more moderate kind. Yet I hope I need not tell you, that I shall never attend another; and would feign have made my escape from this, but it was impossible.—Here, too, I saw upwards of fourscore criminals linked together, by one long chain, and so they were to continue till they arrived in the galleys at *Marseilles*. Now I am sure you will be, as I was, astonished to think, an old woman, the mother of the executioner, should willingly assist in a business of so horrid a nature; and I dare say, you will be equally astonished that the magistrates of the city permitted it. Decency, and regard to the sex, alone, one would think, should have put a stop to a practice so repugnant to both; and yet perhaps, not one person in the town considered it in that light. Indeed, no other person would have assisted, and the executioner must have done all the business himself, if his mother had not been one of that part of the *fair* sex, which Addison pleasantly mentions, "*as rakers of cinders*;" for the executioner could not have found a single person to have given him any assistance. There was a guard of the *Marechaussee*, to prevent the prisoners' escape; but none that would have lifted up a little finger towards forwarding the execution; the office is hereditary and infamous, and the officer is shut out of all society. His perquisites, however, were considerable; near ten pounds, I think, for this single execution; and he had a great deal more business coming on. I would not have given myself the pain of relating, nor you the reading, the particulars of this horrid affair, but to observe, that it is such examples as these, that render travelling in France, in general, secure. I say, in general; for there are, nevertheless, murders committed very frequently upon the high roads in France; and were those murders to be made known by news-papers, as ours are in England, perhaps it would greatly intimidate

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travellers of their own, as well as other nations. But as the murdered, and murderers, are generally foot-travellers, though the dead body is found, the murderer is escaped; and as nobody knows either party, nobody troubles themselves about it. All over France, you meet with an infinite number of people travelling on foot, much better dressed than you find, in general, the stagecoach gentry in England. Most of these foot-travellers are young expensive tradesmen, and artists, who have paid their debts by a light pair of heels; when their money is exhausted, the stronger falls upon the weaker, knocks out his brains, and furnishes himself with a little money; and these murders are never scarce heard of above a league from the place where they are committed; for which reason, you never meet a foot-traveller in France, without arms, of one kind or other, and carried for one *purpose*, or the *other*. Gentlemen, however, who travel only in the day-time, and who are armed, have but little danger to apprehend; yet it is necessary to be upon their guard when they pass through great woods, and to keep in the *middle* of the road, so as not to be too suddenly surprized; because a *convenient* opportunity may induce two or three *honest* travellers to embrace a favourable occasion of replenishing their purses; and as they always murder those whom they attack, if they can, those who are attacked should never submit, but defend themselves to the utmost of their power. Though the woods are dangerous, there are, in my opinion, plains which are much more so; a high hill which commands an extensive plain, from which there is a view of the road some miles, both ways, is a place where a robber has nothing to fear but from those whom he attacks; and he is morally certain of making his escape one way or the other: but in a wood, he may be as suddenly surprized, as he is in a situation to surprize others; for this reason, I have been more on my guard when I have seen people approach me on an extensive plain, than when I have passed through deep woods; nor would I ever let any of those people come too near my chaise; I always shewed them the *utmost distance*, and made them return the compliment, by bidding them, if they offered to come out of their line, to keep off: this said in a peremptory manner, and with a stern look, is never taken ill by honest men, and has a forcible effect upon rascals, for they immediately conclude you think yourself superior to them, and then they will think so too: whatever comes unexpected, is apt to dismay; whole armies have been seized with a panic from the most trifling artifice of the opposite general, and such as, by a minute's reflection, would have produced a contrary effect: the King's troops gave way at Falkirk; the reason was, they were dismayed at seeing the rebels (*I beg pardon*) come down *pell mell* to attack them with their broad swords! it was a new way of fighting, and, they weakly thought, an invincible one;

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but had General Cope previously rode through the ranks, and apprised the troops with the manner of their fighting, and assured them how feeble the effect of such weapons would be upon men armed with musket and bayonet, which is exactly the truth, not a man would have retired; yet, *trim-tram*, they all ran, and the General, it is said, gave the earliest notice of his own defeat! But I should have observed, above, that the laws of France being different, in different provinces, have the contrary effect in the southern parts, to what they were intended. The *Seigneur* on whose land a murdered body is found, is obliged to pay the expence of bringing the criminal to justice. Some of these lordships are very small; and the prosecuting a murderer to punishment, would cost the lord of the manor more than his whole year's income; it becomes his interest, therefore, to hide the dead body, rather than pursue the living villain; and, as whoever has property, be it ever so small, has peasants about him who will be glad to obtain his favour, he is sure that when any of these peasants see a murdered body, they will give him the earliest notice, and the same night the body is for ever hid, and no enquiry is made after the offender. I saw hang on the road side, a family of nine, a man, his wife, and seven children, who had lived many years by murder and robberies; and I am persuaded that road murders are very common in France; yet people of any condition may nevertheless, travel through France with great safety, and always obtain a guard of the *Marechaussee*, through woods or forests, or where they apprehend there is any danger.

P.S. The following method of buying and selling the wine of this province, may be useful to you.

To have good Burgundy, that is, wine *de la premiere tete*, as they term it, you must buy it from 400 to 700 livres. There are wines still dearer, up to 1000 or 1200 livres; but it is allowed, that beyond 700 livres, the quality is not in proportion to the price; and that it is in great measure a matter of fancy.

The carriage of a queue of wine from Dijon to Dunkirk, or to any frontier town near England, costs an hundred livres, something more than four sols a bottle; but if sent in the bottle, the carriage will be just double. The price of the bottles, hampers, package, &c. will again increase the expence to six sols a bottle more; so that wine which at first cost 600 livres, or 25 sols a bottle, will, when delivered at Dunkirk, be worth 29 sols a bottle, if bought in cask; if in bottles, 39 sols.—Now add to this the freight, duties, &c. to London; and as many pounds sterling as all these expences amount to upon a queue of wine, just so many French sols must be charged to the price of every bottle. The reduction of French sols to English sterling money is very plain, and of course the price of the best burgundy delivered in London, easily calculated.

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If the wine be sent in casks, it is adviseable to choose rather a stronger wine, because it will mellow, and form itself in the carriage. It should be double casked, to prevent as much as possible, the frauds of the carriers. This operation will cost six or eight livres per piece; but the great and principal object is, whom to trust to buy the best; and convey it safely. I doubt, it must not pass through the hands of *Mons. C*——, if he deals in wine as he does in drapery, and bills of exchange.

LETTER VII.

LYONS.

Upon our arrival at *Chalons*, I was much disappointed; as I intended to have embarked on the *Soane*, and have slipped down here in the *coche d'eau*, and thereby have saved my horse the fatigue of dragging us hither: but I could only spare him that of drawing my heaviest baggage. The *coche d'eau* is too small to take horses and *cabriolets* on board at *Chalons*; but at *Lyons*, they will take horses, and coaches, or houses, and churches, if they could be put on board, to descend the Rhone, to *Pont St. Esprit*, or *Avignon*. So after we have taken a fortnight's rest here, I intend rolling down with the rapid current, which the united force of those two mighty rivers renders, as I am assured, a short, easy, and delightful passage.

Nothing can be more beautiful than the country we passed through from *Chalons* hither. When we got within a few leagues of this great city, we found every mountain, hill, and dale, so covered with *chateaux*, country houses, farms, &c. that they appeared like towns, villages, and hamlets. Nothing can be a stronger proof of the great wealth of the citizens of *Lyons*, than that they can afford to build such houses, many of which are more like palaces, than the country retreat of *bourgeois*. The prospect from the highest part of the road, a league or two from Lyons, is so extensive, so picturesque, and so enchantingly beautiful, that, impatient as I was to enter into the town, I could not refrain stopping at a little shabby wine-house, and drinking coffee under their mulberry-trees, to enjoy the warm day, the cooling breeze, and the noble prospects which every way surrounded us.

The town of *Lyons*, too, which stands nearly in the center of Europe, has every advantage for trade, which men in trade can desire. The *Soane* runs through the centre of it, and is covered with barges and boats, loaded with hay, wood, corn, and an infinite variety of goods from all parts of the kingdom; while the *Rhone*, on the other side, is still more serviceable; for it not only supplies the town with all the above necessities of life, but conveys its various manufactures down to the ports of the *Mediterranean* sea expeditiously, and at little expence. The small boats, which ply upon the *Soane* as ours do upon the Thames, are flat

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bottomed, and very meanly built; they have, however, a tilt to shelter them from the heat, and to preserve the complexion, or hide the *blushes* of your female *Patronne*:—yes, my dear Sir, Female!—for they are all conducted by females; many of whom are young, handsome, and neatly dressed. I have, more than once, been disposed to blush, when I saw a pretty woman sitting just opposite me, labouring in an action which I thought would have been more becoming myself. I asked one of these female *sculls*, how she got her bread in the winter? Oh, Sir, said she giving me a very significant look, such a one as you can better conceive, than I convey, *dans l'hiver J'ai un autre talent*. And I assure you I was glad she did not exercise *both her talents* at the same time of the year; yet I could not refrain from giving her a double fee, for a single fare, as I thought there was something due to her *winter* as well as summer abilities.

But I must not let my little *Bateliere*'s talents prevent me, while I think of it, telling you, that I did visit, and stay some days at the Roman town lately discovered in Champagne, which I mentioned to you in a former letter: it stood upon a mountain, now called the *Chatelet*, the foot of which is watered by a good river, and its sides with *good wine*. *Monsieur Grignon*, whose house stands very near it, and who has there an iron manufacture, first discovered the remains of this ancient town; his men, in digging for iron ore, found wrought gold, beside other things, which convinced *Mons. Grignon* (who is a man of genius) that it was necessary to inform the King with what they had discovered; in consequence of which, his Majesty ordered the foundations to be laid open; and I had the satisfaction of seeing in *Mons. Grignon*'s cabinet an infinite number of Roman utensils, such as weights, measures, kitchen furniture, vases, busts, locks, swords, inscriptions, pottery ware, statues, &c. which afforded me, and would you, a great deal of pleasure, as well as information. *Mons. Grignon* the elder, was gone to Paris; a circumstance which gave me great concern to hear before I went to his house, but which was soon removed by the politeness, and hospitable manner I was received by his son: yet, my only recommendation to either, was my being a stranger; and being a stranger is, in general, a good recommendation to a Frenchman, for, upon all such occasions, they are never shy, or backward in communicating what they know, or of gratifying the curiosity of an inquisitive traveller; their houses, cabinets, and gardens, are always open; and they seem rather to think they receive, than grant a favour, to those who visit them. How many fine gardens, valuable cabinets, and curiosities, have we in England, so shut up, that the difficulty of access renders them as unentertaining to the public, as they are to the sordid and selfish possessors! I am thoroughly

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satisfied that the town I am speaking of was destroyed by fire, and not, as has been imagined, by any convulsion of the earth, as I found, among a hundred other strong proofs of it, an infinite number of pieces of melted glass, lead, &c. But though I examined the cellars of eight hundred Roman citizens, the selfish rogues had not left a single bottle of wine.—I longed to taste the *old Falernian* wine, of seventeen hundred years.

I write from time to time to you; but not without often thinking it is a great presumption in me to suppose I can either entertain or instruct you; but I proceed, upon your commands, and the authority of Lord Bacon, who says, he is surprised to find men make diaries in sea voyages, where nothing is to be seen but sky and sea, and for the most part omit it in land travels, where so much is to be observed; as if chance were better to be registered than observation. When you are tired of my register, remember, I can *take* as well as *give a hint*.

LETTER VIII.

PORT ST. ESPRIT.

After a voyage of one whole, and one half day, without sail or oar, we arrived here from Lyons. The weather was just such as we could wish and such as did not drive us out of the seat of my *cabriolet* into the cabin, which was full of priests, monks, friars, milleners, &c. a motley crew! who were very noisy, and what they thought, I dare say, very good company; the deck, indeed, afforded better and purer air; three officers, and a priest; but it was not till late the first day before they took any civil notice of us; and if a Frenchman shews any backwardness of that sort, an Englishman, I think, had better *hold up*; this rule I always religiously observe. When the night came on, we landed in as much disorder as the troops were embarked at *St. Cas*, and lodged in a miserable *auberge*. It was therefore no mortification to be called forth for embarkation before daylight. The bad night's lodging was, however, amply made up to us, by the beautiful and picturesque objects and variety which every minute produced. For the banks of this mighty river are not only charged on both sides with a great number of towns, villages, castles, *chateaux*, and farm-houses; but the ragged and broken mountains above, and fertile vales between and beneath, altogether exhibit a mixture of delight and astonishment, which cannot be described, unless I had Gainsborough's elegant pencil, instead of my own clumsy pen. Upon comparing notes, we found that the officers, (and no men understand the *etiquette* of travelling better than they do,) had not fared much better than we had; one of them therefore proposed, that we should all sup together that night at *Pont St.-Esprit*, where, he assured us, there was one of the best cooks in France, and he would undertake to regulate the supper at a reasonable price. This was the first time we had eat with

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other company, though it is the general practice in the southern parts of France. Upon entering the house, where this *Maitre Cuisinier* and prime minister of the kitchen presided, I began to conceive but an indifferent opinion of the Major's judgment; the house, the kitchen, the cook, were, in appearance, all against it; yet, in spite of all, I never sat down to so good a supper; and should be sorry to sit often at table, where such a one was set before me. I will not—nay, I cannot tell you what we had; but you will be surprised to know what we paid,—what think you of three livres each? when I assure you, such a supper, if it were to be procured in London, could not be provided for a guinea a head! and we were only seven who sat down to it.

I must not omit to tell you, that all the second day's voyage we heard much talk of the danger there would be in passing the Bridge of *Pont St. Esprit*; and that many horses and men landed some miles before we arrived there, choosing rather to walk or ride in the hot sun, than swim through *so much danger*. Yet the truth is, there was none; and, I believe, seldom is any. The *Patron* of the barge, indeed, made a great noise, and affected to shew how much skill was necessary to guide it through the main arch, for I think the bridge consists of thirty; yet the current itself must carry every thing through that approaches it, and he must have skill, indeed, who could avoid it. There was not in the least degree any fall; but yet, it passed through with such violence, that we run half a league in a minute; and very soon after landed at the town of Pont. St. Esprit, which has nothing in it very remarkable, but this long bridge, the good cook, and the first olive tree we had seen.

This is Lower *Languedoc*, you know, and the province in which ten thousand pounds were lately distributed by the sagacious Chancellor of England, among an hundred French peasants; and though I was *weak enough* to think it *my property*, I am not wicked enough to envy them their good fortune. If the decision made one man wretched; it made the hearts of many glad; and I should be pleased to drink a bottle of wine with any of my fortunate cousins, and will if I can find them out; for they are my cousins; and I would shake an honest cousin by the hand tho' he were in wooden shoes, with more pleasure than I would the honest Chancellor, who put them *so unexpectedly* upon a better footing. I think, by the *laws* of England, no money is to be transported into other kingdoms; by the JUSTICE of it, it may, and is;—if so, law and justice are still at variance; which puts me in mind of what a great man once said upon reading the confirmation of a decree in the House of Lords, from an Irish appeal:—"It is (said he) so very absurd, inconsistent, and intricate, that, in truth, I am afraid it is really made according to law."

LETTER IX.

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NISMES.

On our way here we eat an humble meal; which was, nevertheless, a most grateful *repas*, for it was under the principal arch of the *Pont du Gard*. It will be needless to say more to you of this noble monument of antiquity, than that the modern addition to it has not only made it more durable, but more useful: in its original state, it conveyed only horse and man, over the River *Gordon*, (perhaps *Gardon*) and water, to the city of *Nismes*. By the modern addition, it now conveys every thing over it, but water; as well as an high idea of Roman magnificence; for beside the immense expence of erecting a bridge of a triple range of arches, over a river, and thereby uniting the upper arches to the mountains on each side, the source from whence the water was conveyed, is six leagues distant from *Nismes*. The bridge is twenty-four *toises* high, and above an hundred and thirty-three in length, and was *my sole property* for near three hours; for during that time, I saw neither man nor beast come near it; every thing was so still and quiet, except the murmuring stream which runs gently under two or three of the arches, that I could almost have persuaded myself, from the silence, and rude scenes which every way presented themselves, that all the world were as dead as the men who erected it. That side of the bridge where none of the modern additions appear, is nobly fillagreed by the hand of time; and the other side is equally pleasing, by being a well executed support to a building which, without its aid, would in a few ages more have fallen into ruins.

I was astonished to find so fine a building standing in so pleasant a spot, and which offers so many invitations to make it the abode of some hermit, quite destitute of such an inhabitant; but it did not afford even a beggar, to tell the strange stories which the common people relate; tho' it could not fail of being a very lucrative post, were it only from the bounty of strangers, who visit it out of curiosity; but a Frenchman, whether monk, or mumper, has no idea of a life of solitude: yet I am sure, were it in England, there are many of our, *first-rate beggars*, who would lay down a large sum for a money of *such a walk*. If a moiety of sweeping the kennel from the Mews-gate to the Irish coffee-house opposite to it, could fetch a good price, and I was a witness once that it did, to an unfortunate beggar-woman, who was obliged by sickness to part with half of it; what might not a beggar expect, who had the *sweeping* of the *Pont du Gard*; or a monk, who erected a confessional box near it for the benefit of *himself*, and the fouts of poor travellers?

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After examining every part of the bridge, above and below, I could not find the least traces of any ancient inscription, except three initial letters, C, P, A; but I found cut in *demi relief* very extraordinary kind of *priapus*, or rather group of them; the country people, for it is much effaced, imagine it to be dogs in pursuit of a hare; but if I may be permitted to *imagine* too perhaps, indeed, with no better judgment, might not the kind of representations be emblematical of the populousness, of the country? though more probably the wanton fancies of the master mason, or his journeymen; for they are too diminutive pieces of work to bear any proportion to the whole, and are therefore blemishes, not ornaments, even allowing that in those ages such kind of works were not considered in the light they would be in these days of more delicacy and refinement.

LETTER X.

NISMES.

I have now been here some time, and have employed most of it, in visiting daily the *Maison Carree*, the *Amphitheatre*, the Temple of *Diana*, and other Roman remains, which this town abounds with above all others in France, and which is all the town affords worthy of notice, (for it is but a very indifferent one.) The greater part of the inhabitants are Protestants, who meet publicly between two rocks, at a little distance from the city, every Sunday, sometimes not less than eighteen thousand, where their pastors, openly and audibly, perform divine service, according to the rites of the reformed church: Such is the difference between the mild government of *Louis* the 16th, and that which was practised in the reign of his great grandfather. But reason and philosophy have made more rapid strides in France, within these few years, than the arts and sciences. It is, however, a great and mighty kingdom, blest with every convenience and comfort in life, as well as many luxuries, beside good wine; and good wine, drank in moderation (and *here* nobody drinks it otherwise) is not only an excellent cordial to the nerves, but I am persuaded it contributes to long life, and good health. Here, where wine and *eau de vie* is so plenty, and so cheap too, you seldom meet a drunken peasant, and never see a gentleman (*except he be a stranger*) in that shameful situation.

Perhaps there is not, on any part of the Continent, a city or town which has been so frequently sacked by foreign invaders, nor so deeply stained with human blood, by civil and religious wars, as this: every street and ancient building within its walls still exhibit many strong marks of the excesses committed by the hands of domestic as well as foreign barbarians, except only the Temple now called, and so called from its form, the *Maison Carree*, which has stood near eighteen hundred years, without receiving any other injuries than the injuries of time; and time has given it rather the face of age, than that of ruins,

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for it still stands firm and upright; and though not quite perfect in every part, yet it preserves all its due proportions, and enough of its original and lesser beauties, to astonish and delight every beholder, and that too in a very particular manner. It is said, and I have felt the truth of it in part, that there does not exist, at this day, any building, ancient or modern, which conveys so secret a pleasure, not only to the *connoisseur*, but to the clown also, whenever, or how often soever they approach it. The proportions and beauties of the whole building are so intimately united, that they may be compared to good breeding in men; it is what every body perceives, and is captivated with, but what few can define. That it has an irresistible beauty which delights men of sense, and which *charms* the eyes of the vulgar, I think must be admitted; for no other possible reason can be assigned why this building alone, standing in the very centre of a city, wherein every excess which religious fury could inspire, or barbarous manners could suggest, has stood so many ages the only uninsulted monument of antiquity, either within or without the walls; especially, as a very few men might, with very little labour, soon tumble it into a heap of rubbish.

The *Amphitheatre* has a thousand marks of violences committed upon it, by fire, sledges, battering rams, &c. which its great solidity and strength alone resisted.

The *Temple of Diana* is so nearly destroyed, that, in an age or two more no vestige of it will remain; but the *Maison Carree* is still so perfect and beautiful, that when *Cardinal Alberoni* first saw it, he said it wanted only *une boete d'or pour le defendre des injures de l'air*; and it certainly has received no other, than such as rain, and wind, and heat, and cold, have made upon it; and those are rather marks of dignity, than deformity. What reason else, then, can be assigned for its preservation to this day; but that the savage and the saint have been equally awed by its superlative beauty.

Having said thus much of the perfections of this edifice, I must however confess, it is not, nor ever was, perfect, for it has some original blemishes, but such as escape the observation of most men, who have not time to examine the parts separately, and with a critical eye. There are, for example, thirty modillions on the cornice, on one side and thirty-two on the other; there are sixty-two on the west side, and only fifty-four on the east; with some other little faults which its aged beauty justifies my omitting; for they are such perhaps as, if removed, would not add any thing to the general proportions of the whole. No-body objected to the moles on Lady Coventry's face; those specks were too trifling, where the *tout ensemble* was so perfect.

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Cardinal Richlieu, I am assured, had several consultations with builders of eminence, and architects of genius, to consider whether it was practicable to remove all the parts of this edifice, and re-erect it at *Versailles*: and, I have no doubt, but *Lewis the 14th* might have raised this monument to his fame there, for half the money he expended in murdering and driving out of that province sixty thousand of his faithful and ingenious subjects, merely on the score of Religion; an act, which is now equally abhorred by Catholics, as well as Protestants. But, *Lord Chesterfield* justly observes, that there is no brute so fierce, no criminal so guilty, as the creature called a Sovereign, whether King, Sultan, or Sophy; who thinks himself, either by divine or human right, vested with absolute power of destroying his fellow-creatures.

Louis the XIth of France caused the Duke of *Nemours*, a descendant of King *Clovis*, to be executed at Paris, and placed his children under the scaffold, that the blood of their father might run upon their heads; in which bloody condition they were returned to the Bastile, and there shut up in iron cages: and a King of SIAM, having lost his daughter, and fancying she was poisoned, put most of his court, young and old, to death, by the most exquisite torture; by this horrid act of cruelty, near two thousand of the principal courtiers suffered the most dreadful deaths; the great Mandarins, their wives, and children, being all scorched with fire, and mangled with knives, before they were admitted to his last favour,—that of being thrown to the elephants.

But to have done with sad subjects.—It was not till the year 1758 that it was certainly known at what time, or for what purpose, the *Maison Carree* was erected; but fortunately, the same town which produced the building so many ages ago, produced in the latter end of the last, a Gentleman, of whom it may be justly said, he left no stone unturned to come at the truth. This is *Mons. Seguier*, whose long life has been employed in collecting a cabinet of Roman antiquities, and natural curiosities, and whose penetrating genius alone could have discovered, by the means he did, an inscription, of which not a single letter has been seen for many ages; but this *habile observateur*, perceiving a great number of irregular holes upon the frontal and frize of this edifice, concluded that they were the cramp-holes which had formerly held an inscription, and which, according to the practice of the Romans, were often composed of single letters of bronze. *Mons. Seguier* therefore erected scaffolding, and took off on paper the distances and situation of the several holes, and after nicely examining the disposition of them, and being assisted by a few faint traces of some of the letters, which had been impressed on the stones, brought forth, to the full satisfaction of every body, the original inscription, which was laid before *l'Academie des Inscriptions & de Belles Lettres de Paris* of which he is a member, and from whom he received their public thanks; having unanimously agreed that there was not a doubt remained but that he had produced the true reading: which is as follows:

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|      TAUROBOLIO MATRIS DEUM MAGNAE IDAEAE      |
|      QUOD FACTUM EST EX IMPERIO                |
|      MATRIS IDAEAE DEUM                        |
|      PRO SALUTE IMPERATORIS CAESARIS          |
|      TITI AELII                                |
| ADRIANI ANTONINI AUGUSTI PII PATRIS PATRIAE    |
|      LIBERORUMQUE EJUS                        |
|      ET STATUS COLONIAE LUGDUNENSIS          |
|      LUCIUS AEMILIUS CARPUS SEXTUMVIS        |
|      AUGUSTALIS ITEM DENDROPHORUS          |
|
|      VIRES EXCEPIT ET A VATICANO              |
|      TRANSTULIT ARAMET BUCRANIUM            |
|      SUO IMPENDIO CONSECRAVIT                |
|      SACERDOTE                                |
| QUINTO SAMMIO SECUNDO AB QUINDECENVIRIS      |
|      OCCABO ET CORONA EXORNATO                |
|      CUI SANCTISSIMUS ORDO LUGDUNENSIS        |
|      PERPETUITATEM SACERDOTIS DECREVIT        |
|      APPIO ANNIA ATILIO BRADUA TITO          |
|      CLODIO VIBIO VARO CONSULIBUS            |
|      LOCUS DATUS DECRETO DECURIONUM.        |
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The *Maison Carree* is not however, quite square, being something more in length than breadth; it is eighty-two feet long and thirty-seven and a half high, exclusive of the square socle on which it stands, and which is, at this time, six feet above the surface; it is divided into two parts, one enclosed, the other open; the facade is adorned with six fluted pillars of the Corinthian order, and the cornice and front are decorated with all the beauties of architecture. The frize is quite plain, and without any of those bas-reliefs or ornaments which are on the sides, where the foliage of the olive leaf is exquisitely finished. On each side over the door, which opens into the enclosed part, two large stones, like the but-ends of joists, project about three feet, and these stones are pierced through with two large mortices, six inches long, and three wide; they are a striking blemish, and must therefore have been fixed, for some very necessary purpose—for what, I will not risque my opinion; it is enough to have mentioned them to you. As to the inside, little need be said; but, that, being now consecrated to the service of GOD, and the use of the order of *Augustines*, it is filled up with altars, *ex votos*, statues, &c. but such as we may reasonably conclude, have not, exclusive of a religious consideration,

all those beauties which were once placed within a Temple, the outward structure of which was so highly finished.

Truth and concern compel me to conclude this account of the *Maison Carree*, in lamenting, that the inhabitants of Nismes (who are in general a very respectable body of people) suffer this noble edifice to be defiled by every species of filth that poverty and neglect can occasion. The approach to it is through an old ragged kind of barn door: it is surrounded with mean houses, and disgraced on every side with filth, and the *offerings* of the nearest inhabitants. I know not any part of London but what would be a better situation for it, than where it now stands: I will not except even Rag-fair, nor Hockly in the Hole.

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LETTER XI.

NISMES.

The state in which that once-superb edifice, the Temple of Diana, now appears; with concern, I perceived that there remains only enough to give the spectator an idea of its former beauty; for though the roof has been broken down, and every part of it so wantonly abused yet enough remains, within, and without, to bear testimony that it was built, not only by the greatest architect, but enriched also by the hands of other great artists: indeed, the mason's work alone is, at this day, wonderful; for the stones with which it is built, and which are very large, are so truly worked, and artfully laid, without either cement or mortar, that many of the joints are scarce visible; nor is it possible to put the point of a penknife between those which are most open. This Temple too is, like the *Maison Carree*, shut up by an old barn-door: a man, however, attends to open it; where, upon entering, you will find a striking picture of the folly of all human grandeur; for the area is covered with broken statues, busts, urns, vases, cornices, frizes, inscriptions, and various fragments of exquisite workmanship, lying in the utmost disorder, one upon another, like the stript dead in a field of battle. Here, the ghost of Shakespeare appeared before my eyes, holding in his hand a label, on which was engraven those words you have so often read in his works, and now see upon his monument.

I have often wondered, that some man of taste and fortune in England, where so much attention is paid to gardening, never converted one spot to an *Il Penseroso*, and another to *L'Allegro*. If a thing of that kind was to be done, what would not a man of such a turn give for an *Il Penseroso*, as this Temple now is?—where sweet melancholy sits, with a look

“That's fastened to the ground,
A tongue chain'd up, without a sound.”

The modern fountain of *Nismes* or rather the Roman fountain recovered, and re-built, falls just before this Temple; and the noble and extensive walks, which surround this pure and plentiful stream, are indeed very magnificent: what then must it have been in the days of the Romans, when the Temple, the fountain, the statues, vases, &c. stood perfect, and in their proper order? Though this building has been called the Temple of Diana, by a tradition immemorial, yet it may be much doubted, whether it was so. The Temples erected, you know, to the daughter of Jupiter, were all of the Ionic order, and this is a mixture of the Corinthian, and Composit. Is it not, therefore, more probable, from the number of niches in it to contain statues, that it was, in fact, a Pantheon? Directly opposite to the entrance door, are three great tabernacles; on that of the middle stood the principal altar; and on the side walls were twelve niches, six on the right-hand are still perfect. The building is eleven *toises* five feet long, and six *toises* wide, and

was thrown into its present ruinous state during the civil wars of Henry the Third; and yet, in spite of the modern statues, and gaudy ornaments, which the inhabitants have bestrewed to decorate their matchless fountain, the Temple of Diana is still the greatest ornament it has to boast of.

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LETTER XII.

MONTPELLIER.

Never was a traveller more disappointed than I was upon entering into this renowned city; a city, the name of which my ears have been familiar to, ever since I first heard of disease or medicine. I expected to find it filled with palaces; and to perceive the superiority of the soft air it is so celebrated for, above all other places; instead of which, I was accompanied for many miles before I entered it with thousands of Moschettos, which, in spite of all the hostilities we committed upon them, made our faces, hands and legs, as bad in appearance as persons just recovering from a plentiful crop of the small-pox, and infinitely more miserable. Bad as these flies are in the West-Indies, I suffered more in a few days from them at, and near Montpellier, than I did for some years in Jamaica.

However fine and salubrious the air of this town might have been formerly, it is far otherwise now; and it may be naturally accounted for; the sea has retired from the coast, and has left three leagues of marshy ground between it and the town, where the hot sun, and stagnated waters, breed not only flies, but distempers also; beside this, there is, and ever was, something very peculiar in the air of the town itself: it is the only town in France where verdigris is made in any great quantity; and this, I am inclined to think, is not a very favourable circumstance; where the air is so disposed to cankerise, and corrode copper, it cannot be so pure, as where none can be produced; but here, every cave and wine-cellar is filled with sheets of copper, from which such quantities of verdigris are daily collected, that it is one of the principal branches of their trade. The streets are very narrow, and very dirty; and though there are many good houses, a fine theatre, and a great number of public edifices beside churches, it makes altogether but an indifferent figure.

Without the walls of the town, indeed, there stands a noble equestrian statue of Louis the XIVth, surrounded with spacious walks, and adorned with a beautiful fountain. Their walks command a view of the Mediterranean Sea in front, and the Alps and Pyrenees on the right and left. The water too is conducted to a most beautiful *Temple d'Eau* over a triple range of arches, in the manner of the *Pont du Gard*, from a very considerable distance. The modern arches over which it runs, are indeed, a great and mighty piece of work; for they are so very large, extended so far, and are so numerous, that I could find no person to inform me of their exact number; however, I speak within the bounds of truth, I hope, when I say there are many hundred; and that it is a work which the Romans might have been proud of, and must therefore convey an high idea of the riches and mightiness of a kingdom, wherein one province alone could bear, and be willing too to bear, so great an expence, and raise so useful, as well as beautiful a monument; for beside the immense expence of this triple range of arches, the source from whence the water is conveyed is, I think, three leagues distant from the town, by

which means every quarter of it is plentifully supplied with fountains which always run, and which in hot climates are equally pleasing, refreshing, and useful.

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The town abounds with apothecaries' shops, and I met a great many physical faces; so that if the air is not good, I conclude the physic is, and therefore laid out two *sol's* for a pennyworth of ointment of *marsh-mallows* which alleviated a little the extreme misery we all were in, during our stay at this celebrated city. If, however, it still has a reputation for the cure of a *particular disorder*, perhaps that may arise from the impurity of the air, —and that the air which is so prone to engender verdigris, may wage war with other subtle poisons; yet, as I found some of my countrymen there, who had taken a longer trial of the air, and more of the physic, than I had occasion for, who neither admired one, nor found benefit from the other, I will not recommend *Montpellier* as having any peculiar excellencies within its walls, but good wine, and some good actors. It is a dear town, even to the natives, and a very imposing one to strangers; and therefore I shall soon leave it, and proceed southward.

Perhaps you will expect me to say something of the *Sweets* which this town is so famed for: there are indeed some sweet shops of that sort; and they are *bien places*. At these shops they have ladies' silk pockets, sachels for their shifts, letter cases, and a multitude of things of that kind, quilted and *larded* with something, which does indeed give them a most pleasing and lasting perfume. At these shops too, beside excellent lavender water, essence of bergamot, &c. they sell *eau de jasmin de pourri, de cedre, de girofle, sans pareille, de mille fleurs, de zephir, de oiellet, de sultan* and a hundred other sorts; but the *essence of bergamot* is above all, as a single drop is sufficient to perfume a handkerchief; and so it ought to be, for it is very dear.

LETTER XIII.

CETTE.

I was very impatient till I had drove my horse from the British to the Mediterranean coast, and looked upon a sea from *that land* which I had often, with longing eyes, viewed *from the sea*, in the year 1745, when I was on board the *Russel*, with Admiral Medley. I have now compleatly crossed this mighty kingdom and great continent, and it was for that reason I visited *Cette*. This pretty little sea-port, though it is out of my way to *Barcelona*, yet it proves to be in *the way* for my poor horse; as I found here a Spanish bark, upon which I put part of my baggage. I was obliged to have it, however, opened and examined at the Custom-house; and as the officer found in it a bass viol, two guittars, a fiddle, and some other musical instruments, he very naturally concluded I was a musician, and very kindly intimated to me his apprehensions, that I should meet with but very little *encouragement in Spain*: as I had not any better reason to assign for going there, but to fiddle, I did not undeceive this good-natured

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man till the next morning, when I owned, I was not sufficiently *cunning* in the art of music to get my bread by it; and that I had unfortunately been bred to a worse profession, that of arms; and if I got time enough to *Barcelona* to enter a volunteer in the *Walloon* guards, and go to *Algiers*, perhaps I might get from his Catholic Majesty, by my services, more than I could acquire from his Britannic—something to live upon in my old age: but I had no better encouragement from this Frenchman as an adventurer in arms, than in music; he assured me, that Spain was a *vilain pays*, and that France was the only country in the world for a *voyageur*. But as I found that France was the only country he had *voyaged* in, and then never above twenty leagues from that spot, I thanked him for his advice, and determined to proceed; for though it is fifteen miles from *Montpellier*, we are not got out of the latitude of the *Moschettos*.

On the road here, we met an infinite number of carts and horses, loaded with ripe grapes; the gatherers generally held some large bunches (for they were the large red grape) in their hands, to present to travellers; and we had some from people, who would not even stay to receive a trifling acknowledgment for their generosity and politeness.

Nothing could be more beautiful than the prospects which every way surrounded us, when we came within three or four miles of this town; both sides of the road were covered with thyme and lavender shrubs, which perfumed the air; the sea breeze, and the hot sun, made both agreeable; and the day was so clear and fine, that the snow upon the *Alps* made them appear as if they were only ten leagues from us; and I could have been persuaded that we were within a few hours drive of the *Pyrenees*; yet the nearest of them was at least a hundred miles distant.

The great Canal of *Languedoc* has a communication with this town, where covered boats, neatly fitted up for passengers, are continually passing up and down that wonderful and artificial navigation. It is a convenient port to ship wine at; but the people have the reputation of playing tricks with it, before and after it is put on board; and this opinion is a great baulk to the trade it is so happily situated to carry on, and of great benefit to the free port of *Nice*.

LETTER XIV.

PERPIGNAN.

DEAR SIR,

Before I leave this kingdom, and enter into that of Spain, let me trouble you with a letter on a subject which, though no ways interesting to yourself, may be very much so to a



young Gentleman of your acquaintance at Oxford, for whose happiness I, as well as you, am a little anxious. It is to apprise you, and to warn him, when he travels, to avoid the *gins and man-traps* fixed all over this country; traps,

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which a thorough knowledge of Latin and Greek, combined even with father and mother's wit, will not be sufficient to preserve him from, unless he is first shewn the manner in which they are set. These traps are not made to catch the legs, but to ruin the fortunes and break the hearts of those who unfortunately step into them. Their baits are artful, designing, wicked men, and profligate, abandoned, and prostitute women. Paris abounds with them, as well as Lyons, and all the great towns between London and Rome; and are principally set to catch the young Englishman of fortune from the age of eighteen to five and twenty; and what is worse, an honest, sensible, generous young man, is always in most danger of setting his foot into them. You suspect already, that these traps are made only of paper, and ivory, and that cards and dice are the destructive engines I mean. Do you know that there are a set of men and women, in *Paris* and *Lyons*, who live elegantly by lying in wait and by catching every *bird of passage*?—but particularly the English *gold-finch*. I have seen and heard of such wicked artifices of these people, and the fatal consequences to the unfortunate young men they have ensnared, that I really think I could never enjoy a single hour of contentment, if I had a large fortune, while a son of mine was making what is called the tour of Europe. The minute one of these young men arrive, either at *Paris* or *Lyons*, some *laquais de place*, who is paid for it, gives the earliest notice to one of the confederacy, and he is instantly way-laid by a French *Marquis*, or an English *Chevalier d'Industrie*, who, with a most insinuating address, makes him believe, he is no sooner arrived at *Paris* than he has found a sincere friend. The *Chevalier* shews him what is most worthy of notice in *Paris*, attends him to *Versailles* and *Marly*, cautions him against being acquainted with the honest part of the French nation, and introduces him to the knaves only of his own and this country; carries him to see French Ladies of the *first distinction*, (and such who certainly *live in that style*) and makes the young man giddy with joy. But alas! it is but a short-lived one!—he is invited; to sup with the *Countess*; and is entertained not only voluptuously, but they play after supper, and he wins too. What can be more delightful to a young man, in a strange country, than to be flattered by the French, courted by the English, entertained by *the Countess*, and cheered with success?—Nay, he flatters himself, from the particular *attention* the *Countess* shews him, above all other men admitted to her toilet, that she has even some *tendre* for his person:—just at this *critical moment*, a *Toyman* arrives, to shew *Madame la Comtesse* a new fashioned trinket; she likes it, but has not money enough in her pocket to pay for it:—here is a fine opportunity to make

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Madame la Comtesse a present;—and why should not he?—the price is not above four or five guineas more than his last night's winnings;—he offers it; and, with *great difficulty* and much persuasion, she accepts it; but is quite *ashamed* to think of the trouble he has given himself:—but, says she, you Englishmen are so charming,—so generous,—and so—so—and looks so sweet upon him, that while her tongue falters, *egad* he ventures to cover her confusion by a kiss;—when, instead of giving him the two broad sides of her cheek, she is so *off her guard*, and so overcome, as to present him *unawares*, with a pretty handsome dash of red pomatum from her lovely pouting lips,—and insists upon it that he sups with her, *tete a tete*, that very evening,—when all this happiness is compleated. In a few nights after, he is invited to meet the *Countess*, and to sup with *Monsieur le Marquis*, or *Monsieur le Chevalier Anglais*; he is feasted with high meat, and inflamed with delicious wines;—they play after supper, and he is stript of all his money, and gives—drafts upon his Banker for all his credit. He visits the Countess the next day; she receives him with a civil coolness,—is very sorry, she says, —and wished much last night for a favourable opportunity to give him a hint, not to play after he had lost the first thousand, as she perceived luck ran hard against him:—she is extremely mortified;—but; as a friend, advises him to go to *Lyons*, or some provincial town, where he may study the language with more success, than in the hurry and noise of so great a city as *Paris*, and apply for further credit. His *new friends* visit him no more; and he determines to take the Countess's advice, and go on to *Lyons*, as he has heard the South of France is much cheaper, and there he may see what he can do, by leaving Paris, and an application to his friends in England. But at *Lyons* too, some artful knave, of one nation or the other, accosts him, who has had notice of his *Paris* misfortunes;—he pities him;—and, rather than see a countryman, or a gentleman of fashion and character in distress, he would lend him fifty or a hundred pounds. When this is done, every art is used to debauch his principles; he is initiated into a gang of genteel sharpers, and bullied, by the fear of a gaol, to connive at, or to become a party in their iniquitous society. His good name gives a sanction for a while to their suspected reputations; and, by means of an hundred pounds so lent to this honest young man, some thousands are won from the *birds of passage*, who are continually passing thro' that city to the more southern parts of *France*, or to *Italy*, *Geneva*, or *Turin*.

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This is not an imaginary picture; it is a picture I have seen, nay, I have seen the traps set, and the game caught; nor were those who set the snares quite sure that they might not put a stop to my peregrination, for they *risqued a supper at me*, and let me win a few guineas at the little play which began before they sat down to table. Indeed, my dear Sir, were I to give you the particulars of some of those unhappy young men, who have been ruined in fortune and constitution too, at *Paris* and *Lyons*, you would be struck with pity on one side, and horror and detestation on the other; nor would ever risque such a *finished part* of your son's education. Tell my Oxonian friend, from me, when he travels, never to let either Lords or Ladies, even of his own country, nor *Marquises*, *Counts*, or *Chevaliers*, of this, ever draw him into play; but to remember that shrewd hint of Lord Chesterfield's to his son;—"When you play with men (says his Lordship) know with *whom* you play; when with women, *for what* you play."—But let me add, that the only SURE WAY, is never to play at all.

At one of these towns I found a man, whose family I respected, and for whom I had a personal regard; he loaded me with civilities, nay, made me presents, before I had the most distant suspicions *how* he became in a situation to enable him so to do. He made every profession of love and regard to me; and I verily believed him sincere; because I knew he had been obliged by a part of my family; but when I found a coach, a country-house, a good table, a wife, and servants, were all supported by the *chance* of a gaming-table, I withdrew myself from all connections with him; for, I fear, he who lives to play, may *play to live*.

Upon the whole, I think it is next to an impossibility for a young man of fortune to pass a year or two in *Paris*, the southern parts of France, Italy, &c. without running a great risque of being beggared by sharpers, or seduced by artful women; unless he has with him a tutor, who is made wise by years, and a frequent acquaintance with the customs and manners of the country: an honest, learned Clergyman tutor, is of less use to a young man in that situation, than a trusty *Valet de Chambre*. A travelling tutor must know men; and, what is more difficult to know, he must know women also, before he is qualified to guard against the innumerable snares that are always making to entangle strangers of fortune.

It is certainly true, that the nearer we approach to the sun, the more we become familiar with vices of every kind. In the *South of France*, and *Italy*, sins of the blackest dye, and many of the most unnatural kind, are not only committed with impunity, but boasted of with audacity; and, as one proof of the corruption of the people, of a thousand I could tell you, I must tell you, that seeing at *Lyons* a shop in which a great variety of

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pictures were hung for sale, I walked in, and after examining them, and asking a few questions; but none that had the least tendency to want of decorum, the master of the shop turned to his wife, (a very pretty woman, and dressed even to a *plumed* head)—shew *Monsieur* the little miniature, said he; she then opened a drawer and took out a book, (I think it was her mass-book) and brought me a picture, so indecent, that I defy the most debauched imagination to conceive any thing more so; yet she gave it me with a seeming decent face, and only observed that it was *bien fait*. After examining it with more attention than I should, had I received it from the hands of her husband, I returned it to her prayer-book, made my bow, and was retiring; but the husband called to me, and said, he had a magazine hard by, where there was a very large collection of pictures of great value, and that his wife would attend me. My curiosity was heightened in more respects than *one*: I therefore accepted the offer, and was conducted up two pair of stairs in a house not far off, where I found a long suite of rooms, in which were a large number of pictures, and some, I believe, of great value. But I was a little surprised on entering into the furthestmost apartment, as that had in it an elegant *chintz* bed, the curtains of which were festooned, and the foliages held up by the paintings of two naked women, as large as life, and as indecent as nakedness could be painted; they were painted, and well painted too, on boards, and cut out in human shape; that at first I did not know whether I saw the shadow or the substance; however, as this room was covered with pictures, I began to examine them also, with the fair attendant at my elbow; but in the whole collection I do not remember there was one picture which would not have brought a blush in the face of an English Lady, even of the most easy virtue. Yet, all this while, when I asked the price of the several parts and pieces, she answered me with a gravity of countenance, as if she attended me to sell her goods like other shopkeepers, and in the way of business; however, before I left the room, I could not, I thought, do less than ask her—her own price. She told me, she was worth nothing; and immediately invited me to take a peep through a convex glass at a picture which was laid under, on the table, for that purpose:—it was a picture of so wicked a tendency, that the painter ought to have been put upon a pillory, and the exhibitor in the stocks. The Lady observed to me again, that it was well painted; but, on the contrary, the only merit it had, was, being quite otherwise, I therefore told her, that the subject and idea only was good; the execution bad.

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Just at this time, several French Gentlemen came in to look at the pictures, and my surprise became infinitely greater than ever; they talked with her about the several pieces, without betraying the least degree of surprise at the subjects, or the woman who shewed them; nor did they seem to think it was a matter of any to me; and I verily believe the woman was so totally a stranger to sentiment or decency, that she considered herself employed in the ordinary way of shopkeepers, that of shewing and selling her goods: as her shop was almost opposite to the General Post-office, where I went every day for my letters, I frequently saw women of fashion at this shop; whether they visited the magazine, or not, I cannot say, but I think there is no doubt but they might borrow the *mass-book* I mentioned above.

I shall leave you to make your own comments upon this subject; and then I am sure you will tremble for the fatal consequences which your son, or any young man, may, nay must be led into, in a country where Vice is painted with all her bewitching colours, in the fore-ground of the picture; and where Virtue, if there be any, is thrown so far behind in the back shade, that it is ten to one but it escapes the notice of a youthful examiner.

I cannot help adding another instance of the profligacy of this town. Lord P—— being invited by a French Gentleman to spend a day at his *Chateau*, in this country, took occasion to tell his Lordship, that in order to render the day as agreeable as possible to his company, he had provided some young people of *both* sexes to attend, and desired to know his Lordship's *gout*. The young Nobleman concealed his surprise, and told his *generous* host, that he was not fashionable enough to walk out of the paths of nature. The same question was then put to the other company, in the order of their rank; and the last, an *humble Frenchman*, replied, it was to him *egal l'un, et l'autre*, just as it proved most convenient. This is not a traveller's story; it is a fact; and I dare say the Nobleman, who was of the party, will give it the sanction of his name, though I cannot with any degree of propriety.

LETTER IV.

JONQUIRE.

I have now crossed the *Pyrenees*, and write this from the first village in Spain. These mountains are of such an enormous height, as well as extent, that they seem as if they were formed even by nature to divide nations. Nor is there any other pass by land into this kingdom but over them; for they extend upwards of thirty leagues from the *Mediterranean Sea*, near *Perpignan* in *Rousillon* to the city of *Pompelina* in *Navarre*; I should have said, extend *into* the *Mediterranean Sea*, for there the extremity projects its lofty head, like a noble fortress of nature, into the ocean, far beyond the low lands on either side. Indeed the

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extensive plains on both side these lofty mountains (so unusual in the Southern parts of Europe) would almost make one suspect, that nature herself had been exhausted in raising such an immense pile, which, as if it were the back-bone of an huge animal, was made to hold, and bind together, all the parts of the western world. There are, I think, nine passes over these hills into *Spain*, two or three of which are very commodious, and wonderfully *picturesque*: others are dreadful, and often dangerous; the two best are at the extremities; that which I have just passed, and the other near *Bayonne*; the former is not only very safe, except just after very heavy and long-continued rains, but in the highest degree pleasing, astonishing, and wonderfully romantic, as well as beautiful.

At *Boulon*, the last village in France, twelve long leagues from *Perpignan*, and seemingly under the foot of the *Pyrenees*, we crossed a river, for the first time, which must be forded three or four times more, before you begin to ascend the hills; but if the river can be safely crossed at *Boulon*, there can be no difficulty afterwards, as there alone the stream is most rapid, and the channel deepest. At this town there are always a set of fellows ready to offer their service, who ford the river, and support the carriage; nor is it an easy matter to prevent them, when no such assistance is necessary; and I was obliged to handle my pistols, to make them *unhandle* my wheels; as it is more than probable they would have overset us in shallow water, to gain an opportunity of shewing their *politeness* in picking us up again. The stream, indeed, was very rapid; and I was rather provoked by the rudeness of the people, to pass through it without assistance, than convinced there needed none.

Having crossed the river four or five times more, and passed between rocks, and broken land, through a very uncultivated and romantic vale, we began to ascend the *Pyrenees* upon a noble road, indeed! hewn upon the sides of those adamantine hills, of a considerable width, and an easy ascent, quite up to the high *Fortress of Bellegarde*, which stands upon the pinnacle of the highest hill, and which commands this renowned pass.

You will easier conceive than I can describe the many rude and various scenes which mountains so high, so rocky, so steep, so divided, and, I may add too, so fertile, exhibit to the traveler's eyes. The constant water-falls from the melted snow above, the gullies and breaches made by water-torrents during great rains, the rivulets in the vale below, the verdure on their banks, the herds of goats, the humble, but picturesque habitations of the goat-herds, the hot sun shining upon the *snow-capt* hills above, and the steep precipices below, all crowd together so strongly upon the imagination, that they intoxicate the passenger with delight.

The French nation in no instance shew their greatness more than in the durable and noble manner they build and make their high-roads; here, the expence was not only cutting the hard mountain, and raising a fine road on their sides, but building arches of

an immense height from mountain to mountain, and over breaks and water-falls, with great solidity, and excellent workmanship.

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The invalide guard at this fortress take upon themselves, very improperly, and I am sure very unwarrantably, to examine strangers who pass, with an impertinent curiosity; for they must admit all who come with a proper *passa-porte* into *Spain*, and durst not admit any without it. On my arrival at the Guard-house, they seized my horse's head, and called for my *passa-porte*, in terms very unlike the usual politeness of French guards; and while my pass was carried into a little office, hard by, to be registered, those who remained on the side of my chaise took occasion to ask me of what country I was: I desired to refer them to my *passa-porte*, (where I knew no information of that kind was given,) as it was a question I could not very well answer; but upon being further urged, I at length told them, I was an *Hottentot*.—"Otentot—Otentot—pray what king governs that country?" said one of them. No king governs the *Hottentots* replied I. "What then, is your country without a king?" said another, with astonishment! No; not absolutely so, neither; for the *Hottentots* have a king; but he always keeps a number of ambitious and crafty men about his Court, who govern him; and those men, who are generally knaves, feed the people with guts, and entrails of beasts, give the king now and then a little bit of the main body, and divide the rest among themselves, their friends, their favourites, and sycophants. But I soon found, these were questions leading to a more important one; and that was, what *countryman* my horse was;—for, suspecting him to be an *Englishman*, they would perhaps, if I had been weak enough to have owned it, have made me pay a considerable duty for his admission into *Spain*; though I believe it cannot legally be done or levied upon any horse, French, or English, (to use an act of parliament phrase) but such "as are not actually in harness, nor drawing in a carriage."

The Spaniards too have done their duty, as to the descent of the *Pyrenees* from *Bellegarde*, but no further; from thence to this village, is about the same distance that *Boulon* is from the foot of the mountains on the other side; but though this road is quite destitute of art it is adorned highly by nature.

But, before I left *Bellegarde*, I should have told you, that near that Fortress the arms of France and Spain, cut on stone pillars, are placed *vis-a-vis* on each side of the road; a spot where some times an affair of *honour* is decided by two men, who engage in personal combat; each standing in a different kingdom; and where, if one falls, the other need not run; for, by the Family Compact, it is agreed, not to give up deserters or murderers.

The road is not less romantic on the Spanish, than on the French side of the *Pyrenees*; the face of the country is more beautiful, and the faces of all things, animate and inanimate, are quite different; and one would be apt to think, that instead of having passed a few hills, one had passed over a large ocean: the hogs, for instance, which are all white on the French side, are all black on this.

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We arrived here upon a Sunday, when the inhabitants had on their best apparel: but instead of high head-dresses, false curls, plumes of feathers, and a quantity of powder, the women had their black hair combed tight from their foreheads and temples, and tied behind, in either red, blue, or black nets, something like the caul of a peruke, from which hang large tassels down to the middle of their back; the men's hair was done up in nets in the same manner, but not so gaudy.

Before we arrived here, I overtook a girl with a load of fresh hay upon her head, whom (*at the request of my horse*) I entreated to spare me a little, but, till she had called back her brother, who had another load of the same kind, would not treat with me; they soon agreed, however, that my request was reasonable; and so was their demand; and there, under the shade of a noble grove of large cork-trees, we and our horse eat a most luxurious meal: appetite was the sauce; and the wild scenes, and stupendous rocks, which every way surrounded our *salle a manger*, were our dessert.

And that you may not be alarmed about this mighty matter, (as it is by many thought) of parting from *France to Spain*, by the way of *Perpignan*, it may not be amiss to say, that I left the last town about seven o'clock in the morning, in a heavy French *cabriolet*, drawn by one strong English horse, charged with four persons, and much baggage; yet we arrived here about three o'clock the same day; where at our supper, we had a specimen of Spanish cookery, as well as Spanish beds, bills, and custom-house officers: to the latter, a small donative is better bestowed, than the trouble of unpacking all your baggage, and much better relished by them: as to the host, he was neither rude, nor over civil; the cookery more savoury than clean; the window frames without glass, the rooms without chimneys. The demand for such entertainment is rather dearer than in France.

Before I left *Perpignan*, I found it necessary to exchange some French gold for Spanish, and to be well informed of the two kingdoms. There were many people willing to change my money; though but few, indeed, who would give the full value. Formerly, you know, the *Pyrenees* were charged with gold, from whence the Phoenicians fetched great quantities every year. In the time of the Romans, much of the *Pyrenean* gold was sent to Rome; and a King of Portugal, so lately as the year 1512, had a crown and sceptre made of the gold washed from those hills into the *Tagus*; their treasures were known, you may remember, even to Ovid.

“Quod suo Tagus amne vehit fluit
Ignibus aurum.”

But as I did not expect to find a gold mine on my passage into Spain, I thought it best to carry a little with me, and leave nothing to chance; and I should have been content to have found, by the help of my gun, the bird vulgarly called the *Gelinotte des Pyrenees*; it has a curved bill like a hawk, and two long feathers in the tail; but though I saw a great number of different birds, I was not fortunate enough to find the *Ganga*, for that is the

true name of a bird, so beautiful in feather, and of so delicate a flavour, that it is even mentioned by Aristotle, and is a native of these hills.

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P.S. I forgot to tell you, that the day we left *Cette* we stopped, according to custom, to eat our cold dinner, in an olive grove; from whence we had a noble view of the Mediterranean Sea, and a most delightfully situated *Chateau*, standing upon the banks of a salt-water lake, at least twenty miles in circumference, “clear as the expanse of heaven;” and that while we were preparing to spread our napkin, a gentleman of genteel appearance came out from a neighbouring vineyard, and asked us if any accident had happened, and desired, if we wanted any thing, that we would command him, or whatever his house afforded, pointing to the *Chateau*, which had so attracted our notice: we told him, our business was to eat our little repast, with his leave, under, what we presumed, was his shade also, and invited him to partake with us. He had already captivated us by his polite attention, and by his agreeable conversation: we lamented that we had not better pretensions to have visited his lovely habitation. We found he was well acquainted with many English persons of fashion, who have occasionally resided at Montpellier; and I am sure, his being a winter inhabitant of that city, must be one of the most favourable circumstances the town affords. These little attentions to strangers, are never omitted by the well-bred part of the French nation. I could not refrain asking the name of a gentleman, to whom I felt myself so much obliged, nor avoid telling him my own, and what had passed at the town of *Cette*, relative to the musical instruments, as one of the largest was still with us.—He seemed astonished, that I preferred the long and dangerous journey by land, as he thought it, to *Barcelona*, when I might, he said, have run down to it over a smooth sea, in the same bark I had put my baggage on board.

LETTER XVI.

GIRONE.

From *Jonquere* to *Figueres* (about four hours journey, so they reckon in Spain) the road is intolerable, and the country beautiful; over which the traveller may, as nature has done, repose himself upon a flowery bed, indeed; for nature surely could not do more for the pleasure and profit of man, than she has done from *Jonquere* to *Girone*. The town of *Figueres* is, properly speaking, the first town in Spain; for *Jonquere* is rather a hamlet; but *Figueres* has a decent, comfortable appearance, abounds with merchants and tradesmen, and at a little distance from it stands the strongest citadel in Spain; indeed it is the frontier town of the kingdom. The quietness of the people, and seeming tranquility of all ranks and orders of men in Spain, is very remarkable to a person who has just left a kingdom in every respect so different. Strangers as we were, and as we must be known to be, we passed unnoticed; and when we stopped near a cottage to eat our hedge dinner, neither man, woman, or child

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came near us, till I asked for water, and then they brought with it, unasked, dried grapes, and chesnuts, but instantly retired. I was charmed with the Arcadian inhabitants, and visited the inside of their cabin; but its situation upon a little *tump*, on the bank of a brook, shaded by ever-green oaks, and large spreading fig-trees, was all it had to boast of; it had nothing within but straw beds, Indian corn, dried grapes, figs, &c.

From *Figuerie* to *Girone*, which is a good day's journey, the country is enclosed, and the hedgerows, corn fields, &c. had in many places the appearance of the finest parts of England, only warmed by a hotter sun, and adorned with woods and trees of other species; instead of the hawthorn, I found the orange and the pomegranate, the myrtle and the cypress; in short, all nature seemed to rejoice here, but man alone.

From many parts of this road we had a view of the *Mediterranean* Sea, and the *Golfe de Royas*, a fine bay, over which the heads of the *Pyrenees* hang; and on the banks of which there seemed to be, not only villages, but large towns; the situations of which appeared so enchanting, that I could hardly resist the temptation of visiting them;—and now wonder why I did not; but at that time, I suppose I did not recollect I had nothing else to do.

We entered this town rather too late, and were followed to our inn by an armed soldier, who demanded, in harsh terms, my attendance upon the Governor; I enquired whether it was customary for a Gentleman, just off a journey, to be so called upon, and was assured it was not; that my *passa-porte* was sufficient. I therefore gave that to my conductor, and desired him to take it, and return it, which he did, in about half an hour; but required to be paid for his trouble—a request I declined understanding.

This is a fortified city, well built, but every house has the appearance of a convent. I went into the market, where fruit, flesh, and vegetables, were to be sold in abundance; but instead of that noise which French and English markets abound with, a general silence and gravity reigned throughout; which, can hardly be thought possible, where so many buyers and sellers were collected together. I bought a basket of figs, but the vender of them spoke to me as softly as if we had been engaged in a conspiracy, but she did not attempt to impose; I dare say, she asked me no more than she would have demanded of a Spaniard. The manners of people are certainly infectious; my spirits sunk in this town; and I wanted nothing but the language, and a long cloak, to make me a compleat Spaniard. Our inn was the Golden Fountain; and, considering it was in Spain, not a bad one. If the town, however, was gloomy, the country round about it exhibited all the beauties nature can boast of.

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In climates, says some writer, where the earth seems to be the pride and masterpiece of nature, rags, and dirt, ghastly countenances, and misery under every form, are oftener met with, than in those countries less favoured by nature; and the forlorn and wretched condition of the people in general seemed to belie and disgrace their native soil. Certain it is, that the natives of the southern parts of Europe have neither the beauty, the strength, nor comeliness of men born in more northern climates. I have seen in the South of France, in Spain, and Portugal, the aged especially of both sexes, who hardly appeared human! nor do you see, in general, even among the youthful, much more beauty than that which youth alone must give; for youth itself is beauty. Whoever compares the natives of Switzerland, England, Ireland, and Scotland, with those of Spain, Portugal, or other Southern climates, will find, that men born among cold, bleak mountains, are infinitely superior to those of the finest climates under the sun. Perhaps, however, this difference may arise more from the want of Liberty than the power of climate. Oh Liberty! sweet Liberty! without thee life cannot be enjoyed! Thou parent of comfort, whose children bless thee, though they dwell among the barren rocks, or the most surly regions of the earth! Thou blessest, in spite of nature; and in spite of nature, tyranny brings curses.

LETTER. XVII.

MARTORY.

After we left *Girone* we passed thro' a fine country, but not equal to that which is between *Jonquire* and that town; we lay the first night at a *veritable* Spanish *posada*; it was a single house, called the *Grenade*. We arrived there early in the afternoon; and though the inside of the house was but so-so, every thing without was charming, and our host and his two daughters gave us the best they had, treated us with civility enough; and gave us good advice in the prosecution of our journey to Barcelona; for about four leagues from this house, we found two roads to that city, one on the side of the Mediterranean Sea, the other inland. He advised us to take the former, which exactly tallied with my inclination, for wherever the sea-coast affords a road in hot climates, that must be the pleasantest; and I was very impatient till we got here.

After we had left the high inland road, we had about three leagues to the sea side, and the village on its margin where we were to lie; this road was through a very wild, uncultivated country, over-run with underwood and tall firs. We saw but few houses and met with fewer people. When we came near the sea, the country, however, improved upon us; and the farms, churches, convents, and beacons, upon the high lands, rendered the prospects every way pleasing. We crossed a shallow river several times, adorned on both sides with an infinite quantity of tall beeches, on one of which trees (boy like) I cut my name, too

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high for *other boys*, without a ladder, to cut me *out* again. At length we arrived at the village, and at a *posada*, than which nothing could be more dreadful, after the day-light was gone; for beside the rudest mistress, and the dirtiest servants that can be conceived, there lay a poor Frenchman dying in the next room to us; nay, I may almost say, in the same room with us, for it could hardly be called a door which parted us. This poor man, who had not a shilling in his pocket, had lain twenty days ill in that house; but was attended by the priests of the town with as much assiduity as if he had been a man of fashion: he had been often exhorted by them, it seems, to confess, but had refused. The night we came, he feared would be his last, and he determined to make his confession; I was in the room when he signified his desire so to do; and all the people were dismissed by the parish priest. I returned to my room, and could now and then hear what the priest said: but the sick man's voice was too low: his crimes however, I fear, were of an high nature, for we heard the priest say, with a voice of impatience and seeming horror, *Adonde&mdash*
sh;adonde—adonde?—Where—where—where?

You may imagine, a bad supper, lighted by stinking oil, burning in an iron lamp hung against the side of a wall, (for there were no candles to be had) and while the sick man was receiving the last sacrament, would have been little relished had it been good; that our dirty straw beds were no very comfortable retreat; and that day-light the next morning was what we most wanted and wished for. Indeed, I never spent a more miserable night; but it was amply made up to us by this day's journey to *Martory*, for we coasted it along the sea, which sometimes washed the wheels of my chaise At others, we crossed over high head-lands, which afforded such extensive views over both elements, as abundantly overpaid us for the sufferings of the preceding evening. The roads, indeed, over these head-lands were bad enough, in some places dangerous; but between walking and riding, with a steady horse, we got on very well.

On this coast, we found a village at every league, inhabited by rich fishermen, and wealthy ship-builders, and found all these artificers busy enough in their professions; in some places, there were an hundred men dragging in, by bodily strength, the *Saine*; at others, still more surprising, ships of two hundred tons were building on the dry land, where no tide rises to launch them! These villages are built close to the sea; nothing intervenes between their houses and the ocean but their little gardens, in which, under the shade of their orange, lemon, and vine trees, which were loaded with fruit, sat the wives and daughters of the fishermen, making black silk lace. Though I call them villages, and though they are in reality so, yet the houses were such, in general, as would make a good figure even in a fine city; for they were all well built, and many adorned on the outside with no contemptible paintings.

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The town, indeed, from which I write, is situated in the same manner, but is a little city, and affords a *posada*, (I speak by comparison, remember) comfortable enough; and the sea a fish, they call the red fish, than which nothing can be more delicious; I may venture almost to call it the sea woodcock, for it is eaten altogether in the same manner. We fared better than my poor horse, for not a grain of oats or barley did this city afford; nor has he tasted, or have I seen, a morsel of hay since I parted from my little *Dona*, near the foot of the *Pyrenees*. Tomorrow we have seven hours to *Barcelona*; I can see the high cape under which it stands, and from under which, you shall soon hear again from me.

LETTER XVIII.

BARCELONA.

Upon our arrival at this town, we were obliged to wait at the outward gate above half an hour, no person being admitted to enter from twelve till one, tho' all the world may go out; that hour being allotted for the guards, &c. to eat their dinner. As I had no letter to any person in this city, but to the French Consul, I had previously wrote to a Mr. Ford, a merchant at Barcelona, with whom I had formerly travelled from London to Bath, to beg the favour of him to provide lodgings for me; I therefore enquired for Mr. Ford's house, and found myself conducted to that of a Mr. Curtoys; Mr. Ford, unfortunately for me, was dead; but the same house and business is carried on by Messrs. Adams and Curtoys, who had received and opened my letter. After this family had a little *reconnoitred* mine, Mr. Curtoys came down, and with much civility, and an hospitable countenance, told me his dinner was upon the table, and in very pressing terms desired that we would partake of it. We found here a large family, consisting of his wife, a motherly good-looking woman; Mrs. Adams, her daughter by a former husband, a jolly dame; and several children. Mrs. Adams spoke fluently the Catalan, French, English, and Spanish tongues; all which were necessary at a table where there were people who understood but one only of each language. Mr. Curtoys pressed us to dine with him a few days after, a favour which I, only, accepted; when he told me, he was nominated, but not absolutely fixed in his Consulship of this city; that he had obtained it by the favour of Lord Rochford, who had spent some days at his house, on his way to Madrid, when his Lordship was Ambassador to this Court; and before I went from him, he desired I and my family would dine with him at his country-house the next day: instead of which, I waited upon him in the morning, and told him, that I had formerly received civilities from his friend, Lord Rochford, and believed him once to have been mine; but that, unfortunately, I found now it was much otherwise; and observed, that perhaps his politeness to me might injure him with his Lordship; and that I thought it right to say so

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much, that he might be guided by his own judgment, and not follow the bent of his inclination, if he thought it might be prejudicial to his interest; and by the way of a little return for the hospitable manner in which he had received and entertained me, and my family, I took out an hundred and twenty-five pound in Banknotes, and desired him to send them to England; adding, that I had about thirty pounds in my pocket, which I hoped would be sufficient for my expences, till he had an account of their safe arrival. But instead of his wonted chearful countenance, I was *contunded* with an affected air of the man of business; my bank notes were shined against the window, turned and twisted about, as if the utmost use they could be of were to light the Consul's pipe after supper. I asked him whether he had any doubts of their authenticity; and shewed him a letter to confirm my being the person I said I was, written to me but a short time before, from his friend Lord Rochford, from whom he too had just received a letter: he then observed; that a burnt child dreads the fire; that their House had suffered; that a Moor had lately passed thro' France, who had put off a great number of false Bank notes, and that I might indiscreetly have taken some of them; but assuring him that I had received all mine from the hands of Messrs. Hoare, and that I would not call upon him for the money till he had received advice of their being good, I took my leave, and left my notes.

But as there was a possibility, nay, a probability, that Mr. Curtoys might not have very early advice from England, or might not give it to me if he had, (for all his hospitality of countenance and civility was departed) I thought it was necessary to secure a retreat; for I should have informed you, that I found at his table a Mr. Wombwell, whose uncle I had lived in great intimacy with many years before at Gibraltar, and who left this man (now a Spanish merchant) all his fortune. Indeed, I should have said, that Mr. Wombwell had visited me, and even had asked me to dine with him; and as he appeared infinitely superior both in understanding, address, and knowledge of the world to good Mr. Curtoys, I went to him, with that confidence which a good note, and a good cause, gives to every man. I told him the Consul's fears, and my own, lest I might want money before Mr. Curtoys was ready to supply me; in which case, and which only, I asked Mr. Wombwell if he would change me a twenty pound Bank note, and shewed him one which I then took out of my pocket; but Mr. Wombwell too examined my notes, with all the attention of a cautious tradesman, and put on all that imperiousness which riches, and the haughty Spanish manners to an humble suitor, could suggest. I tell you, my dear Sir, what passed between us, more out of pity than resentment towards him; he said I will recollect it as nearly as I can, "that if you are Mr. Thicknesse, you must have lived a great deal in the world; it is therefore unfortunate,

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you are not acquainted with Sir Thomas Gascoyne, a gentleman of fashion, well known in England, and now in the same auberge with you.” I confessed that I had seen, and conversed with Sir Thomas Gascoyne there, and that it was very true, he was to me, and I to him, utter strangers; but I observed, that Sir Thomas had been ten years upon his travels, and that I had lived fourteen years in retirement before he set out, and therefore that was but a weak circumstance of my being an impostor; I observed too, that impostors travelled singly, not with a wife and children; and that though I by no means wished to force his money out of his pocket, I coveted much to remove all suspicions of my being an adventurer, for many obvious reasons. This reply opened a glimpse of generosity, though sullied with arrogance and pride. “I should be sorry (said he) to see a countryman, who is an honest man, in want of money; and therefore, as I think it is probable you are Mr. Thicknesse, I will, when you want your note changed, change it;” adding, however, that “he thanked God! if he lost the money, he could afford it.” I then told him, he had put it in my power to convince him I was Mr. Thicknesse, by declining, as I did, the boon he offered me; I declined it, indeed, with an honest indignation, because I am sure he did not doubt my being Mr. Thicknesse, and that *he*, not *I*, was the REAL PRETENDER. I had before told him, that I had some letters in my pocket written by a Spanish Gentleman of fashion, whose hand-writing must be well known in that town;—but to this he observed, that there was not a Moor in Spain who could not write Spanish;—he further remarked, that if I was Mr. Thicknesse, I had, in a publication of my travels, spoke of Sir John Lambert, a Parisian Banker, in very unhandsome terms, and, for aught he knew, I might take the same liberty with his name, in future. I acknowledged that his charge was very true, and that his suggestion might be so; that I should always speak and publish such truths as I thought proper, either for the information of others, or the satisfaction of myself. Mr. Wombwell, however, acknowledged, that Mr. Curtoys, to whom I shewed Lord Rochford’s letter to me, ought to have been quite satisfied whether I was, or was not an impostor; but I still left him under real or pretended doubts, with a resolution to live upon bread and water, or the bounty of a taylor, my honest landlord; for, tho’ a Spaniard, I am sure he had that perception, and that humanity too, which Mess. Curtoys and Wombwell have not, or artfully concealed from me: yet, in spite of all the unkind behaviour of the latter, I could not help shewing him my share of vanity too; I therefore sent him a letter, and enclosed therein others written to me by the late Lord Holland, the Duke of Richmond, Lord Oxford, and many other people of rank; and desired him to give me credit, at least, for *that* which he could lose nothing by—that of my being, if I was an impostor, an ingenuous one. He sent the letters, handsomely sealed up, back again, without any answer; and there finished for ever, our correspondence, unless *he should renew it*.

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I am ashamed of saying so much about these men and myself, where I could find much better subjects, and some, perhaps, of entertainment; but it is necessary to shew how very proper it is for a stranger to take with him letters of recommendation when he travels, not only to other kingdoms, but to every city where he proposes to reside, even for a short time; for, as Mr. Wombwell justly observed, when I have a letter of recommendation from my friend, or correspondent, I can have no doubt who the bearer is; and I had rather take that recommendation than Bank notes.—I confess, that merchants cannot be too cautious and circumspect; I can, and do forgive Mr. Curtoys, for reasons he shall shew you under his own hand: but I have too good an opinion of Mr. Wombwell's perception to so readily forget his shrewd reprisals; though I must, I cannot refrain from telling you what a flattering thing he said to me: I had shewn him a printed paper, signed *Junius*; said he, "If you wrote this, you may be, for aught I know, really JUNIUS." I assured him that I was not; for being in Spain, and out of the reach of the inquisitorial court of Westminster-Hall, I would instantly avow it, for fear I should die suddenly, and carry that secret, like *Mrs. Faulkner*, to the grave with me.

LETTER XIX.

BARCELONA.

You will, as I am, be tired of hearing so much about Messrs. Wombwell, Curtoys, Adams, and Co.—but as there are some other persons here, which my last letter must have put you in some pain about, I must renew the subject. I had, you know, some letters of recommendation to the *Marquis of Grimaldi*, which I had reserved to deliver into his Excellency's hands at *Madrid*; but which I found necessary to send away by the post, and to request the honour of his Excellency to write to some Spaniard of fashion here, to shew me countenance, and to clear up my suspected character. I accordingly wrote to the *Marquis*, and sent him my letters of recommendation, but sixteen days was the soonest I could expect an answer. I therefore, in the mean time, wrote myself to the *Intendant of Barcelona*, a man of sense, and high birth; I told him my name, and that I had letters in my pocket from a Spanish Gentleman of fashion, whom he knew, which would convince him who I was, and desired leave to wait upon him. The Intendant fixed six o'clock the same evening. I was received, and conducted into his apartment, for he was ill, by one of his daughters; the only woman I had seen in Barcelona that had either beauty or breeding;—this young Lady had both in a high degree. After shewing my letters, and having conversed a little with the Intendant, a Lady with a red face, and a nose as big as a brandy bottle, accosted me in English: "Behold, Sir, (said she) your countrywoman." This was Madam O'Reilly, wife to the Governor of *Monjuique* Castle, and brother to the Gentleman

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of that name, so well known, and so amply provided for, by the late and present King of Spain. She was very civil, and seemed sensible. Her husband, the Governor, soon after came in, and the whole family smiled upon me. I then began to think I should escape both goal and inquisition. Mrs. O'Reilly visited my family. Mr. O'Reilly borrowed a house for me, and a charming one too; I say borrowed it, for no Spaniard lets his house; I was only to make him some *recompense for his politeness and generosity*. The Intendant even sent Gov. O'Reilly to know why Mr. Curtoys had not presented me, on the court-day, to the Captain-General. Mr. Consul Curtoys was obliged to give his reasons in person; had they been true, they were good: the Intendant accepted them, and said he would present me himself. Things seemed now to take a favourable turn: Mr. Curtoys visited me on his way back from the Intendant's; assured me he had told him that I was a man of character, and an honest man; and that though he could not see me as *Consul Curtoys*, he should be glad to see me as *Merchant Curtoys*. On the other hand, the *Marquis of Grimaldi*, with the politeness of a minister, and the feelings of humanity, wrote me a very flattering letter indeed, and sent it by a special *courier*, who came in four days from *Madrid*. Now, thought I, a fig for your Wombwells, Curtoys, &c. The first minister's favour, and the *shining countenance* of Madam O'Reilly, must carry me through every thing. But alas! it was quite otherwise;—the *courier* who brought my letter had directions to deliver it into my own hands; but either by *his blunder*, or *Madam O'Reilly's*, I did not get it till *nine hours* after it arrived, and then *from the hands* of *Madam O'Reilly's* servant. The contents of this letter were soon known: the favour of the minister at *Madrid* did not shine upon me at the *Court of Barcelona*! I visited Madam O'Reilly, who looked at me,—if I may use such a coarse expression,—“like God's revenge against murder.” I could not divine what I had done, or what omitted to do. I could get no admittance at the Intendant's, neither. I proposed going to *Montserrat*, and asked my *fair* countrywoman for a letter to one of the monks; but—*she knew nobody there, not she*:—Why then, madam, said I, perhaps I had better go back to France:—Oh! but, says she, perhaps the *Marquis of Grimaldi* will not let you; adding, that the laws of France and Spain were very different.—But, pray, madam, said I, what have the laws of either kingdom to do with me, while I violate none of them? I am a citizen of the world, and consequently free in every country.—Now, Sir, to decypher all this, which I did by the help of some *characters* an honest Spaniard gave me:—Why, says he, they say you are a *great Captain*; that you have had an attention shewn you by the *Marquis of Grimaldi*,

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which none of the O'Reilly's ever obtained; and they are afraid that you are come here to take the eldest brother's post from him, and that you are to command the troops upon the second expedition to *Algiers*; for every body is much dissatisfied with his conduct on the first; adding, that the Spaniards do not love him.—I told him, that might arise from his being a stranger; but I had been well assured, and I firmly believed it, that he is a gallant, an able, and a good officer; but, said I, that cannot be the reason of so much shyness in the *Intendant*, even if it does raise any uneasiness in the O'Reilly's family:—Yes, said he, it does; for the Captain-General O'Reilly is married lately to one of the *Intendant's* daughters. So you see here was another mine sprung under me; and I determined to set out in a day or two for *Montserrat*. I had but one card more to play, and that was to carry the open letter I had to the French Consul, and which, I forgot to tell you, I had shewn to the acute, discerning, and sagacious merchant Wombwell. It was written by *Madame de Maigny*, the Lady of the *Chevalier de Maigny*, of the regiment *d'Artois*, one of the Gentlemen with whom I had eat that voluptuous supper in company at *Pont St. Esprit*; but, as Mr. Wombwell shrewdly observed, my name was not even mentioned in that letter, it was the *bearer only* who was recommended; and how could that Lady, any more than Mr. Wombwell, tell, but that I had murdered the first bearer, and robbed him of his recommendatory letter, and dressed myself in his scarlet and gold-laced coat, to practise the same wicked arts upon their lives and fortunes?

Now, you will naturally wish to know how Sir Thomas Gascoyne, my *vis-a-vis* neighbour in the same *Hotel*, conducted himself. I had, before all this fuss, eat, drank, and conversed with him: he is a sensible, genteel, well-bred man; and there was with him Mr. Swinburne, who was equally agreeable: no wonder, therefore, if I endeavoured to cultivate an acquaintance with two such men, so much superior, in all respects, to what the town afforded. Sir Thomas, however, became rather reserved; perhaps not more so than good policy made necessary for a man who was only just entering upon a grand tour through the whole kingdom, from Barcelona to Cadiz, Madrid, &c. &c. I perceived this shyness, but did not resent it, because I could not censure it. He had no suspicion of me at first; and if he had afterwards, I could not tell what circumstances might have been urged against me; and I considered, that if a man of his fortune and figure could have been suspected, there was much reason for him to join with others in suspecting me.

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The Moor, it seems, who had put off the counterfeit bank notes, had been advertised in all the foreign papers; his person was particularly described; and as application had been made to the Courts of France and Spain, to stop the career of such a villain, the Governor of *Barcelona* had, upon Sir Thomas Gascoyne's first arrival, stopped him, and sent for the Consul, verily believing he had got the offender. The Moor was described as a short, plump, black man; and as Sir Thomas has black eyes, and is rather *en bon point*, the plain, honest Governor had not discernment enough to see that ease and good breeding in Sir Thomas, which no Moor, however well he may imitate Bank notes, can counterfeit. But as Sir Thomas had letters of credit upon Mr. Curtoys, which ascertained his person and rank, this adventure became a laughable one to him. It is, indeed, from his mouth I relate it, though, perhaps, not with all the circumstances he told me.—Now, had my person tallied as well as Sir Thomas's did with that of the itinerant Moor, I should certainly have been in one of the round towers, which stick pretty thick in the walls of the fortification of this town.

You will tremble—I assure you, I do—when I think of another escape I had; and I will tell you how:—The day after I left *Cette*, I came to a spot where the roads divide; here I asked two men, which was mine to *Narbonne*? one of them answered me in English; he was a shabby, but genteel-looking young man, said he came from *Italy*, and was going to *Barcelona*; that he had been defrauded of his money at *Venice* by a parcel of sharpers, and was going to *Spain* to get a passage to Holland, of which country he was a native; he was then in treaty, he said, with the other man to sell him a pair of breeches, to furnish him with money to carry him on; and as I had no servant at that time, he earnestly intreated me to take him into my service: I would not do that, you may be sure; but lest he might be an unfortunate man, like myself, I told him, if he could contrive to lie at the inns I did, I would pay for his bed and supper. He accepted an offer, I soon became very sorry I had made; and when we arrived at *Perpignan*, I gave him a little money to proceed, but absolutely forbid him either to walk near my chaise, or to sleep at the same inns I did; for as I knew him not, he should not enter into another kingdom as one in my *suite*; and I saw no more of him till some days after my arrival at *Barcelona*, where he accosted me in a better habit, and shewed me some real, or counterfeit gold he had got, he said, of a friend who knew his father at Amsterdam. He was a bold, daring fellow; and it was with some difficulty I could prevail upon him not to walk *cheek by jole* with me along the ramparts.

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Soon after this I was informed, that a fine-dressed, little black-eyed man was arrived in a bark from Italy. This man proved to be, as Mr. Curtoys informed me, the very Moor whom Sir Thomas Gascoyne was suspected to be: he was apprehended, and committed to one of the round towers. But what will you say, or what would have been my lot, had I taken the other man into my service?—for the minute *my white man*, for he was a *whitish* Moor, saw the black one arrive, he decamped; they were afraid of each other, and both wanted to escape; my man went off on foot; the black man was apprehended, while he was in treaty with the master of the same bark he came in, to carry him to some other sea-port. Now had I come in with such a servant, and with my suspected Bank notes, without letters of credit, or recommendation; had the Moor arrived, who is the real culprit, and who had been connected with my man, what would have become of his master, your unfortunate humble servant?—I doubt the *abilities* of his Britannic Majesty's Consul would not have been able to have divided our degrees of *guilt* properly; and that I should have experienced but little charity on my straw bed, from the humanity of Mr. Wombwell. However, I had still one card more to play to reinforce my purse; it was one, I thought could not fail, and the money was nearer home:—I had lent, while I was at Calais, thirty guineas to a French officer, for no other reason but because he wanted it: I knew the man; and as he promised to pay me in three months, and as that time was expired, I applied to Mr. Harris, a Scotch merchant, at his house at Barcelona, on whom the London Bankers of the same name give letters of credit to travellers. I begged the favour of him to send the note to his correspondents at Paris, and to procure the money for me, and when it was paid, that he would give it to me at Barcelona; but Mr. Harris too, begged to be excused: he started some difficulties, but at length did give me a receipt for the note, and promised, reluctantly enough, to send it. I began now to think that I should starve indeed. Every article of life is high in Spain, and my purse was low. I therefore wrote to Mr. Curtoys, to know if he had any tidings of the Bank bills; for I had immediately wrote to Messrs. Hoare, to beg the favour of them to send Mr. Curtoys the numbers of those which I received at their house; and they very politely informed me, they had so done. Mr. Consul Curtoys favoured me with the following answer:

“Mr. Curtoys presents his compliments to Mr. Thicknesse; no ways doubts the Bank bills *to be good*, from London this post under the 24th past, they *accuse* receipt thereof, &c. *Barcelona*, 12th of December, 1775.”

As Mr. Curtoys's correspondent had *accused receipt thereof*, I thought I might too, and accordingly I went and desired my money. The cashier was sick, they said, and I was desired to call again the next morning, *when he would be much better*;—I did so, and received my money; and shall set off immediately for *Montserrat*, singing, and saying what I do not exactly agree to; but, being at Rome, I would do as they do there: I therefore taught my children to repeat the following Spanish proverb:

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“Barcelonaes Bueno,
Si la Bolsa fueno;
Sueno o no fueno;
Barcelonaes Bueno.”

I will not translate what, I am sure, you will understand the sense of much better than you will think I experienced the truth. I hope, however, to have done with my misfortunes; for I am going to visit a spot inhabited by virtuous and retired men; a place, according to all reports, cut out by nature for such who are able to sequester themselves from all worldly concerns; and from such strangers as they are I am sure I shall meet with more charity for they deal in nothing else than I met with humanity or politeness at Barcelona.

P.S. I should have told you, that before Sir Thomas Gascoyne left this town, he sent a polite message, to desire to take leave of me and my family: I therefore waited upon him; and as he proposed visiting Gibraltar, I troubled him with a letter to my son, then on that duty; and was sorry soon after to find that my son had left the garrison before Sir Thomas could arrive at it. If you ask me how Sir Thomas Gascoyne ventured to make so great a tour through a country so awkwardly circumstanced for travellers in general, and strangers in particular, I can only say, that when I saw him he had but just began his long journey, and that he had every advantage which *religion* and fortune could give him. I had none: he travelled with two coaches, two sets of horses, two saddle mules, and was protected by a train of servants. I had religion, (but it was a bad one in that country) and only one footman, who strictly maintained his character, for he always walked. Indeed, it is the fashion of all Spanish gentlemen to be followed by their servant on foot. I therefore travelled like a Spaniard; Sir Thomas like an Englishman. The whole city of *Barcelona* was in an uproar the morning Sir Thomas's two coaches set off; and I heard, with concern, that they both broke down before they got half way to *Valencia*; but, with pleasure, by a polite letter soon after from Mr. Swinburne, that they got so far in perfect health.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

P.S. Before I quit Barcelona, it will be but just to say, that it is a good city, has a fine mole, and a noble citadel, beside *Monjuique*, a strong fort, which stands on a high hill, and which commands the town as well as the harbour. The town is very large and strongly fortified, stands in a large plain, and is encompassed with a semi-circular range of high hills, rather than mountains, which form *un coup-d'oeil*, that is very pleasing, as not only the sides of the hills are adorned with a great number of country houses, but the plain also affords a great many, beside several little villages. The roads too near the town are very good. As to the city itself, it is rather well built in general, than abounding with any particular fine buildings. The Inquisition has nothing to boast of now, either within or without, having (fortunately for the public)

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lost a great part of its former power: it, however, still keeps an awe upon all who live within its verge. I never saw a town in which trade is carried on with more spirit and industry; the indolent disposition of the Spaniards of *Castile*, and other provinces, has not extended ever into this part of Spain. They have here a very fine theatre; but those who perform upon the stage are the refuse of the people, and are too bad to be called by the name of actors. They have neither libraries nor pictures worthy of much notice, though they boast of one or two paintings in their churches by natives of the town, Francois *Guirro*, and John *Arnau*. In the custom-house hangs a full-length of the present King, so execrable, that one would wonder it was not put, with the painter, into the Inquisition, as a libel on royalty and the arts. I am told, at *La Fete Dieu* there are some processions of the most ridiculous nature. The fertility of the earth in and about the town is wonderful; the minute one crop is off the earth, another is put in; no part of the year puts a stop to vegetation. In the coldest weather, the market abounds with a great variety of the choicest flowers; yet their sweets cannot over-power the intolerable smell which salt fish, and stinking fish united, diffuse over all that part of the city; and rich as the inhabitants are, you will see the legs, wings, breasts, and entrails of fowls, in the market, cut up as joints of meat are in other countries, to be sold separately: nor could I find in this great city either oil, olives, or wine, that were tolerable. I paid a guinea a day at the *Fontain d'Or* for my table; yet every thing was so dirty, that I always made my dinner from the dessert; nor was there any other place but the stable of this dirty inn to put up my horse, where I paid twelve livres a week for straw only; and whoever lodges at this inn, must pay five shillings a day for their dinner, whether they dine there or not.

Catalonia is undoubtedly the best cultivated, the richest, and most industrious province, or principality, in Spain; and the King, who has the SUN FOR HIS HAT, (for it always shines in some part of his dominions) has nothing to boast of, equal to *Catalonia*.

As I have almost as much abhorrence to the Moors, as even the Spaniards themselves, (having visited that coast two or three times, many years ago) you may be sure I was grieved to meet, every time I went out, so many maimed and wounded officers and soldiers, who were not long returned from the unsuccessful expedition to *Algiers*. There are no troops in the world more steady than the Spaniards; it was not for want of bravery they miscarried, but there was some sad mismanagement; and had the Moors followed their blows, not a man of them would have returned. My servant, (a French deserter) who was upon that expedition, says, Gen. O'Reilly was the first who landed, and the last who embarked;—but it is the

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HEAD, not the *arm* of a commander in chief, which is most wanted. The Moors at *le point du jour*, advanced upon the Spaniards behind a formidable *masked and moving battery* of camels: the Spaniards, believing them, by a faint light, to be cavalry, expended a great part of their strength, spirits, and ammunition, upon those harmless animals; and it was not till *this curtain* was removed that the dreadful carnage began, in which they lost about nine thousand men. There seems to have been some strange mismanagement; it seems probable that there was no very good understanding between the marine and the land officers. The fleet were many days before the town, and then landed just where the Moors expected they would land. There is nothing so difficult, so dangerous, nor so liable to miscarriage, as the war of *invading*: our troops experienced it at *St. Cas*; and they either have, or will experience it in America. The wild negroes in Jamaica, to whom Gov. Trelawney wisely gave, what they contended for, (LIBERTY) were not above fifteen hundred fit to bear arms. I was in several skirmishes with them, and second in command under Mr. Adair's brother, a valiant young man who died afterwards in the field, who made peace with them; yet I will venture to affirm, that though five hundred disciplined troops would have subdued them in an open country, the united force of France and England could not have extirpated them from their fast holds in the mountains. Did not a Baker battle and defeat two Marshals of France in the Cevennes? And is it probable, that all the fleets and armies of Great-Britain can conquer America?—England may as well attempt moving that Continent on this side the Atlantic.

LETTER XX.

MONTSERRAT.

I never left any place with more secret satisfaction than I did *Barcelona*; exclusive of the entertainment I was prepared to expect, by visiting this holy mountain; nor have I been disappointed; but on the contrary, found it, in every respect, infinitely superior to the various accounts I had heard of it;—to give a perfect description of it is impossible;—to do that it would require some of those attributes which the Divine Power by whose almighty handy it was raised, is endowed with. It is called *Montserrat*, or *Mount-Scie*,^[C] by the *Catalonians*, words which signify a cut or *sawed mountain*; and so called from its singular and extraordinary form; for it is so broken, so divided, and so crowned with an infinite number of spiring cones, or PINE heads, that it has the appearance, at distant view, to be the work of man; but upon a nearer approach, to be evidently raised by HIM alone, to whom nothing is impossible. It looks, indeed, like the first rude sketch of GOD's work; but the design is great, and the execution such, that it compels all men who approach it, to lift up their hands and eyes to heaven, and to say,—Oh GOD!—HOW WONDERFUL ARE ALL THY WORKS!

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[C] The arms of the Abbey are—A saw in the middle of a rock.

It is no wonder then, that such a place should be fixed upon for the residence of holy and devout men; for there is not surely upon the habitable globe a spot so properly adapted for retirement and contemplation; it has therefore, for many ages, been inhabited only by monks and hermits, whose first vow is, never to forsake it;—a vow, without being either a hermit or a monk, I could make, I think, without repenting.

If it be true, and some great man has said so, that “*whosoever delighteth in solitude, is either a wild beast, or a God;*” the inhabitants of this spot are certainly more than men; for no wild beast dwells here. But it is the *place*, not the people, I mean at present to speak of. It stands in a vast plain, seven leagues they call it, but it is at least thirty miles from *Barcelona*, and nearly in the center of the principality of *Catalonia*. The height of it is so very considerable, that in one hour’s slow travelling towards it, after we left *Barcelona*, it shewed its pointed steeples, high over the lesser mountains, and seemed so very near, that it would have been difficult to have persuaded a person, not accustomed to such deceptions, in so clear an atmosphere to believe, that we had much more than an hour’s journey to arrive at it; instead of which, we were all that day in getting to *Martorel*, a small city, still three leagues distant from it, where we lay at the Three Kings, a pretty good inn, kept by an insolent imposing Italian. *Martorel* stands upon the steep banks of the river *Lobregate*, over which there is a modern bridge, of a prodigious height, the piers of which rest on the opposite shore, against a Roman triumphal arch of great solidity, and originally of great beauty. I think I tell you the truth when I say, that I could perceive the convent, and some of the hermitages, when I first saw the mountain, at above twenty miles distance. From *Martorel*, however, they were as visible as the mountain itself, to which the eye was directed, down the river, the banks of which were adorned with trees, villages, houses, &c. and the view terminated by this the most glorious monument in nature. When I first saw the mountain, it had the appearance of an infinite number of rocks cut into *conical* forms, and built one upon another to a prodigious height. Upon a nearer view, each cone appeared of itself a mountain; and the *tout ensemble* compose an enormous mass of the *Lundus Helmonti*, or plumb-pudding stone, fourteen miles in circumference, and what the Spaniards *call* two leagues in height. As it is like unto no other mountain, so it stands quite unconnected with any, though not very distant from some very lofty ones. Near the base of it, on the south side, are two villages, the largest of which is *Montrosol*; but my eyes were attracted by two ancient towers, which flood upon a hill near

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Colbaton, the smallest, and we drove to that, where we found a little *posada*, and the people ready enough to furnish us with mules and asses, for we were now become quite impatient to visit the hallowed and celebrated convent, *De Neustra Senora*; a convent, to which pilgrims resort from the furthest parts of Europe, some bearing, by way of penance, heavy bars of iron on their backs, others cutting and slashing their naked bodies with wire cords, or crawling to it on all-fours, like the beasts of the field, to obtain forgiveness of their sins, by the intercession of *our Lady of Montserrat*.

When we had ascended a steep and rugged road, about one hour, and where there was width enough, and the precipices not too alarming, to give our eyes the utmost liberty, we had an earnest of what we were to expect above, as well as the extensive view below; our impatience to see more was encreased by what we had already seen; the majestic convent opened to us a view of her venerable walls; some of the hermits' cells peeped over the broken precipices still higher; while we, glutted with astonishment, and made giddy with delight and amazement, looked up at all with a reverential awe, towards that God who raised the PILES, and the holy men who dwell among them.— Yes, Sir,—we caught the holy flame; and I hope we came down better, if not wiser, than we went up. After ascending full two hours and a half more, we arrived on a flat part on the side, and about the middle of the mountain, on which the convent is built; but even that flat was made so by art, and at a prodigious expence. Here, however, was width enough to look securely about us; and, good God! what an extensive field of earth, air, and sea did it open! the ancient towers, which at first attracted my notice near *Colbaton*, were dwindled into pig-sties upon a *mounticule*. At length, and a great length it was, we arrived at the gates of the *Sanctuary*; on each side of which, on high pedestals, stand the enormous statues of two saints; and nearly opposite, on the base of a rock, which leans in a frightful manner over the buildings, and threatens destruction to all below, a great number of human skulls are fixed in the form of a cross. Within the gate is a square cloister, hung round with paintings of the miracles performed by the Holy Virgin, with votive offerings, &c. It was Advent week, when none of the monks quit their apartments, but one whose weekly duty it was to attend the call of strangers; nor did the whole community afford but a single member (*pere tendre*, a *Fleming*) who could speak French. It was *Pere Pascal*, by whom we were shewn every mark of politeness and attention, which a man of the world could give, but administered with all that humility and meekness, so becoming a man who had renounced it. He put us in possession of a good room, with good beds; and as it was near night, and very cold, he ordered a brazier of red-hot embers into our apartment;

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and having sent for the cook of the strangers' kitchen, (for there are four public kitchens) and ordered him to obey our commands, he retired to evening *vespers*; after which he made us a short visit, and continued to do so, two or three times every day, while we staid. Indeed, I began to fear we staid too long, and told him so; but he assured me the apartment was ours for a month or two, if we pleased. During our stay, he admitted me into his apartments, and filled my box with delicious Spanish snuff, and shewed us every attention we would wish, and much more than, as *unrecommended* strangers, we could expect. All the poor who come here are fed gratis for three days, and all the sick received in the hospital. Sometimes, on particular festivals, seven thousand arrive in one day; but people of condition pay a reasonable price for what they eat. There was before our apartment a long covered gallery; and tho' we were in a deep recess of the rocks, which projected wide and high on our right and left, we had in front a most extensive view of the *world below*, and the more distant Mediterranean Sea. It was a moon-light night; and, in spite of the cold, it was impossible to be shut out of the enchanting lights and shades which her silver beams reflected on the rude rocks above, beneath, and on all sides of us.—Every thing was as still as death, till the sonorous convent bell warned the Monks to midnight prayer. At two o'clock, we heard some of the tinkling bells of the hermits' cells above give notice, that they too were going to their devotion at the appointed hour: after which I retired to my bed; but my mind was too much awakened to permit me to sleep; I was impatient for the return of day-light, that I might proceed still higher; for, miser like, tho' my *coffers were too full*, I coveted more; and accordingly, after breakfast, we eagerly set our feet to the first *round* of the *hermit's ladder*; it was a stone one indeed, but stood in all places dreadfully steep, and in many almost perpendicular. After mounting up a vast chasm in the rock, yet full of trees and shrubs, about a thousand paces, fatigued in body, and impatient for a safe resting place, we arrived at a small hole in the rock, through which we were glad to crawl; and having got to the secure side of it, prepared ourselves, by a little rest, to proceed further; but not, I assure you, without some apprehensions, that if there was no better road down, we must have become *hermits*. After a second clamber, not quite so dreadful as the first, but much longer, we got into some flowery and serpentine walks, which lead to two or three of the nearest hermitages then visible, and not far off, one of which hung over so horrible a precipice, that it was terrifyingly picturesque. We were now, however, I thought, certainly in the garden of Eden! Certain I am, Eden could not be more beautifully adorned; for God alone is the gardener here also; and consequently, every thing prospered around us which could gratify the eye, the nose and, the imagination.

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“Profuse the myrtle spread unfading boughs,
Expressive emblem of eternal vows.”

For the myrtle, the eglantine, the jessamin, and all the smaller kind of aromatic shrubs and flowers, grew on all sides thick and spontaneously about us; and our feet brushed forth the sweets of the lavender, rosemary and thyme, till we arrived at the first, and peaceful hermitage of *Saint Tiago*. We took possession of the holy inhabitants little garden, and were charmed with the neatness, and humble simplicity, which in every part characterised the possessor. His little chapel, his fountain, his vine arbor, his stately cypress, and the walls of his cell, embraced on all sides with ever-greens, and adorned with flowers, rendered it, exclusive of its situation, wonderfully pleasing. His door, however, was fast, and all within was silent; but upon knocking, it was opened by the venerable inhabitant: he was cloathed in a brown cloth habit, his beard was very long, his face pale, his manners courteous; but he seemed rather too deeply engaged in the contemplation of the things of the next world, to lose much of his time with *such things* as *us*. We therefore, after peeping into his apartments, took his benediction, and he retired, leaving us all his worldly possessions, but his straw bed, his books, and his beads. This hermitage is confined between two pine heads, within very narrow bounds; but it is artfully fixed, and commands at noon day a most enchanting prospect to the East and to the North. Though it is upwards of two thousand three hundred paces from the convent, yet it hangs so directly over it, that the rocks convey not only the sound of the organ, and the voices of the monks singing in the choir, but you may hear men in common conversation from the piazza below.

This is a long letter; but I know you would not willingly have left me in the midst of danger, or before I was safe arrived at the first stage towards heaven, and seen one humble host on GOD's high road.

P.S. At two o'clock, after midnight, these people rise, say mass, and continue the remainder of the night in prayer and contemplation. The hermits tell you, it was upon high mountains that God chose to manifest his will:—*fundamenta ejus in montibus sanctis*, say they;—they consider these rocks as symbols of their penitence, and mortifications; and their being so beautifully covered with fine flowers, odoriferous and rare plants, as emblems of the virtue and innocence of the religious inhabitants; or how else, say they, could such rocks produce spontaneously flowers in a desert, which surpass all that art and nature combined can do, in lower and more favourable soils? They may well think so; for human reason cannot account for the manner by which such enormous quantities of trees, fruits, and flowers are nourished, seemingly without soil. But that which established a church and convent on this mountain, was the story of a hermit who resided

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here many years; this was *Juan Guerin*, who lived on this mountain alone, the austerity of whose life was such, that the people below believed he subsisted without eating or drinking. As some very extraordinary circumstances attended this man's life, all which are universally believed here, it may not be amiss to give you some account of him:— You must know, Sir, then, that the devil envying the happiness of this good man equipped himself in the habit of a hermit, and possessed himself of a cavern in the same mountain, which still bears the name of the *Devil's Grot*; after which he took occasion to throw himself in the way of poor *Guerin*, to whom he expressed his surprize at seeing one of his own order dwell in a place he thought an absolute desert; but thanked God, for giving him so fortunate a meeting. Here the devil, and *Guerin* became very intimate, and conversed much together on spiritual matters; and things went on well enough between them for a while, when another devil chum to the first, possessed the body of a certain Princess, daughter of a Count of *Barcelona*, who became thereby violently tormented with horrible convulsions. She was taken to the church by her afflicted father. The daemon who possessed her, and who, spoke for her, said, that nothing could relieve her from her sufferings but the prayers of a devout and pious hermit, named *Guerin*, who dwelt on *Montserrat*. The father, therefore, immediately repaired to *Guerin*, and besought his prayers and intercession for the recovery of his daughter. It so happened (for so the devil would have it) that this business could not be perfectly effected in less than nine days; and that the Princess must be left that time alone with *Guerin* in his cave. Poor *Guerin*, conscious of his frail nature, opposed this measure with all his might; but there was no resisting the argument and influence of the devil, and she was accordingly left. Youth, beauty, a cave, solitude, and virgin modesty, were too powerful not to overcome even the chaste vows and pious intentions of poor *Guerin*. The devil left the virgin, and possessed the saint. He consulted his false friend, and told him how powerful this impure passion was become, and his intentions of flying from the danger; but the devil advised him *to return to his cell*, and pray to God to protect him from sin. *Guerin* took his council, returned and fell into the fatal snare. The devil then persuaded him to kill the Princess, in order to conceal his guilt, and to tell her father she had forsaken his abode while he was intent on prayer. *Guerin* did so; but became very miserable, and at length determined to make a pilgrimage to Rome, to obtain a remission of his complicated crimes. The Pope enjoined him to return to *Montserrat*, on all fours, and to continue in that state, without once looking up to heaven, for the space of seven years, or 'till a child of three months old told him, his sins were forgiven: all which *Guerin* chearfully complied with, and accordingly crawled back to the defiled mountain.

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Soon after the expiration of the seven years Count *Vifroy*, the father of the murdered Princess, was hunting on the mountain of *Montserrat*, and passing near *Guerin's* cave, the dogs entered, and the servant seeing a hideous figure concluded they had found the wild beast they were in pursuit of: they informed the Count of what they had seen, who gave directions to secure the beast alive, which was accordingly done; for he was so over-grown with hair, and so deformed in shape, that they had no idea of the creature being human. He was therefore kept in the Count's stable at *Barcelona*, and shewn to his visitors as a wonderful and singular wild beast. During this time, while a company were examining this extraordinary animal, a nurse with a young child in her arms looked upon it, and the child after fixing his eyes stedfastly for a few minutes on *Guerin*, said, "*Guerin, rise, thy sins are forgiven thee!*"—*Guerin* instantly rose, threw himself at the Count's feet, confessed the crimes he had been guilty of, and desired to receive the punishment due to them, from the hands of him whom he had so highly injured; but the Count, perceiving that God had forgiven him, forgave him also.

I will not trouble you with all the particulars which attended this miracle; it will be sufficient to say, that the Count and *Guerin* went to take up the body of the murdered Princess, for burial with her ancestors; but, to their great astonishment found her there alive, possessing the same youth and beauty she had been left with, and no alteration of any kind, but a purple streak about her neck where the cord had been twisted, and wherewith *Guerin* had strangled her. The father desired her to return to *Barcelona*; but she was enjoined by the Holy Virgin, she said, to spend her days on that miraculous spot; and accordingly a church and convent was built there, the latter inhabited by Nuns, of which the Princess (who had risen from the dead) was the Abbess. It was called the Abbey *des Pucelles*, of the order of *St. Benoit*, and was founded in the year 801. But such a vast concourse of people, of both sexes, resorted to it, from all parts of the world, that at length it was thought prudent to remove the women to a convent at *Barcelona*, and place a body of *Benedictine* monks in their place.

Strange as this story is, it is to be seen in the archives of this holy house; and in the street called *Condal*, at *Barcelona*, may be seen in the wall of the old palace of the Count's, an ancient figure, cut in stone, which represents the nurse with the child in her arms, and a strange figure, on his knees, at her feet, and that is Friar *Guerin*.

Now, whether you will believe all this story, or not, I cannot take upon me to say; but I will assure you, that when you visit this spot, it will be necessary to say *you do*; or you would appear in their eyes a much greater wonder than any thing which I have related, of the Devil, the Friar, the Virgin, and the Count.

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LETTER XXI.

The second hermitage, for I give them in the order they are usually visited, is that of *St. Catharine*, situated in a deep and solitary vale: it however commands a most extensive and pleasing prospect, at noon-day, to the East and West. The buildings, garden, &c. are confined within small limits, being fixed in a most picturesque and secure recess under the foot of one of the high pines. Though this hermit's habitation is the most retired and solitary abode of any, and far removed from the *din* of men, yet the courteous, affable, and sprightly inhabitant, seems not to feel the loss of human society, though no man, I think, can be a greater ornament to human nature. If he is not much accustomed to hear the voice of men, he is amply recompensed by the notes of birds; for it is their sanctuary as well as his; for no part of the mountain is so well inhabited by the feathered race of beings as this delightful spot. Perhaps indeed, they have sagacity enough to know that there is no other so perfectly secure. Here the nightingale, the blackbird, the linnet, and an infinite variety of little songsters greater strangers to my eyes, than fearful of my hands, dwell in perfect security, and live in the most friendly intimacy with their holy protector, and obedient to his call; for, says the hermit,

"Haste here, ye feather'd race of various song,
Bring all your pleasing melody along!
O come, ye tender, faithful, plaintive doves,
Perch on my hands, and sing your absent loves!"—

When instantly the whole *vocal band* quit their sprays, and surround the person of their daily benefactor, some settling upon his head, others entangle their feet in his beard, and in the true sense of the word, take his bread even out of his mouth; but it is freely given: their confidence is so great, (for the holy father is their bondsman) that the stranger too partakes of their familiarity and caresses. These hermits are not allowed to keep within their walls either dog, cat, bird, or any living thing, lest their attention should be withdrawn from heavenly to earthly affections. I am sorry to arraign this good man; he cannot be said to transgress the law, but he certainly *evades* it; for though his feathered band do not live within his walls, they are always attendant upon his *court*; nor can any prince or princess on earth boast of heads so *elegantly plumed*, as may be seen at the court of *St. Catharine*; or of vassals who pay their tributes with half the cheerfulness they are given and received by the humble monarch of this sequestered vale. If his meals are scanty, his dessert is served up with a song, and he is hushed to sleep by the nightingale; and when we consider, that he has but few days in the whole year which are inferior to some of our best in the months of May and June, you may easily conceive, that

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a man who breathes such pure air, who feeds on such light food, whose blood circulates freely from moderate exercise, and whose mind is never ruffled by worldly affairs, whose short sleeps are sweet and refreshing, and who lives confident of finding in death a more heavenly residence; lives a life to be envied, not pitied.—Turn but your eyes one minute from this man's situation, to that of any monarch or minister on earth, and say, on which side does the balance turn?—While some princes may be embruining their hands in the blood of their subjects, this man is offering up his prayers to God to preserve all mankind:—While some ministers are sending forth fleets and armies to wreak their own private vengeance on a brave and uncorrupted people, this solitary man is feeding, from his own scanty allowance, the birds of the air.—Conceive him, in his last hour, upon his straw bed, and see with what composure and resignation he meets it!—Look in the face of a dying king, or a plundering, and blood-thirsty minister, —what terrors the sight of their velvet beds, adorned with crimson plumage, must bring to their affrighted imagination!—In that awful hour, it will remind them of the innocent blood they have spilt;—nay, they will perhaps think, they were dyed with the blood of men scalped and massacred, to support their vanity and ambition!—In short, dear Sir, while kings and ministers are torn to pieces by a thirst after power and riches, and disturbed by a thousand anxious cares, this poor hermit can have but one, *i.e.* lest he should be removed (as the prior of the convent has a power to do) to some other cell, for that is sometimes done, and very properly.

The youngest and most hardy constitutions are generally put into the higher hermitages, or those to which the access is most difficult; for the air is so fine, in the highest parts of the mountain, that they say it often renders the respiration painful. Nothing therefore can be more reasonable than, that as these good men grow older, and less able to bear the fatigues and inconveniencies the highest abodes unavoidably subject them to, should be removed to more convenient dwellings, and that the younger and stouter men should succeed them.

As the hermits never eat meat, I could not help observing to him, how fortunate a circumstance it was for the safety of his little feathered friends; and that there were no boys to disturb their young, nor any sportsman to kill the parent.—God forbid, said he, that one of them should fall, but by his hands who gave it life!—Give me your hand, said I, and bless me!—I believe it did; *but it shortened my visit*:—so I stept into the *grot*, and *stole* a pound of chocolate upon his stone table, and myself away.

If there is a happy man upon this earth, I have seen that extraordinary man, and here he dwells!—his features, his manners, all his looks and actions, announce it;—yet he had not even a single *maravedi* in his pocket:—money is as useless to him, as to one of his black-birds.

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Within a gun-shot of this *remnant* of *Eden*, are the remains of an ancient hermitage, called *St. Pedro*. While I was there, my hermit followed me; but I too *coveted retirement*. I had just bought a fine fowling-piece at *Barcelona*; and when he came, I was availing myself of the hallowed spot, to make *my vow* never to use it. In truth, dear Sir, there are some sorts of pleasures too powerful for the body to bear, as well as some sort of pain: and here I was wrecked upon the wheel of felicity; and could only say, like the poor criminal who suffered at *Dijon*,—O God! O God! at every *coup*.

I was sorry my host did not understand English, nor I Spanish enough, to give him the sense of the lines written in poor *Shenstone*'s alcove.

“O you that bathe in courtlye bliss,
“Or toyle in fortune's giddy spheare;
“Do not too rashly deeme amisse
“Of him that hides contented here.

I forgot the other lines; but they conclude thus:

“For faults there beene in busye life
From which these peaceful glennes are free.”

LETTER XXII.

I know you will not like to leave *St. Catherine*'s harmonious cell so soon;—nor should I, but that I intend to visit it again. I will therefore conduct you to *St. Juan*, about four hundred paces distant from it, on the east side of which, you look down a most horrid and frightful precipice,—a precipice, so very tremendous, that I am persuaded there are many people whose imagination would be so intoxicated by looking at it, that they might be in danger of throwing themselves over: I do not know whether you will understand my meaning by saying so; but I have more than once been so bewildered with such alarming *coup d'oeil* on this mountain, that I began to doubt whether my own powers were sufficient to protect me:—Horses, from sudden fright, will often run into the fire; and man too, may be forced upon his own destruction, to avoid those sensations of danger he has not been accustomed to look upon. Perhaps I am talking non-sense; and you will attribute what I say to lowness of spirits; on the contrary, I had those feelings about me only during the time my eyes were employed upon such frightful objects; for my spirits were enlivened by pure air, exercise, and temperance:—nay, I remember to have been struck in the same manner, when the grand explosion of the fireworks was played off, many years ago, upon the conclusion of peace! The blast was so great, that it appeared as if it were designed to take with it all earthly things; and I felt almost forced by it, and summoned from my seat, and could hardly refrain from jumping over a parapet wall which stood before me. The building of this hermitage, however, is

very secure; nothing can shake or remove it, but that which must shake or remove the whole mountain.

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At this cell, small as it is, King Philip the Third dined on the eleventh of July 1599;—a circumstance, you may be sure, the inhabitant will never forget, or omit to mention. It commands at noon-day a fine prospect eastward, and is approached by a good stage of steps. Not far from it, on the road side, is a little chapel called St. Michael, a chapel as ancient as the monastery itself; and a little below is the grotto, in which the image of the Virgin, now fixed in the high altar of the church, was found. The entrance of this grotto is converted into a chapel, where mass is said every day by one of the monks. All the hermitages, even the smallest, have their little chapel, the ornaments for saying mass, their water cistern, and most of them a little garden. The building consists of one or two little chambers, a little refectory, and a kitchen; but many of them have every convenience within and without that a single man can wish or desire, except he should wish for or desire *such things* as he was obliged to renounce when he took possession of it.

From hence, by a road more wonderful than safe or pleasing, you are led on a ridge of mountains to the lofty cell of *St. Onofre*. It stands in a cleft in one of the pine heads, six and thirty feet (I was going to say) above the earth; its appearance is indeed astonishing, for it seems in a manner hanging in the air; the access to it is by a ladder of sixty steps, extremely difficult to ascend, and even then you have a wooden bridge to cross, fixed from rock to rock, under which is an aperture of so terrifying an appearance, that I still think a person, not over timid, may find it very difficult to pass over, if he looks under, without losing in some degree that firmness which is necessary to his own preservation. The best and safest way is, to look forward at the building or object you are going to.—Fighting, and even courage, is mechanical; a man may be taught it as readily as any other science; and I would *pit* the little timid hermit of *St. Onofre* to a march, on the margin of the precipices on this mountain, against the bravest general we have in America. The man that would not wince at the whistle of a cannon-ball over his head, may find his blood retire, and his senses bewildered, at a dreadful precipice under his feet. *St. Onofre* possesses no more space than what is covered in by the tiling, nor any prospect but to the South. The inhabitant of it says, he often sees the islands of *Minorca*, *Mallorca*, and *Ivica*, and the kingdoms of *Valencia* and *Murcia*. The weather was extremely fine when I visited it, but there was a distant haziness which prevented my seeing those islands; indeed, my eyes were better employed and entertained in examining objects more interesting, as well as more pleasing. Going from this hermitage, you have a view of the vale of *St. Mary*, formerly called *la Vallee Amere*, through which the river *Lobregate* runs, and which divides the bishoprick of Barcelona from that of *De Vic*.

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Lest you should think I am rather too tremendously descriptive of this *upland* journey, hear what a French traveller says, who visited this mountain about twenty years ago. After examining every thing curious at the convent, he says, "*Il ne me restoit plus rien a voir que l'hermitage qui est renomme, il est dans la partie la plus elevee de la montagne, & partage en treize habitations, pour autant d'hermites. Le plaisir de le voir devoit me dedommager de la peine qu'il me falloit prendre pour y monter, en grim pant pendant plus de heux heures. J'aurois pre me servir de ma mule, mais il m'auroit fallu prendre un chemin ou j'aurois mis le double du tems. Je m'armai donc de courage, & entre dans une enceinte par une porte que l'on m'ouvrit avec peine au dehors du monastere, je commencai a monter par des degres qui sembloient perpendiculaires, tant ils etoient roides; & je fus oblige de m'agraffer a des barres qui y font placees expres: ensuite, je me trainai par-dessous de grosses pierres, qui sont comme des voutes ruinees, dont les ouvertures sont le seul passage qu'il y ait pour quiconque a la temerite de s'engager dans ces defiles; apres avoir grimpe, environ mille pas, je trouvai un petit terrain uni ou je me laissai tomber tout etendu afin de reprendre ma respiration qui commençoit a me manquer.*" And yet this was only the Frenchman's first stage on his way to the first and nearest hermitage; and who I find clambered up the very road we did, rather than take the longer route on mule-back; and, for aught I know, a route still more dangerous, for there are many places where the precipice is perpendicular on both sides of a ridge, and where the road is too narrow even to turn the mule; so he that sets out, must proceed.

After ascending a ladder fixed in the same pine where *St. Onofre* is situated, at an hundred and fifty paces distant, is the fifth hermitage of the penitent *Madalena*; it stands between two lofty pines, and on some elevated rocks, and commands a beautiful view, towards noon-day, to the East and West; and near to it, in a more elevated pine, stands its chapel, from whence you look down (dreadful to behold) a rugged precipice and steep hills, upon the convent at two miles distance where are two roads, or rather passages, to this cell, both exceedingly difficult; by one you mount up a ladder of at least an hundred steps; the other is of stone steps, and pieces of timber to hold by; that the hermit who dwells there says, the whistling of the wind in tempestuous nights sounds like the roaring of baited bulls.

LETTER XXIII.

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I must now lead you up to the highest part of the mountain; it is a long way up, not less than three thousand five hundred paces from *St. Madalena*, and over a very rugged and disagreeable road for the feet, which leads, however, to the cell of *St. Geronimo*; from the two turrets of which, an immense scene is opened, too much for the head of a *low-lander* to bear; for it not only takes in a view of a great part of the mountain beneath, but of the kingdoms of *Arragon*, *Valencia*, the Mediterranean Sea, and the islands; but as it were, one half of the earth's orbit. The fatigue to clamber up to it is very great; but the recompense is ample. This hermitage looks down upon a wood above a league in circumference, in which formerly some hermits dwelt; but at present it is stocked with cattle belonging to the convent, who have a fountain of good water therein. Near this hermitage, in a place they call *Poza*, the snow is preserved for the use of the *Religieux*. The inhabitant either was not within, or would not be disturbed; so that after feasting my eyes on all sides, my conductor led me on eastward to the seventh hermitage, called *St. Antonio*, the father of the Anchorites; it stands under one of the highest PINES, and the access to it is so difficult and dangerous, that very few strangers visit it;—a circumstance which whetted my curiosity; so, like the boy after a bird's-nest, I *risqued it*, especially as I was pretty sure I should *take the old bird sitting*. This hermit had formerly been in the service; and though he had made great intercession to the Holy Virgin and saints in heaven, as well as much interest with men on earth, he was not, I think, quite happy in his exalted station; his turret is so small, that it will not contain above two men; the view from it, to the East and North, is very fine; but it looks down a most horrible and dreadful precipice, above one hundred and eighty toises perpendicular, and upon the river *Lobregate*. No man, but he whom custom has made familiar to such a tremendous *eye-ball*, can behold this place but with horror and amazement; and I was as glad to leave it, as I was pleased to have seen it. At about a gun-shot distance from it rises the highest pine-head of the mountain, called *Caval Hernot*, which is eighty toises higher than any other *cone*, and three thousand three hundred paces from the convent below. Keeping under the side of the same hill, and along the base of the same pine-head, you are led to the hermitage of *St. Salvador*, eight hundred paces from *St. Antonio*, which hermitage has two chapels, one of which is hewn out of the heart of the PINE, and consequently has a natural as well as a beautiful cupola; the access to this cell is very difficult, for the crags project so much, that it is necessary to clamber over them on all-four; the prospects are very fine to the southward and eastward. The inhabitant

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was from home; but as there was no fastening to his doors, I examined all his worldly goods, and found that most of them were the work of his own ingenious hands. A little distant from hence stands a wooden cross, at which the road divides; one path leads to *St. Benito*, the other to the *Holy Trinity*. By the archives of the convent, it appears, that in the year 1272, *Francis Bertrando* died at the hermitage of *St. Salvador*, after having spent forty-five years in it, admired for his sanctity and holy life, and that he was succeeded therein by *Francois Durando Mayol*, who dwelt in it twenty-seven years.

Descending from hence about six or seven hundred paces, you arrive at the ninth hermitage, *St. Benito*; the situation is very pleasing, the access easy, and the prospects divine. It was founded by an *Abbot*, whose intentions were, that it should contain within a small distance, four other cells, in memory of the five wounds made in the body of Christ. This hermit has the privilege of making an annual entertainment on a certain day, on which day all the other hermits meet there, and receive the sacrament from the hands of the mountain vicar; and after divine service, dine together. They meet also at this hermitage on the day of each titular saint, to say mass, and commune with each other.

LETTER XXIV.

I cannot say a word to you on any other subject, till you have taken a turn with me in the shrubberies and gardens of the glorious (so they call it) hermitage of *St. Ana*. Coming from *St. Benito*, by a brook which runs down the middle of the mountain, six hundred paces distant from it, stands *St. Ana*, in a spacious situation, and much larger than any other, and is nearly in the center of them all. The chapel here is sufficiently large for the whole society to meet in, and accordingly they do so on certain festivals and holidays, where they confess to their mountain vicar, and receive the sacrament, This habitation is nobly adorned with large trees; the ever-green oak, the cork, the cypress, the spreading fig-tree, and a variety of others; yet it is nevertheless dreadfully exposed to the fury of some particular winds; and the buildings are sometimes greatly damaged, and the life of the inhabitant endangered, by the boughs which are torn off and blown about his dwelling. The foot-road from it to the monastery is only one thousand three hundred paces, but it is very rugged and unsafe; the mule-road is above four times as far: it was built in 1498, and is the hermitage where all the pilgrims pay their ordinary devotion.

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Eight hundred and fifty paces distant, on the road which leads to the hermitage of *St. Salvador*, stands, in a solitary and deep wood, the hermitage of the *Holy Trinity*. Every part of the building is neat, and the simplicity of the whole prepares you to expect the same simplicity of manners from the man who dwells within it: and a venerable man he is; but he seemed more disposed to converse with his neighbours, *Messrs. Nature*, than with us. His trees, he knows, never flatter or affront him; and after welcoming us more by his humble looks than civil words, he retired to his long and shady walk; a walk, a full gun-shot in length, and nothing in nature certainly can be more beautiful; it forms a close arbour, though composed of large trees, and terminates in a view of a vast range of pines, which are so regularly placed side by side, and which, by the reflection of the sun on their yellow and well burnished sides, have the appearance of the pipes of an organ a mile in circumference. The Spaniards say that the mountain is a block of coarse jasper, and these *organ pipes*, it must be confessed, seem to confirm it; for they are so well polished by the hand of time, that were it not too great a work for man, one would be apt to believe they had been cut by an artist.

Five hundred and sixty paces from the hermitage of the Holy Trinity, stands *St. Cruz*; it is built under the foot of one of the smaller pines; this is the nearest cell of any to the convent, and consequently oftenest visited, being only six hundred and sixty steps from the bottom of the mountain.

LETTER XXV.

I am now come to *St. Dimas*, the last, and most important, if not the most beautiful of all the hermits' habitations. This hermitage is surrounded on all sides by steep and dreadful precipices, some of which lead the eyes straight down, even to the river *Lobregate*; it can be entered only on the east side by a draw-bridge, which, when lifted up, renders any access to it almost impossible. This hermitage was formerly a strong castle, and possessed by a *banditti*, who frequently plundered and ravaged the country in the day-time, and secured themselves from punishment, by retiring to this fast hold by night. As it stands, or rather hangs over the buildings and convent below, they would frequently lower baskets by cords, and demand provisions, wine, or whatever necessities or luxuries the convent afforded; and if their demands were not instantly complied with, they tumbled down rocks of an immense size, which frequently damaged the buildings, and killed the people beneath: indeed, it was always in their power to destroy the whole building, and suffer none to live there; but that would have been depriving themselves of one safe means of subsistence:—at length the monks, by the assistance of good glasses, and a constant attention to the motion of their troublesome *boarders*,

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having observed that the greater part were gone out upon the *marauding* party, persuaded seven or eight stout farmers to believe, that heaven would reward them if they could scale the horrid precipices, and by surprise seize the castle, and secure the few who remained in it;—and these brave men accordingly got into it unobserved, killed one of the men, and secured the others for a public example. The castle was then demolished, and a hermitage called *St. Dimas*, or the Good Thief, built upon the spot. The views from it are very extensive and noble to the south and eastward.

And now, Sir, having conducted you to make a short visit to each of these wonderful, though little abodes, I must assure you, that a man well versed in *author craft* might write thirteen little volumes upon subjects so very singular. But as no written account can give a perfect idea of the particular beauties of any mountain, and more especially of one so unlike all others, I shall quit nature, and conduct you to the works of art, and treasures of value, which are within the walls of the holy sanctuary below; only observing, what I omitted to mention, that the great rains which have fallen since the creation of all things, down the sides of this steep mount, have made round the whole base a prodigious wide and deep trench, which has the appearance of a vast river course drained of its water. In this deep trench lie an infinite number of huge blocks of the mountain, which have from age to age caved down from its side, and which renders the *tout au tour* of the mountain below full as extraordinary as the pointed pinnacles above: beside this, there are many little recesses on the sides of the hill below, so adorned by stately trees and natural fountains, that I know not which part of the enchanted spot is most beautiful. I found in one of these places a little garden, fenced in by the fallen rocks, a spring of so clear and cool a water, and the whole so shaded by, oaks, so warmed by the sun, and so superlatively romantic, that I was determined to find out the owner of it, and have set about building a house or a hut to the garden, and to have made it my abode; but, alas! upon enquiry, I found the well was a holy one, and that the water, the purest and finest I ever saw or tasted could only be used for holy purposes. And here let me observe, that the generality of strangers who visit this mountain, come prepared only to stay one day;—but it is not a day, nor a week, that is sufficient to see half the smaller beauties which a mountain, so great and wonderful of itself, affords on all sides, from the highest pinnacle above, to the foundation stones beneath.

But I should have told you, that there are other roads to some of the hermitages above, which, by twisting and turning from side to side, are every week clambered up by a blind mule, who, being loaded with thirteen baskets containing the provision for the hermits, goes up without any conductor, and taking the hermitages in their proper order, goes as near as he can to each, and waits till the hermit has taken his portion; and proceeds till he has discharged his load, and his trust, and then returns to his stable below. I did not see this animal on the road, but I saw some of his *offerings there*, and you may rely upon the truth of what I tell you.

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Before I quit the hermits, however, I must tell you, that the hardships and fatigues which some of them voluntarily inflict upon themselves, are almost incredible: they cannot, like the monks in *Russia*, sit in water to their chins till they are froze up, but they undergo some penances almost as severe.

LETTER XXVI.

Pere Pascal having invited me to high mass, and to hear a Spanish sermon preached by one of their best orators, we attended; and though I did not understand the language sufficiently to know all I heard, I understood enough to be entertained, if not edified. The decency of the whole congregation too, was truly characteristic of their profession. There sat just before us a number of lay-brothers, bare-headed, with their eyes fixed the whole time upon the ground; and tho' they knew we were strangers, and probably as singular in their eyes as they could be in ours, I never perceived one of them, either at or after the service was over, to look, or even glance an eye at us. The chapel, or church of this convent, is a very noble building; and high over the great altar is fixed the image of the Virgin, which was found eight hundred years ago in a deep cave on the side of the mountain: they say the figure is the work of St. Luke; if that be true, St. Luke was a better carver than a painter, for this figure is the work of no contemptible artist; it is of wood, and of a dark-brown it is of wood, and of a dark-brown or rather black colour, about the size of a girl of twelve years of age; her garments are very costly, and she had on a crown richly adorned with *real* jewels of great value; and I believe, except our Lady of *Loretto*, the paraphernalia of her person is superior to all the saints or crowned heads in Europe. She holds on her knees a little Jesus, of the same complexion, and the work of the same artist. The high altar is a most magnificent and costly structure, and there constantly burn before it upwards of fourscore large silver lamps. The balustrades before the altar were given by King Philip the Third, and cost seven thousand crowns; and it cost fourteen thousand more to cut away the rock to lay the foundation of this new church, the old one being so small, and often so crowded by pilgrims and strangers, that many of the monks lost their lives in it every year. The whole expence of building the new one, exclusive of the inward ornaments, is computed at a million of crowns; and the seats of the choir, six and thirty thousand livres. The old church has nothing very remarkable in it but some good ancient monuments, one of which is of *Bernard Villomarin*, Admiral of Naples; a man (as the inscription says) illustrious in peace and war. There is another of *Don John d'Arragon*, *Dux Lunae*, who died in 1528; he was nephew to King Ferdinand. But the most singular inscription in this old church is one engraven on a pillar, under which *St. Ignatius* spent a whole night in prayer before he took the resolution of renouncing the world, which was in the year 1522.

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After mass was over, we were shewn into a chamber behind the high altar, where a door opened to the recess, in which the Virgin is placed, and where we were permitted, or rather required to kiss her hand. At the same time, I perceived a great many pilgrims entering the apartments, whose penitential faces plainly discovered the reverence and devotion with which they approached her sacred presence. When we returned, we were presented to the Prior; a lively, genteel man, of good address; who, with *Pere Tendre*, the Frenchman, shewed us an infinite quantity of jewels, vessels of gold and silver, garments, &c. which have been presented by Kings, Queens, and Emperors, to the convent, for the purpose of arraying this miraculous image. I begin to suspect that you will think I am become half a Catholic;—indeed, I begin to think so myself; and if ever I publicly renounce that faith which I now hold, it shall be done in a pilgrimage to *Montserrat*; for I do not see why God, who delights so much in variety, as all his mighty works testify; who has not made two green leaves of the same tint,—may not, nay, ought not to be worshipped by men of different nations, in variety of forms. I see no absurdity in a set of men meeting as the Quakers do, and sitting in silent contemplation, reflecting on the errors of their past life, and resolving to amend in future. I think an honest, good Quaker, as respectable a being as an Archbishop; and a monk, or a hermit, who think they merit heaven by the sacrifice they make for it, will certainly obtain it: and as I am persuaded the men of this society think so, I highly honour and respect them: I am sure I feel myself much obliged to them. They have a good library, but it is in great disorder; nor do I believe they are men of much reading; indeed, they are so employed in confessing the pilgrims and poor, that they cannot have much time for study.

I forgot to tell you, that at *Narbonne* I had been accosted by a young genteel couple, a male and female, who were upon a *pilgrimage*; they were dressed rather neat than fine, and their garments were adorned with cockle and other marine shells; such, indeed, all the poorer sort of pilgrims are characterised with. They presented a tin box to me, with much address, but said nothing, nor did I give them any thing; indeed, I did not *then* know, very well, for what purpose or use the charity they claimed was to be applied. This young couple were among the strangers who were now approaching the sacred image. I was very desirous of knowing their story, who they were, and what sins people so young, and who looked so good, had been guilty of, to think it necessary to come so far for absolution. *Their sins on the road*, I could be at no loss to guess at; and as they were such as people who love one another are very apt to commit, I hope and believe, they will obtain forgiveness of them.—They were either people of some condition, or very accomplished *Chevaliers d'Industrie*; though I am most inclined to believe, they were *brother and sister*, of some condition.

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After visiting the Holy Virgin, I paid my respects to the several monks in their own apartments, under the conduct of *Pere Pascal*, and was greatly entertained.—I found them excellently lodged; their apartments had no finery, but every useful convenience; and several good harpsichords, as well as good performers, beside an excellent organist. The Prior, in particular, has so much address, of the polite world about him, that he must have lived in it before he made a vow to retire from it.

I never saw a more striking instance of national influence than in the person of *Pere Tendre*, the Frenchman!—In spite of his holy life, and living among Spaniards of the utmost gravity of manners, I could have known him at first sight to have been a Frenchman. I never saw, even upon the *Boulevards* at Paris, a more lively, animated, or chearful face.

Indeed, one must believe, that these men are as good as they appear to be; for they have reason enough to believe, that every hour may be their last, as there hangs over their whole building such a terrifying mass of rock and pine heads, so split and divided, that it is difficult to perceive by what powers they are sustained: many have given way, and have no other support than the base they have made by slipping in part down, among the smaller rocks and broken fragments. About an hundred years ago, one vast block fell from above, and buried under it the hospital, and all the sick and their attendants; and where it still remains, a dreadful monument, and memento, to all who dwell near it!—I should fear (God avert the day!) that the smallest degree of an earthquake would bury all the convent, monks, and treasure, by one fatal *coup*.

LETTER XXVII.

Before I bring forth the treasures of this hospitable convent, and the jewels of *Neustra Senora*, it may be necessary to tell you, that they could not be so liberal, were not others liberal to them; and that they have permission to ask charity from every church, city, and town, in the kingdoms of France and Spain, and have always lay-brothers out, gathering money and other donations. They who feed all who come, must, of course, be fed themselves; nor has any religious house in Europe (*Loretto* excepted) been more highly honoured by Emperors, Kings, Popes, and Prelates, than this: nay, they have seemed to vie with each other, in bestowing rich and costly garments, jewels of immense value, and gold and silver of exquisite workmanship, to adorn the person of *Neustra Senora*; as the following list, though not a quarter of her *paraphernalia*, will evince: but before I particularize them, it may be proper to mention, the solemn manner in which the Virgin was moved from the old to the new church, by the hands of King Philip the Third, who repaired thither for that purpose privately as possible, to prevent the prodigious concourse of

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people who would have attended him had it been generally known. He staid at the convent four days, in which time he visited all the hermitages above, in one; but returned, greatly fatigued, and not till ten o'clock at night. After resting himself the next day, he heard mass, and being confessed, assisted at the solemnity of translating the Virgin, in the following manner:—After all the monks, hermits, and lay-brothers had heard mass, and been confessed, the Virgin was brought down and placed upon the altar in the old church, and with great ceremony, reverence, and awe, they cloathed her in a rich gold mantle, the gift of the Duke of *Branzwick*, the sleeves of which were so costly, that they were valued at eighteen thousand ducats. The Abbots, Monks, hermits, &c. who were present, wore cloaks of rich gold brocade, and in the procession sung the hymn *Te Deum Laudamus*; one of whom bore a gold cross, of exquisite workmanship, which weighed fifty marks, and which was set with costly jewels. The procession consisted of forty-three lay-brothers, fifteen hermits, and sixty-two monks, all bearing wax-tapers; then followed the young scholars, and a band of music, as well as an infinite number of people who came from all parts of the kingdom to attend the solemnity; for it was impossible to keep an act of so extraordinary a nature very private. When the Virgin was brought into the new church, she was placed on a tabernacle by four of the most ancient monks; the King held also a large lighted taper, on which his banner and arms were emblazoned, and being followed by the nobles and cavaliers of his court, joined in the procession; and having placed themselves in proper order in the great cloyster of the church, the monks sung a hymn, addressed to the Virgin, accompanied by a noble band of music: this being over, the King taking the Virgin in his arms, placed her on the great altar; and having so done, took his wax taper, and falling on his knees at her feet, offered up his prayers near a quarter of an hour: this ceremony being over, the monks advanced to the altar, and moved the Virgin into a recess in the middle of it, where she now stands: after which, the Abbot, having given his pontifical benediction, the King retired to repose himself for a quarter of an hour, and then set off for *Martorell*, where he slept, and the next day made his entry into *Barcelona*.

Among an infinite number of costly materials which adorn this beautiful church, is a most noble organ, which has near twelve hundred pipes. In the *Custodium* you are shewn three crowns for the head of the Infant Jesus, two of which are of pure gold, the third of silver, gilt, and richly adorned with diamonds; one of the gold crowns is set with two hundred and thirty emeralds, and nineteen large brilliants; the other has two hundred and thirty-eight diamonds, an hundred and thirty pearls, and sixteen rubies; it cost eighteen thousand ducats.

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There are four crowns also for the head of the Virgin; two of plated gold, richly set with diamonds, two of solid gold; one of which has two thousand five hundred large emeralds in it, and is valued at fifty thousand ducats; the fourth, and richest, is set with one thousand one hundred and twenty-four diamonds, five of which number are valued at five hundred ducats each; eighteen hundred large pearls, of equal size; thirty-eight large emeralds, twenty-one zaphirs, and five rubies; and at the top of this crown is a gold ship, adorned with diamonds of eighteen thousand dollars value. The gold alone of these crowns weighs twenty-five pounds, and, with the jewels and setting, upwards of fifty. These crowns have been made at *Montserrat*, from the gold and separate jewels presented to the convent from time to time by the crowned heads and princes of Europe. There is also another small crown, given by the Marquis de *Aytóna*, set with sixty-six brilliants.

The Infanta gave four silver candlesticks, which cost two thousand four hundred ducats.

Ann of Austria, daughter to Philip the third, gave a garment for the Virgin, which cost a thousand ducats.

There are thirty chalices of gilt plate, and one of solid gold, which cost five thousand ducats.

Prince Charles of Austria, with his consort Christiana of Brunswick, visited *Montserrat* in the year 1706, and having kissed the Virgin's hand, left at her feet his gold-hilted sword, set with seventy-nine large brilliants. This sword was given the Emperor by Anne, Queen of England.

In the church are six silver candlesticks, nine palms high, made to hold wax flambeaux. There are diamonds and jewels, given by the Countess de Aranda, Count Alba, Duchess of Medina, and forty other people of high rank, from the different courts of Europe, to the value of more than an hundred thousand ducats.—But were I to recite every particular from the list of donations, which my friend, *Pere Pascal*, gave me, and which now lies before me, with the names of the donors, they would fill a volume instead of a letter.

LETTER XXVIII.

I know you will expect to hear something of the Ladies of Spain; but I must confess I had very little acquaintance among them: when they appear abroad in their coaches, they are dressed in the modern French fashion, but not in the extreme; when they walk out, their head and shape is always covered with a black or white veil, richly laced; and however fine their gowns are, they must be covered with a very large black silk petticoat; and thus holding the fan in one hand, and hanging their *chapelets* over the

wrist of the other, they walk out, preceded by one or two shabby-looking servants, called pages, who wear swords, and always walk bare-headed.

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I have already told you, that the most beautiful, indeed the only beautiful woman, I saw at *Barcelona*, was the Intendant's daughter; and I assure you, her, black petticoat and white veil could not conceal it; nor, indeed, is the dress an unbecoming one. Among the peasants, and common females, you never see any thing like beauty, and, in general, rather deformity of feature. No wonder then, where beauty is scarce, and to be found only among women of condition, that those women are much admired, and that they gain prodigious influence over the men.—In no part of the world, therefore, are women more caressed and attended to, than in Spain. Their deportment in public is grave and modest; yet they are very much addicted to pleasure; nor is there scarce one among them that cannot, nay, that will not dance the *Fandango* in private, either in the decent or indecent manner. I have seen it danced both ways, by a pretty woman, than which nothing can be more *immodestly agreeable*; and I was shewn a young Lady at *Barcelona*, who in the midst of this dance ran out of the room, telling her partner, she could *stand it* no longer;—he ran after her, to be sure, and must be answerable for the consequences. I find in the music of the *Fandango*, written under one bar, *Salida*, which signifies *going out*; it is where the woman is to part a little from her partner, and to move slowly by herself; and I suppose it was at *that bar* the lady was so overcome, as to determine not to return. The words *Perra Salida* should therefore be placed at that bar, when the ladies dance it in the high *gout*.

The men dress as they do in France and England, except only their long cloak, which they do not care to give up. It is said that Frenchmen are wiser than, from the levity of their behaviour, they seem to be; and I fancy the Spaniards look wiser from their gravity of countenance, than they really are; they are extremely reserved; and make no professions of friendship till they feel it, and know the man, and then they are friendly in the highest degree.

I met with a German merchant at *Barcelona*, who told me he had dealt for goods to the value of five thousand pounds a year with a Spaniard in that town; and though he had been often at *Barcelona* before, that he had never invited him to dine or eat with him, till that day.

The farrier who comes to shoe your horse has sometimes a sword by his side; and the barber who shaves you crosses himself before he *crosses your chin*.

There is a particular part of the town where the ladies of easy virtue live; and if a friend calls at the apartment of one of those females, who happens to *be engaged*, one of her neighbours tells you, she is *amancebados y casarse a mediacarta*; i.e. that she is half-married.—If you meet a Spanish woman of any fashion, walking alone without the town, you may join her, and enter into

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whatever *sort of conversation* you chuse, without offence; and if you pass one without doing so, she will call you *ajacaos*, and condemn you: this is a custom so established at Madrid, that if a footman meets a lady of quality alone, he will enter into some indecent conversation with her; for which reason, the ladies seldom walk but with their husbands, or a male friend by their side, and a foot-boy before, and then no man durst speak, or even look towards them, but with respect and awe:—a blow in Spain can never be forgiven; the striker must die, either *privately* or publicly.

No people on earth are less given to excess in eating or drinking, than the Spaniards; the *Olio*, or *Olla*, a kind of soup and *Bouilli*, is all that is to be found at the table of some great men: the table of a *Bourgeois* of Paris is better served than many *grandees* of Spain; their chocolate, lemonade, iced water, fruits, &c. are their chief luxuries; and the chocolate is, in some houses, a prodigious annual expense, as it is offered to every body who comes in, and some of the first houses in Madrid expend twenty thousand *livres* a year in chocolate, iced waters, &c. The *grandees* of Spain think it beneath their dignity to look into accounts, and therefore leave the management of their household expenses to servants, who often plunder and defraud them of great sums of money.

Unlike the French, the Spaniards (like the English) very properly look upon able physicians and surgeons in a very respectable light:—Is it not strange, that the French nation should trust their health and lives in the hands of men, they are apt to think unworthy of their intimacy or friendship?—Men, who must have had a liberal education, and who ought not to be trusted in sickness, if their society was not to be coveted in health. Perhaps the Spanish physicians, who of all others have the least pretensions, are the most caressed. In fevers they encourage their patients to eat, thinking it necessary, where the air is so subtle, to put something into the body for the distemper to feed upon; they bleed often, and in both arms, that the blood may be drawn forth *equally*; the surgeons do not bleed, but a set of men called *sangerros* perform that office, and no other; the surgeons consider it dishonourable to perform that operation. They seldom trepan; a surgeon who attempted to perform it, would himself be perhaps in want of it. To all flesh wounds they apply a powder called *coloradilla*, which certainly effects the cure; it is made of myrrh, mastic, dragon's blood, bol ammoniac, &c.—When persons of fashion are bled, their friends send them, as soon as it is known, little presents to amuse them all that day; for which reason, the women of easy virtue are often bled, that their lovers may shew their attention, and be *bled too*.—The French disease is so ignorantly treated, or so little regarded, that it is very general; they consider a *gonorrhoea* as health to the reins; and except a tertian ague, all disorders are called the *calentura*, and treated alike, and I fear very injudiciously; for there is not, I am told, in the whole kingdom, any public academy for the instruction of young men, in physic, surgery, or anatomy, except at Madrid.

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Notwithstanding the sobriety, temperance, and fine climate of Spain, the Spaniards do not, in general, live to any great age; they put a prodigious quantity of spice into every thing they eat; and though sobriety and temperance are very commendable, there are countries where eating and drinking are carried to a great excess, by men much more virtuous than those, where temperance, perhaps, is their principal virtue.

LETTER XXIX.

I forgot to tell you that, though I left the Convent, I had no desire to leave the spot where I had met with so cordial a reception; nor a mountain, every part of which afforded so many scenes of wonder and delight. I therefore hired two rooms at a wretched *posada*, near the two ancient towers below, and where I had left my horse, that I might make my daily excursions on and about the mountain, as well as visit those little solitary habitations above once more. My host, his wife, and their son and daughter, looked rather cool upon us; they liked our money better than our company; and though I made their young child some little presents, it scarce afforded any return, but prevented rudeness, perhaps. The boys of the village, though I distributed a little money every day to the poor, frequently pelted me with stones, when they gained the high ground of me; and I found it necessary, when I walked out, to take my fuzee. I would have made a friend of the priest, if I could have found him, but he never appeared!—It was a poor village, and you may easily conceive our residence in such a little place, where no stranger ever staid above an hour, occasioned much speculation. My servant too (a French deserter) had neither the politeness nor the address so common to his countrymen; but I knew I was *within a few hours* of honest *Pere Pascal*; and while the hog, mule, and ass of my host continued well, I flattered myself I was not in much danger; had either of those animals been ill, I should have taken my leave; for if a suspicion had arose that an heretic was under their roof, they would have been at no loss to account for the cause or the calamity which had, or might befall them.—During my residence at this little *posada*, I saw a gaudy-dressed, little, ugly old man, and a handsome young woman, approach it; the man smiled in my face, which was the only smile I had seen in the face of a stranger for a fortnight; he told me, what he need not, that he was a Frenchman, and a noble Advocate of *Perpignan*; that his name was *Anglois*, and that his ancestors were English; that he had walked on foot, with his maid, from *Barcelona*, in order to pay his devotions to the Holy Virgin of *Montserrat*, though he had his own chaise and mules at *Barcelona*: he seemed much fatigued, so I gave him some chocolate, for he was determined, he said, to get up to the convent that night. During this interview, he embraced me several times, professed a most affectionate regard

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for me and my whole family; and I felt enough for him, to desire he would fix the day of his return, that I might not be out upon my rambles, and that he would dine and spend the evening with me; in which case, I would send him back to *Barcelona* in my *cabriolet*; all which he chearfully consented to; and having lent him my *couteau de chasse*, as a more convenient weapon on ass-back than his fine sword, we parted, reluctantly, for five days; that was the time this *noble Advocate* had allotted for making his peace with the Holy Virgin;—I say, his peace with the Holy Virgin; for he was very desirous of leaving *his* virgin with us, as she was an excellent cook, and a most faithful and trusty servant, both which he perceived we wanted; yet in spite of his encomiums, there was nothing in the behaviour of the girl that corresponded with such an amiable character: she had, indeed a beautiful face, but strongly marked with something, more like impudence than boldness, and more of that of a pragmatic mistress than an humble servant; and therefore we did not accept, what I was very certain, she would not have performed. I impatiently, however, waited their return, and verily believed the old man had bought his crimson velvet breeches and gold-laced waistcoat in honour of the Virgin, and that his visit to her was a pious one.—He returned to his time, and to a sad dinner indeed! but it was the best we could provide. He had lost so much of that vivacity he went up with, that I began to fear I had lost his friendship, or he the benediction of the Holy Virgin. Indeed, I had lost it in some measure, but it was transferred but a little way off; for he took the first favourable occasion to tell my wife, no woman had ever before made so forcible an impression upon him, and said a thousand other fine things, which I cannot repeat, without losing the esteem I still have for my countryman; especially as he did not propose staying only *one night* with us, nay, that he would depart the next morning *de bon matin*. During the evening, all his former spirits returned, as well as his affection for me: he told me, he suspected I wanted money, and if that was the case, those wants should be removed; so taking out a large parcel of gold *duras*, he offered them, and I am persuaded too, he would have lent or given them to me. I arose early, to see that my man and chaise were got in good order, to conduct so good a friend to *Barcelona*; but not hearing any thing of *Monsieur Anglois*, I directed my servant to go into his chamber, to enquire how he did;—my man returned, and said, that *Madame* was awake, but that *Monsieur* still sleeps. Madame! what Madame? said I!—Is it the young woman who came with him? I then found, what I had a little suspected, that the mountain virgin was not the *only* virgin to whom *Monsieur Anglois* made his vows. He soon after, however, came down, drank chocolate with us, and making a thousand

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professions of inviolable regard, he set off in my chaise for *Barcelona*; but I should have told you, not till he had made me promise to visit him at *Perpignan*, where he had not only a town, but country house, at my service.—All these professions were made with so much openness, and seeming sincerity, that I could not, nor did doubt it; and as I was determined then to leave that unhospitable country, and return to France, I gave him my *passa-porte*, to get it *refreshed* by the Captain-General at *Barcelona*, that I might return, and pass *by* the walls only of a town I can never think of but with some degree of pain, and should with horror, but that I now know there is one man lives in it, and did then,[D] who has lamented that he had not an opportunity to shew me those acts of hospitality his nature and his situation often give him occasion to exercise; but the *etiquette* is, for the stranger to visit first; and I found but little encouragement to visit a German Gentleman, though married to an English Lady, after the hostile manners I had experienced from my *friends* and *countrymen*, Messrs. *Curtoys*, *Wombwell*, &c.

[D] Mr. THALDITZER.

LETTER XXX.

In the archives of *Montserrat* they shew you a letter written to the Abbe by King Philip the second, who begins, “venerable and devout *Religieux*,” and tells him, he approves of his zeal, of his building a new church at *Montserrat*, charges him to continue his prayers for him, and, to shew his zeal for that holy house, informs him, that the bearer of his letter is *Etienne Jordan*, the most famous sculptor then in Spain, who is to make the new altar-piece at the King’s expence, and they agreed to pay *Jordan* ten thousand crowns for the design he laid before them: the altar was made at *Valladolid*, and was brought to *Montserrat* on sixty-six waggons; and as *Jordan* did much more to the work than he had engaged to perform, the King gave him four thousand crowns over and above his agreement, and afterwards gave nine thousand crowns more, to gild and add further ornaments to it.

At the death of Philip the Second, his son, Philip, the Third, assisted in person to remove the image of the Virgin from the old to the new church; which I shall hereafter mention more fully. Before this noble altar, in which the figure of the Virgin stands in a nitch about the middle of it, are candlesticks of solid silver, each of which weighs eighty pounds; they are a yard and a half high; and yet these are mere trifles, when compared to the gold and jewels which are shewn occasionally.

The monks observe very religiously their statutes; nor is there a single hour in the day that you find the church evacuated.—I always heard at least two voices chanting the service, when the monks retire from the church, which is not till seven o’clock at night; the pilgrims continue there in prayer the greater part of the night.

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I should have told you, that beside the superior among the hermits, there are two sorts of them, neither of which can possess a hermitage till they have spent seven years in the monastery, and given proofs of their holy disposition, by acts of obedience, humility, and mortification; during, which they spend most of their time, night as well as day, in the church, but they never sing or chant. After the expiration of the seven years, the Abbot takes the advice of his brethren, and if they think the probationer's manners and life entitle him to a solitary life above, he is sent,—but not, perhaps, without being enjoined to wait upon some old hermit, who is past doing the necessary offices of life for himself.—Their habit, as I said before, is brown, and they wear their long beards; but sometimes the hermits are admitted into holy orders, and then they wear black, and shave their beards: however, they are not actually fixed to the lonely habitations at first, but generally take seven or eight months trial. Many of the abbess, whose power, you may be sure, is very great, and who receive an homage from the inferiors, very flattering, have, nevertheless, often quitted their power for a retirement above. They observe religiously their abstinence from all sorts of flesh; nor are they permitted to eat but within their cells. When any of them are very ill, they are brought down to the convent; and all buried in one chapel, called St. Joseph.

The lay-brothers are about fourscore in number; they wear a brown habit, and are shaved; their duty is to distribute bread, wine, and other necessaries, to the poor and the pilgrims, and lodge them according to their condition: and many of them are sent into remote parts of the kingdom, as well as France and other Catholic countries, to collect charity; while those who continue at home assist in getting in their corn, and fetching provisions from the adjacent towns, for which purposes they keep a great number, upwards of fifty mules.—These men too have a superior among them, to whom they are all obedient.

There are also a number of children and young students, educated at the convent who are taken in at the age of seven or eight years, many of whom are of noble families; they all sleep in one apartment, but separate beds, where a lamp constantly burns, and their decent deportment is wonderful. Dom Jean de Cardonne, admiral of the galleys, who succoured Malta when it was besieged by the Turks, was bred at *Montserrat*, and when he wrote to the Abbe, "Recommend me," he said, "to the prayers of my little brethren."

As I have already told you of the miracle of a murdered and violated virgin coming to life, and of a child of three months old saying, *Guerin, rise, thy sins are forgiven thee*; perhaps you will not like to have further proofs of what miracles are wrought here, or I could give you a long list, and unanswerable arguments to prove them.

Frere Benoit d'Arragon was a hermit on this mountain, whose sanctity of life has made his name immortal in the hermitage of St. Croix. The following sketch of his life is engraven.

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“Occidit hac sacra Frater Benedictus in sede,
Inclytus & sama, & religione sacer,
Hic sexaginta & septem castissimus annos,
Vixit in his saxis, te, Deus alme, peccans
Usque senex, senio mansit curvatus & annis
Corpus humo retulit, venerat unde prius
Ast anima exultans, clarum repetivit olympum,
Nunc sedet in summo glorificata throno.”

It appears, that Louis the Fourteenth, King of France, gave a certain sum to this convent, to say mass and pray for the soul of his deceased mother; the sum however was not large, being something under fifty pounds; and the donation is recorded in the chapel of *St. Louis*, upon a brass lamp.

P.S. The time that this wonderful mountain became the habitation of a religious community, may be pretty nearly ascertained by the following singular epitaph, on a beautiful monument, still legible in the great church of *Tarragona*.

“Hic quiescit Corpus sanctae memoriae Domini Joannis filii Domini Jacobi, Regis Arragonum, qui decimo septimo anno aetatis suae factus Archiepiscopus Toletanus, sic dono scientiae infusus Divinitus & gratia praedicationis floruit, quod nullus ejusdem aetatis in hoc ei similis crederetur. Carnem suam jejuniis & ciliciis macerans, in vigesimo octavo anno aetatis suae factus Patriarcha Alexandrinus & Administrator Ecclesiae Tarraconensis ordinato per eum, inter multa alia bona opera novo Monasterio scalae Dei Diacessis Tarraconensis, ut per ipsam scalam ad Coelum ascenderet reddidit spiritum Creatori XIV. kalendas Septembris, anno Domini MCCCXXXIV. anno vero aetatis suae XXXIII. pro quo Deus tam in vita, quam post mortem ejusdem est multa miracula operatus.”

This very young Bishop was the son of James the second, and his Queen *Dona Blanca*; and that he was Prior of the monastery of Montserrat, appears in their archives; for I find the names of several hermits of this mountain, that came down to pay homage to him. —*Dederunt obedientiam domino Joanni Patriarchae Alexandrino, & administratori prioratus Montis Serrati, &c.*—It is therefore probable, that he was the first Prior, and that the convent was built about the year 1300; but that the mountain was inhabited by hermits, or men who retired from the world many ages before, cannot be doubted.

LETTER XXXI.

DEAR SIR,

I have had (since I mentioned the Spanish Ladies in a former letter) an opportunity of seeing something more of them; what they may be at *Madrid*, I cannot take upon me to



say; but I am inclined to believe, that notwithstanding what you have heard of Spanish beauty, you would find nature has not been over liberal as to the persons of either sex in Spain; and though tolerable good features upon a brown complexion, with very black hair finely combed and pinned up with two or three gold bodkins, may be very pleasing, as a

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new object, yet a great deficiency would appear, were you to see the same women dressed in the high fashion of England or France. England, for real and natural female beauty, perhaps surpasses all the world; France, for dress, elegance, and ease. The Spanish women are violent in their passions, and generally govern every body under their roof; husbands who contend that point with them, often finish their days in the middle of a street, or in a prison; on the other hand, I am told, they are very liberal, compassionate, and charitable. They have at *Barcelona* a fine theatre, and tolerable good music; but the actors of both sexes are execrable beyond all imagination: their first woman, who they say is rich by means of one *talent or other*, (for me, like my little Lyons water girl, has *two talents*) is as contemptible in her person as in her theatrical abilities: it is no wonder, indeed; for these people are often taken from some of those gipsy troops, I mentioned in a former letter, and have, consequently, no other qualifications for the stage but impudence instead of confidence, and ignorance instead of a liberal education. Perhaps you will conclude, that the theatre at *Madrid* affords much better entertainment; on the contrary, I am well assured it is in general much worse: a Gentleman who understands the language perfectly, who went to *Madrid* with no other view but to gratify his curiosity, in seeing what was worthy of notice there, went only once to the theatre, where the heat of the house, and the wretchedness of the performance, were equally intolerable; nor are the subjects very inviting to a stranger, as they often perform what they call "*Autos Sacramentales*"—*sacramental representations*. The people of fashion, in general, have no idea of serving their tables with elegance, or eating delicately; but rather, in the stile of our fore-fathers, without spoon or fork, they use their own fingers, and give drink from the glass of others; foul their napkins and cloaths exceedingly, and are served at table by servants who are dirty, and often very offensive. I was admitted, by accident, to a Gentleman's house, of large fortune, while they were at dinner; there were seven persons at a round table, too small for five; two of the company were visitors; yet neither their dinner was so good, nor their manner of eating it so delicate, as may be seen in the kitchen of a London tradesman. The dessert (in a country where fruit is so fine and so plenty) was only a large dish of the seeds of *pomegranates*, which they eat with wine and sugar. In truth, Sir, an Englishman who has been in the least accustomed to eat at genteel tables, is, of all other men, least qualified to travel into either kingdoms, and particularly into Spain; especially, if what Swift says be true, that "a nice man is a man of dirty ideas,"—I know not the reason, whether it proceeds from climate, or food, or from the neglect of the poorer order of

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the people; but *head combing* seems to be a principal part of the day's business among the women in Spain; and it is generally done rather publicly.—The most lively, chearful, neat young woman, I saw in Spain, lived in the same house I did at *Barcelona*; she had a good complexion, and, what is very uncommon, rather light hair; and though perfectly clean and neat in her apparel, yet I observed a woman, not belonging to the house, attended every morning to comb this girl's head, and I believe it was *necessary* to be combed. I could not very well ask the question; but I suspect that there are people by profession called *headcombers*; every shop door almost furnishes you with a specimen of that business; and if it is so common in *Barcelona*, among a rich and industrious people, you may imagine, it is infinitely more so among the slothful part of the inland cities and smaller towns;—but this is not the only objection a stranger (and especially an English Protestant) will find to Spain; the common people do not look upon an Englishman as a Christian; and the life of a man, not a Christian, is of no more importance in their eyes than the life of a dog: it is not therefore safe for a protestant to trust himself far from the maritime cities, as an hundred unforeseen incidents may arise, among people so ignorant and superstitious, to render it very unsafe to a man known to be a Protestant. If it be asked, how the Consuls, English merchants, &c. escape?—I can give no other reason than what a Spaniard gave me, when I put that question to him:—"Sir," said he, "we have men here, (meaning *Barcelona*) who are Protestants all day, and Papists all night; and we have a chapel where they go, into which no other people are admitted." However, I was convinced, before I went into Spain this time, from what I remembered formerly, that it was necessary to appear a good Catholic; so that I always carried a little crucifix, or two, some beads, and other *accidental* marks of my faith; and where I staid any time, or, indeed, where I slept upon the road, I took occasion to let some of those *powerful protectors* be seen, as it were, by chance;—it is very necessary to avail one's self of such innocent frauds, in a country where innocence itself may not be sufficient to shield you from the fury of religious bigotry, where people think they are serving God, by destroying men: The best method to save yourself, is by serving God in the same manner they do, till you are out of their power. I really thought, that Philosophy and Reason entered into Spain at the same gate that the Jesuits were turned out of the kingdom; and, I suppose, some did; but it must be many years before it is sufficiently diffused over the whole nation, to render it a country like France; where men, who behave with decency and decorum, may live, or pass through, without the least apprehension or inconvenience on the score of religion; if they do not meddle with politics or fortifications.

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That you may not imagine my suspicions of the danger of passing thro' Spain are ill founded, I will relate what happened to two English Gentlemen of fashion at *Marcia* as I had it from the mouth of one of them lately:—they had procured letters of recommendation from some friends to the *Alguazile*, or chief magistrate of that town; and as there were some unfavourable appearances at their first entering *Marcia*, and more so at their *posada*, they thought it right to send their letters directly to the *Alguazile*; who, instead of asking them to his house, or visiting them, sent a servant to say he was ill, and who was directed to invite them to go that night to the comedy: they thought it right, however, to accept the invitation, extraordinary as it was: the *Alguazile*'s servant conducted them to the theatre, and paid (for he was directed so to do, he said) for their admittance; and having conducted his strangers into the pit, he retired. The comedy was then begun; but, nevertheless, the eyes of the whole house were turned upon them, and their's, to their great astonishment, upon the *sick Alguazile* with his whole family. Those near whom they at first stood, retired to some distance: they could not, he said, consider the manner in which they were looked at, and retired from, but to arise from disgust or dislike, more than from curiosity. This reception, and the manner in which they had been sent there, deprived them of all the amusement the house afforded; for though the performers had no great excellence, there was, among the female part of the audience, more beauty than they expected. Mr. B——, one of the Gentlemen, at length discovered near him in the pit a man whom he knew to be an Irishman, and in whole countenance he plainly perceived a desire to speak, but he seemed with-held by prudence. At length, however, he was got near enough to his countryman to hear him say, without appearing to address himself to any body, "*Go hence! go hence!*" They did so; and the next morning, tho' it was a fine town, which they wished to examine, and to spend some time in, set off early for *Carthagera*, where they had some particular friends, to whom they related the *Alguazile*'s very extraordinary behaviour, as well as that of the company at the theatre. It was near the time of the Carnival at *Carthagera*: the conduct of *Don Marco* to the two gentlemen strangers, became the subject of conversation, and indeed of indignation, among the Spaniards of that civilized city; and the *Alguazile*, who came to the Carnival there soon after, died by the hands of an assassin; he was stabbed by a mask in the night. Now suppose this man lost his life at *Carthagera*, for his ill behaviour to the two strangers at *Marcia*, or for any other cause, it is very certain, if natives are so liable to assassination, strangers are not more secure.

P.S. To give you some idea of the address of the pulpit oratory in Spain, about sixty or seventy years ago, (and it is not in general much better at present) take the following specimen, which I assure you, is strictly true:—

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A preacher holding forth in the place called *Las Mancanas* at Madrid, after informing his auditors of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, added,—and is it not strange, that we still continue to sin on, and live without repentance? O Lord God! said he, why sufferest thou such ungrateful and wretched sinners to live?—And instantly giving himself a violent box on the ear, the whole assembly followed his example, and four thousand *soufflets* were given and received in the twinkling of an eye.—The French Ambassador, from whose *memoires* I take this story, was upon that instant bursting out in laughter at the pious ceremony, had he not been checked by one of his friends, who happened to stand near, and who assured him, that his rank and character would not have saved him, had he been so indiscreet, for the enraged populace would have cut him in a thousand pieces; whereupon he hid his face in his handkerchief, and boxed his own ears more for the love of himself than from gratitude to his Redeemer.

LETTER XXXII.

There are in Spain twelve councils of state, *viz.* of *War*, of *Castile*, of the *Inquisition*, of the royal orders of *St. Iago*, of *Arragon*, of the *Indies*, of the chamber of *Castile*, of the *Croisade*, of the *State*, of *Italy*, of the *Finances and Treasure*, and lastly, that (of no use) of *Flanders*.

The council of *War* is composed of experienced men of various orders, who are thought capable of advising upon that subject, and not of any determinate number.

That of *Castile* has a president and sixteen other members, beside a secretary and inferior officers; it is the first of all the councils, and takes cognizance of civil as well as criminal matters. The King calls this council only OUR council, to mark its superiority to all others. The president is a man of great authority, and is treated with the utmost respect; nor does he ever visit any body.

The council of the *Inquisition*, established by *Don Fernando* in 1483, has an inquisitor general for its president, who is always a *Grandee* of the first condition; he has six counsellors, who are called apostolic inquisitors. This court, (the power of which has, fortunately for mankind, been of late years greatly abridged) has a great number of inferior officers, as well as *holy spies*, all over the kingdom, particularly at *Seville*, *Toledo*, *Valladolid*, *Barcelona*, and other places, where these horrid tribunals are fixed; each is governed by three counsellors, who, however, are dependant on that of Madrid; and to whom they are obliged every month to give a particular account of what has passed through their hands. These men have not power to imprison a priest, a religious, nor even a gentleman, without obtaining the consent of the supreme court above; they meet at *Madrid* twice every day, and two of the King's council always attend at the afternoon meeting.

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Of the council of the three royal orders of Spain; that of *Santiago* is the first; the other two are *Calatrava* and *Alcantara*. It is composed of a president, six counsellors, and other officers.

The president of the council of *Arragon* is called the vice chancellor; who is assisted by nine counsellors, and inferior officers. This council attend to the public state of the kingdom of *Arragon*, as well as to the islands of *Majorca*, *Ivica*, &c.

The council of the *Indies* was established in 1511, for the conservation and augmentation of the new kingdoms discovered by *Columbus* in South America, in 1492; and where the Spaniards have at this time four thousand nine hundred leagues of land, including *Mexico* and *Peru*; land divided into many kingdoms and provinces, in which they had built, in the year 1670, upwards of eight thousand churches, and more than a thousand convents. They have there a patriarch, six arch-bishops, and thirty-two bishops, and three tribunals of the inquisition. This council is composed of a president, a grand chancellor, and twelve counsellors, a treasurer, secretary, advocates, agents, and an infinite number of inferior officers. They meet twice a week, to regulate all the affairs, both by land and sea, relative to that part of the King's dominions.

The council of the *Croisade* is composed of a president, who is called the commissary general, and who has great privileges. The clergy are obliged to pay something annually to it; and if any one finds a purse of money in the streets, they are obliged to deliver it to the secretary of this council.

The council of *State* is composed of men of the first birth and understanding about the court. The King presides, and is assisted by the archbishop of *Toledo*. This council is not confined to any certain number; they meet three times a week, to deliberate on the most important affairs of the kingdom.

The council of *Italy* attends to the affairs of *Naples*, *Sicily*, and *Milan*; it is composed of a president, and six counsellors, three of whom are Spaniards, one Neapolitan, one Italian, and one Sicilian; each of which have their separate charge on the affairs of those countries.

The council of *Finances and Treasure* is composed of a president, who is called *presidente de hazienda*, that is, superintendant of the finances; eight counsellors, and a great number of other officers, beside treasurers, controllers, &c, who have a great share of the most important affairs of the nation to regulate; they hear causes, and are not only entrusted with the treasures of the kingdom, but with administration of justice to all the king's subjects. You may easily judge what a number of officers compose this council, when I tell you, that they have twenty-six treasurers.

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The council of *Flanders* have now only the *name*; as the King of England bears that of France.—The formal manner which men, high in office or blood, observe in paying or receiving visits, is very singular: the inquisitor-general, for instance, has several black lines marked upon the floor of his anti-chamber, by which he limits the civilities he is to shew to men, according to the rank or office they bear: he has his *black* marks for an ambassador, an envoy, &c. When people of condition at Madrid propose to make a visit, it is previously announced by a page, to know the day and hour they can be received; and this ceremony is often used on ordinary visits, as well as those of a more public nature: the page too has his coach to carry him upon these errands. I have seen the account of a visit made by the Cardinal of *Arragon* to the Admiral of *Castile*, the train of which filled the whole street; he was carried by six servants in a magnificent chair, and followed by his body coach drawn by eight mules, attended by his gentlemen, pages, esquires, all mounted on horseback, and arrayed in a most sumptuous manner. Every order of men assume an air of importance in Spain. I have been assured, that when a shoemaker has been called upon to make a pair of shoes, he would not undertake the work till he had first enquired of *Dona*, his wife, whether there was any money in the house? if she answered in the affirmative, he would not work. Even the beggars do not give up this universal privilege, as the following instance will evince:—A foreigner of fashion, who was reading in a bookseller's shop in Madrid, was accosted by one of the town beggars, who in an arrogant manner asked his charity, in terms which implied a demand rather than a favour. The stranger made no reply, nor did he take the least notice, but determined to continue reading, and dismiss the insolent beggar by his silent contempt: this encreased the beggar's hardiness; he told him, he might find time enough to read after he had attended to his request, and what he had to say. But still the gentleman read on, and disregarded his rudeness. At length, the beggar stept up to him, and with an air of the utmost insolence, at the same time taking him hold by the arm, added, What! neither charity, nor courtesy? By this time, the stranger lost all patience, and was going to correct him for his temerity:—Stop, Sir, (said the beggar, in a lower tone of voice) hear me;—pardon, me, Sir; do you not know me? No, certainly; replied the stranger, But, said he, you ought, for I was secretary to an embassy in a certain capital, where we lived together in intimacy; and then told him his name, and the particular misfortunes which had reduced him to that condition; he expressed himself with art, address, and eloquence, and succeeded in getting money from the gentleman, though he could not convince him that he was his old acquaintance.

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There are in Spain an infinite number of such sort of beggars, who are men of sense and letters, and so *au fait* in the art, that they will not be denied. The grand secret of the art of begging is in perseverance; and all the *well-bred* part of beggars do not despair, though they have ten refusals. But the worst sort of beggars in Spain, are the troops of male and female gipsies: these are the genuine breed, and differ widely from all other human beings. In Spain I often met troops of these people; and when that interview happens in roads very distant from towns or dwellings, the interview is not very pleasing; for they ask as if they knew they were not to be refused; and, I dare say, often commit murders, when they can do it by surprize. Whenever I saw any of these people at a distance, I walked with a gun in my hand, and near to the side of my chaise, where there were pistols visible; and by shewing them I was not afraid, or, at least, making them believe so, they became afraid of us. They are extremely swarthy, with hair as black as jet; and form a very picturesque scene under the shade of those rocks and trees, where they spend their evenings; and live in a manner by no means disagreeable, in a climate so suitable to that style, where bread, water, and idleness is certainly preferable to better fare and hard labour. It is owing to this universal idleness that the roads, the inns, and every thing, but what is absolutely necessary, is neglected; yet, bad as the roads are, they are better than the *posada*, or inns. *El salir de la posada, es la mejor jornada*,—"the best part of the journey, say the Spaniards, is the getting out of the *posada*." For as neither king nor people are at much expence to make or mend the high ways, except just about the capital cities, they are dry or wet, rough or smooth, steep or rugged, just as the weather or the soil happens to favour or befoul them.—Now, here is a riddle for your son; I know he is an adept, and will soon overtake me.

I'm rough, I'm smooth, I'm wet, I'm dry;
My station's low, my title's high;
The King my lawful master is;
I'm us'd by all, though only his:
My common freedom's so well known,
I am for that a proverb grown.

The roads in Spain are, like those in Ireland, very *narrow*, and the leagues very long. When I complained to an Irish soldier of the length of the miles, between Kinsale and Cork, he acknowledged the truth of my observation; but archly added, that though they were *long*, they were but *narrow*.—Three Spanish leagues make nearly twelve English miles; and, consequently, seventeen Spanish leagues make nearly one degree. The bad roads, steep mountains, rapid rivers, &c. occasion most of the goods and merchandize, which are carried from one part of the kingdom to the other, to be conveyed on mule-back, and each mule has generally a driver; and as these drivers have

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their fixed stages from *posada* to *posada*, so must the gentlemen travellers also, because there are no other accommodations on the roads but such houses; the stables therefore at the *posadas* are not only very large, but the best part of the building, and is the lodging-room of man and beast; all the muleteers sleep there, with their cloaths on, upon a bundle of straw: but while your supper is preparing, the kitchen is crowded with a great number of these dirty fellows, whose cloaths are full of vermin; it would be impossible, therefore, for even a good cook to dress a dish with any decency or cleanliness, were such a cook to be found; for, exclusive of the numbers, there is generally a quarrel or two among them, and at all times a noise, which is not only tiresome, but frequently alarming. These people, however, often carry large sums of money, and tho' they are dirty, they are not poor nor dishonest.—I was told in France, to beware of the *Catalans*; yet I frequently left many loose things in and about my chaise, where fifty people lay, and never lost any thing.

When I congratulated myself in a letter to my brother, upon finding in Wales a Gentleman of the name of Cooke, whose company, conversation, and acquaintance, were so perfectly pleasing to me; my brother observed, however, that my Welch *friend* was not a *Welchman*, for, said he, “there are no COOKS in Wales;”—but this observation may be with more justice applied to Spain; for I think there are no COOKS in Spain; but there are, what is better, a great number of honest, virtuous men: I look upon the true, genuine Spaniards to be as respectable men as any in Europe; and that, among the lower order of them there is more honour and honesty than is to be found among more polished nations; and, I dare say, there were an hundred Spaniards at *Barcelona*, had they been as well informed about my identity as Messrs. Curtoys and Wombwell, that would have changed my notes, or lent me money without.

P.S. The tour through Spain and Portugal by UDAL ap RHYS, grandfather to the now Mr. Price of Foxley in Herefordshire, abounds with more falshoods than truths; indeed I have been told it was written, as many modern travels are, over a pipe in a chimney corner: and I hope Mr. Udal never was in Spain, as “*one fib is more excusable than a thousand.*”

LETTER XXXIII.

NISMES.

Monsr Anglois having sent me back my *passa-porte*, signed by *Don Philipe Cabine*, the Captain-General of *Barcelona*, accompanied by a very kind and friendly letter, I determined to quit the only place in Spain which had afforded me pleasure, amusement, and delight. We accordingly sat off the next day for *Martorel*, and went to the Three

Kings, where our Italian host, whose extortions I had complained of before, received us with a face of the utmost disdain;

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and though he had no company in his house, put us into much worse apartments than those we had been in before. I ordered something for supper, and left it to him, as he had given us a very good one before; but he was not only determined to punish us in lodging, but in eating also, and sent only four little mutton cutlets, so small, that they were not sufficient for one, instead of four persons; we pretended, however, not to perceive his insolence, that he might not enjoy our punishment; and the next day, as I was desirous of looking about me a little, we removed to another *posada*, where, about noon, a Canon of great ecclesiastical preferment arrived, with a coach, six mules, and a large retinue, to dinner: the Canon had no more the marks of a gentleman than a muleteer; and he had with him two or three persons, of no better appearance. While his dinner, a kind of *olla*, was preparing, I went into the kitchen, where the smell of the rancid oil with which it was dressed, would have dined two or three men of moderate or tender stomachs; nor had he any other dish. There was behind his coach a great quantity of bedding, bed-steads, &c. so you will perceive he travelled *comme il faut*. His livery servants were numerous, and had on very short livery coats, with large sleeves, and still shorter waists. After he had eat a dinner, enough to poison a pack of hounds, he sat off in great pomp for *Barcelona*, a city I passed the next day with infinite pleasure, without entering its inhospitable gates; which I could not have done, had not *Mons. Anglois* saved me that mortification by getting my *passa porte refreshed*. I confess, Sir, that while I passed under the fortifications of that city, which the high road made necessary, I felt, I knew not why, a terror about me, that my frame is in general a stranger to; and rather risked two hours' night travelling, bad and dangerous as the roads were, than sleep within four leagues of it; so that it was ten o'clock before we got to *Martereau*, a little city by the sea side, where we had lodged on our way to *Barcelona*. The next day, we proceeded on the same delightful sea coast we had before passed, and through the same rich villages, on our way to *Girone*, *Figuiera*, &c. and avoided that horrid *posada* where the Frenchman died, by lying at a worse house, but better people: but having bought a brace of partridges, and some *red fish* on the road, we fared sumptuously, except in beds, which were straw mattresses, very hard, and the room full of wet Indian corn; but we were no sooner out of our *posada*, than the climate and the beautiful country made ample amends for the town and *posada* grievances.

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It is contrary to the law of Spain to bring more than a certain quantity of Spanish gold or silver out of the kingdom, and I had near an hundred pounds in gold *duras*, about the size of our quarter guineas. I endeavoured to change them at *Figuere*, but I found some very artful, I may say roguish, schemes laid, to defraud me, by a pretended difficulty to get French money, and therefore determined to proceed with it to *Jonquiere*, the last village, where it was not probable I could find so much French money. I therefore had a very large French *queue* made up, within which the greater part of my Spanish gold was bound; and as the weight *made* me hold up my *tete d'or*, the custom-house officers there, who remembered my entrance into Spain, found half-a-crown put into their hands less trouble than examining my baggage gratis; they accordingly *passed* me on my way to *Bellegarde*, without even opening it; and we found the road up to that fortress, though in the month of December, full as good as when we had passed it in the summer; and after descending on the French side, and crossing the river, got to the little *auberge* at *Boulon*, the same we had held too bad when we went into Spain, even to eat our breakfast at; but upon our return, worthy of a place of rest, and we accordingly staid there a week: beds with curtains, rooms with chimnies, and paper windows, though tattered and torn, were luxuries we had been unaccustomed to.—But I must not omit to tell you, that on our road down on the French side of the *Pyrenees*, two men, both armed with guns, rushed suddenly out of the woods, and making towards us, asked, whether we wanted a guard? I was walking, perhaps fortunately at that time, with my fuzee in my hand, and my servant had a double barrell'd pistol in his; and therefore forbid them to approach us, and told them, we had nothing else to lose but our lives, and that if they did not retire I should look upon them as people who meant to plunder, rather than protect us: they accordingly retired into the woods, and I began to believe they had no evil intent; but finding an *Exempt* of the *Marechaussee* at *Boulon*, I told him what had passed, and asked him whether his men attended upon that road, in coloured cloaths, or any others were allotted, to protect or guard travellers? He assured me there were no such people of any kind; that his men always moved on horseback, in their proper character, and suspected *our guard* would have been very troublesome, had they found us *off our guard*; but he did not offer, nor did I ask him, to send after them, though he was a very civil, sensible man, who had been three years on duty in *Corsica*; and, consequently, his company, for the week I staid in such a poor town, was very agreeable. And as *Mons. Bernard*, or some officer of the *Marechaussee*, is always in duty at this town, I would advise those who enter into Spain, by that route, to procure a couple of those men to escorte them up to *Bellegarde*—an attention that no officer in France will refuse to shew, when it is not incompatible with his duty.

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The rapid water at this town, which I had passed going into Spain, was now lower than usual. Here too my horse, as well as his master, lived truly *in clover*; and though our habitation was humble, a habitation at the very foot of the *Pyrenees* could not but be very beautiful; no part of France is more so; it is indeed a beautiful and noble sight, to see the hanging plantations of vines, olives, and mulberry-trees, warmed by a hot sun on the sides of those mountains, the upper parts of which are covered with a perpetual snow. But beautiful as all that part of the country is, there was not a single gentleman's house in the environs.

After a compleat week's refreshment, we proceeded to *Perpignan* to spend our Christmas, where we found the *Chevalier de Maigny* and his Lady, who had given us the letter of recommendation to the French Consul at *Barcelona*; who shewed us those marks of civility and politeness, French officers in general shew to strangers. There we staid a fortnight; and *Mons. de Maigny* got me a considerable profit, in changing my Spanish gold for French.

In this town, I found an unfortunate young Irishman; he had been there three months, without a friend or a shilling in his pocket; and as he was a man of education and good breeding, I could not so soon forget my own situation at *Barcelona*, not to pity his: but what most induced me to assist him a little, was, what he feared might have had a contrary effect. When I asked him his name, he readily answered, "R—h; an unfortunate name!" said he;—"but, as it is my name, I will *wear it*."—He had a well-wisher in the town, a French watch-maker, to whom he imparted the little kindness I had shewn him; and as it was not enough to conduct him on foot to the north side of this kingdom, the generous, but poor watch-maker, gave him as much as I had done, and he sat off with a light heart, though a *thin pair of breeches*, for his own country. He had been to visit a rich relation at Madrid; and, I believe, did not meet with so cordial a reception there as he expected.

At this town I drank, at a private gentleman's house, part of a bottle of the wine made at a little village hard by, called *Rios Alto*; the most delicious wine I ever tasted: but as the spot produces but a small quantity, that which is really of the growth is very scarce, as well as dear: it has the strength of full port, with a flavour superior to burgundy.

Perpignan is the principal city of *Rosillein*; it is well fortified, but the works are in a ruinous condition: the streets are narrow and dirty, but the Governor's, and the botanic gardens are worthy of notice: the climate is remarkably fine, and the air pure. The *Pyrenees*, which are at least fifteen miles distant, appear to hang in a manner over the town: to see so much snow, and feel so much sun, is very singular. Wood is very scarce and dear in that town: I frequently

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saw mules and asses loaded with rosemary and lavender bushes, to sell for firing. The barbarous language of the common people of this province, is very convenient, as they understand French, and can make themselves understood thro' a great part of Spain: from which kingdom not a day passes but mules and carriages arrive, except when the heavy rains or snow obstruct the communication.—The mules and asses of Spain, and this part of France, are not only very useful but valuable beasts: the only way to get a valuable one of either sort from Spain, is, to fix upon the beast, and promise a round sum to one of the religious mendicants to smuggle it out of the kingdom, who covers the animal with bags, baskets, and a variety of trumpery, as if he was going into France to collect charity: and passes either by *not* being suspected, or by being a *Religieux* if he is suspected.

As we took exactly the same route from *Perpignan* to this town as we went, except leaving *Cette* a few leagues on our left; I shall say nothing of our return, but that we relished our reception at the French inns, and the good cheer we found there, infinitely more than as we went: and that we were benighted for some hours before we got into *Montpellier*, and caught in the most dreadful storm of rain, thunder and lightning I ever was exposed to. I was obliged for two hours to hold my horse's bridle on one side, as my man did on the other, and feel with sticks for the margin of the road, as it was elevated very high above the marshy lands, and if the heel had slipped over on either side, it must have overset the chaise into the lowlands: besides which, the roaring of the water-streams was so great, that I very often thought we were upon the margin of some river or high bridge: nor was my suffering quite over even after I got into the city: I could not find my former *auberge*, nor meet with any body to direct me: and the water-spouts which fell into the middle of those narrow streets almost deluged us.—My poor horse, too, found the steep streets, slippery pavement, and tons of water which fell upon him, as much as he could well bear: but, as the old song says,

“Alas! by some degree of woe,
We every bliss obtain;”

So we found a good fire and good cheer an ample recompence for our wet jackets. It was so very dark, that though I led my horse by the head above a league, I could but seldom see him: nor do I remember in my whole life to have met with any difficulty which so agitated my mind:—no: not even at the *bar of the House of Lords*, I did not dread the danger so much, as the idea of tumbling my family over a precipice, without the power to assist them; or, if they were *gone*, resolution enough to *follow them*.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.