

such a height, that the lieutenant of police was thrown into the river by the populace, in the month of March. Twenty-seven villages in the Lower Auvergne were soon after in arms on the same account; and these disturbances were not yet entirely quelled, when the sudden illness of the king took off the attention of the government from all other objects. His majesty was seized with shivering fits, sickness, and pains in his back, on the 27th of April, being then at Trianon; the next day he was removed, by his own desire, to Versailles, but it does not appear that the physicians of his court had the least suspicion of the small-pox at the commencement of his illness, for his disorder was treated contrary to all the established rules of modern practice in such cases. No wonder, therefore, that nature sunk under the operations of copious bleeding and blisters, which had been advised, on a supposition that the disease was a putrid fever. The eruption of the small-pox appeared on the 29th, in the evening, to the surprise of the whole court, and from this moment, little hopes were entertained of his recovery; every preparation, therefore, was made for the approaching awful change. The last rites of the Romish church were administered, in the presence of the princes of the blood and the great officers of state; and the heralds were summoned to approach the chamber of the dying monarch, two to announce his decease, which happened on the 10th, and two to proclaim the accession of his successor.

Thus died Louis the XV., in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and the fifty-ninth of his reign. He was the absolute master of every individual in his extensive dominions, but was himself the slave of two base and intriguing women, whom he permitted to gain an entire ascendancy over him, and to place and displace the great officers of state, the generals of his armies, and even the magistrates, at their pleasure. When we reflect upon the sovereign of a great nation, which under his immediate predecessor had made such a conspicuous figure in the annals of Europe, betraying such mental imbecility, as to grant his entire confidence to the dependants of his favourite mistresses, and thereby occasioning a succession of commotions and revolutions in the internal state of his kingdom, we lament that such blemishes should tarnish the reputation of a prince who was a patron of the polite arts, and the founder of several useful establishments.

The reign of Louis XIV. was the era of military glory in France; that of Louis XV. was as remarkable for successful negotiations. The treaties of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748, and of Versailles, in 1763, the alliance with the house of Austria, and the family compact, in all of which France, by sound policy, indemnified herself for the ravages of unsuccessful wars, will be durable monuments of the superior talents of her negotiating ministers, while they reflect but little lustre on those of the other powers of Europe. (1)

LETTER VIII.

View of the Spanish Monarchy—its Government—and Resources, A. D. 1763—1780.—Glance at Naples and Switzerland.

SPAIN is less extensive than France by only about fifteen hundred square miles, while its population is only one-third as great; and yet the climate of Spain is serene, and the air almost universally salubrious. There are but few districts that are not at least fit for pasturage; the number of rivers is considerable; some canals have been executed and others are practicable: but the policy pursued by the Ferdinands and the Philips has destroyed the life of the Spanish nation.

As the productions of Spanish authors are subjected to six censures; as nothing is allowed to pass through the press without having been examined by the synodal examiner, the chronist of Castile, an official, a royal secre-

(1) See Voltaire's Age of Louis XV.—La Vie privée de Louis XV.—and Doddsley's Annual Register.—Journal Historique, &c.

tary, the corrector-general, and even the royal council; the truth respecting a number of circumstances will be as little known to posterity as it is to the kings themselves; but the effects of this miserable system of policy are evident to the eyes of all.

The court was obliged by its necessities to seek for new financial resources; and, during the administration of the marquis of Ensenada, procured a *concordat* at Rome, by which it was determined, that such estates as the clergy might in future acquire should not be exempted from taxation on that account; that in great public emergencies the church should bear its share of the burden; and that the nomination to the inferior benefices should belong to the king. The court thus obtained an extraordinary degree of influence over the clergy; because, as the number of such benefices is extremely great, and those who have once experienced the extension of favour in this manner, are usually disposed to look for farther promotion, this regulation produced a very *loyal* disposition in that class of ecclesiastics which is most immediately in contact with the mass of the people. The pope retained four hundred and fifty-two benefices in his own gift; and the court of Spain deposited one hundred and thirteen thousand scudi in the apostolic chamber, at the ratification of this *concordat*.

The tribunal of faith remained, although the dissension which took place between the courts of Spain and Rome under Charles III. gave occasion to a peremptory command, that it should publish no papal bull or letter which had not previously received the exequator, or royal assent; which was "the apple of the eye of authority." The king nominates the grand inquisitor and the six counsellors; besides whom, the confessor, two members of the council of Castile, a royal secretary, alguazil-major, and the inferior servants of the tribunal, constituting the remaining persons. Eighteen offices in the provinces, the Balearic and Canary islands, and America, all of which are subordinate to the supreme tribunal, are found sufficient to maintain the prudential maxim, that "it is better to believe than to inquire!" as the fundamental principle of education, and of written and oral intercourse.

Don Carlos III., in the beginning of his reign, caused the estates to take an oath of their belief in the immaculate conception: a negotiation was also undertaken, the object of which was to elevate the holy virgin, by means of a formal bull, to the dignity of tutelary saint of all Spain, A. D. 1761; but this attempt was foiled by the cathedral chapter of St. Jago de Compostella, who represented the ingratitude of deposing their great apostle, who had so frequently shown himself, mounted on his white horse, at the head of the armies of Spain!

The twenty-two provinces of Castile contained upwards of ninety thousand secular priests and monks, and twenty thousand nuns: according to Ustariz, one-thirtieth of the whole nation belonged to the ecclesiastical body. The clergy of the superior classes were generally sensible and benevolent persons; those of the inferior sort, too numerous not to be formidable when offended: the monks, as a body, were avaricious, and were the support of absolute power, as long as it could be rendered subservient to their interests.

Under Philip V. and Ferdinand VI., Alberoni, Patinho, Ensenada, Valparayso, and Wäll, successively enjoyed the highest authority as ministers. Don Carlos raised to that dignity the marquis di Squillace, a Sicilian, with whom he had become acquainted at Naples, where he had been employed as commissary at war. This nobleman was ruined by the influence of the clergy, whose wealth he is said to have regarded as the means of repairing the dilapidated finances. Other ministers, remarkable for their intelligence, but perhaps too incautious, were equally incapable of maintaining their posts.

This court was always inclined to slow measures; which at least afforded ground to hope, that if it should at length adopt good maxims, it would retain them with proportionate tenacity. But the government was deprived of the guidance of public opinion; for the national voice was stifled by the terrific institutions which we have before described, and the convocation of the cortes was discontinued. The supreme direction of affairs, under the king, was

confided to the council of state: the high council of Castile, consisting of five chambers, resembled the great council in France, or a general directory. Every province was commanded to maintain a correspondence with one of the counsellors of the superior chamber: each province had a district commander, and Upper Navarre a viceroy; each of the commanders was assisted by a council, under which the municipal authorities exercised their powers. The chanceries of Grenada and Valladolid were supreme tribunals of appeal in judicial affairs, and their presidents were appointed by the king. Other supreme tribunals, called *audiencias*, were established at Oviedo, Seville, and Cordova, and in nine of the cities of the American dominions; one hundred and fifty-three places had municipal constitutions, in which the magistrates appointed the *alcades*, or royal judges, as in Castile; or proposed them, as in Arragon. The municipalities ordinarily consisted of twenty-four *regidores*; but the constitution of the cities had so degenerated, that these offices had become family estates; some of which were considered hereditary, and descended by the rule of primogeniture; some were farmed, and several united in one person. These *regidores* commonly appointed twelve sworn representatives of the people, or a number proportionate to the parishes.

The distinction of ranks was carefully observed in all the relations of public and private life. The nobility were divided into *grandees*, knights, and *lieges*; and their most essential privileges consisted in exemption from certain imposts, and from the jurisdiction of particular tribunals. The privileged orders had their own judges in the municipal constitutions, possessed an advocate-general in the superior courts, and could not be summoned before the subordinate offices of the inquisition, except by the especial command of the supreme tribunal. They frequently protested against the regulations of the government; but since the accession of the house of Bourbon, their assumed or hereditary rights had been less respected. They still, however, retained the inferior tribunals: almost all the small towns and villages, with the exception of a few which are situated in the mountains, or have purchased their exemption, are subject to the authority of some nobleman or city.

Since the ancient *partidas*, and since the decree of the states at Toro in the year 1505, the administration of justice has been rather confounded than determined, by the double principles of the Roman code and of an infinite number of royal regulations. Here, as in all despotisms, the court exercised over the provinces an authority far less oppressive than that of the subordinate administrations and tribunals, and the abuses of the labyrinth of laws by the advocates, and the pride, the ignorance, and avarice of the noble and gratuitous *regidores*.

The principal sources of the revenue are twelve. The subsidy, or *alcavala*, is a tax of a tenth penny upon the amount of all sales of whatsoever description. The collection of this tax, which is levied by an innumerable swarm of officers, whose business it is to pry into all transactions, is justly regarded as one of the sources of the universal corruption that prevails.

The court receives a fifth of all the silver, and a twentieth of all the gold, produced in America. The quantity of silver which comes from America to Europe is to the gold as twenty-two to one: this proportion, however, is not that of the relative commercial value of the two metals: the demand for silver is more considerable; and a larger quantity of this metal is consumed in the arts the East Indies swallow it up by millions; and hence the relative value is reduced to about fourteen to one. Before the discovery of the New World, the proportion was as ten to one; but the silver mines have been very productive. There is reason to believe that the quantity of silver and gold annually imported into Cadiz and Lisbon, in all shapes, amounts to between fifty-four and sixty millions of florins, or about six millions of pounds sterling. Potosi itself, however, is no longer so productive as formerly: many proprietors of mines are contented with the profit arising from the use of their mills. It is common to allow the discoverer of a new vein to work it two hundred and forty-six feet in length, and half as much in breadth, free from duty; it is becoming continually more difficult to ventilate the mines, and to keep them

clear of water, on account of their excessive depth; and only twenty-five tons of quicksilver are annually produced at the mines of Almadras. The interior commerce of the American provinces, together with that of Acapulco, affords half a million of piastres to the king: and as he exacts a mint tax of a real on every coined mark of metal, he derives from this source a revenue of one hundred and fifty thousand piastres in Mexico, and one-fourth part larger in Peru. Campomanes estimates the total revenue of the crown arising from the mines at thirty millions.

All the commodities which go from Europe to America are subject to a duty of something more than ten reals for every span which they measure in circumference, provided that their value bears a certain proportion to their bulk; and it is estimated that the imports amount to eleven millions. Foreign goods are subject to a duty *ad valorem* of twenty-five pounds *per cent.*; but this enormous impost only serves to encourage smuggling. The duty levied on all the goods which are exchanged between the ports of America and that of Cadiz, is supposed to yield seven hundred thousand piastres; and the customs, together with the *alcavala* collected on the continent of America, is valued at two millions and a half.

The commerce in tobacco is of equal importance to the royal treasury: all the merchants and dealers in that article are obliged to supply themselves from the great manufactory at Seville, and are allowed to make a profit of ten *per cent.* The manufacture and commerce of this article furnishes employment to thirty-four thousand persons, and yields an income to the king of ninety millions of reals de velho. (1)

The tax on salt was raised about twenty-one pence per hundred weight by Don Carlos III., in order to defray the expense of making the roads of Barcelona, Valencia, Grenada, and Cadiz.

The capitation tax, levied on the native Americans, yields two millions; and the duty on the negroes, two hundred thousand.

The tax on paper, in America alone, yields three hundred thousand piastres; and that on playing-cards, in Mexico only, seventy thousand: and Mexico and Peru together take pilgrimage-bulls to the amount of three millions and a half annually.

From the pulca, a favourite beverage of its American subjects, the court of Spain derives a revenue of one hundred and sixty thousand piastres; about fifteen thousand from the sale of rice; five hundred thousand from the herb of Paraguay; and seventy-one thousand from Mexico alone for gunpowder.

The produce of the post-office is estimated at three millions three hundred thousand dollars de velho; and the export of wool, from Seville alone, yields ten millions of reals de velho to the royal treasury: to these sources of revenue must be added the tax on brandy, and the produce of the royal forests; as well as that of the confiscated estates of the jesuits, which is valued at four hundred thousand piastres.

The financial department consists of five chambers: that which takes cognizance of the affairs of America is called the grand royal council of the Indies. The imposts of every province are levied by the intendants; and the whole organization of this department was instituted by the president Orry, in the reign of Philip V. Ensenada and Carvajal, under that of Ferdinand VI., were induced, partly by the splendid theory of the physiocratic system, and partly by the partial confirmation afforded by experience in Arragon, to attempt to reduce the financial system to the utmost degree of simplicity: it was resolved to subject the country to an actual admeasurement; to enumerate the inhabitants, to estimate their property; and then to demand only one real from every three hundred. The provinces of Castile were measured, and a "junta of the single impost" had already been added to the financial council, when the ministers who came into office after the death of Ferdinand abandoned the design. Don Carlos found the treasury

(1) A real de velho is worth about twopence halfpenny.

extremely burdened with debts which had been incurred partly to defray the expenses of war, and partly by the magnificence and prodigality with which every undertaking, whether useful or superfluous, is in this kingdom attended. The royal treasury, however, contained a considerable sum in ready money, and the annual revenue amounted to forty-seven millions of dollars de velho. The king set apart an annual sum for the redemption of the public debt.

The income of the eight archbishops and forty-eight bishops was returned by themselves at one million three hundred thousand ducats: the cathedral chapters are not less opulent; more than three thousand monasteries are also supported; and the less rigid institutions of the New World are possessed of extensive estates, capitals, and tithes. The simplicity of pious individuals who purchase dispensations is one principal source of the ecclesiastical revenues.

The military department was organized under the reign of Philip V. The king himself presided in the council of war. In the beginning of the American war, there were five commanders, fifty-five lieutenant-generals, and an equal number of *maréchaux-de-camp*; more than a hundred brigadiers, six inspectors-general, forty war-commissaries, and fifteen auditors. The king had his own regiment of guards, together with a brigade of carabineers, thirty-six regiments of foot, fourteen of horse, and eight of dragoons; a corps of engineers; the artillery, and some companies of cadets; there were five foundries of ordnance, a manufactory of arms at Toledo, and another for firearms at Guipuscoa. The invalids were divided into forty-six companies; there were forty-two regiments of country militia, and one hundred and twenty-six companies of city militia; some of which were usually kept encamped near Gibraltar, Oran, Ceuta, and Marsalquivir, and in the smaller presidencies. The foreign troops in the pay of Spain consisted of the Walloon guards, four regiments of Walloons, four of Swiss, and twelve of Italians. But scarcely any of their corps had their full complement; and one hundred and forty regiments contained in reality scarcely one hundred thousand men. The tactical system had been changed in some unimportant details. The military station was not honoured; as the ranks were debased by the custom of introducing among them smugglers, thieves, and murderers. Desertion was punished by the martial law with death; but the officers preferred suffering the offender to lie in prison for a year, allowed his name to remain on the rolls, and by this means continued to receive his pay. The principal foundry for the artillery was in the most wretched condition; because the inspectors were induced by avarice to employ materials and workmen of the worst description.

The naval system is divided into the three departments of Cadiz, Ferrol, and Carthage. Ferdinand VI. left, at his decease, forty-eight ships of the line. Don Carlos augmented their number; but this was rather an apparent than a real increase of their strength, for all the reports were exaggerated and the commands ill executed. Hence arose the misfortunes of the war of 1762, the miserable result of the siege of Algiers, and the failure of the attack on Gibraltar. The deficiency consisted not in money, or in regiments, or in ships; but in that spirit which the Spaniards had so nobly displayed before the time of Ferdinand the Catholic, and of the inquisition.

NAPLES.

The kings of Sicily and Naples contrived for a long time to protect their subjects from the last-mentioned curse; and the inquisitors never ventured to display the full effect of their fury in those dominions. The barons of Sicily and the people of Naples maintained some of their rights: despotism never dared utterly to oppress this lively nation, whose stormy passions frequently threatened the destruction of its oppressors, and obliged the court on various occasions to obey the voice of the piazza del popolo, while their territory was peculiarly exposed to the hazard of foreign invasion. The government stood frequently in need of subsidies; the taxes were distributed by

the piazza; and every *arendamento* was carried to the chamber by those persons to whom the levying of this impost had been intrusted. The military power of this state was supposed to be equal to that of Sardinia; but the soldiers were better paid and the troops superior in appearance. The population is estimated at four millions.

SWITZERLAND.

After the states under the sway of the house of Bourbon, the Swiss confederates, who are the most ancient allies of that family, deserve to be next mentioned. The internal administration of the cantons was distinguished by intelligence, probity, and vigilance; and their population and opulence increased without interruption. As they were equally destitute of a supreme head and of a permanent representation, they found it easy to avoid being entangled in the affairs of more powerful states. They dwelt without apprehension in the midst of jealous and powerful rivals; they had no idea of aggrandizement; and their wishes were confined to the object of remaining in their present condition. Accordingly, they enjoyed a more undisturbed course of prosperity than their brethren the Venetians and Hollanders had been able to obtain by their wars and negotiations; and preserved more successfully their primitive equality and the simplicity of their manners, which became refined as the national character developed itself.

The renewal of the general alliance between the cantons and France convinced all Europe that the latter kingdom was disposed to continue to support the confederates in the great political discussions of the continent; and that her frontier would henceforth be protected on the side of Switzerland. The Swiss, besides, furnished the king with men; the only article which they possessed in superfluity: and the monarch supported the needy cantons by subsidies. The stipulations relative to the regiments were separated from the articles of alliance, and treated as a private affair.

The population of Switzerland amounts to about a million and a half; five hundred and eighty thousand of which belong to Zurich and Bern: about thirty-eight thousand persons serve in the foreign regiments, most of whom are enlisted for a term of four years; and it may safely be assumed, that twenty-five thousand of that number consist of native Swiss.

The natural instruments of despotism, a standing army, and the multiplication of taxes, were unknown in the cantons; the government of which owed its whole power to the sentiment of public prosperity, and to the esteem and affection of the people. After the destruction indeed of public morality, the common opinion of their accumulated wealth, their well-known military spirit, and the situation of their country at the passes into more fertile provinces, might give even the cantons reasonable ground of apprehension for the continuance of their peaceful existence.

LETTER IX.

The Court of Rome and the Jesuits—Intrigues of the latter in various Countries, and their final Expulsion from Europe. A. D. 1759—1773.

A RELIGIOUS order, says Mons. Voltaire, ought not to make any part of a history. No historian of antiquity has entered into a detail of the establishments of the priests of either Cybele or Juno. It is one of the misfortunes of our European policy, that the monks, destined to ignorance by their institution, have made as much noise in the world as princes, either by their immense riches, or the troubles they have excited from the first of their institution. Your attention, my dear son, has already been directed to this subject, the conduct of the jesuits: (1) but that the narrative may not be left in an unfinished state, we shall now resume it and carry it to its termination. In

(1) See Part II. Letter XXXV., &c.