

remarkable for his independent resistance of papal encroachment; but the peculiarity of his situation subjected him in an uncommon degree to ecclesiastical influence at home. Priests mingled in the council and the camp, and, arrayed in their sacerdotal robes, not unfrequently led the armies to battle.¹³ They interpreted the will of Heaven as mysteriously revealed in dreams and visions. Miracles were a familiar occurrence. The violated tombs of the saints sent forth thunders and lightnings to consume the invaders; and, when the Christians fainted in the fight, the apparition of their patron, St. James, mounted on a milk-white steed, and bearing aloft the banner of the cross, was seen hovering in the air, to rally their broken squadrons, and lead them on to victory.¹⁴ Thus

¹³ The archbishops of Toledo, whose revenues and retinues far exceeded those of the other ecclesiastics, were particularly conspicuous in these holy wars. Mariana, speaking of one of these belligerent prelates, considers it worthy of encomium, that "it is not easy to decide whether he was most conspicuous for his good government in peace, or his conduct and valor in war." *Hist. de España*, tom. ii. p. 14.

¹⁴ The first occasion, on which the military apostle condescended to reveal himself to the Leonese, was the memorable day of Clavijo, A. D. 844, when 70,000 infidels fell on the field. From that time, the name of St. Jago, became the battle-cry of the Spaniards. The truth of the story is attested by a contemporary charter of Ramiro I. to the church of the saint, granting it an annual tribute of corn and wine from the towns in his domin-

ions, and a knight's portion of the spoils of every victory over the Mussulmans. The *privilegio del voto*, as it is called, is given at length by Florez in his Collection, (*España Sagrada*, tom. xix. p. 329,) and is unhesitatingly cited by most of the Spanish historians, as Garibay, Mariana, Morales, and others. — More sharp-sighted critics discover, in its anachronisms, and other palpable blunders, ample evidence of its forgery. (*Mondejar, Advertencias á la Historia de Mariana* (Valencia, 1746,) no. 157, — *Masdeu, Historia Crítica de España, y de la Cultura Española*, (Madrid, 1783–1805,) tom. xvi. supl. 18.) The canons of Compostella, however, seem to have found their account in it, as the tribute of good cheer, which it imposed, continued to be paid by some of the Castilian towns, according to Mariana, in his day. *Hist. de España*, tom. i. p. 416.

INTROD. the Spaniard looked upon himself, as in a peculiar manner the care of Providence. For him the laws of nature were suspended. He was a soldier of the Cross, fighting not only for his country, but for Christendom. Indeed, volunteers from the remotest parts of Christendom eagerly thronged to serve under his banner; and the cause of religion was debated with the same ardor in Spain, as on the plains of Palestine.¹⁵ Hence the national character became exalted by a religious fervor, which in later days, alas! settled into a fierce fanaticism. Hence that solicitude for the purity of the faith, the peculiar boast of the Spaniards, and that deep tinge of superstition, for which they have ever been distinguished above the other nations of Europe.

The long wars with the Mahometans served to keep alive in their bosoms the ardent glow of patriotism; and this was still further heightened by the body of traditional minstrelsy, which commemorated in these wars the heroic deeds of their ancestors. The influence of such popular compositions on a simple people is undeniable. A sagacious critic ventures to pronounce the poems of

Influence of
their min-
strelsy.

¹⁵ French, Flemish, Italian, and English volunteers, led by men of distinguished rank, are recorded by the Spanish writers to have been present at the sieges of Toledo, Lisbon, Algeiras, and various others. More than sixty, or, as some accounts state, a hundred thousand, joined the army before the battle of Navas de Tolosa; a round exaggeration, which, however, implies the great number of such auxiliaries. (Garibay, *Compendio Histo-*

rial de las Crónicas de España, (Barcelona, 1628,) lib. 12, cap. 33.) The crusades in Spain were as rational enterprises, as those in the East were vain and chimerical. Pope Pascal II. acted like a man of sense, when he sent back certain Spanish adventurers, who had embarked in the wars of Palestine, telling them, that "the cause of religion could be much better served by them at home."

Homer the principal bond which united the Grecian states.¹⁶ Such an opinion may be deemed somewhat extravagant. It cannot be doubted, however, that a poem like that of the "Cid," which appeared as early as the twelfth century,¹⁷ by calling up the most inspiring national recollections in connexion with their favorite hero, must have operated powerfully on the moral sensibilities of the people.

It is pleasing to observe, in the cordial spirit of these early effusions, little of the ferocious bigotry which sullied the character of the nation, in after ages.¹⁸ The Mahometans of this period far excel-

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I.

Their charity to the infidel.

¹⁶ See Heeren, Politics of Ancient Greece, translated by Bancroft, chap. 7.

¹⁷ The oldest manuscript extant of this poem, (still preserved at Bivar, the hero's birth-place,) bears the date of 1207, or at latest 1307, for there is some obscurity in the writing. Its learned editor, Sanchez, has been led by the peculiarities of its orthography, metre, and idiom, to refer its composition to as early a date as 1153. (Coleccion de Poesias Castellanas anteriores al Siglo XV. (Madrid, 1779-90,) tom. i. p. 223.)

Some of the late Spanish antiquaries have manifested a skepticism in relation to the "Cid," truly alarming. A volume was published at Madrid, in 1792, by Risco, under the title of "Castilla, o Historia de Rodrigo Diaz," &c., which the worthy father ushered into the world with much solemnity, as a transcript of an original manuscript coeval with the time of the "Cid," and fortunately discovered by him in an obscure corner of some Leonese monastery. (Prólogo.) Masdeu, in an analysis of this precious document, has been led to scrutinize the grounds, on which the re-

puted achievements of the "Cid" have rested from time immemorial, and concludes with the startling assertion, that "of Rodrigo Diaz, el Campeador, we absolutely know nothing, with any degree of probability, not even his existence!" (Hist. Crítica, tom. xx. p. 370.) There are probably few of his countrymen, that will thus coolly acquiesce in the annihilation of their favorite hero, whose exploits have been the burden of chronicle, as well as romance, from the twelfth century down to the present day.

They may find a warrant for their fond credulity, in the dispassionate judgment of one of the greatest of modern historians, John Muller, who, so far from doubting the existence of the Campeador, has succeeded, in his own opinion at least, in clearing from his history the "mists of fable and extravagance," in which it has been shrouded. See his Life of the Cid, appended to Escobar's "Romancero," edited by the learned and estimable Dr. Julius, of Berlin. Frankfort, 1828.

¹⁸ A modern minstrel inveighs loudly against this charity of his

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Their chivalry.

led their enemies in general refinement, and had carried some branches of intellectual culture to a height scarcely surpassed by Europeans in later times. The Christians, therefore, notwithstanding their political aversion to the Saracens, conceded to them a degree of respect, which subsided into feelings of a very different complexion, as they themselves rose in the scale of civilization. This sentiment of respect tempered the ferocity of a warfare, which, although sufficiently disastrous in its details, affords examples of a generous courtesy, that would do honor to the politest ages of Europe.¹⁹ The Spanish Arabs were accomplished in all knightly exercises, and their natural fondness for magnificence, which shed a lustre over the rugged features

ancestors, who devoted their "cantos de cigarra," to the glorification of this "Moorish rabble," instead of celebrating the prowess of the Cid, Bernardo, and other worthies of their own nation. His discourtesy, however, is well rebuked by a more generous brother of the craft.

"No es culpa si de los Moros
los valientes hechos cantan.
pues tanto mas resplandecen
nuestras celebres hazañas;
que el encarecer los hechos
del vencido en la batalla,
engrandece al vencedor,
aunque no hablen de el palabra."

Duran, Romancero de Romances
Moriscos, (Madrid, 1828,) p. 227.

¹⁹ When the empress queen of Alfonso VII. was besieged in the castle of Azeca, in 1139, she reproached the Moslem cavaliers for their want of courtesy and courage in attacking a fortress defended by a female. They acknowledged the justice of the rebuke, and only requested that she would condescend to show herself to them from her

palace; when the Moorish chivalry, after paying their obeisance to her in the most respectful manner, instantly raised the siege, and departed. (Ferrerias, Histoire Générale d'Espagne, traduite par d'Hermilly, (Paris, 1742-51,) tom. iii. p. 410.) It was a frequent occurrence to restore a noble captive to liberty without ransom, and even with costly presents. Thus Alfonso XI. sent back to their father two daughters of a Moorish prince, who formed part of the spoils of the battle of Tarifa. (Mariana, Hist. de España, tom. ii. p. 32.) When this same Castilian sovereign, after a career of almost uninterrupted victory over the Moslems, died of the plague before Gibraltar, in 1350, the knights of Granada put on mourning for him, saying, that "he was a noble prince, and one that knew how to honor his enemies as well as his friends." Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. p. 149.

of chivalry, easily communicated itself to the Christian cavaliers. In the intervals of peace, these latter frequented the courts of the Moorish princes, and mingled with their adversaries in the comparatively peaceful pleasures of the tourney, as in war they vied with them in feats of Quixotic gallantry.²⁰

The nature of this warfare between two nations, inhabitants of the same country, yet so dissimilar in their religious and social institutions, as to be almost the natural enemies of each other, was extremely favorable to the exhibition of the characteristic virtues of chivalry. The contiguity of the hostile parties afforded abundant opportunities for personal rencounter and bold romantic enterprise. Each nation had its regular military associations, who swore to devote their lives to the service of God and their country, in perpetual war against the *infidel*.²¹ The Spanish knight became the true hero

²⁰ One of the most extraordinary achievements, in this way, was that of the grand master of Alcantara, in 1394, who, after ineffectually challenging the king of Granada to meet him in single combat, or with a force double that of his own, marched boldly up to the gates of his capital, where he was assailed by such an overwhelming host, that he with all his little band perished on the field. (Mariana, *Hist. de España*, lib. 19, cap. 3.) It was over this worthy compeer of Don Quixote, that the epitaph was inscribed, "Here lies one who never knew fear," which led Charles V. to remark to one of his courtiers, that "the good knight could never have tried to snuff a candle with his fingers."

²¹ This singular fact, of the ex-

istence of an Arabic military order, is recorded by Conde. (*Domination de los Arabes*, tom. i. p. 619, note.) The brethren were distinguished for the simplicity of their attire, and their austere and frugal habits. They were stationed on the Moorish marches, and were bound by a vow of perpetual war against the Christian infidel. As their existence is traced as far back as 1030, they may possibly have suggested the organization of similar institutions in Christendom, which they preceded by a century at least. The loyal historians of the Spanish military orders, it is true, would carry that of St. Jago as far back as the time of Ramiro I., in the ninth century; (Caro de Torres, *Historia de las Ordenes Militares de Santiago, Calatrava,*

INTROD. of romance, wandering over his own land, and even into the remotest climes, in quest of adventures; and, as late as the fifteenth century, we find him in the courts of England and Burgundy, doing battle in honor of his mistress, and challenging general admiration by his uncommon personal intrepidity.²² This romantic spirit lingered in Castile, long after the age of chivalry had become extinct in other parts of Europe, continuing to nourish itself on those illusions of fancy, which were at length dispelled by the caustic satire of Cervantes.

Thus patriotism, religious loyalty, and a proud sense of independence, founded on the consciousness of owing their possessions to their personal valor, became characteristic traits of the Castilians previously to the sixteenth century, when the oppressive policy and fanaticism of the Austrian dynasty contrived to throw into the shade these generous

y Alcantara, (Madrid, 1629,) fol. 2. — Rades y Andrada, *Crónica de las Tres Ordenes y Cavallerias*, (Toledo, 1572,) fol. 4.) but less prejudiced critics, as Zurita and Mariana, are content with dating it from the papal bull of Alexander III., 1175.

²² In one of the Paston letters, we find the notice of a Spanish knight appearing at the court of Henry VI., "wyth a Kercheff of Plesaunce iwrapped aboute hys arme, the gwyche Knight," says the writer, "wyl renne a cours wyth a sharpe spere for his sou'eyn lady sake." (Fenn, *Original Letters*, (1787,) vol. i. p. 6.) The practice of using sharp spears, instead of the guarded and blunted weapons usual in the tournament, seems to have been affected by the

chivalrous nobles of Castile; many of whom, says the Chronicle of Juan II., lost their lives from this circumstance, in the splendid tourney given in honor of the nuptials of Blanche of Navarre and Henry, son of John II. (*Crónica de D. Juan II.*, (Valencia, 1779,) p. 411.) Monstrelet records the adventures of a Spanish cavalier, who "travelled all the way to the court of Burgundy to seek honor and reverence" by his feats of arms. His antagonist was the Lord of Chagny; on the second day they fought with battle-axes, and "the Castilian attracted general admiration, by his uncommon daring in fighting with his visor up." *Chroniques*, (Paris, 1595,) tom. ii. p. 109.

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I.

virtues. Glimpses of them, however, might long be discerned in the haughty bearing of the Castilian noble, and in that erect, high-minded peasantry, whom oppression has not yet been able wholly to subdue.²³

To the extraordinary position, in which the nation was placed, may also be referred the liberal forms of its political institutions, as well as a more early developement of them than took place in other countries of Europe. From the exposure of the Castilian towns to the predatory incursions of the Arabs, it became necessary, not only that they should be strongly fortified, but that every citizen should be trained to bear arms in their defence. An immense increase of consequence was given to the burgesses, who thus constituted the most effective part of the national militia. To this circumstance, as well as to the policy of inviting the settlement of frontier places by the grant of extraordinary privileges to the inhabitants, is to be imputed the early date, as well as liberal character, of the charters of community in Castile and Leon.²⁴

Early importance of the Castilian towns.

Their privileges.

²³ The Venetian ambassador, Navagiero, speaking of the manners of the Castilian nobles, in Charles V.'s time, remarks somewhat bluntly, that, "if their power were equal to their pride, the whole world would not be able to withstand them." *Viaggio fatto in Spagna et in Francia*, (Vinegia, 1563,) fol. 10.

²⁴ The most ancient of these regular charters of incorporation, now extant, was granted by Alfonso V., in 1020, to the city of Leon and its territory. (Marina rejects those of an earlier date, adduced

by Asso and Manuel and other writers. *Ensayo Histórico-Crítico, sobre la Antigua Legislacion de Castilla*, (Madrid, 1808,) pp. 80-82.) It preceded, by a long interval, those granted to the burgesses in other parts of Europe, with the exception, perhaps, of Italy; where several of the cities, as Milan, Pavia, and Pisa, seem early in the eleventh century to have exercised some of the functions of independent states. But the extent of municipal immunities conceded to, or rather assumed by, the Italian cities at this early pe-

INTROD. These, although varying a good deal in their details, generally conceded to the citizens the right of electing their own magistrates for the regulation of municipal affairs. Judges were appointed by this body for the administration of civil and criminal law, subject to an appeal to the royal tribunal. No person could be affected in life or property, except by a decision of this municipal court; and no cause, while pending before it, could be evoked thence into the superior tribunal. In order to secure the barriers of justice more effectually against the violence of power, so often superior to law in an imperfect state of society, it was provided in many of the charters, that no nobles should be permitted to acquire real property within the limits of the community; that no fortress or palace should be erected by them there; that such as might reside within its territory, should be subject to its jurisdiction; and that any violence, offered by them to its inhabitants, might be forcibly resisted with impunity. Ample and inalienable funds were provided for the maintenance of the municipal functionaries, and for other public expenses. A large

riod, is very equivocal; for their indefatigable antiquarian confesses that all, or nearly all their archives, previous to the time of Frederic I., (the latter part of the twelfth century,) had perished amid their frequent civil convulsions. (See the subject in detail, in Muratori, *Dissertazioni sopra le Antichità Italiane*, (Napoli, 1752,) dissert. 45.) Acts of enfranchisement became frequent in Spain during the eleventh century; several of which are preserved, and exhibit, with suffi-

cient precision, the nature of the privileges accorded to the inhabitants. — Robertson, who wrote when the constitutional antiquities of Castile had been but slightly investigated, would seem to have little authority, therefore, for deriving the establishment of communities from Italy, and still less for tracing their progress through France and Germany to Spain. See his *History of the Reign of the Emperor Charles V.*, (London, 1796,) vol. i. pp. 29, 30.

extent of circumjacent country, embracing frequently many towns and villages, was annexed to each city with the right of jurisdiction over it. All arbitrary tallages were commuted for a certain fixed and moderate rent. An officer was appointed by the crown to reside within each community, whose province it was to superintend the collection of this tribute, to maintain public order, and to be associated with the magistrates of each city in the command of the forces it was bound to contribute towards the national defence. Thus while the inhabitants of the great towns in other parts of Europe were languishing in feudal servitude, the members of the Castilian corporations, living under the protection of their own laws and magistrates in time of peace, and commanded by their own officers in war, were in full enjoyment of all the essential rights and privileges of freemen.²⁵

It is true, that they were often convulsed by intestine feuds; that the laws were often loosely administered by incompetent judges; and that the exercise of so many important prerogatives of independent states inspired them with feelings of independence, which led to mutual rivalry, and sometimes to open collision. But with all this, long after similar immunities in the free cities of other countries, as Italy for example,²⁶ had been

²⁵ For this account of the ancient polity of the Castilian cities, the reader is referred to Sempere, *Histoire des Cortès d'Espagne*, (Bordeaux, 1815,) and Marina's valuable works, *Ensayo Histórico-Crítico sobre la Antigua Legislacion*

de Castilla, (Nos. 160 - 196,) and *Teoría de las Cortes*, (Madrid, 1813, part. 2, cap. 21 - 23,) where the meagre outline given above is filled up with copious illustration.

²⁶ The independence of the Lombard cities had been sacrificed, ac-

INTROD. sacrificed to the violence of faction or the lust of power, those of the Castilian cities not only remained unimpaired, but seemed to acquire additional stability with age. This circumstance is chiefly imputable to the constancy of the national legislature, which, until the voice of liberty was stifled by a military despotism, was ever ready to interpose its protecting arm in defence of constitutional rights.

Castilian
Cortes.

The earliest instance on record of popular representation in Castile occurred at Burgos, in 1169;²⁷ nearly a century antecedent to the celebrated Leicester parliament. Each city had but one vote, whatever might be the number of its representatives. A much greater irregularity, in regard to the number of cities required to send deputies to cortes on different occasions, prevailed in Castile, than ever existed in England;²⁸ though, previously

according to the admission of their enthusiastic historian, about the middle of the thirteenth century. Sismondi, *Histoire des Républiques Italiennes du Moyen-Âge*, (Paris, 1818,) ch. 20.

²⁷ Or in 1160, according to the *Corónica General*, (part. 4. fol. 344, 345,) where the fact is mentioned. Mariana refers this celebration of cortes to 1170, (*Hist. de España*, lib. 11, cap. 2;) but Ferreras, who often rectifies the chronological inaccuracies of his predecessor, fixes it in 1169. (*Hist. d'Espagne*, tom. iii. p. 484.) Neither of these authors notices the presence of the commons in this assembly; although the phrase used by the Chronicle, *los ciudadanos*, is perfectly unequivocal.

²⁸ Capmany, *Práctica y Estilo de Celebrar Cortes en Aragón,*

Cataluña, y Valencia, (Madrid, 1821,) pp. 230, 231.—Whether the convocation of the third estate to the national councils proceeded from politic calculation in the sovereign, or was in a manner forced on him by the growing power and importance of the cities, it is now too late to inquire. It is nearly as difficult to settle on what principles the selection of cities to be represented depended. Marina asserts, that every great town and community was entitled to a seat in the legislature, from the time of receiving its municipal charter from the sovereign, (*Teoria*, tom. i. p. 138;) and Sempers agrees, that this right became general, from the first, to all who chose to avail themselves of it. (*Histoire des Cortès*, p. 56.) The right, probably, was not much insisted on by