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JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

TRAVELS

IN

S P A I N

IN 1797 AND 1798.

BY

FREDERICK AUGUSTUS FISCHER.

P. C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

WITH AN APPENDIX ON THE

METHOD OF TRAVELLING IN THAT COUNTRY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.

Donativo del Sr. Conde de
Romanones á la Biblioteca
de la Alhambra. 1909

LONDON:

PRINTED BY A. STRAHAN, PRINTERS-STREET,

FOR T. N. LONGMAN AND O. REES, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1802.

P R E F A C E .

IN this work the author's object was to exhibit the first impressions of a traveller, and to give a living picture of the country. He has endeavoured to note those particulars which have escaped other writers, and on which the plan of Bourgoanne only permitted him slightly to touch, as for instance the present state of literature in Spain, and the mode of travelling there, which is the subject of the appendix. The reader will therefore consider these sheets as a series of practical notes to that and other works, and in this point of view the author hopes his labours may be associated with those of that distinguished writer.

* * * To avoid the constant interruption of notes the translator has introduced those of the original into the text, and even added a few cursory observations of his own, distinguished by square brackets [thus] where his own knowledge of that country enabled him to correct some trifling error.

It may be useful to add that a real vellon is almost twopence farthing sterling; a real of plate or silver is about fourpence halfpenny; a pesetta is four reals vellon (about ninepence three-farthings,) but is generally considered as equal to a french livre; eight reals of plate make a nominal dollar or dollar of exchange (called a piece of eight) and five pesettas make a hard dollar or dollar of twenty reals vellon; a quarto is a fourth, and an ochavo an eighth part of a real of vellon. T.

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P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

Lately published by LONGMAN and REES,
Paternoster-Row.

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London Review, March 1799.

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Anti-Jacobin Rev. Oct. 1801.

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European Mag. Oct. 1801.

TRAVELS IN SPAIN,

IN 1797 AND 1798.

LETTER I.

*Departure from Amsterdam for Rotterdam.—The Maas or Meuse.—
The Briel.—Scenery.*

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERIA DE TURISMO
On board the Jong Pieter, off the Briel,
April 1797.

It is now noon, and we are waiting for the controllers of the customs, with whom the pilot is to go on shore; I therefore take this opportunity of sending you a letter.

You may remember that at Amsterdam I was seeking for a vessel bound for Spain; but this unfortunate war has thrown every thing into confusion. At length I found by the public prints, that a ship was on the point of sailing from Rotterdam for Bordeaux, and instantly determined to take my passage thither. Having no time however to lose, I collected my passports, and went in the schuyt to Rotterdam, where I bargained with the
B captain

captain for twelve ducats for my passage and board. I bought some provisions, and last night slept on board the vessel alongside the quay of the Meuse.

This morning, toward five o'clock, mast-heads were perceived, a light fog announced a fine day, and there being less swell showed, that the tide had abated, and was about to turn. We therefore tacked, and were presently in the middle of the river. By degrees the sun rose, the wind began to freshen from the eastward, and, though we only carried two small sails, the wind and tide together carried us down like a dart. During a considerable time we still distinguished, through the high green trees of the Boompuy (a pleasant promenade on the broad quay of the Meuse), the magnificent palaces with which that quay is lined. At length they disappeared; as did the immense arsenal, and the delicious plantations of the farther banks; and all these objects became almost imperceptible.

We failed in company with several other vessels, always coasting along the immense and flat banks of the river. On our left we saw nothing but meadows and woods; but, on the right, Delft-haven reared its enormous dykes above the surface of the water; and, soon after, Schiedam, which is celebrated for its manufacture of Gin: it resembled a town in flames, while a thick suffocating smoke incessantly

incessantly covers it, and extends along the bank of the river like an immense white mountain.

We had our head to the wind, the water was falling by degrees, and the current was increasing more and more; when a vessel, coming up the river, luffed and neared us. Our pilot called out to him to put the helm down; but this manœuvre not being performed quick enough, we were within half a ship's length of each other, and our bowsprit was come directly upon his prow. The captain and the pilot now both exclaimed at the same moment, "We are lost, we are lost!" when fortunately the other ship tacked about, and we both escaped.

As we advanced, the river grew wider and wider, and we saw several islands adorned with the most beautiful verdure. We have at length cast anchor at the mouth of the river, near the fort of the Briel, which stands on the south point of the island of Vooren. The charming plains have now given place to sand-banks, where nothing is seen but batteries and flag-staves. On the banks here and there are women and children gathering up the fish and shells which the sea has left in the traps and in the mud. Before us we behold the blue plains of the ocean covered with an infinite number of fishing-boats; we hear the noise of the bar like thunder, and the ship works with great violence at her anchors.

But the pilot is impatient to have my letter, and I must take my leave. Adieu, my dear friend, a thousand times adieu. How painful is the moment of separation! These are perhaps the last lines I shall ever write you; never more perhaps will you hear of me. But no; away with these melancholy thoughts! I hope this Voyage will be as auspicious as the two former. I trust in Heaven and my good fortune. Once more adieu, my dearest friend.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

LETTER II.

The North Sea. — Sea-Sickness. — Dunkirk. — Arrangements on board. — An English Cutter. — Dover Lighthouse. — The British Channel. — Scenery.

At sea.

AT length we got out to sea the day before yesterday, with a pretty strong wind from the north-eastward. Our vessel cut the foaming waves with rapidity; and a multitude of fishing-boats, returning home, saluted us from afar. We could still distinguish the Downs; but by degrees only saw a greyish fog, which soon became confounded with the surface of the water.

At dusk, I began to feel sea-sick. The waves of the ocean are longer and stronger than those of the Baltic, and give the vessel a more violent shock, which is the cause of that disorder. I was however very little incommoded by it, having, by way of precaution, taken a few doses of bark in some cherry-brandy.

Next morning we were a-breast of Dunkirk; to which we were so near, that, with a common pocket-glass, I distinguished the ships of war in the road, and the three steeples so well known by seamen. The sun seemed to rise directly over the

town, gilding the surface of the waves ; but the air was cold, and great part of the heavens overcast.

The first day of a sea voyage is almost entirely employed in getting to rights : there are so many things to arrange, that nothing is thought of but examining every thing, and fixing the place it should occupy. My *coje*, or cabin, contains, at the foot, a small cupboard for my provisions ; and my books and papers on a shelf for that purpose above my head. I am not indeed very comfortably lodged, but it does very well.

The captain had also a multitude of affairs to attend to : he had to arrange his charts, his quadrants, and his glasses, examine the sails and cordage, distribute his provisions, &c. In short, the whole morning and part of the afternoon passed in these preparations ; till at length the boatswain suddenly called out, that there were four sail to leeward : upon this, we all went upon deck, and perceived, by our glasses, three English frigates and a cutter.

I believe I have told you we sailed under prussian colours and papers ; as soon therefore as we came in sight of the english ships, we hoisted our prussian flag ; upon which they made a signal for us to come alongside the cutter, who began her inquiries with her speaking-trumpet : “ Where are you from ? ” “ From Rotterdam. ” “ Where are you

you bound?" "For Bordeaux." "Of what country are you?" "Prussians." "Pafs, and be damn'd!" We had already begun to fear they would force us to visit Dover against our will, and were astonished at our good fortune in escaping.

We now saw nothing around us but vessels of all sorts and sizes, and sailing in all directions, which afforded a most animated and interesting sight, filling the mind with satisfaction and with hope. At length the sun was hid by gigantic masses of cloud, night drew her veil over the ocean, and we saw Dover light-house shining like a comet to the northward.

This morning we entered the British Channel; but the wind being contrary, we were obliged to stand off and on. The sun has dispersed the fog, and we see before us the English and French coasts, all full of light, reflecting the morning sun; and every motion of the ship shows us, on one side, the white cliffs of Kent, and the citadel of Dover; on the other, the blue rocks of Picardy, and the batteries of Calais. The air is extremely pleasant, the wind south-west; the sea, calm and smooth, breaks peacefully along the shore, and sails shine on every side. It affords me an excellent omen, to perceive that Heaven guides us so happily along this dangerous channel; for the Goodwin Sands, be-

tween North and South Foreland, are a terror to all seamen. The currents carry us along with violence, and the wind is so calm that all our sails flap upon the masts. Adieu ; but though I take my leave of you, my thoughts constantly accompany you.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

LETTER III.

*An English Privateer. — Picturesque Description of the Day,
as it passes at Sea.*

At sea.

LAST night the wind had veered round somewhat to the eastward, and we had sailed some leagues, when the captain waked me suddenly about fix in the morning, telling me to get up quick, for a privateer was coming on board; and soon after an Englishman entered the cabin.

He looked over our passports, muster-roll, charter-party, and log-book. "You cursed Dutchmen," said he "always sail with Prussian passports; come, give me some bottles of gin." The captain gave him some with a very humble air. "Well, and a dozen pipes." These were also given him. "And a Dutch cheese." After which he seemed to be going. "And who is that gentleman?" said he, pointing at me, "A subject of the king of Prussia." "Well, well, come give me a glass of wine." He drank two large glasses, and, at length, left us graciously, as did his companions.

By his dress and manner he appeared to be only a boatswain, and the vessel we so much dreaded no more than a lugger.

At length our captain, who, notwithstanding his prussian passports, was somewhat distrustful of those devilish Englishmen as he called them, seemed to be in better spirits; and the wind in the meanwhile having freshened, we were all extremely happy.

But unfortunately toward noon we were again becalmed. The sea was as smooth as a lake in Switzerland, but the ship rolled as usual; yet I have contrived to write you a description of all that passes around me. Day begins to break; the dark clouds that covered the ocean become a light mist, the stars fade away, the tops of masts reappear, the sea resumes a deep azure, and a slight roseate hue begins to shine in the East. The liquid plain grows brighter and more extensive every moment, and we already see, in the offing, sails of ships at the extremity of the horizon, and streaks of purple float amid the azure of the heavens. In short a glorious light fires the sea and sky, and the sun rises in all its majesty.

By degrees the light encreases, and I begin to observe the vessels in the distance, to examine whether any of our old acquaintance have disappeared, and others come in sight, whether they are Danes, Swedes, English, or of other countries, what course they steer, whether they are coming toward us or going from us, whether they sail well or ill, whether they are in ballast or in freight, or whether

whether there are any men of war or privateers in sight, all questions infinitely interesting at sea, where, with a telescope to look through, you may find employment for whole hours without intermission.

The cabin is set in order, breakfast prepared and eaten, and preparation made for cooking the dinner; one studies the charts, reads, writes, or draws; meanwhile the sun advances toward its meridian, the captain takes his observations, the cook finishes his work, and we sit down to table, after which an hour's sleep is very agreeable, were it only to shorten the afternoon. We then walk the quarter deck, again take a review of the vessels in fight, contemplate the coats, perform a little music, or perhaps play at cards.

Meanwhile the disk of the sun increases, and his rays lengthen. Surrounded by purple clouds he descends in all the pomp of evening, while aerial mountains are heaped together around him; but he pierces them with his brilliant fires, and gilds the sails, till at length he plunges, by degrees, into the ocean, after which a soft and crimson light envelopes the waters and the heavens.

We set down to supper, then attend prayers, and thus the day concludes. Twilight now extends its empire over the ocean, the distant sails seem to lose themselves in its obscurity, the masts disappear,

disappear, and the stars one by one pierce through the clouds. Thus night spreads around, and the sea appears an obscure abyss; yet in the distance we still perceive the lights of vessels here and there, or light-houses along the shore. Our lanterns are now lighted, and, except the two sailors on watch, every one hastens to bed.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

LETTER IV.

Scenery.—A Smuggler.—The Shingles.—The Pleasure of a favourable Voyage.—An English Frigate.—Englishmen on board.

At sea.

OUR hopes have been disappointed. The wind has again shifted to the westward, and the whole of the day before yesterday we were standing off and on; another ship bound for Morlaix kept us company for some time; we talked with the passengers, and exchanged with her a roll of Knaaster tobacco against some cheese and butter, after which the sailors caught a net-full of fish, which our cook has kept for supper. Meanwhile the coast of Kent displayed itself before us, and exhibited its beautiful hills and green meadows, its trees in bloom and its white houses, while the coast of Picardy, from which we sheered off, through policy, as if we were sailing for an English port, presented on the contrary, a mere chain of brown naked rocks.

The sun had now set, and the twilight had already embrowned the sea, when we discovered a sloop making directly toward us. Not being able to distinguish as yet, what her company consisted of, our captain was somewhat alarmed, and took her

her for a privateer; but soon she came nearer, and we saw two men waving their handkerchieves in the air as a sign of amity. We steered toward them, and soon discovered they were smugglers, for they only asked us if we had any gin. Our conversation indeed was rather laconic, "Whence are you?" "From Rotterdam." "Have you any thing to drink?" "A few barrels of gin." "Good guineas if you will give us some." This offer our captain positively refused, but exchanged two bottles of it for three of rum, and the boat was presently out of sight.

Toward midnight the mate came gaily into our cabin, and calling the captain to his watch, "The wind," said he, "has been north-east ever since eleven o'clock, and we are near the Shingles." And in fact we had made so much way, that the great light-house on the point of Kent, with its brilliant light, was perfectly visible.

This morning the wind has again freshened and we are making much way. The greater part of the ships that kept us company, and which were in ballast, have outailed us, saluting their countryman with acclamations of joy. Indeed, my dear friend, you can scarcely conceive, how much pleasure we feel in thus gliding along with a moderate and favouring wind. The refreshing sea air, the swelling sails, the easy undulation of the ship, the murmurs of the foaming waves, the brilliant reflection

reflection of light from the surface of the sea, the azure vault of heaven, all fill me with sensations of pleasure, of energy, of happiness, and of health, which I scarcely know how to describe.

In this manner came on the afternoon, when on a sudden we descried to leeward a frigate, which by her manner of sailing we judged to be English. Our captain, wishing to escape her, endeavoured this time to take advantage of the wind, and set two more sails, but, in spite of all our exertions, the frigate manœuvred better than us, and in less than two hours we were within gunshot, when she made a signal to drop astern, which, however, on account of the violence of the wind, we could not immediately comply with. They fired therefore a second gun with ball, and our old captain was half dead with fright. Upon this the mate, as a sign of submission, hauled up the foresail, while part of the frigate's company got into her long-boat, and we having now wore the ship, saw sixteen men rowing toward us.

At first the captain gave up all for lost. He concealed a small purse of money in his woollen wig, put a tin case containing his *papers of resource* as he called them, into his large breeches, drank three large glasses of gin, one immediately after another, and with an air of melancholy and despair, and in a cold sweat, waited the arrival of the enemy.

Their

Their leader was a little well dressed man, who came on board with six of his people. According to custom he perused all our papers, repeating aloud, as he read over our manifest, *ten barrels of beer*, and asked us with a sarcastic air, "What, have the French no more wine?" At length, after reading our passports three times, he said in a friendly voice, "Very well, you may pursue your voyage." On hearing these words our captain, who had till then been rooted to the ground, and trembled like an aspen leaf, recovered his speech: "Would you like," said he with a smile, "to take any thing, some biscuit and cheese, or a glass of double distilled gin?" The Englishman however refused, and quitted our ship, to the great disappointment of his men, who had been reckoning upon a good share of prize-money, "Now," said our captain with an air of triumph, "I hope those rogues will not trouble us any more. I have plenty to stop their mouths with."

At night about nine o'clock we descried the Caskets; which are three lights on a dangerous reef of rocks near the isle of Aurigny. Their strong and lively flames, which seem alternately detached and mingled together, transport me, as it were, by a species of enchantment, to that happy and peaceful fireside, where I have so often enjoyed the society of my friend.

LETTER V.

*The Commencement of a Storm.—Its Progress.—Distress.—Cor-
posant.—The Isle of Oléron.*

At sea.

AT length I can again set pen to paper ; but we have passed some dreadful days. Toward noon the north wind, which had been so favourable to us, ceased, and we remained in a distressing calm till night. At length, a southeast wind springing up, we stood off and on till midnight, when the wind was quite contrary, having come round to the westward. The sun in awful majesty, and the dark black clouds that accompanied him, were the preface of a storm.

Toward the afternoon the wind was so violent that we could only carry the mainfail and forefail. The heavens were quite overcast, it rained for a time, and the storm was already seen at a distance. We stood off and on as long as we could, but the wind and the sea drove us considerably astern. Toward night we were obliged to haul up the forefail, and to reef the mainfail. In this manner the night passed ; the wind had somewhat fallen, but it freshened again in the morning, and there was reason to apprehend the
storm

storm would continue ; the swell grew heavier every moment, and the seas we shipped struck so high as to wet our sails, which we were now obliged to hand, so that the captain determined to put into St. Malo, or any other port that was nearer, if we should be happy enough to make one; but unfortunately we scarcely knew where we were.

The following night and day our situation was still worse. I passed the day in bed, and was obliged to light a lantern, for the cabin was quite dark. The captain came and said to me, "If heaven does not soon send us some help, we must cut away our masts : this storm seems to me equal to that in 1776." He was quite dejected, and even the mate, though otherwise communicative, did not say a word. The sea dashed against the ship's sides with a dreadful crash, and she seemed as if she were going in pieces.

Toward the afternoon however the sky began to clear, the storm somewhat abated, and toward night we were able to let out the reefs. At midnight the captain waked me to tell me with transport, that a corposant, which prognosticated the end of the storm, appeared at the masthead. But no one can feel the importance of this intelligence without having witnessed a similar scene.

At noon the wind fell considerably, and the air became so serene, that the captain himself went

to the masthead to look out. He perceived to the westward a flat country, but could not determine precisely where we were. The sea was still extremely heavy, but we did not roll so violently as two days before. We had now, for the first time since the storm, a regular dinner cooked, and congratulated each other on our good fortune.

At two o'clock the sun at length shone through the clouds, and we clearly distinguished the land. We determined to sail before the wind, which was westerly, and our captain soon discovered the land to be the isle of Oléron. I clearly perceived the rocks and the batteries. The guard of the lighthouse hoisted their flag, and we did the like. At this moment we are standing off and on along the coast.

The wind abates every hour, the sun sets peacefully, the serenity of a cloudless evening promises us a calm night and a fine day, and I feel as happy and contented as if I had just returned from paying you a visit.

LETTER VI.

Wreck.—Fogs and Signals.—Rock and Lighthouse of Corduan:—A Pilot-boat.—Mouth of the Garonne.—Guard-boats.—Scenery.

On board.

THE wind had now quite fallen, the sea was growing calm, but the day was dark and the weather variable. We saw the wreck of a boat floating on the water, and then a mast and some cordage. Soon after we distinguished the other vessels, which approached us in greater numbers than before. A Dutchman asked us, with his speaking trumpet, if we had seen this boat. In all appearance she belonged to some vessel that had been wrecked on the sand banks off the coast of France. This idea gives us much pain. In the afternoon the wind shifted entirely in our favour, to the northward, but the fog became so thick, that we could not see more than the ship's length before us. From time to time therefore we struck the anchor with a hammer, or blew a horn, as signals to any ships that might otherwise have neared us, to prevent our running foul of each other, or running down any ships that might cross our track, as we had the advantage of being to windward.

This

This singular music continued throughout the night, and deprived us of our sleep. Toward midnight the mate called out to us below, "*The tower of Corduan*", that is to say, the lighthouse at the mouth of the Garonne. The fog had dispersed, and we perceived it at a distance, like a ball of fire. But unfortunately toward night the wind changed again, and we were obliged to drop astern, not daring to approach so dangerous a coast without a pilot. Thus we stood off and on very tediously during twenty hours.

At length we this morning descried a boat making toward us, which, by its red sail and number, we judged to be a pilot-boat. Nor were we mistaken; and an hour after we took a pilot on board. He told us, that, hearing of us by some fishermen, he had set sail yesterday, and that he had cast anchor, during the night, near the shore. We were extremely rejoiced at his arrival, and, the wind being admirably favourable, we in a short time saw on our right the rock of Corduan with its lofty lighthouse. The waves broke majestically against that formidable mass of rock which is formed by the reefs that skirt the shore, but which by the aid of our pilot, we escaped. This man informed me, that the tower is one hundred and sixty feet high, the great lantern fifteen, and from two to three hundred and fifty pounds of pitcoal are consumed there every night. The watch are

generally relieved every fortnight ; but they are obliged to take a month's provisions, because boats can only approach these rocks when the sea is perfectly calm.

We had no sooner passed the lighthouse than we perceived a difference in the water, and beheld the charming banks of the Gironde. A multitude of ships of every size, that we perceived at a distance, passed us in an instant ; and on our left the Royan, which was covered with verdure, immediately attracted our attention.

We now approached the guardship, and it was necessary to slacken sail ; when, after a few minutes, two customhouse officers, a military officer, and two soldiers, came on board. They noted down the name of the captain and of the ship ; the description of my person in my passport was carefully compared with my features, and they made me several times repeat my signature. At length, all things being found regular, their countenances, which at first appeared severe, began to assume a milder aspect, the officer informed us of the signature of the preliminaries of peace at Leoben, the news of which had arrived a few days before, and, having mutually congratulated each other, we parted.

The Gironde, the waters of which are yellowish and rapid, is above three leagues wide at its mouth, and its shores, which are well cultivated, afford so
enchancing

enchancing a prospect, that we instantly forgot all our fatigues and dangers. On all sides we beheld green fields, villages, vineyards, meadows, country-houses, and woods, with the richest and most luxurious vegetation. In a word, a most charming scene approached us on both banks, so that I beheld as it were a new world, which seemed to be just discovered: the trees in bloom, the smiling farms, the little hills covered with shrubs, the plains adorned with flocks, the vineyards of a darker colour than the other verdure, the chateaux, and the houses that we perceived at the end of the avenues, all gave to nature a new and interesting appearance.

It is now seven o'clock, and the sun is on the point of setting; the shadow of these enchanting banks extends over the peaceful waters of the river, the harmonious tints of evening give a softness to the landscape, and the air wafts us a thousand delicious perfumes. Some boats have sold us provisions, especially wine; but we shall be obliged to cast anchor near Blaye on account of the tide.

LETTER VII.

Blaye.—Médoc.—Bec d'Ambes.—The Garonne.—Scenery.—Le Passage.—Disputes.—The Port of Bordeaux.

On board.

AT Blaye, a fête was celebrating in honour of peace, in consequence of which that little town was illuminated, and throughout the night re-echoed with music and singing. Blaye carries on some trade in wine, and is situated opposite to the fort of Médoc. The Gironde is there nineteen thousand one hundred toises broad. On a small island, seven hundred toises from Blaye, stands a fort, consisting of a small flat tower, known by the name of Pâté, whose batteries cross those of Médoc. Soon after the river grows narrower, but its banks are thereby rendered more romantic. To the left arise rocks, whose summits are crowned with verdure, and their sides studded with chateaux, farms, cottages, vineyards, and meadows. The right bank, which is the lowest, is a fine plain covered with charming houses and plantations of all kinds. After this we passed a point of land called the Bec d'Ambes, near which is the confluence of the Dordogne and Garonne, which, when united, take the name of Gironde. As far as the eye can pursue

view the narrow banks of the Dordogne and its tumultuous course, it views a rich and well-cultivated country embellished with an infinite variety of objects. The Garonne, as it ascends, grows very sensibly narrower, but thereby only produces a more pleasing illusion: on looking behind, you would imagine the two banks united with the horizon, and shut up the passage of the river by a circuit of vineyards, of plantations, and of verdure. In front appears a vast amphitheatre, which combines every thing in nature that is attractive or magnificent.

The tide now again stopped our progress, and we were obliged a second time to cast anchor, though we were but an hour and a half's sail from Bordeaux. Our pilot having determined to leave us, and our captain being desirous of paying his respects to the consul of his nation at Bordeaux, I resolved to accompany them, and to sleep that very night on shore. We landed on the side of the river next Le Passage, a place which employs a great number of boats; for Bordeaux being on the left bank of the Garonne, all persons and goods, either coming down or going up the country, must pass there. Here I was instantly assailed by a crowd of wharfingers and boatmen, who contended for the care of my baggage; and apparently supposing me extremely impatient, and still more generous, demanded no less than eighteen francs.

I there-

I therefore preferred remaining that night on board and waiting till the next day, when we should be alongside the town; and having passed so many nights on board, it was no mortification to me to stay there one more. However I landed, leaving my trunk in the care of a sailor, to whom I gave the price of a measure of wine, and went to take a walk among the avenues of trees that run along the bank.

Meanwhile some of these people, having changed their mind, offered to carry my trunk for the six francs I had offered them. They therefore attempted to bring it out of the boat; but they could not persuade the sailor to give it up, his concern for my interest being now reinforced by some good draughts of wine; he therefore put himself in a posture of defence to protect my property, and used his oars to make himself the better understood. The assailants were even with him, and returned his blows; so that a scuffle arose, for the consequences of which I was somewhat uneasy. Fortunately a municipal officer came up, who separated the combatants, though not without difficulty. I thanked him for his interference, and returned on board.

This morning we have received on board a new pilot. Unfortunately the wind has become contrary, and we have been forced to stand off and on; but I have been well compensated by the
beauty

beauty of the banks that presented themselves to my view. At this moment I perceive a forest of masts and above two hundred vessels assembled together; in the centre is the town, which forms a semicircle. A multitude of ships of all kinds precede us, and pursue the current of the river. It is about two o'clock, and we are at length arrived. The custom-house officers, who came yesterday on board, have already examined my trunk, and as soon as the captain is satisfied, we shall go on shore.



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LETTER VIII.

The Landing, and the Quay.—Chateau-trompette.—Entrance into the City.—Situation of Bordeaux—Its Architecture.—Promenade called Allées de Tourni.—A singular Posting-bill.—The Theatre.—Upstart Fortunes.

Bordeaux, May 1707.

ACCUSTOMED to the beautiful quays of Holland, I was not a little astonished to find the landing here low and muddy, the glacis, which is of wood, only beginning in the neighbourhood of Chateau-trompette. A narrow road runs beside a row of houses mostly very handsome; but it is so incumbered with mules, carriages, and foot passengers, that it is extremely difficult to advance. On the left the view of the river is superb: beyond the shipping the eye is feasted with a smiling and fertile country full of the most beautiful variety. Two young girls offered to be my guides, and, full of play the whole of our road, carried my heavy trunk by turns on their head without interrupting their drollery for a moment.

To shorten my walk, we passed by Chateau-trompette, which is the ancient fort of Bordeaux, but which is shortly to be pulled down in order to make way for an esplanade. Here I saw a number of portuguese prisoners, who were just then permitted

mitted to take the air; they had composed the crews of several captured vessels; but their lot is here tolerably mild, and it is possible they prefer their present condition to living at home even at liberty. We entered the fort, and from the appearance of the filthy glacis we had first passed, were very agreeably surpris'd by the *Allées de Tourni*, and the superb theatre fronting the great square, the farther end of which is adorned with very fine edifices. Here the eye pursues the beautiful street of *Chateau-rouge* as far as the charming banks of the river, which is covered with ships, and the whole forms a most delightful and magnificent prospect.

Bordeaux forms nearly a triangle; but on the side next the river it resembles a crescent, the eastern part of which comprehends the town, and the southern the suburb. This part, which is known by the name of *Chartrons*, is celebrated for the beauty of its edifices, its romantic views, and the multitude of rich merchants that live there. The houses in the town itself are mostly of white free-stone, and have a certain air of riches and magnificence; but the streets are narrow, paved without art or symmetry, and shew the antiquity of the place.

The *Allées de Tourni*, which commence at the theatre, are the principal promenade out of the town. It has lately been embellished with a new coffee-

coffee-house at the end, where some droll pictures bring good custom; most of the subjects seem to be taken from Ariosto, and they are considered as very well executed: a cabinet of wax figures, among which are several personages of the day, and an exhibition of ombres chinoises, rope-dancers, &c. afford a feeble imitation of the boulevards of Paris. The trees were everywhere covered with posting-bills: in France, one soon becomes accustomed to the declamatory style of these papers: the following however struck me too forcibly not to copy it: it contained the surprising promises of an *officer of health*, who engaged to cure all possible disorders in a certain fixed time, appointing precisely the month, week, day, hour, and minute; for instance, he could cure the tooth-ache in three minutes, the cholick in three quarters of an hour, a fever in three days, a sciatica in three weeks, and a consumption in three months. You will allow this hand-bill professed a species of talent by no means common.

At the theatre, which is magnificent, and of which you will find a description in every book of travels, I saw Gluck's Orpheus and Eurydice, with a ballet performed in a superior style. On beholding this crowd of young people elegantly dressed, and women loaded with diamonds, you would scarcely have thought it possible France could have suffered so severely during the last eight years.