

the utmost exactness, by several writers : I shall merely add, that not one of them can be accused of exaggeration. I have read many original records of trials which filled me with horror, nor could I regard those who had recourse to such means, in any other light, than men coolly and deliberately barbarous. The supreme council was frequently obliged to interdict the torture, more than once in the same trial : this regulation was, however, rendered nugatory, by an abominable subterfuge. The cessation of torture, rendered necessary when the victim's life happened to be endangered, was, thenceforth called a suspension, as in the case of Salas ; so that the instant an accused recovered from the effects of his first essay, a second, and even a third was made.* It is quite unnecessary," says Llorente, " to dictate the judgment which future generations will pronounce on such conduct. The chamber of torment was always under ground, and the approach managed so as to prevent the cries of the tortured from being heard, even within the walls of the Holy

* The sole object of the torture was evidently to multiply the number of victims : indeed, many cases are cited, both by Llorente, and other writers, of persons who denounced hundreds, while on the fatal bed ; amongst whom were often found parents and relatives. If, as frequently happened, a victim recanted what might have been extorted in the hour of suffering, he was instantly taken back to the chamber of torment.

Office itself." Llorente thus concludes the chapter, in which the torture is treated ; " my pen refuses to retrace the picture of those horrors, for there can be nothing more opposed to the spirit of charity and compassion, so often recommended by Christ to his followers ; and yet, there is not, even in the nineteenth century, any law that abolishes the torture !"*

The subterranean cells were of different depths ; those at Zaragoza and Madrid, which I have seen, though not more than from twelve to fifteen feet below the level of the street, were damp and loathsome ; nor can I imagine how any person could possibly exist for many days in such dreadful receptacles. Some of them reminded me of the *Damuscas*, noticed in my letters from Sicily, and used in the criminal procedure of that Island. I understand, from an eye witness, who visited Valladolid soon after the entry of the French there, in 1809, that there were three dungeons in the Holy Office of that place, above thirty feet deep, and that they could be entered only from the top. This contrivance was, no doubt, suggested by the subterranean vaults of ancient Rome, destined for starving the vestals, who had transgressed the barbarous vow. Who knows, too, but that many of our fellow creatures have shared a similar fate at Valladolid ! It

* The above remark was made in 1818.

must be confessed, the agents of the Holy Office were not very particular from whom they borrowed new modes of punishment; their first object seems to have been that of never omitting any opportunity of tormenting poor human nature.

It is very generally believed that a portion, at least, of the instruments of torture, were restored with the Holy Office, in 1814; and if reports, which I have heard, both here and at Zaragoza, be true, it must have been resorted to in several instances. Amongst the memoranda found on the walls of the Inquisition here, one, after declaring the innocence of the writer, points out his mother as the accuser: another seems to have been traced by a victim upon whom the torture of *La Pendola* had been exercised. This was performed by placing the sufferer in a chair sunk into the earth, and letting water fall on the crown of his head, from a certain height, in single drops. Though far from appearing so, the *Pendola* is supposed to have been the most painful operation practised by the defenders of the faith. In a third inscription, dated on the 11th November, 1818, the writer complains of having been shut up for a political offence, and in consequence of a false denunciation.

If the foregoing melancholy statements prove, that the mild and consoling Religion of Christ, has been converted into an instrument of cruelty,

oppression, and persecution, it next remains to be shown that in abolishing the Holy Office, only a part of the evils arising from the vices and follies of mankind is removed. This will be attempted in the following remarks on the manners and customs of the Peninsula.



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

LETTER XIV.

RELIGIOUS REFORM, MANNERS and CUSTOMS.—Preliminary Reflections.—Appeal to Religious Reformers.—Effects of Absolution, Auricular Confession and Celibacy.—Their Origin.—Mr. Bowring.—*Pan y Toros*.—Indifference of the People to the Duties of Religion: its Cause.—Necessity of a Change.—Gregoire, Marina, Llorente, &c.—Relaxation of Morals in Spain accounted for.—Qualities of Men and Women.—Materials for a Legislator.—Influence of the Priesthood.—Effects of Riches and Titles.—Grandees and Plebeians: Degeneracy of the former.—Priests and Lawyers.—Merchants and Tradesmen.—Opinion of the Abbé de Pradt.—Saying of Louis XIV.—Information amongst the Lower Classes.—*Arrieros, Contrabandistas, &c.*—Social Intercourse.—Reception and Treatment of Strangers.—Comparisons.—Castilian Pride, Bombast and Quixotism.—Titles and Armorial Bearings.—Mendicity.—Point of honour in Spain.—Duelling.—Music and Dancing.—Costume.—Inordinate use of Snuff and Tobacco.—Allusion to Bull Feasts.—Essay on Games, by Jovellanos.—Tournaments.—Origin of the Bull Feasts.—Extract from *Pan y Toros*.—Opinion and Suggestion of Jovellanos.—Desultory Remarks on the Spanish Capital.—Contrast of Riches and Poverty.—Character and Disposition of the Inhabitants.—Situation and Climate.—Architectural Embellishments: Churches, Convents, and other Public Establishments.—Royal Palace; View from the Terrace.—Public Walks, Theatres.—*Plaza de Toros*.—El Prado.—Concluding Hints and Reflections.

Madrid, October, 1820.

To render the preceding facts and observations, relative to those evils which have sprung from the mistaken notions, false zeal and passions of mankind in this country, practically useful to

Spain, they should be followed by a minute account of the abuses that still disfigure religious practice and belief; and without a removal of which, it is to be feared the best political institutions can neither be properly enjoyed, nor of very long continuance. Such an undertaking would lead into a vast field of inquiry, and if well executed, no greater service could be rendered to Spain, than by its publication. Unequal to the task myself, all I aspire to, in the following cursory remarks on the manners and customs of the Peninsula, is that of making you somewhat better acquainted with the general character of the people, and pointing out a few of those circumstances, which the maturest reflection has taught me to regard, as no less repugnant to the genuine spirit of christianity, than they are opposed to the dictates of reason and principles of morality.

While occupied in reflecting on Sicilian manners, it occurred to me that the degree of virtue and vice in a people, depends on the religious and political institutions to which they have been accustomed: twelve years additional experience induces me to lay that down as an axiom now, which was then hazarded as a mere matter of opinion. Although I shall not enter into the developement, of which this notion is susceptible, it is not less worthy of attention to those who may be called on to legislate for a nation long exposed

to the influence of tyranny and inroads of corruption. I have a double motive for the above suggestion on the present occasion; that of calling your attention to the subject, as a highly important truth, and of exonerating myself from the charge of advancing any fact through motives of illiberality and prejudice, which is offered only in the hope of promoting the best interests of the Spanish people. Should it become necessary to allude to other countries, for the sake of illustration, or stating any facts interesting to morals, I beg it to be clearly understood, as not proceeding from the smallest tincture of national prejudice. Without dwelling on the injustice of following the examples too often shown in this way, or denying that I may have, myself, fallen into the error, while want of sufficient reflection had still narrowed my views, it is high time to acknowledge that each member of the European family, has its own share of failings to correct without reproaching its neighbour; and, above all, let us hasten to recognize the important truth, that if the people of one country can really boast any superiority over another, it is exclusively due to the nature of their institutions and system of government.

It is a most fortunate circumstance for Spain, that so large a portion of its clergy are favourable to reform, and seem deeply impressed with the necessity of a change, as the only means of sav-

ing their flocks from falling into the extremes of incredulity, which so often succeed the excesses of fanaticism, when the latter are removed by the progress of knowledge, or a want of proper example in the pastors of religion. It is to those virtuous and enlightened men I would fain appeal for the justice of my assertions.

In that mass of abuses which encumber the religious institutions of this country, the attention of the reformers has been chiefly directed to celibacy, auricular confession, absolution, form of prayer, preaching and use of images, as it is to the improper application of these powerful agents they principally attribute the existing evils in morals and religion.

It is not my intention to enter into a recapitulation of all those controversies, to which the above points gave rise, during the early ages of the church, nor of the numerous sects that sprung up, according as the fathers differed on points which ought never to have occasioned schism, since they had been already settled by the founder of christianity. Though a reference to the early writers on this subject, is highly necessary to the formation of clear notions, as to the original intentions of Christ and his Apostles, it is most essential for you to know in what way, the abuse of old, or introduction of new dogmas, has influenced the morals and happiness of the community.

If it could be proved that the relaxation in manners, and want of principle, which strike at the root of social happiness, rendering all the blessings of liberty sterile in Spain, Italy, and other countries of Europe, are in a great measure due to the facilities of obtaining absolution, and a supposition that there is a possibility of compromising with our conscience, by means of pecuniary offerings, and the formula of confession, surely there is no man with any pretensions to virtue or true religion, who will deny, that some modification is not required in these fundamental points of the Catholic faith? If it can also be satisfactorily demonstrated, that celibacy has, from its commencement, been productive of the greatest crimes on the part of those, by whom it was professed; that it has had a most fatal effect on the morals of women; and is, finally, no less opposed to the doctrine of Christ, than contrary to the most sacred right of nature: is it not flying in the face of the Divinity, any longer to encourage a practice, fraught with so many paramount evils, and the continuance of which, opposes an insuperable barrier to the progress of female virtue? The Catholic priesthood of Armenia and Greece, have never given up the sacred privilege of marriage: it is merely required that the tie should be contracted previous to ordination. Why should not their example be followed in the rest of Europe?

It would be an endless task to repeat all the anecdotes and stories circulated in the Peninsula, relative to the excesses, into which the vow of celibacy has, at all times, been leading its victims of both sexes. The fact of their existence is so palpable, as no longer to excite the smallest wonder in any class of the Spanish community. Can those acquainted with the manners and customs of Spain, France, or Italy deny, that very little pains are taken to observe a vow, made in direct opposition to true religion and nature. *La Sobrina del Cura* here, and *La Nièce* in France, have long been regarded as an indispensable and natural appendage to the domestic establishment of most parish priests. This fact has often been made the subject of ballads and epigrams on the continent: some of the most facetious jokes and popular songs of what are called "*the low Irish*," in England, have been composed on similar topics.

Upon the whole, I think it may be fairly presumed that, until this violent and unnatural restraint be removed, there is no probability of improvement, much less reform in the manners of Spain. It is, in fact, a gangrene in the social body, which can never be restored to health, while it is suffered to remain. If the class, to which I allude, were to be converted into husbands and fathers, is it likely they would countenance many practices, which are now said to be

even encouraged by them, but which are not less subversive of moral obligations than of religious duties.*

If it be a fact which strikes the most superficial observer who visits the continent, that the form of prayer, use of images, pictures, rosaries, banners, processions, and other rites needless to name, have hitherto tended to lead the vulgar mind astray, destroying those notions of the unity of God, which are so indispensable to the purity of religious faith, until they have at length produced an alarming indifference in the great majority of that very vulgar, where is the man, be he priest or layman, prince or bishop, who will lay his hand on his heart, and say this evil ought not to be remedied?†

* Those who contend for the necessity of abrogating the restraints on the marriage of the Catholic Priesthood, assert that these restraints have been the source of every crime that can debase our nature. The execution of a Monk, in 1818, for having first violated his penitent and then murdered her, to conceal his crime, is amongst the numerous facts adduced to prove the above assertion.

† Many of the Abbe de Pradt's publications contain allusions, and assertions, by which it is easy to perceive he is amongst those who lament existing abuses, and would, doubtless, be glad to see them corrected. His able work, entitled *Les Quatre Concordats*, is worthy of particular notice, as exposing numerous contradictions and absurdities. See the first Vol: page 173, *et passim*, relative to the numberless exceptions and unnatural privileges of the Pope and Clergy. When a Catholic Bishop

Instead of adding to the odium invariably attached to the invidious task of signaling errors, whether in politics or religion, by multiplying the instances which have fallen within even my own knowledge, in illustration of the foregoing assertions, I shall merely add that, the more inquiry is extended, the more will their existence be corroborated. It may, however, be proper to observe, that I would not have hazarded the notice of such important and melancholy truths, were it not from a conviction that, so far from transgressing the duties prescribed by the religion of Christ, I am acting in obedience to its dictates and performing an office, which, however thankless in itself, will be, at least secretly, approved by the greatest ornaments of the Catholic Church.

My friend, Mr. Bowring, could not be a silent spectator of the superstitious rites and puerile practices which continue to disgrace religious worship in this country ;* his "Sketch of Religion

can say "*le culte est surcharge de pratiques, comme les Temples le sont d' Images,*" it may be readily conceived that he would willingly say much more, if not restrained by his fears. Had this acute and ingenious writer devoted his prolific pen to the reform of the church, as sedulously as he has attended to politics, he would have done infinitely more good : but this opinion is advanced, without any wish to under-rate the ex-Bishop's political labours.

* Objectionable as are many of the rites practised in Spain, it would be extremely difficult to find one so little consonant to the meekness and simplicity of the christian faith, as that which is

and Literature in Spain," made during a visit to the Peninsula last year, is drawn in his usual style of vivid portraiture: after paying a just tribute to that portion of the clergy, which does not partake the too general character of the priesthood, he thus alludes to the monkish orders: "They live in a state of sensual enjoyment, between the organ-loft and the refectory, to which all other enjoyment is but purgatory: the link which should connect them with the commonweal, for ever broken, the ties of family and friends dissolved, their authority founded on the barbarism and degradation of the people, they are interested in stemming the torrent of improvement in knowledge and liberty, which must, in the end, sweep away these 'cumberers of the soil.'"—Of the practice of christianity, he says, "here we have a religion, if such it may be called, that is purely ceremonial, its duties are not discharged in the

daily seen in France. I allude to the introduction of soldiery with their arms and band of music into the churches, during the celebration of high mass. Whether this be done to gratify a love of show, or keep the military spirit of the nation from being extinguished, it is difficult to say; but I feel satisfied that the military occupation of a place of worship, if not disrespectful to religion, has the effect of attracting the attention of the congregation in a particular degree; while the march, or quickstep, to the sound of which the troops retire, is very much calculated to remind one of the Abbé de Pradt's favourite saying;—"From the sublime to the ridiculous, there is but one step!"

daily walk of life ; not by the cultivation of pure, and pious, and benevolent affections, but by attending masses, by reciting Paternosters and Avemarias, by pecuniary offerings for souls in purgatory, and by a thousand childish observances, which affect remotely, if they affect at all, the conduct and the character. The Spaniard attends his parish church, to hear a service in an unknown tongue : he bends his knees and beats his bosom at certain sounds familiar to his ear, but not to his sense : he confesses and communicates with undeviating regularity ; and, sometimes, perhaps, he listens to a sermon in the eloquent style and beautiful language of his country ; not, indeed, instructing him in the moral claims of his religion, but celebrating the virtues and recounting the miracles of some saint or martyr, to whom the day is dedicated. He reads his religious duties, not in a Bible, but in an Almanac ; and his Almanac is but a sort of Christian mythology : his Saints are more numerous than the Deities of the Pantheon ; and, to say the truth, there are many of them little better : in a word, intolerance in its widest and worst extent, is the foundation on which the Spanish Ecclesiastical edifice rests." It is to be regretted that one who paints so well, and so much to the life, does not enlarge the sketch from which these extracts are taken.

The innumerable evils of every kind under which this country suffered, a few years after the

accession of Charles IV, were never more eloquently described, than in a small tract, entitled *Pan y Toros*, attributed to Jovellanos, and from which my friend has given some spirited extracts, very faithfully rendered, in the sketch above cited. I cannot help selecting another in which the effects of superstition and tyranny have been traced with a masterly hand, by the author, whoever he was.* Alluding to religious worship, he says,—“The church has continually laboured to remove from the faithful, all idea of attributing any particular virtue to images; while its members have not ceased to encourage and establish them. A figure of Christ or the Virgin is seen in a corner, dirty, neglected and unworshipped; while others pride themselves on expensive spectacles, and do not appear, except with sumptuousness and ceremony. The virgin of Antocha, Almudena, and Soledad, compete with each other for supremacy in miracles, and each has her

* This powerful and elegant satire is, by some, attributed to Don Pedro Centeno, an Augustin monk and celebrated writer in the reign of Charles IV.: he was called the Juvenal of Spanish Literature, and fell a victim to the persecutions of the Holy Office. Llorente describes the volume composed by Centeno, in answer to the charges of the Inquisitors, as a model of erudition, eloquence and learning. It is somewhat doubtful, which of these two writers was the author of *Pan y Toros*: I have heard that it is ascribed to Jovellanos, on the same principle that the letters of Junius were to Edmund Burke; that of there being no other contemporary writer equal to such a composition.

portions of devotees, who, if not idolaters, are not a whit from being so." Again, "though decrepid and superstitious, we pretend to unchain the soul and understanding; but, ignorance has always engendered superstition, as pride has incredulity. Although the fountain and cement of our belief, the study of the scriptures, has been in a miserable state of abandonment, for many ages; ecclesiastical antiquities have sunk under the weight of the decretals, and other abuses fraudulently introduced. The decisions of law, and individual opinions, have run an equal race with dogmatical and incontrovertible truths. As to the church, it has considered the tribunal of reason as incompetent; treating all those who have not adopted the maxims of Rome, as heretical. The too great liberty of writing in foreign countries, has caused us to be slaves in reading. The culpable contempt with which Protestants have treated the discipline of the church, has determined us to venerate the most ruinous abuses of the barbarous ages. Spain has witnessed thousands of Bishops, who, though loaded with decretals, and forensic formula, never fulfilled the object of their mission; which was no other than to preach the Gospel to all the world, directing mankind in the path of peace, and not by that of contention."

In calling your attention to a subject on which I touched above ten years ago, and which has experienced no change in the country then described; nor would it have changed here, but for the insurrection of La Isla; I do not pretend to

the merit of originality, or making known any new facts. The most able writers of the last and present century, laymen and divines, from Wickliffe, Luther, Calvin and Knox, to Gregoire, Lanjuinais, Bernabeu and Llorente, have elucidated and inveighed against the abuses of religion so forcibly, that little more is left for others, than to reiterate their objections. The want of success which has hitherto attended the efforts of those writers, is no argument for not returning to the subject; for, as observed by the venerable Bishop of Blois, "the progress of truth may be compared to the encroachments of the sea; every wave, though its influence be unseen, does something to advance the general tide."

Even a circumscribed exposure of the mischiefs arising from the points I have mentioned, would require a separate work; and there is little doubt but such a publication will, one day or another, be added to the stock of European literature: meantime, the best way of removing error, is to stimulate inquiry.

With respect to the great body of the Spanish Clergy, I am happy in this opportunity of declaring that it contains as much learning, virtue and knowledge, as any other in Europe; but, in alluding to general facts, a regard for the interests of truth, obliges me to repeat, that the practices adopted in former days, relative to images, celibacy, temporal power and the appropriation of property, intended for totally different purposes,

can only be regarded as an unwarrantable deviation from the rules of the primitive church. As the continuance of error does not consecrate or justify it, there cannot, surely, be any impropriety in urging that whatever remains of the evils thus introduced by vice or ignorance, ought to be removed, if the ministers of the gospel wish to secure esteem for themselves, or fidelity to the religion of their divine master.

I can truly add that, the relaxation, approaching to perfect indifference, which prevails in the middling and higher classes of society in Spain, with respect to the obligations of religion, and a fulfilment of the ordinary duties of worship, is spreading with such rapidity, and gaining over the lowest orders, as to threaten the most serious consequences. It is in vain that volumes are written, to prove scepticism and infidelity have their origin in the works of philosophers, and modern demagogues, if such there be : none but the blind or interested any longer deny that both are to be found in the conduct of the clergy themselves ; in their uniform opposition to reform of every kind : in their efforts to perpetuate error, long after it is recognized as such, by the most illiterate of their flocks ; in their readiness to co-operate with the tyrants and oppressors of mankind ; and, above all, in an universal persuasion that they neither practice nor believe in the doctrines they preach, so implicitly, as men ought, who are desirous of convincing others.

The chief ground of hope with those who feel anxious about the future fate of Spain, is founded on the important circumstance of there being a very considerable portion of its clergy who acknowledge the necessity of reform ; men who are actuated no less by a just sense of virtue, than by the apprehensions that, as in political matters, if delayed too long, it will have the inevitable effect of bringing those dogmas into total contempt, which may, by a timely restoration to their original purity, become the source of present as well as future felicity.

I have conversed with some of these men, models of probity, meekness and disinterestedness ; at once the most irreproachable and enlightened this country has produced. There is not one of them who does not deeply lament the existing state of the church, and who does not sigh for its regeneration. With these men, as with the laics of Spain, who have considered the subject, the use of images, form of prayer, calender of saints, confession, celibacy and absolution, require to be regulated on a different system ; and, that much longer to neglect these corner-stones of the christian edifice, will be productive of the most serious consequences to its general security.

While the clerical reformers of Spain admit that if Christ were to come on earth, he could not recognize the structure which his blood had cemented, in the present mis-shapen building, under

mined by innumerable errors, and divided against itself; they agree that it would be a triumph worthy of the Redeemer himself, and almost above humanity, were the heads of his church to unite, for the benign purpose of restoring christianity to some portion of its pristine purity: such a measure, in atoning for the millions of our fellow creatures who have been sacrificed through the false zeal of its votaries, would be a signal blessing to the species, leaving but little for the political reformer to effect; for, if mankind were but once impressed with the zeal of true religion, it is impossible that the accumulated vices, which now stand in the way of human improvement, could long continue. It is, therefore, sincerely to be hoped, that neither obloquy, slander, nor persecution will deter the Spanish Pastors, to whom I allude, from leading the way in religious, as their lay brethren have in political reform.

Such men as Gregoire and Llorente, Lanjuinais, and Marina, not to mention many others, equally zealous in the sainted cause of truth, have already done much towards this grand desideratum; let them but persevere, and be consoled in reflecting that they are walking in the steps of the Saviour himself; with this material difference, that the Redeemer and his followers were called upon to convert ignorance and fanaticism, while the religious reformer of the present day addresses men, whose minds are prepared for the reception of the

sublimest truth, and whose conduct proves they are unequivocally favourable to reform.*

* Having mentioned the Bishop of Blois, it would be unjust to pass over so distinguished a name, without adding my humble tribute of admiration, to that which has reached the universal philanthropist and primitive christian, from every quarter of the civilized world; for, where have not his pious and benevolent labours extended? Commencing his career in the genuine spirit of the gospel, one of the Bishop's first productions was, a book in favour of the Jews, in which, to use the expression of a contemporary biographer, he traces the causes of the degenerate character of the sons of Israel to their true source, the unceasing persecution of bigots, misnamed christians; and anticipates, with a benevolence which is the spring of all his feelings, the happiest change in their manners; from the general acknowledgment of their natural rights, in the christian world.* The bright prospect which was opened to France, in the early part of her Revolution, induced him to address a letter to the Bishop of Burgos, Grand-Inquisitor of Spain, pointing out how completely the practice and existence of the Holy Office was opposed to the doctrines of Christ, and supporting his assertions by numerous authorities from the New Testament, Saints and Fathers of the Church. This is amongst the most eloquent and persuasive appeals of the Bishop: many of the passages are prophetic; the following few lines show the opinion of this eloquent divine, on the prevalent failing of his contemporaries of the church: "Great degeneracy must have taken place in the ideas of men, before reaching that expressed by the words Prince Bishop (*Prince Eveque*): will Germany be less Catholic, when her prelates confine themselves to seeking the kingdom of Jesus, which is not of this world?"

* Extracted from a biographical sketch of the Bishop, which has appeared in the Monthly Repository.

Those who complain of a relaxation of morals in Spain, from the facility of breaking through

will the centre of unity be less known, the Roman Church less flourishing; will its chief be less revered, when the wish expressed three centuries ago, by *Laurenzio del Valle*, and which was reiterated lately, by an illustrious Italian Bishop,† is accomplished? How is it possible to root up abuses, whilst the successor of *St. Peter* in poverty is the successor of the temporal grandeur of the *Cæsars*?" How exactly the Bishop looked into futurity, may be seen by another passage in the same pamphlet: "The human mind has emancipated itself, and cannot retrograde: all those actions in government disavowed by religion and sound policy will be, henceforward, despised. The changes now in progress re-echo through both worlds; they have merely commenced in Europe: their march must be accelerated in proportion to the opposition of those, who, backward in their age, court destruction by the extravagance of folly and their measures. Political society, rising from its ruins, will be re-composed on a new foundation. The *Ebro* and the *Tagus* will also have their banks cultivated by the hands of freedom."

The Bishop has lately published a volume, to prove that the Gallician church, if properly administered, is the ally, and not the enemy, of civil liberty. His labours in favour of our African fellow-men, and those efforts which he has made, to check the monstrous abuses of church discipline in France, are not less praiseworthy than his former exertions to stop the progress of irreligion there. For my own part, I want no greater proof of the necessity of religious reform, than in the treatment uniformly experienced by this truly virtuous man, during the

† Alluding to the celebrated homily of *Pius VII.* then Bishop of *Imola*, in which the christian pastor freely canvasses the vices of the church, and proves that the religion of *Jesus* is not only favourable to, but even enjoins liberty and equality.

the ties which preserve the peace of domestic life in our own country; to the frequency of assassinations for comparatively trifling provocations, should recollect that these and all other aberrations from rectitude, have hitherto found a species of indirect justification, in the practice of giving absolution; as if it were possible for a just and omnipotent God, to

last eight years, in which he has been an object of continued persecution and calumny; a treatment not less disgraceful to the age, than it is to the parties concerned. Be it said, to their shame, certain laymen, whose political professions must dictate a very different line of conduct, have acted most uncharitably towards the Bishop; and it is scarcely needless to add that his most active and bitter persecutors belong to that sacred calling, of which he is, himself, so great an ornament.

It will form a bright page in the biography of Napoleon, when the historian relates that, but for the stipend allowed to the Bishop of Blois, as one of those Senators who constantly opposed the Emperor's plans of conquest, this Prelate might now be in want of bread! Will it be credited that the advisers of Louis XVIII. induced their master to withdraw the senatorial pension on his restoration? Nor was it till after a lapse of two years, and the strongest expression of public opinion, that this allowance, guaranteed by Louis himself, in a Proclamation issued at Ghent, could be recovered. Is it thus that the primitive christians, the benefactors of human kind, ought to be treated in the nineteenth century? I have never seen the humility, meekness and charity, which are said to have formed the distinguishing characteristics of the Redeemer's immediate followers so, clearly traced, as in the placid features and resigned air of this exemplary Prelate. Those who want to know what christianity is, ought to hear the venerable Gregoire speak of his most implacable enemies.

delegate a power, which is above all others so calculated to give impunity to vice. On the other hand, what guarantee can there be for female virtue, where the spiritual guide makes a solemn vow to heaven, which he must know it is impossible to fulfil?—a vow which is so frequently made to be broken, not in quarters that are likely to be least affected by its violation, but in those exercising an extensive influence on others; persons, who being themselves taught to regard a deviation from virtue as harmless, do not dream of pointing out its enormity to their sons and daughters.*

* Although there is every reason to believe that celibacy is one of the last points of church discipline which the sovereign Pontiffs will cede, there is perhaps none upon which the Catholic clergy are so generally agreed. Were it otherwise, the extensive class condemned to this painful alternative, would incur the charge of still greater hypocrisy; for the time has gone by when the most scrupulous amongst them can offer even a plausible excuse for its continuance. As already stated, this subject has been most ably and unanswerably treated in M. Llorente's plan of a religious constitution. This writer has at once decided the question, by proving from various authorities, sacred and profane, that celibacy forms no part of christianity and ought therefore to be abrogated as a continued source of crime, and an act of violence done to nature.

Those who read the tenth chapter of M. Llorente's volume, in which it is so clearly demonstrated that the marriage of the clergy formed an integral part of the primitive church, and was sanctified by the three hundred and eighteen bishops who assembled at Nicea in 325, will hardly pretend that there is any subsequent circumstance which ought to rescind the rules then laid down,

The trading spirit, which forms so prominent a feature in the national character, exercising such an immense influence on public morals in other countries, has made comparatively little progress here. It is true no people of Europe have more to reproach themselves with, than the descendants of those who executed the sanguine designs of Ferdinand Cortés and the Holy Office, as much to procure gold as obtain proselytes. If, however, they became bigots and slaves in after times, it did not arise from that thirst of gain, which, in destroying every sentiment of honour and humanity, leads the traders of other nations to commit

and acted upon till the Pontificate of Gregory VII. in the eleventh century. Nothing but the barbarism and ignorance of the age, could have preserved the Catholic religion amidst the innumerable disorders which succeeded the reign of this pontiff. By a reference to the history of the church, from the period at which celibacy was enforced up to the reformation, one would be almost induced to imagine, that all crimes of which human nature is capable were reserved for the ministers of religion!

I would gladly analyse the portion of M. Llorente's book above alluded to, but look forward to its being circulated amongst the Catholic clergy of the United Kingdom as it has been in the Peninsula. The following Popes are mentioned by the author as having had children, viz:—Pius II., Paul II., Sextus IV., Innocent VIII., Alexander VI., Julius II., Leo X., and Paul III.; all of these, says Llorente, were fathers, and all are known for their disorderly and irregular lives; some even for a vice which dare not be named! What will the elegant historian of the Medici family say, when he hears his hero has been so roughly handled by the author of the Critical History?

enormities, scarcely less revolting than the first invaders of South America, while they tamely submit to see their dearest liberties frittered away or abrogated by monsters of their own creation.

If ever so well informed on the subject, I should leave the task of stating the extent of the evil, thus shortly sketched, to other hands: its existence, and the necessity of removing it, is all I contend for; as to those social virtues which do not come so directly in contact with the two grand levers of church discipline, I am borne out in saying they are no where more conspicuous than in the Peninsula. That frankness in commercial dealings, the generosity and kindness to strangers, which mark the national character of Spain, are totally exempt from the motives of vanity and self-interest attributed to the exercise of similar virtues in other countries.

What with the foregoing causes and the fatal example of the court, during the reign of Charles IV., there is no moralist, however rigid, who would not overlook a still greater relaxation of manners, than has unhappily taken place here. Much might also be said on those forms of society and domestic restraints, which so frequently induce parents to consult their personal interests rather than the happiness of their progeny, in the choice of those with whom they are destined to go through life. Often as this important subject has been treated, it is still susceptible of considerable development. If parents in this country could be persuaded that

marriages of interest are for the most part fertile sources of misery and vice, it can hardly be supposed they would sacrifice their offspring to such false calculations as now obtain the ascendancy in family alliances.

If the women of Spain yield to the strongest of all passions, have they not been taught to believe, that neither religious nor moral obligation is thereby infringed? Is not the example of those who are charged with their morals often ready to justify a departure from the path of duty? It would be a libel of the grossest description, for any person acquainted with the noble nature, the kind and generous sympathy, affectionate tenderness, and disinterested attachments of a Spanish female, to say they are not capable of carrying all the virtues of their sex to the highest pitch of excellence. I do not scruple to add, that should a reform in manners follow political regeneration, the women of Spain will be the first to adopt it, as they have ever been foremost in stimulating their natural protectors to shake off the yoke of political servitude.

When improved by education, and emancipated from the baneful effects of superstition, there is no part of Europe in which women are likely to exert a more powerful and salutary influence than Spain. Those who have studied the annals of this country, do not require to be informed of the pre-eminence of women in the days of chivalric gallantry. It has been justly observed that the

females of the present day are distinguished by the same qualities which in other times used to throw such a romantic charm over all their actions. Their heroism, during the war of independence, and since the late happy change, will long be a theme of well deserved panegyric throughout Europe. It is in this respect that the women of every other country, not excepting our own, lose amazingly by a comparison with those of the Peninsula.*

It would be no less unjust to say of the men, that those virtues which enabled their forefathers to resist all the efforts of the early invaders, and the proverbial bravery which distinguished the soldiers of the *Cid*; *Guzman el Bueno*, and *El gran Capitan*, were extinct; for, though cramped through the effects of civil and religious slavery, they have been revived in the present day with

* A cheering prospect has been opened to the women of Spain by the restoration of liberty. They may well rejoice in a change which will, it is hoped, ere long, restore them to the importance and dignity of their nature; for ever removing a system, which in sacrificing them to pass their days within the walls of a cloister, not only rendered them miserable, but deprived society of its most valuable members. It has been truly said, that if a different impulse were to be given to that enthusiasm and zeal, which enables a female to abandon all the ties which bind her to life, there would be no possibility of limiting the heroism and virtue of those who can thus sacrifice every joy, and stifle the dictates of nature, to perform an act which they have been led to suppose agreeable to the Divinity.

redoubled lustre : so true it is that nations do not degenerate without an irresistible cause. Even the legions of the Duke of Alba and of Ferdinand Cortes were models of intrepidity. What a pity that they should have been employed only as instruments of cruelty and oppression ! If, instead of plundering and massacring the peaceful inhabitants of the low countries and America, a different direction had been given to those brave men, what might not their leaders have achieved in the path of real glory !

It is not without reason that the Spaniard is accused of indolence ; but, as in other defects of the national character, which are the invariable result of an impelling cause, it would be the height of injustice to judge too harshly of the habit which makes him lose several hours in the day in smoking segars, or lolling and lounging in his *capa*, as the effect of natural sloth. Until the late change the people of Spain had no incentives to action ; on the contrary every exertion was useless, where there was neither security for person or property. The former history of Spain, no less than those occurrences which marked the late war with France, and the recent revolution, prove how capable they are of undergoing the greatest fatigue, and braving every danger, when a sufficient impulse is given.

There is no country in the world that can furnish a legislator with more abundant materials for forming a great and virtuous nation, than Spain.

Those who are called upon to reconstruct the social edifice here, will find inexhaustible sources of improvement in the physical strength, sobriety, and abstemiousness; patience under fatigue, and privations of every kind, docility and warm-heartedness of the people; qualities which all the trammels of their gothic institutions and religious prejudices could not destroy. When the great mass of the Spanish population are no longer taught to revere gross errors as divine truths, the work of regeneration will commence and proceed with rapidity.

Much might be said on the difficulty of effecting a reform in manners, while those who exercise such a direct influence on domestic life, acting as oracles to husbands and wives, children and servants, are so apt to abuse the confidence reposed in them. People are in general so ready to give way to their passions, that it requires a strong sense of virtue, continually stimulated by spiritual

* It is quite surprising that the Spanish peasantry and soldiery should be in general so strong and hardy, considering the scantiness and nature of their food; consisting chiefly of a coarse bread, onions, chesnuts and garbanzos: their wine, poor in itself, is not much improved by being carried some hundreds of miles in skins. The Spanish soldier and peasant, sitting down with a resigned air and contented visage to his morsel of black bread, an onion or some boiled chesnuts, has often reminded me of the inmates of most Irish cabins, sitting round their *skee hogue*, and repeating an Ave Maria, before attempting to touch their meal of *Redbucks* or *White apples*.

advice, to restrain their effects in the southern countries of Europe. It is well known that the Edict of Denunciation has extended to every circumstance, however trivial, that passed in families; the effect of such a law, which obliges servants, and even sons or daughters, to declare how their parents are occupied, as well as their own proceedings, need hardly be explained.*

There would be no difficulty, whatever, in persuading those of the Spanish community, who may not have duly considered the subject, that

* Notwithstanding the powerful inducements constantly held out to servants, to betray the secrets of their masters, domesticity, (to use a French term) is on a better footing here than in most other countries of Europe. Spanish servants, of both sexes, are generally remarkable for their honesty and fidelity; but this praise is more especially bestowed on the *Gallegos*, or Gallicians, who have long been proverbial for the above qualities. La Borde says, that not less than 80,000 individuals emigrated annually from Galicia to Portugal, where they performed all the offices of servants and porters. The number has decreased considerably of late years.

The familiarity and equality which has always prevailed between servants and their masters in Spain, while the despotism was at its acme, is matter of just surprize to strangers, and deserves a more minute examination than I can undertake to give. It has frequently occurred to me, that this equality, also common to France and Italy, is an additional argument in favour of liberty; at all events, it proves that the system of tyranny and oppression, which had so long weighed down the people of Spain, produced infinitely less effect on the heads of families than might have been expected.

national greatness and the preservation of liberty are connected intimately with, and mainly dependent on, maintaining the honour of their families intact. It would be equally so to prove, that marriage, instead of being the signal of a dissolute life, and relaxation of virtue, was instituted to prevent profligacy and to promote purity. The benefits which would result from a nicer sense of honour on these points, and an observance of the sacred obligations contracted at the altar, are so obvious as not to require a moment's comment.

A detailed account of the state of society in the Peninsula, would be a highly interesting source of reflection and amusement; for, there is a degree of originality in the manners and customs of the people, altogether peculiar to themselves: as I merely intend to treat these matters in their relations to political institutions, you must be satisfied with such observations as are likely to convey a few detached notions on the subject, rather than form a finished picture.

I have, in a former letter, alluded to the limited state of information in the higher classes: to trace those causes which have debased the Aristocracy of Spain, and placed many of its members on a level with the peasant and soldier, would, no doubt, be worthy of the most accurate painter of manners, and exceedingly useful to a legislator. If riches, titles and honours, insure no better inheritance to their future possessors, than degeneracy, ignorance and poverty, who would covet

either one or the other? It has frequently occurred to me, while inhaling the dust and heat of the Prado, during the broiling autumnal evenings, which have scarcely yet gone by, and marking the long train of carriages which line its avenues, that if the ancestors of those who rode in most of these vehicles, could have foreseen the degraded and effeminate state of their descendants, they would have rejected all the blandishments of fortune, rather than accept them on such humiliating conditions. If there be any truth in the doctrine of compensation, it will certainly be found in the cares and miseries entailed by excessive wealth; while happiness and tranquility await those who are contented with mediocrity.

The ancestors of another class of the great, would have still more to reproach themselves with, if they could have foreseen that fortunes amassed by gallantry in the field, or industry in commerce, would be squandered away on opera dancers, in brothels, and at the gaming-table; night turned into day; and instead of that temperance which formed the ground-work of their own happiness, an indulgence in every excess. A third class might well be shocked, when they contrasted their own humble efforts to aid the people and comunidades of the sixteenth century, in opposing the encroachments of despotism, now dancing attendance at court, coveting its tinsel honours and only ambitious of filling their pockets with the public money. The fact of its being

considered that there are no elements for a chamber of Peers, renders it unnecessary for me to say in what light the nobility are regarded.

Priests and lawyers, who compose the second class of society in Spain, are, by far, the best informed, whatever use they may make of their learning. It is unnecessary to say that both exercise an amazing influence on the condition and morals of the people; the former by the example they show, and the precepts they instil; the latter by their power of promoting litigation, and perpetuating the endless abuses of law. Unhappily it has long been a too general maxim with the members of these professions, to consider their interests as totally distinct from those of the people.

If, on the one hand, a regard for the interest of truth obliges me to make these general remarks, it would be injustice, on the other, to deny that there are numbers to be found, not only amongst the grandees, but priests and lawyers, who reflect the highest honour on Spain, as well as on the bodies of which they form a part.

As in other countries, the merchants and tradesmen of Spain are the chief depositaries of virtue, and consequently possess the greatest share of happiness: alike removed from indigence and superfluity, this class seems to be exempted from the vices of those which are above and below its level. Thus it is, that while those who appear to bask in all the sunshine of worldly

fortune, are reproached for their pride, indolence, meanness and debauchery ; the labourer and the soldier are said to be treacherous, vindictive, jealous and fanatical. If these reproaches be well founded, they are important, as proving that the extremes of wealth and poverty produce nearly the same effects : that they are unnatural, it would not, I should imagine, require much argument to prove.

The Abbé de Pradt has frequently spoken of the great affinity there exists between the people of Spain, and their opposite neighbours of Africa ; as if it were a new discovery of his own. There is certainly nothing surprising in this similarity, occasioned by a possession of several hundred years, during which the Moors occupied nearly the whole surface of the Peninsula. As the Abbé's remarks have been received as bad compliments, if not as proofs of ill-nature, by many persons here, it would be worth while inquiring what Spain has lost, by not being more assimilated to Europe ? I am inclined to believe the separation has been an advantage to her, and that it will operate as such, in a very eminent degree, while her liberties are consolidating.

What, but the serious and reflective turn imbibed from their Saracenic ancestors, has prevented the people of Spain from encouraging many vices which seem to be indigenous in other countries : neither gambling, *espionnage*, nor prostitution have ever made such an easy progress

here as in the rest of Europe ; and, if even authorized by the government, I am convinced the most abandoned classes of the Spanish community, would reject such degrading privileges with scorn. Even what are vulgarly called the dregs of the people, seem to have a sense of delicacy in their manner, unknown to many parts of the Continent : those notions of decorum which prevent the Spaniard of both sexes from tolerating many practices, quite common in other countries, is another trait that deserves notice, as it bespeaks an early civilization, long anterior to that of their neighbours, and which all the effects of corruption have not been able to eradicate.

It was a favourite saying of Louis XIV. that there was no longer any Pyrenees, (*Il n'y a plus des Pyrénées ;*) this has been frequently repeated since his time, and very lately by the ex-Bishop of Malines. However flattering to both nations, there is too wide a distinction placed by nature between France and Spain, ever to make the above phrase any thing more than a popular figure of speech, so long as a spirit of national independence remains in the Peninsula, and with it a proper sense of national glory ; while the people aim at preserving the native originality of their manners, and are proud of a glorious ancestry, so long will the barrier of the Pyrenees remain. Far be it from me to wish, that these should prevent a friendship and intercourse, which are reciprocally advantageous : there is much to be gained, and

a great deal of useful knowledge to be acquired from each other: nature has shed her blessings on both countries, with an unsparing hand, nor would it be an uninteresting task to draw a comparison between the moral and physical attributes of two nations, which, though touching each other, are yet so distinct in character, manners and habits.

I ought to have observed, in alluding to the state of knowledge, that considering the obstacles opposed to its progress, by the innumerable defects of education and other causes, it is astonishing to find so much information spread through the inferior classes of the people in Spain. It is rather from long habits of submission to his spiritual guide, that the Spanish peasant has worn his fetters, than from ignorance. I have conversed with many, who, though scarcely ever out of the village which gave them birth, were thoroughly acquainted with the chief sources of the national degradation. With a large share of natural sagacity, it requires very little time to improve this disposition towards acquiring correct notions of their political condition: hence it is, that the soldiers and sailors of the Peninsula are nearly as well informed as those of England and France. There is, however, another very extensive class here which is still more enlightened than either of the former: I allude to the *Arrieros* or Muleteers; of whom there are an immense number in Spain; owing to the want of

roads, and mountainous nature of the country. This is a singular intelligent body of men. To these may be added the *Contrabandistas*, or Smugglers, also a numerous association; who, when reclaimed, and brought into habits of regular industry, will be a great acquisition to the moral and physical strength of the nation.

In the common intercourse of life, Spaniards of both sexes are polite and friendly in the extreme: this feeling towards each other, is carried farther than in most countries, and seems to be divested of all affectation. The *Agur* and *Va ya usted con Dios*, salutations used in passing the most perfect strangers, is, doubtless, coeval with christianity,* a most amiable practice, and one which ought not therefore to give place to the frigid and selfish forms of foreign courtesy, which are as common to Spain as to other countries.

The general treatment and reception of strangers in Spain, though tinctured with that suspicion, with which the people have been taught to regard each other, bears a most striking contrast with the systematic plan of extortion or incivility practised among the lower and trading

* The *Goma ne dea'ghud*, or God save you, my dear, is also retained amongst the Irish Peasantry. The coincidence of dress, physiognomy, and particular customs between the lower classes of both countries, can arise only from circumstances connected with a common origin. How singular that there should have been so little difference in their political destinies!

classes in most other parts of the Continent. A system which some governments seem to encourage and support, by their neither applying a remedy, nor affording adequate satisfaction, in many cases of flagrant delinquency.

Those who travel through Spain, may certainly be plundered of their property by the highway robber; and, as in some instances, assassinated also; but any one acquainted with this country, will agree with me in bearing testimony to the little disposition there is to impose, on travellers, or aggravate that imposition by insult and ferocity; the inseparable effect of impunity. The foregoing fact is highly honourable to the Spanish character, and the more remarkable in a country reduced to the last stage of indigence and poverty; excuses, which, bad as they are, cannot be pleaded in any other country of Europe, to an equal extent.*

* So great is the dearth of accommodation on many of the Spanish roads, that it is as yet advisable for travellers to carry all their resources with them, even to a bed: when, on reaching an *Osteria*, or sleeping place, at night; you may ask for the bill of fare, the answer is, generally, a shrug of the shoulder, with, *no hay nada*, there is nothing: if your inquiries be pushed somewhat further, and it is asked, "what have you got?" they coolly reply, "*lo que usted traiga*," whatever you have brought! The mode of supplying the wants of travellers in Spain, is rather too patriarchal for the taste of modern tourists: the arrival of the *Arrieros*, and their travelling companions is usually followed by a species of market, held before the door of the Inn. To mend matters, one is reduced to the necessity of becoming his own cook

It has been justly observed, that nations as well as individuals, have a weak point, which neither reflection nor experience can cure: Castilian pride has long been proverbial; and, though so many circumstances have combined to diminish it, since the immortal lessons of Cervantes were first read to his countrymen, there is still enough remaining to exercise the pen of an able satirist, and which is constantly giving rise to the most erroneous views of men and things in various instances. It is true, no people of Europe can look back with more complacency and self-satisfaction, on the history of former days, than those of Spain; teeming as it does with acts of heroism, nothing is more natural than for a Spaniard to forget the cruelties which marked the progress of those chiefs who were spurred on by the double impulse of conquest and religious fanaticism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, or while contemplating the heroes of Saguntum, Numantia and Zaragoza. A thousand other reminiscences

and butler. There is, however, a compensation in the witty sallies of the muleteers, who are full of gaiety and humour, passing off every inconvenience in the true spirit of practical philosophy. It not unfrequently happens that one of them places himself on a bench, with his guitar, and continues to touch it to some national song, till supper is announced. A thousand recollections are awakened by this agreeable surprise, of which the charm is greatly heightened, if the moon happens to illuminate the beautiful and unclouded azure of a Spanish sky, in autumn or summer.