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*Willm. Thurstall*

ANECDOTES  
OF  
EMINENT PAINTERS  
IN SPAIN,

During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries;

WITH  
CURSORY REMARKS

UPON THE  
PRESENT STATE OF ARTS.  
IN THAT KINGDOM.

By RICHARD CUMBERLAND.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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VOL. II.

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L O N D O N:

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M.DCC.LXXXII.





A N E C D O T E S  
O F  
E M I N E N T P A I N T E R S  
I N S P A I N, &c.

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A N E C D O T E S  
O F  
E M I N E N T P A I N T E R S  
I N S P A I N, &c.

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THE city of Seville, in the language of Spain the Paragon of Cities, the World's Eighth Wonder and the most famous, which the sun surveys, has the honour of giving birth to *Diego Velazquez de Silva*, a painter, who by eminence in his art rose to every title and emolument, which his

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B. merit

merit could claim, or fortune could bestow: He was born in the year 1594 of *Donna Geronima Velazquez* by *Juan Rodriguez de Silva*, natives of the same illustrious city, and both descended from antient and honourable houses; he bore his mother's name *Velazquez* antecedent to that of his family, according to the usage of Andalusia. The family of *Silva* is of Portuguese original and by long and honourable descent claims to derive from the antient kings of Alba-Longa. The house of *Silva* in point of splendour and antiquity is unquestionably respectable; but I have little doubt, that it may say with many more that contend for Pagan original



ginal in the language of the Pharisee "Have we not Abraham for our father?" In like manner the family of Galvez, a family from the dregs of the people, availing themselves of a fortuitous similitude of name, pretend to derive from the Emperor Galba; a silly vanity in men, whom chance has elevated into station and who by stirring a question, which no prudent man would have touched, only provoke an enquiry, which traces them through a few obscure generations to their true Moorish extraction. In short, Spain, which has as much or more of this pride of pedigree than any kingdom in Europe, is the one of all others with most bars in its genealogy

and that from very obvious causes adherent to its history.

The parents of *Velazquez*, though in very narrow circumstances, gave their son a liberal education, and tradition has preserved many circumstances of his early docility as well as excellent disposition : But when every paper, on which he wrote his puerile tasks, exhibited sketches and drawings on the back and those of such a stile as plainly indicated a new and extraordinary genius in its dawn, the good sense of his parents did not hesitate upon humouring the impulse and accordingly put him under the instruction of *Francisco de Herrera*, commonly called *Old Herrera*, a rigid master, but of consummate ability in

in the art he taught. The manners and temper of *Old Herrera* were however so unsupportable to young *Velazquez*, that he left him and entered himself in the academy of *Pacheco*, a man of equal erudition and of an admirable nature: Here his genius began to display itself in several sketches from nature of peasants and ordinary people in peculiar habits and occupations, as they struck his fancy in the streets or posadas of the city. These first sallies of his imagination give a striking representation of the manners and characters of the vulgar: They exhibit also a luxuriance of still-life, that he has introduced in the scenery of his pieces, in all which the costuma is

B 3      observed

observed to perfection: One of his first productions is to be seen in the palace of the Buen-Retiro and represents an old Aguador in a tattered garment, which through its rents discovers naked parts of his body, giving water to drink out of his barrel to a boy; a piece of wonderful nature and expression with a degree of science and precision in muscular anatomy, which is uncommon.

In subjects of this rustic sort young *Velazquez* suffered his imagination to disport itself in its first fallies, replying to some, that moved him to assume a higher stile of painting, that the foundation of his art must be strength; delicacy might follow after as the superstructure.

superstructure. It should seem in his first productions, that he coloured in the stile of *Caravaggio*, but upon his seeing some pictures of *Guido*, *Pamarancio*, *Cavallero*, *Ballioni*, *Lanfranco* and *Ribera*, which were brought to Seville out of Italy, he altered his manner; but the artist, upon whose model he chiefly studied to form himself at this time, was *Luis Tristan* of Toledo, a scholar of *Dominica Greco*. Of *Tristan* he declared himself an admirer and professed imitator; his design, colouring and vivacity of invention, were the standard, to which he directed all his studies. In portraits *Dominica Greco* was his model, the air of his heads *Velazquez* held in the highest

B 4      estimation,



estimation, and frequently observed, " that what this master  
 " did well was best of all good  
 " things, and what he did ill was  
 " bad in the extreme."

Whilst *Velazquez* was thus engaged in the practice, he by no means neglected the theory of his art; he read every author of credit, that could form his judgment, or enlarge his science, and some he diligently studied, in particular *Alberto Durer* for the symmetry of the human figure; *Andres Bexalio* for anatomy: He read the treatise of *Daniel Barbaro* on perspective; *Vitruvio*, *Viñola* and others on architecture, and at the same time perfected himself in the propositions of *Euclid*; elements, that  
 prepare

prepare the mind in every art and every science, to which the human faculties can be applied; which give a rule and measure for every thing in life, dignify things familiar and familiarize things abstruse; invigorate the reason, restrain the licentiousness of fancy, open all the avenues of truth and give a charm even to controversy and dispute.

After five years thus studiously employed in the academy he married *Donna Juana*, the daughter of his master *Francisco Pacheco*, of a family and name as noble as any in Spain; this respectable artist in his *Treatise de la Pintura* (Lib. 1. cap. 9), after an elogium on the merit of his pupil, declares, that  
 he

he was moved to bestow his daughter upon him from the many demonstrations he gave of a most virtuous and liberal disposition, and the high expectation he had formed of his talents after an experience of five years, which he had spent in superintending his education; and, after pronouncing prophetically of his scholar's rising fame, he declares, that so far from regarding it with an eye of envy, he considered his own reputation advanced thereby in the same manner as *Leonardo da Vinci's* was by *Rafael*, *Castelfranco's* by *Titiano*, or *Plato's* by *Aristotle*. *Velazquez*, who by his marriage with *Donna Juana* had established himself to his content, felt himself tempted to undertake

dertake a journey to Madrid, where and at the Escorial so many treasures of art were amassed: In short, having sacrificed to the softer passions, ambition came in turn to take dominion of his mind and, leaving *Donna Juana* at Seville, he set out with one attendant only for the capital, where he arrived in April of the year 1622, being then in his twenty-eighth year, an age when the mind of man demands expansion and a larger field of action than its native scenes present. *Velazquez* upon this visit to Madrid, not finding an opportunity of painting any of the royal persons of the court, returned after a short stay to Seville in some degree of disgust; and here per-

haps

haps he might have staid, as *Murillo* afterwards did, for the remainder of his life, if he had not been earnestly solicited to return by the minister *Olivares*, who employed *Gongora* the court poet to invite him in his name and to offer the accommodations of his house and family to him. Such an invitation was not to be withstood and in the year following (viz. 1623) *Velazquez* for the second time arrived in Madrid.

He was now lodged in the house of the prime minister and was soon admitted to take the portrait of the King, the Infants and *Olivares* himself: This was the most immediate crisis of his fame and fortune. Philip had been painted by  
most

most of the eminent artists of the time, *Vincencio Carducho* and his brother *Bartolome*, *Angelo Nardi*, *Eugenio Caxes* and *Josepb Leonardò* had successively exerted themselves to the utmost in portraying the royal person of a young sovereign in possession of every thing, which could rouse their emulation and reward their diligence: In the house of the minister Philip sat to *Velazquez*, and the date of this event is thought important enough to be preserved to posterity, it was on the 30th of August 1623: The portrait was upon a large scale, the King was drawn in armour and mounted upon a magnificent steed and displayed with all the advantageous accompaniments of a beautiful

tiful scenery in the back-ground: The artist succeeded to his wish; the court rang with applause and all the cognoscenti joined in giving the palm to *Velazquez* above all his predecessors: So compleat was his triumph on this happy occasion, that the minister was commanded to inform his inmate that the Royal person of Philip would in future be committed to no other pencil but his. In consequence he proceeded to paint the Infants Don Carlos and Don Fernando, and after them he made a portrait of his patron Don Gaspar de Guzman Conde de Olivares, mounted, like his Royal master, on a noble Andalusian courser, richly caparisoned. If I may venture an ob-

fervation in the general upon these  
 and others of his royal portraits, it  
 is, that there seems a labour in the  
 artist, working under the impres-  
 sion of the personal dignity of his  
 sitters, to force a character of the  
 sublime, which sometimes borders  
 on the tumid and bombast: Every  
 thing swells and flutters; rich as  
 the Spanish horses are by nature,  
 still there seems a pleonasm in their  
 manes and tails, that borders on  
 extravagance: But the reader  
 should be reminded, that *Rubens*  
 was now at Madrid in habits of in-  
 timacy with *Velazquez*, that he  
 had painted his figure of San  
 Giorgio slaying the Dragon, the  
 very quintessence of colouring  
 and the most captivating example  
 of



of extravagance which the art of painting can perhaps exhibit.

On the 17th day of March in this year Prince Charles of England had made his entry into Madrid; that Prince honoured *Velazquez* with peculiar attention. He did not sit to him, but *Velazquez* took a sketch of him as he was accompanying King Philip in the chace. When *Velazquez* had finished his portrait of the King, he hung it up by royal permission in a public street of the city, opposite the convent of San Phelipe; whilst the courtiers applauded it to the skies, and the poets made sonnets in his praise, the artists silently passing by, pined with envy at the sight. Fortune now began

gan to open all her treasures to the meritorious and happy *Velazquez*. On the last day of October 1623 he was made King's painter with a salary of twenty ducats per month, exclusively of which he was paid for his pictures by tale: The royal munificence assigned him a handsome house to live in of two hundred ducats a year; Philip paid him three hundred ducats for his portrait and granted a pension of three hundred more by year specifically for this performance. Great rewards being thus heaped upon *Velazquez*, great things were expected from him and, though the public subscribed to his superiority in portraiture, he had not executed yet any capital historical

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piece, as his competitors *Caxes*, *Carduchio* and *Nardi* had done. Each of these had signalized themselves on a subject of great popular eclat, the Expulsion of the Moors out of Spain by Philip the III<sup>d</sup> ; he again entered the lists with these artists and, following them in their subjects, exhibited a superb composition, in the center of which he placed the King armed and in the act of giving directions to a party of soldiers, who are escorting a groupe of Moors of different ages and sexes to an embarkation, which awaits them in one extremity of the canvass ; on the opposite side he has personified the kingdom of Spain as a majestic matron in Roman armour with

part

part of a stately edifice, and this inscription at her feet, viz. “Phi-  
 “ lippo III. Hispan. Regi Cathol.  
 “ Regum pientissimo, Belgico,  
 “ Germ. Afric. pacis et justitiæ  
 “ cultori publicæ quietis assertori  
 “ ob eliminatos feliciter Mauros  
 “ Philippus IV. robore ac virtute  
 “ magnus, in magnis maximus,  
 “ animo ad majora nato propter  
 “ antiq. tanti parentis et pietatis  
 “ observantiæq. ergo trophæum  
 “ hoc erigit anno 1627.” Below  
 he signs as follows, viz. : “Di-  
 “ dacus Velazquez Hispalensis  
 “ Philip IV. Regis Hispan. pictor,  
 “ ipsiusque jussu fecit anno 1627.”

No sooner had he completed  
 this composition, than he again  
 experienced the munificence of the

C 2      sovereign.

sovereign. In the same year he was made Usher of the Chamber, an office of great rank and honour; and in further support of his new dignity Philip added a stipend of a daily pension of twelve rials and a yearly suit or habit of ninety ducats value. In this year *Rubens* made his second visit to Madrid in quality of Ambassador; the intimacy, which he formed with *Velazquez* and the ideas he thereby inspired into him of the state of the arts in Italy, raised an irresistible desire in that ambitious artist of prosecuting further improvements in the study of the antique and in the schools and collections in Rome. *Velazquez* was now in such favour, that he had no sooner expressed his wishes for

for a tour to Italy, than he found himself anticipated in every preparative for his undertaking; that the indulgence of his Sovereign could provide. His Majesty gave him four hundred ducats and two years salary to defray his expences, and Olivares upon parting added two hundred ducats more in gold and a medal with the head of the King and many commendatory letters: He left Madrid in company with Don Alonso Espinola, the King's general in Flanders, and embarked at Barcelona on the feast of San Lorenzo: In August 1629 he landed at Venice, and was lodged at the Spanish ambassador's house, who shewed him all possible kindness and directed

his servants to attend him, whenever he went out. In Venice he copied a picture of Tintoreto's, but, not chusing to make any long abode there, he took his route to Rome, passing through Ferrara, where he was very honourably entertained by Cardinal Sacchetti, who had been nuncio in Spain, with whom he passed two days: In Rome he was lodged in the Vatican by favour of Cardinal Barberino, who gave him access at all times to the works of *Rafael* and *Michael Angelo Bonarroti*: Of these great authors he studied the most capital productions with unremitting attention and delight; but his health being impaired by intense application, he was directed  
into

into a more airy part of the city, in the house of the Florentine ambassador through the favour of the Conde de Monte Rey, Philip's ambassador at Rome: Being now convalescent, he gave himself up to the study of the antique for the space of two months. During his abode in Rome he painted his celebrated history of Jacob, when his sons shew the bloody garment of Joseph, a picture, which in all the great requisites of perfection is scarcely to be exceeded and is undoubtedly one of his most capital performances; he also painted the Discovery of Venus's Infidelity, as related by Apollo to Vulcan, who is represented at his forge attended by his journeymen the

C 4      Cyclops,



Cyclops, a wonderful piece of expression: Both these pictures he transmitted to King Philip, who ordered them to his palace of the Buen-Retiro, from whence that of Joseph was removed to the Escorial, where it now hangs, an illustrious accession to that invaluable collection.

*Velazquez*, after a year and a half's absence, returned to Madrid, taking Naples in his way, where he made a portrait of Donna Maria de Austria, Queen of Hungary, consort of Ferdinand the III<sup>d</sup>. Absence had not impaired his favour with the King, who made him one of the gentlemen of his wardrobe and appointed him a painting-room in his palace, of which

which the King himself kept a private key; resorting to him as Charles did to *Titiano* and Philip the II<sup>d</sup> to *Coello*: *Fuit enim ea comitas illi, propter quam gratior Alexandro magno erat, frequenter in officinam ventitantis.* (Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 31. cap. 10.)

In 1638 *Velazquez* made a portrait of Don Francisco III<sup>d</sup>, Duque de Modena, who was then at Madrid, and in the same year he painted his famous crucifix now in the convent of the monks of San Placido at Madrid; and surely, if there were nothing but this single figure to immortalize the fame of *Velazquez*, this alone were sufficient: It is of the size of life upon a plain back ground, disposed with great simplicity

simplicity and nature, but with an expression in the features, an air in the depression of the head and a harmonious tone of colouring, at once so tender and of such effect, that nothing can exceed it. I visited this exquisite production repeatedly and every time with new delight and surprize. The wretched cell or cabin, where it hangs, affords but little light thro' the iron grate of a window not glazed and that little is unfavourable: Mount Calvary itself was scarce more dismal. In the same year *Velazquez* finished a portrait of Don Adrian Pulido Paresa, Admiral of the King's fleet in New Spain: This officer was under orders for repairing to his command, when Philip,

upon

upon entering the chamber of *Velazquez* then at work upon this portrait, mistaking it for the Admiral himself, entered into sudden expostulation with him for staying at Madrid beyond his time; declaring to *Velazquez*, after discovering his mistake, that it was so perfect a counterpart of the Admiral, that with no light in the room but what struck immediately upon the figure, he had for some time actually believed it to be the person himself, and was surprized at finding him there in disobedience to his orders. In painting this picture *Velazquez* used pencils with very long handles to produce more effect by distance; this admirable

portrait

portrait was in possession of the late Duque de Arcos.

It may well be expected to find the performances of this period of *Velazquez's* life executed in his best stile, when his taste was formed by study at Rome, his judgment matured by experience and his fire not yet abated by years; careased by his sovereign, applauded by his contemporaries and at the summit of all worldly prosperity. In 1643 the minister Olivares was dismissed from his employments and confined to his town of de Toro, where he died on the 22d of July 1645, and his body was permitted to be removed for interment by the barefooted Carmelites at Loeches in the convent  
of

of his own foundation. The good fortune of *Velazquez* received no shock by the disgrace of his patron. It is to be mentioned to his honour upon this event, that he did not forsake his benefactor in misfortune, but took occasion, notwithstanding his employ at court, to see Don Gaspar de Guzman in his exile and give him one, and perhaps the only, example of an unshaken attachment; the healing consolation, which such a visit must bring with it to a mind galled by ingratitude and languishing under the inquietudes of disappointed ambition, need not be pointed out: It is an amiable trait in Philip's character, that he saw this attachment and suffered it without

without withdrawing any portion of his favour from *Velazquez* ; this I think is clear from his giving him this very year the honour of the gold key and taking him with him upon his second journey to Zaragoza : He had accompanied the King into Aragon the year before Olivares's disgrace, when Philip made his expedition for quieting the tumults in Cataluña ; this was repeated in 1644 and now his favourite artist attended him as groom of the chamber, and upon the submission of Lerida to Philip on the 31st of July of that year, who entered it in person on the 7th of August following, *Velazquez* made a magnificent portrait of the King in the habit he then wore with all  
the

the insignia of a general, an inestimable work: He drew the Cardinal Infante Don Fernando, Philip's brother, the Queen Donna Isabel richly habited, mounted on a beautiful white palfrey, and the prince Don Carlos, very young, in armour, with a general's staff in his hand on a Spanish jennet in full speed: He made many other portraits of illustrious persons, Don Francisco de Quevedo Villegas, Cardinal de Borja y Velasco, Archbishop of Seville and Toledo, the learned Simon de Roxas and others: He drew the King again on horseback in armour with his titles as follows, viz. *Philippus Magnus: hujus nom: IV, potentissimus Hispaniarum Rex Indiar:*



*Indiar : maxim : Imp : Anno Cbrist :  
XXV, Sæculi XVII, Era. XX. A.*

In the year 1648 *Velazquez* was dispatched upon a particular embassy to Pope Innocent X. and was at the same time commissioned by the King to purchase statues and pictures in Italy for the royal collection ; on this expedition he sailed out from Madrid in the month of November and embarked at Malaga with Don Jayme Manuel de Cardenas, Duque de Naxera, who was going to Trent a esperar a la Reyna Donna Maria Aña de Auftria, daughter of the Emperor Ferdinando IIIId and Donna Maria Infanta of Spain. *Velazquez* landed in Genoa, passed through Milan, Padua and from thence to Venice, where he passed

passed some time in reviving his acquaintance with the admired compositions of *Titiano*, *Tintoreto*, *Paulo Verones* and others; and here he had the good fortune to purchase some capital pictures, as likewise in Bologna, where he engaged *Miguel Colona* and *Agustin Miteli* to go into Spain to execute some paintings in fresco for the King. He made some stay in Florence and paid a visit to the Duke of Modena, who received him with great cordiality and showed him the portrait he had painted at Madrid, splendidly equipped and disposed to all possible advantage in the best apartment of the palace; from hence he went to Parma to view the works of the celebrated *Cor-*

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regio,

*regio*, and whilst he was on his way from Parma to Rome, he was called away to Naples by express from the Viceroy Conde de Oñate, who had received the King's commands to confer with *Velazquez* upon the objects of his commission; here he was visited by the famous *Ribera*, a Knight of the order of Christ. When he arrived in Rome he was received with great kindness and distinction by the Pope, and as he found many hours, when the duties of his employ did not engage his attention, he painted many portraits in Rome of dignified persons after the example of *Rubens* during his embassy at Madrid. Innocent X. sent to *Velazquez* and, in token of

his satisfaction, gave him a magnificent golden medal. *Velazquez* sent a copy of this picture over to Spain. He made a portrait of *Juan de Pareja* the painter, which being exhibited to the public on the feast of San Joseph, after the departure of *Velazquez*, it was so universally applauded, that the academicians of Rome elected him of their body and sent his appointment after him to Spain. It was not till the year 1651, that *Velazquez* took his departure by sea from Genoa on his return to Spain, freighted with a very grand collection of antique statues, busts and some pictures of the most celebrated masters. He arrived in safety with his cargo, and was re-

ceived by Philip with his accustomed favour. The Queen Donna Isabel de Bourbon had died whilst *Velazquez* was absent, and the King had wedded Donna Maria Aña de Austria.

In 1652, Philip bestowed upon *Velazquez*, a very distinguishing mark of his favour by appointing him *Aposentador* major of his royal palace in the room of Don Pedro de Torres, an office to be filled by none but men of eminent pretensions either in rank or service, and after his return from Italy it appears, that Philip took him into absolute confidence, passing many hours in private with him and advising with him upon affairs of the greatest delicacy and importance.

It

It was at this time *Velazquez* designed and executed his famous picture, in which he has represented himself at his easel with his pallet in one hand and his pencil in the other ; the picture, on which he is working, is the portrait of Donna Margarita Maria of Austria, Infanta of Spain, and afterwards Empress of Germany. It is related of this picture, that Philip with his own hand put in the order of Santiago upon the portrait of *Velazquez*, which at the time of painting this piece (viz. 1656) he was not yet possessed of. When Charles the IId of Spain shewed this picture to *Lucas Jordan*, he exclaimed with rapture and surprise,

D 3                      prize,

prize, *Santo es la Theologia de la Pintura.*

This year 1656 *Velazquez* received an order from the King to select a number of original pictures to augment the collection at the Eleorial: They were taken out of those, which he himself had purchased for the King in Italy, with others, that had been collected in Naples by the Viceroi Conde de Castrillo, and the pictures, which had been bought in England at the sale of the late Royal Martyr's effects: Amongst these latter it is well known was the inestimable *Perla* of *Rasael*, an Holy Family by *Andrea del Sarto* and a capital piece by *Tintoret* of our Saviour washing his Disciples feet:

fect: These were amongst the selection made by *Velazquez*, and are now deposited in the sacristy of the Escorial, there to remain for ever dedicated to San Lorenzo and obscurity, or until some such extraordinary revolution, as they have already experienced, shall again transplant them into other hands together with the magazine of wealth and precious things imprisoned with them. The extraction of such inestimable pieces of art out of any country may well be termed a national loss and misfortune, and, viewing it as such, we justly execrate the tasteless demagogues, that put them up to public sale; but this once done, we certainly have cause for self-con-

D 4 gratulation



graduation and surprize, that any  
 of these valuable reliques of that  
 collection are left amongst us ; how  
 it came to pass that the cartoons  
 of Raffaele were bought in by the  
 Protector, when Philip's ambassa-  
 dor was a bidder, one is at a loss  
 to account ; and it must be confi-  
 dered as a very happy chance, that  
 they did not expatriate together  
 with the Perla and its compani-  
 ons. Add to this, that at an æra  
 when it was religion to break  
 painted windows, it might have  
 been meritorious to burn painted  
 canvases ; so that it is well their  
 sentence was not death, instead of  
 banishment to some distant  
 place. Much has been said both  
 in poetry and prose upon the near  
 alliance

alliance between freedom and the liberal arts; I hope it has been both said and sung with truth and reason; we are interested to wish, that such respectable parties should be upon the best of terms; but it must be remembered, in this instance at least, the party, who attacked freedom, was the collector and the party, who defended it, the feller: I might add, that the buyer was an absolute Prince. Certainly it is hard with the arts, when an arbitrary sovereign upon a scruple of conscience issues his edict for the demolition of all pictures in the nude: Such a manifesto in the teeth of taste can only be exceeded by Caliph Omar's order for the burning of the Alexandrian

andrian library. In such cases we cannot too much lament the mis-  
use of power, where such deplor-  
able effects result from the exer-  
cise of it; but where is the ty-  
rant who could issue edicts more  
completely barbarous than the fol-  
lowing, viz.

July 23, 1645.

*Ordered, That all such pictures  
and statues there (viz. York House)  
as are without any superstition,  
shall be forthwith sold for the be-  
nefit of Ireland and the North.*

*Ordered, That all such pictures  
there, as have the representation of  
the second person in Trinity upon  
them, shall be forthwith burnt.*

*Ordered, That all such pictures  
there, as have the representation of  
the*

*the Virgin Mary upon whom, shall  
be forthwith burnt.*

To all this on one side as well as  
the other there needs no other an-  
swer to be given, than that fanat-  
icism is not freedom, nor the  
freaks of prudery true modesty of  
nature.

*Velazquez* in obedience to his  
orders removed forty-one capital  
pictures to the Escorial, col-  
lected by Philip, of all which he  
presented to the King a full and  
critical description and account.  
In 1658 *Colona* and *Menni*, the  
two artists, whom *Velazquez* had  
engaged at Bologna, arrived at  
court and were immediately em-  
ployed under the superintendence  
of *Velazquez* in many considerable  
fresco

fresco paintings of the galleries, cieling of the palace and theatre, as well as of the fountains and buildings in the gardens; in these works they were assisted by the celebrated *Don Juan Carreño* and *Don Francisco Risi*, both artists in the service of the King. *Agustin Miteli* died in 1660, much lamented, and was buried at the Royal charge with great solemnity in the convent of our Lady de la Merced with the following inscription on his tomb, viz. D. M. S. *Agustinus Miteli Bononensis, pictor præclarus natura æmulus admirandus ac perspectiva incomparabilis cujus manu prope vivebant imagines, ipsâ invidâ, occubuit Mantua Carpetanæ, postridie*

*postridie Kalendas Augusti anno*  
**MDCLX. HSESTL.**

*Colona,* after concluding his commission much to the satisfaction of the King and his own emolument, returned to Italy in September 1662, though others have supposed, that he went to France.

In 1659 *Velazquez* by order of the King painted a portrait of Don Phelipe Prince of Asturias born 1651, which was sent into Germany to the Emperor. He also painted one of the Infanta Donna Margarita de Austria, an excellent piece, which portraits were the last works, that this illustrious artist lived to finish. In the year preceding this Philip had conferred upon *Velazquez* the military

Military order of Santiago; the King was then at the Escorial and, having according to the rules of the order issued his mandate to the Marquis de Tabara the president to examine and report the proofs of qualification on the part of *Velazquez*, which being complied with and presented to the King, Philip turning himself to *Velazquez* with a smile, that expressed every thing most gracious and complacent, replied, *Give him the order, for I know his noble birth and the right he has to it*; and thus at once made needless any further scrutiny and examination. As a further grace to this distinguished artist, Philip appointed his investiture for the feast of San Prospero, which

which was the day of the Prince of Asturias, who bore that amongst his names; and thus upon the grand gala of the court, amidst the utmost festivity and magnificence, *Velazquez* was invested with the insignia of the order by the hands of Señor Don Gaspar Juan Alonso Perez de Guzman, then Conde de Niebla and afterwards Duque de Medina Sidonia; his sponsor on the solemnity being the Marquis de Malpica, Comendador of the order. The functions of his office of Apofentador now occupied the chief part of *Velazquez's* time, who, full of fame and years, began to obey the summons of old age and abate of his wonted application to his art.

The



The King now prepared for his journey to Irun to meet the King of France, who by his ambassador extraordinary had demanded the Infanta Donna Maria Teresa in marriage; this journey took place in 1660, and *Velazquez* in execution of his office, sat out before the court; the King followed with the Infanta; they passed through Alcala, Guadalajara and Burgos, in which capital *Velazquez* waited to receive the further orders of his sovereign for fitting and preparing the ceremonials of the interview: The house appointed for this purpose was in the Isle de los fayfanes upon the river Vidasas near to Irun in the province of Guepuzcoa. *Velazquez* advanced to this place in

company with the ~~Baron de Bate-~~  
 billa, Governor of ~~San Sebastian,~~  
 for the purpose of putting it in pro-  
 per order and condition for the re-  
 ception of the royal personages,  
 who were there to meet; this in-  
 terview took place in the month of  
 June, when Louis the fourteenth,  
 after being splendidly regaled and  
 having interchanged several mag-  
 nificent presents with the Catholic  
 King, received his bride and  
 Philip returned to San Sebastian.  
 In all these splendid ceremonies  
*Velazquez* officiated in quality of  
 his post, adorned with the insignia  
 of his knighthood and other dig-  
 nities, magnificently apparelled in  
 a vest of golilla with rich silver lace  
 of Milan, according to the fashion

of the times ; on his cloak the red cross, profusely adorned with diamonds and other precious stones, a beautiful silver-hilted sword of exquisite workmanship with figures in relieve, made in Italy ; a costly gold chain round his collar, with the order of Santiago appending to it in a magnificent setting of diamonds.

The King returned through Guadarrama and the Escorial to Madrid, and *Velazquez* at the summit of all worldly happiness and prosperity hastened to enjoy the congratulations and embraces of his family. What must have been his disappointment in the moment, when he was met with melancholy and dejected countenances by all  
his

his household, on account of his death being predicted to them by several of the court. *Velazquez* was too considerable a man to fall without some traditional presages of his death ; this is a tribute, which the superstition of the time generally demands and, if chance does not furnish the fact, invention must supply it and biographers must record it : On the eve of San Ignacio, at the end of the month of July in 1660, *Velazquez*, having attended his functions at court, complained of being unusually fatigued and sickened that night ; his family physician Don Vicencio Moles was immediately called in ; the alarm of his illness soon reached the King ; the royal physicians

Don Miguel de Alva and Don Pedro de Chavarri were sent to assist, and the fever, (as well may be believed) kept pace with their assistance. The King, after so many splendid favours bestowed upon *Velazquez* through the course of his reign, added the last melancholy office of friendship by sending to him a spiritual comforter in the person of Don Alonso Perez de Guzman, a good and pious prelate, Archbishop of Tyre in partibus infidelium and Patriarch of the Indies: He supported himself against the violence of his distemper and the medicines of his doctors till the evening of the 6th of August, when this great artist, at the age of 66, having compleated a life of uninterrupted

uninterrupted felicity and fame, resigned it with becoming fortitude and composure; lamented by his Sovereign, and regretted by all but those, who envied his talents and prosperity. Philip who naturally was a lover of the arts, under the tuition of *Velazquez* had become a judge; the hours, which he had dedicated to the society of this elegant and grateful instructor, were the most serene and pleasing passages of his life: His attachment to *Velazquez* had been caused by admiration of his talents, but it was closed and confirmed by experience of his discretion, fidelity and virtue: This attachment had been now coeval with his reign; it had felt no interruption

or abatement, had outlasted all those political ones, to which for a time he had so absolutely surrendered himself: In the revulsion of his affection from his favourite Olivares, a shock which might naturally be thought decisive against *Velazquez*, Philip had the moderation to admit of sharing his attentions with a minister, whom he had discarded; a self-submission difficult for any man, but doubly so for one possessed of arbitrary power; the grateful vassal felt his Sovereign's magnanimity and knew the value of the sacrifice; from that period his devotion was unbounded, and Philip's confidence kept pace with it so effectually, in spite of all the peevish efforts of  
the

the envious, that he possessed his favour undiminished to the last hour of life : That event deprived the King of a resource and made a gap in his enjoyments, which he could never more fill up ; the loss to Philip was irreparable, and nothing now remained but to pay the last honours to the memory of *Velazquez* with a solemnity, that should at once mark the love he bore his person and the esteem he entertained for his merits : This was effectually performed and *Velazquez* was attended to his grave in the parochial church of San Juan, by a train of courtiers and Grandees, with the band of the Royal chapels and all the funeral ceremonies of the most splendid

E 4 church



church on earth. *Don Juan de Alfaro* of Cordova, a disciple of *Velazquez*, in partnership with his brother *Henry* a physician, composed the following epitaph, which, if the reader shall think deficient in elegance, will recompense him in quantity.

“ Posteritati Sacratum. D. Di-  
 “ dacus Velazquius de Silva Hif-  
 “ palensis, Pictor eximius, natus  
 “ anno MDLXXXIV. picturæ  
 “ nobilissimæ arti sese dicavit (pre-  
 “ ceptore accuratissimo Francisco  
 “ Pocieco qui de pictura perele-  
 “ ganter scripsit) jacet hic : Proh  
 “ dolor ! D. D. Philippi IV. Hif-  
 “ paniarum regis augustissimi à  
 “ cubiculo pictor primus, à ca-  
 “ mara excelsa adjutor vigilantif-  
 “ fimus,

“ finus, in Regio palatio et ex-  
 “ tra ad hospitium cubicularius  
 “ maximus, a quo studiorum ergo  
 “ missus, ut Romæ et aliarum  
 “ Italiæ urbium picturæ tabulas  
 “ admirandas, vel quid aliud hu-  
 “ jus suppellectilis, veluti statuas  
 “ marmoreas, æreas conquireret,  
 “ perfectaret ac secum adduceret,  
 “ nummis largiter sibi traditis:  
 “ sic cum ipse pro tunc etiam In-  
 “ nocentii X. Pont. Max. faciem  
 “ coloribus mirè expressarit, aureâ  
 “ catenâ pretii supra ordinarij cum  
 “ remuneratus est, numismate,  
 “ gemmis, cæato cum ipsius Pon-  
 “ tificis effigie insculpta, ex ipsa  
 “ ex anulo appenso, tandem D.  
 “ Jacobi stemmate fuit condeco-  
 “ ratus, et post redditum ex fonte  
 “ rapido

“ rapido Galliæ confinī Urbe  
 “ Matritum versus cum Rege suo  
 “ potentissimo e nuptiis Serenif-  
 “ simæ D. Mariæ Theresiæ Bi-  
 “ bianæ de Austria et Borbon, é  
 “ connubio scilicet cum Rege  
 “ Galliarum Christianissimo D. D.  
 “ Ludovico XIV. labore itineris  
 “ febri præhensus, obiit Mantua  
 “ Carpentanæ, postridie nonas  
 “ Augusti, ætatis LXVI. anno  
 “ M.DC.LX. sepultusque est ho-  
 “ norificè in D. Joannis Parro-  
 “ chiali ecclesiâ nocte, septimo  
 “ Idus mensis, sumptu maximo  
 “ immodicisque expensis, sed non  
 “ immodicis tanto viro; Hæroum  
 “ concomitatu, in hoc domini  
 “ Gasparis Fuenfalida Grafieri  
 “ Regii amicissimi subterraneo  
 “ sarcophago; suoque magistro  
 “ præclaroque

“ præclaroque viro sæculis omni-  
 “ bus venerando, Picturâ colla-  
 “ crimante, hoc breve epicedium  
 “ Joannes de Alfaro Cordubensis  
 “ mœstus posuit et Henricus fra-  
 “ ter medicus.”

*Francisco Zurbaran*, though a native of Fuente de Cantos in the neighbourhood of Seville, studied in Estremadura under one of the scholars of *El Divino Morales*; before he had perfected himself with this master, his parents returned with him into Andalusia to the place of his nativity, and entered him in the school of the celebrated Canon *Pablo de las Roelas* at Seville, who, as we have before observed, was a disciple of *Titiano*. In this academy *Zurbaran* applied himself

himself with such diligence and success to his art, that he soon acquired the reputation of an eminent painter; struck with the bold effects of *Caravaggio's* clear-obscure, he adopted his stile of colouring, at the same time adhering closely to nature without extravagance or caprice: His first compositions acquired great fame, and are in the second cloyster of the barefooted Merced in Seville: They represent the history of San Pedro Nolasco, and all the religious being in white habits, the draperies are managed with great art and delicacy: Many other of his paintings are in this city and several in Cordova; such was the reputation of this artist, that when  
it

it was reported that he was about to settle at Fuente de Cantos, the magistrates and people of Seville, alarmed at the idea of losing so celebrated an artist and so excellent a citizen, deputed certain of their body to wait upon *Zurbaran* by commission and entreat him not to depart out of their city for the purpose of settling elsewhere: He obeyed the flattering deputation by revoking his design, but the commands of the King were soon after signified to him by *Velazquez* in the year 1650, calling him up to Madrid: To these orders the citizens of Seville opposed no remonstrance, nor could he easily demur in the case. Upon his arrival in Madrid he was employed in

in the Retiro, where he executed the paintings of Hercules and was in great favour with Philip the IVth. He painted several pictures for the Casa de Campo and the other Royal Sitios; many of his performances are dispersed in the churches, and not a few in private hands: He died at the age of 66 years in 1662. *Zurbaran* was made King's painter, and Philip, who had a mode of bestowing his favours peculiarly gracious, announced his appointment by telling him, that having been for some time King of the Painters, it was fit he should henceforward be Painter to the King; whilst this was saying Philip had gently rested his hand upon the shoulder of  
*Zurbaran,*

*Zarbaran*, accompanying his favour with one of those familiar actions of princely condescension, which are better felt than described and which, if they do not constitute the essence of generosity, certainly are the ornament of it.

*Antonio del Castillo y Saavedra* of Cordova, was of a very noble stock and studied painting under his father *Agustin del Castillo*, at whose death he went to Seville and perfected himself in the academy of the abovementioned *Zarbaran*: Many valuable paintings in the cathedral of Cordova bear testimony to *Castillo's* merit, and if his colouring had been equal to his drawing, it would not have been easy in this catalogue to have

2

found



found his superior. In the church of San Francisco in his native city of Cordova there is a composition of his representing the baptism of the Saint, which he painted in competition with *Alfaro*, and as that painter was in the habit of signing all his pieces with his name, which *Castillo* imputed to vanity, he wrote at the foot of this canvass, *Non fecit Alvaro*. In 1666 he returned to Seville, where he had not been since his youth; *Murillo* was then in general vogue and at the height of his fame; some of his productions were shewn to *Castillo*; he surveyed them for a time with mute astonishment and surprise; he saw Nature reflected in her most perfect shapes and with a  
 2 brilliancy

brilliancy of pencil, which he was conscious he did not possess, and probably did not believe to be within the power of the art; at length he recovered his speech and turning from the object exclaimed with a sigh, *Yà muridè Castillo!* Castillo is no more: He returned to Cordova; seized with disgust he abstained from his art, and verified his prediction before a year had expired, pining away in melancholy and despair; with such painful sensibility are some men constructed, that to take away their opinion of their own superiority is in effect to take away their lives. I have enquired into this circumstance, as related by *Palomino*, and I find it well authenticated by un-

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questionable tradition. The reader may be apt to conclude that *Castillo* was a man of insufferable self-conceit and corroded with envy; to the contrary of this there is not to be found upon record an artist of more distinguished good qualities, or more complacent disposition: In accounting for the operations of a sensitive mind acting upon a delicate frame of body, there seems to be no occasion for making the malevolent passions accessory to an event like this which took place in the person of poor *Castillo*: The deduction, which I should recommend to be drawn from it, and in which I am persuaded I shall be anticipated by candour, is simply to reflect, that

3

such

such being the frail materials, of which men of tender feelings, and more especially professors of the fine arts, are too apt by nature to be compounded, we ought to regard their infirmity with compassion and be cautious how we attempt to derogate from that excusable self-opinion, which is so inseparable from talents and so essential to man's happiness; In this view of the case perhaps that species of detraction, which a court of law will not denominate a libel, in a court of conscience and in the eye of Heaven shall amount to murder. I had almost forgot to add that *Castillo* was a poet.

The genius of *Velazquez* was of that quality, that to be within the

sphere of its activity was in some degree to partake of its enthusiasm, at least where its attraction met with any particles that were of correspondent quality. A slave, by name *Juan de Pareja*, a Mulatto, was employed in mixing his colours and feeding his pallet; from pointing the arrows of Apollo he became ambitious of trying his strength at the bow: The disqualification of his condition nevertheless was such, that to touch the most liberal of arts with the hand of a slave was danger in the extreme: The Casts in India do not stand off at greater distance from each other, than degrees of men do in Spain, and *Velazquez* was of all masters the least likely to brook

a

a violation so presumptuous as that which *Parefa* meditated: Hung round with chains of gold and courtly orders, of haughty pretensions in point of family and high in favour and familiarity with his Sovereign, *Velazquez* would have treated the insolence of his slave, as Jupiter did that of Salmoneus, by extinguishing his existence: Notwithstanding the temptation was for ever present and the impulses of genius in the end became irresistible; in the stolen moments of his master's siesta, or when court avocations called him from home, *Parefa* seized the clandestine opportunities and by the force of talents became in time an accomplished artist. Ambition now

inspired him with higher projects,  
 and as the liberality of Philip held  
 out a general asylum to merit, he  
 determined upon a method of in-  
 troducing his performances to the  
 eye of the King: He observed it  
 was his practice in *Velazquez's*  
 chamber to order the pictures, that  
 stood with their faces to the wall,  
 to be turned that he might see  
 them; this suggested to him the  
 thought of substituting one of his  
 own productions, and taking his  
 chance for what should follow.  
 The expedient happily took place,  
 and the King coming in to the aca-  
 demy, ordered the canvases to be  
 turned; *Pareja* eagerly obeyed and  
 presented to the royal view a piece  
 composed by the audacious pencil  
 of

of a slave and a Mulatto, but such an one in point of excellence, as would have done honour to a freer and a fairer artist: It was not easy to appeal to better judgment than the King's, or enter upon his trial at a more merciful tribunal: *Parefa* fell upon his knees, and avowing the guilt of the performance, implored protection against the resentment of his master for having secretly purloined his art. *Velazquez*, says the King, you must not only overlook this transgression in *Parefa*, but observe that such talents should emancipate the possessor. The generous decree was obeyed by *Velazquez*, and *Parefa* had his freedom; the grateful freed man continued his voluntary

F 4      service



service till the death of *Velazquez*, and after his death to his daughter, who married Don Juan Baup-  
tista del Mazo. I wish I could add that I had seen any of his works, but I understand he was eminent in portraits and copied very ably the stile and manner of his master : *Paresa* died at Madrid in 1670 aged sixty years.

*Alonso Cano* may be stiled the *Michael Angelo* of Spain, he excelled as Painter, Statuary and Architect, and it is difficult to decide in which branch his talents were most conspicuous : He was born in the city of Grenada in 1600 : His father was an eminent architect and educated him in his own profession ; the genius of

*Alonso* was not to be limited to one department in the arts or sciences; he had industry to combat any difficulties, ardour to undertake and readiness to apprehend. When he had completed his theoretical studies under his father, as far as his instructions could carry him in architecture, he applied himself to the more animating study of sculpture and made an uncommon progress in a very short time; he next repaired to Seville and admitted himself as one of *Pacheco's* disciples, he staid eight months with him and then completed himself under *Juan del Castillo*, in whose academy he executed many noble paintings for public edifices in Seville, and at  
the

the same time gave some specimens of his excellence in statuary, which were perfectly astonishing in so early a proficient; being then only twenty-four years of age. *Cano* was of a noble family and so high-minded that in his early practice he would not admit of being paid for his productions, excusing himself by declaring that he worked for reputation and practice, and that he considered himself as yet so unfinished and imperfect in his art, that he could not in conscience admit of any recompence: Nevertheless in this early period of life he exhibited some statues of such superior workmanship, in particular a Madonna and Child, now in the great church of Nebriga, and

two

two colossal figures of San Pedro and San Pablo, that the Flemish artists, hearing of their fame, came into Andalusia to copy them, and returned in admiration at his talents.

*Cano*, who was generous and gallant in the extreme, was of a turbulent and fiery temper, and having upon some occasion quarrelled with *Sebastian de Llanos y Valdes*, a painter of eminence in Seville, he challenged him to single combat, and being a most expert swordsman wounded *Llanos* in the right arm: I have no doubt but *Cano* was wrong in the dispute, for he found it necessary to quit Seville upon the affair, and Philip the IVth chancing to pass through that city with his minister *Olivares*,

*vares*, *Cano* attached himself to the suite of the Conde Duque, and under his protection came to Madrid; an artist of his extensive capacity was not likely to be overlooked by Philip, and in a short time he was made First Royal Architect, King's Painter, and Teacher to the Prince Don Balthazar Carlos de Austria. As architect he projected several additional works to the palaces, some public gates to the city and a triumphal arch erected upon the grand entrance of Mariana de Austria, second consort to Philip the IVth; this was universally admired, as well for the novelty as for the sublimity of the idea. As a painter he executed many celebrated compositions;

positions; in the parish church of Santa Maria in Madrid there is a much-admired picture on the subject of San Isidro; a Saint Francis with an Angel in the parish church of Santiago; a Santa Cantalina, a San Joseph and some others in the church of San Miguel, and many more in the Imperial College and otherwise dispersed in Madrid, which any curious enquirer that is desirous of tracing the productions of this celebrated artist may readily enough find out. He was now at the summit of prosperity and fame; of course he was an object for envy and detraction. He takes his compositions, said the cavillers, from the refuse of the print-shops; and is not such plagiarism mean and unbecoming

becoming for so great a pretender? Granted, replied *Alonso*; but if you commit the same offence, gentlemen, I shall not make the same complaint.

An event now happened, which involved him in much trouble and persecution; returning home one evening he discovered his wife murdered, his house robbed and an Italian journeyman, on whom the suspicion naturally fell, escaped and not to be found. The criminal judges held a court of enquiry upon the fact, and having discovered that *Alonso Cano* had been jealous of this Italian, and also that he was known to be attached to another woman, they acquitted the fugitive gallant and  
with

with a sagacity truly in character condemned the husband; no choice was now left to *Cano* but to fly and abandon Madrid in the midst of his prosperity; he caused it to be reported that he was gone to Portugal and took refuge in the city of Valencia; necessity soon compelled him to have recourse to his art, and his art immediately betrayed him; in this exigency he betook himself to the asylum of a Carthusian convent at Porta Coeli about three leagues from Valencia: Here he seemed for a time determined upon taking the order, but either the austerities of that habit, or some hopes of returning with impunity to a course of life more to his taste than a convent, put him



him by from his design, and he was even rash enough to return to Madrid, thinking to conceal himself in the house of his father Don Rafael Sanguineto. He made several paintings here as well as with the Carthusians, and not being of a temper to maintain any lasting restraint over himself, he neglected to keep house with Don Rafael, and was apprehended in the streets, and directions were given for putting him to the torture: *Cano* defended himself by the plea of *excellens in arte*, and he obtained so much mitigation as to have his right arm exempted from the ligation; he suffered the rack, and had the resolution under his tortures not to criminate himself by any

any confession, not uttering a single word. This circumstance being related to Philip, he received him again into favour, and as *Cano* saw there was no absolute safety but within the pale of the Church, he solicited the King with that view and was named Residentiary of Grenada: The Chapter objected to his nomination, and deputed two of their body to represent to Philip against the person of *Cano*, enumerating many disqualifications and amongst the rest want of learning: The King dismissed the Deputies bidding them proceed to admit his nomination, and telling them that if *Cano* had been a man of learning, he should perhaps have made him their Bishop

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G

and

and not a Residentiary. " Priests  
 " like you (said Philip) I the  
 " King can make at pleasure, but  
 " God alone can create an *Alonso*  
 " *Cano* ;" using the same retort to  
 these complainants, as Charles the  
 Vth did to his courtiers in the case  
 of *Vitiano* : The Church of Gre-  
 nada profited by his appointment,  
 many sculptures and paintings be-  
 ing of his donation, and some he  
 also bestowed upon the church of  
 Malaga. A Counsellor of Grenada  
 having refused to pay the sum of  
 one hundred pistoles for an image  
 of San Antonio de Padua which  
*Cano* had made for him, he dashed  
 the Saint into pieces on the pave-  
 ment of his academy, whilst the  
 stupid Counsellor was reckoning  
 up

up how many pistoles per day *Cano* had earned whilst the work was in hand: You have been five-and-twenty days carving this image of San Antonio, said the niggardly arithmetician, and the purchase-money demanded being one hundred, you have rated your labour at the exorbitant price of four pistoles per day, whilst I, who am a Counsellor and your superior, do not make half your profits by my talents.—Wretch, cried the enraged Artist, to talk to me of your talents—I have been fifty years learning to make this statue in twenty-five days, and so saying he flung it with the utmost violence upon the pavement. The affrighted Counsellor escaped out of the

G 2      house

house with the utmost precipitation, concluding that the man, who was bold enough to demolish a Saint, would have very little remorse in destroying a Lawyer. Happily for *Cano* the story did not reach the ears of the Inquisitors, else he would have had a second rehearsal of his former tortures and the doom of *Torrignano*; but he escaped with no other punishment than a suspension from his function by the Chapter of Grenada, to which however he was restored by the King, but not until he had finished a magnificent crucifix, which the Queen had commissioned him to carve and which he had long neglected to perform. This passed in the year

1658;

1658; from this period to his death he led an exemplary life of great charity and devotion; when he had no money to bestow in alms, which was frequently the case, he would call for paper and give a beggar a drawing, directing him where to carry it for sale; but to Jews he bore such antipathy that he considered every touch of theirs as a contamination, and in such cases would give away his cloaths, forbidding however his servant on whom he bestowed them, on any account to wear what he had cast off. On his death-bed he would not receive the sacraments from a priest, who attended him, because he had given them to the converted Jews; and from another

he would not accept the crucifix presented to him in his last moments, telling him it was so bungling a piece of work that he could not endure the sight of it; in this manner died *Alonso Cano* at the age of seventy-six in the year 1676; a circumstance which shows that his ruling passion for the Arts accompanied him in the article of death superseding even religion itself in those moments, when the great interests of salvation naturally must be supposed to occupy the mind to the exclusion of every other idea.

Had it not been that the persecution of his judges deprived *Cano* of that tranquillity, which is so necessary to the very existence of the  
fine

fine arts, I am inclined to think his talents would have produced a display superior to any Spain had given birth to; in the early period of his life, when the great artists of Flanders thought a journey to Spain well repaid by surveying and copying his works, and when he had so strong an idea in his mind of further excellence, that he refused payment for productions he regarded as imperfect, he could have given no greater evidence of the true spirit and native genius of an artist; the same spirit attended him to his last hour, the very eye that the hand of death was in the act of closing, and in which the light of life was all but absolutely extinct, revolted with

G 4      abhorrence



abhorrence from a disproportioned and ill-carved crucifix, though to that object the indispensable duties of his religion were affixed. Strong indeed must be the enthusiasm of that Virtuoso, who, when naked and starving, was to refuse entering the door that was opened to him, because the rules of architecture were not observed in its construction; if we may say of such a man that he loved his art better than his life, we may pronounce of *Cano* in stronger terms that it was dearer to him than his soul.

How it happened that he avoided the Inquisition when he broke Saint Antony in pieces is matter of just surprize; nor is it less to be wondered

dered at ~~that~~ he escaped self-crimination on the rack ; in that situation there is no defence but in absolute silence ; like the Divine Author of our religion to be dumb before our accusers is in that case the only part which innocence can take. If it be true that the Inquisition had its origin in the Crusades, it is the legitimate child of persecution, and has not degenerated from its stock to the present hour : False accusations are hard enough to bear, let them come from whom they may ; but to be compelled falsely to accuse one's self is a refinement on tyranny, for which mankind are indebted to the ingenious cruelty of the Holy Office : The law, or, speaking more properly,

I

perly, that abuse of justice, which usurps its name, and which at present obtains in the afflicted and truly pitiable kingdom, where this account has chiefly been composed, participates much of the nature of inquisitorial proceedings, and I am in this place tempted to relate a fact, of which I was a very interested and anxious spectator, that will confirm what I have advanced. I had in my family at Madrid a young man of exemplary character, who lived with me in great trust and intimacy, and was a native of that city, universally known and respected in it; he had been my guest but one night, when the next day at the hour of dinner the officers of justice entered.

tered my chamber, whilst a party of foldiers paraded at my gates, demanding the body of this unfortunate victim; it was as vain to ask to know the charge, as it was impracticable to avoid or resist it; after conditioning for the removal of the foldiers, and some promises of humanity on the part of the judge, I surrendered to that magistrate a young man, born of Irish parents, red-haired, of a fair complexion, and without impediment in his gait or person. I mention these circumstances because this officer and his alguazils were in search of his direct opposite in every particular, viz. of an old felon, an Asturian, black as a gypsy and lame in one of his feet by

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a natural defect in its formation. In spite of the evidence of his own eyes, the judge conducted my guest to prison, hand-cuffed and hauled between two fiend-like alguazils, in the sight of hundreds of spectators, who followed him through the streets silently compassionating his ignominy and misfortune. The next day his books, papers and effects were seized and rummaged, where fortunately they found no food for the Holy Office, nor offence against the state. In the regular course of proceeding he should have laid in prison ten or twelve years, if nature could have subsisted for that time, before he was allowed to see his judge; but at my instance he was speedily admitted

admitted to an examination, and I place it justly amongst the many marks of kindness I was distinguished with in that kingdom, that justice was made so to quicken her customary pace on my account. When he was brought before the judge, though every feature in his face swore to the mistake of his commitment, the necessary forms of inquisition were not to be passed over, and he was called upon to recollect all the passages of his life and conversation, and to guess the cause for which he was arrested and imprisoned: In perfect simplicity of heart he exposed to his inquisitor all his history and habits of life with the whole of his correspondence and acquaintance, as well

well as a disturbed imagination could bring it to recollection: When this had passed and happily nothing had dropt on which his judge could fasten any new matter of crimination, he was coolly informed he did not answer to the description of the felon they were in search of, and that he was at liberty to return to the place from which he came.

To such uneven hands is the scale of justice delegated in some states; with such tenants are the towers of Segovia and Cadiz peopled; and who that reflects on this, and has the sentiments and feelings of a man, but must regret, may execrate, that narrow, impious and impolitic principle of intolerance.

rancy and persecution, which drives our Catholic subjects in shoals to seek a subsistence in a hostile service? Let the English reader excuse this short digression, whilst he can say within himself, My house is my castle, I shall know my charge, and face my accusers; I cannot be left to languish in a prison and when I am called to trial, I shall not be made to criminate myself; nor can I, if I would. Of such a constitution we may justly glory; our fathers have bled to establish it, and if in the course of this unequal war we follow our sons to the grave who die in its defence, we have not bought our privilege too dear, however painful may have been the

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the purchase. Before I quite dismiss this account it may be some satisfaction to humanity to know that I extracted the above gentleman safely out of Spain.

*Don Juan de Alfaro y Gamon* of Cordova was a painter of too great eminence to be passed over in silence; he was educated under *Castillo*, and completed his studies with *Kelazquez* at Madrid, whose style he copied, particularly in his portraits; in his latter manner he inclined more to the simplicity and nature of *Vandyke*, and some of his paintings, particularly upon a reduced size, are not with certainty to be distinguished from that master: *Alfaro* attached himself to the Admiral of Castile and lived

lived in his family, with the greatest intimacy and friendship till the time of the admiral's exile; upon that event the disconsolate *Alfaro* could no longer support a residence in Madrid and retired to Cordova his native city in 1678; here he lived in great privacy and obscurity, and an edict having been published for taxing pictures ad valorem, *Alfaro* then sore with the loss and misfortunes of his friend, and indignant against a principle so discouraging to the arts, totally abstained from painting, though his fame was at its height and his age not yet forty: Under this spirited self-denial he was suffering infinite distresses, when information was brought of

the release of his friend: To hear these glad tidings and to set out upon his journey of congratulation to Madrid was in *Alfaro* the operation of one and the same moment: His provision for the way was no impediment to his dispatch, and perhaps at that instant the concern never entered his mind; though the journey was long and the country difficult, yet the impulse of an ardent affection smoothed all obstacles; if *Alfaro* was destitute, yet he might presume upon encountering hospitality by the way, and if all other doors were shut against his necessities the doors of convents are ever open to the wayfaring man and the poor. He arrived in Madrid

drid at length and hastened to the palace of his patron and friend, but whether the meanness of his habit and appearance, or what other pretence operated for his repulse does not appear, but so it proved that upon repeated visits he could not obtain admission to an interview with the admiral; pierced to the heart with this cutting disappointment, destitute of fortune and abandoned to despair, the too sensitive heart of *Alfaro* sunk under the shock and a few days laid him in his grave, at the age of forty years in 1680. Thus perished one of the most ingenious and elegant artists, that Spain ever produced; a man described to have been of refined manners, and on it well

appears of a most soft and susceptible spirit. A genius dedicated to science or the study of the fine arts is seldom capable of surmounting these worldly rubs, which ingratitude, or distress, or insult are for ever throwing in the way; such men should only tread in flowery paths through life, the thorns and briars which coarser feet either trample upon without pain, or kick aside with indifference, in them produce wounds and rankling sores, that in the end too frequently prove mortal, and from slight offences become serious evils. The fair sex and the fine arts should be treated with equal delicacy: Genius and Beauty, like blossoms of the choicest plants, should

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are not to be touched by profane and vulgar hands, but fostered with the tenderest attention and respect.

I come now to speak of the tender and natural *Murillo*, a painter better known in England than any of the Spanish school except *Ribera*, and yet I very much doubt whether any historical groups or composition of *Murillo's* is in English hands; at least my enquiry has not ascertained any such to be found. It is of course a very imperfect measure of his merit we can take in this country. The great Historical Paintings of the Life of Jacob in the possession of the Marquis de Santiago at Madrid are the finest compositions

which I have seen of Murillo, and was to follow no better authority than the impression left on my feelings by those wonderful representations of nature, and put to make at once an unstudied choice, I am inclined to think I should rate those canvasses before any I have ever seen, one miracle of art alone excepted, the Venus of Titian. His Catholic Majesty has several beautiful paintings by Murillo in his collection, but his great scriptural pieces are in religious incarceration at Seville; that was the place of his residence and there he has left the most numerous monuments of his fame. A student or lover of painting, who comes to Spain for edification or amusement,

ment, ought by all means to visit the city of Seville; from this place our collectors have extracted what few pictures of value they have drawn out of Spain, and in this number some few single figures of *Murillo* and more, that assume his name, may be included. A late edict of the present King in its preamble recites this circumstance of the extraction of *Murillo's* pictures and gives the strictest order to the officers of his customs for its prevention; but what mandate may not be evaded by the contrivance of packages or the corruption of custom-house officers? Valencia, Cordova, Granada contain a magazine of paintings, and in some cases even the hands of



Monks may be made to quit their hold in the little wretched convent of San Placido at Madrid there are pictures by *Guercino*, *Velazquez*, *Goello* and others of inestimable value; the reputed relic of a saint though cut from a gibbet, might perhaps move some of them from their frames, and thus although it could not be said to work miracles itself, it might purchase those who did. Was it the policy of Spain to emancipate some of her treasures in art, and put them into circulation through Europe, according to my idea, it would answer to her in point of interest and reputation and be the means of drawing foreigners to extend their tour into

her now-unvisited dominions. Notwithstanding the severity of this edict, it was my good fortune, not surreptitiously, but under favour of his Catholic Majesty's generous and condescending indulgence to bring out of Spain some few valuable samples of the great Spanish masters, with a composition of *Vandyke's* of undoubted originality obtained by a most happy accident; the cloth is nine feet by six and the composition a dead Christ, the body supported by Mary the sister of Martha and Mary Magdalene, two angels kneel at the feet and a cherubim in tears points to his wounds; the size is that of nature, and I may add so is the expression. This picture, before

it was upon sale, was in the hands of Mengs and served him for a study : The attitude and air of the head of the first Mary he has evidently transcribed into his picture on the same subject in the Madrid palace, with this difference that he has transferred it to his San Juan. The rigour of our custom-house in London, and my fruitless solicitation for obtaining an exemption from the royal import duties on pictures to be measured by the foot, put me to the painful obligation of opening a roll, which the King of Spain's painters had contrived with the utmost care and attention, so that, notwithstanding I had every indulgence from the executive officers that their duty could

could admit of, this canvass and one by *Velazquez* in a very tender state received injury. I should not have presumed upon interposing this anecdote, but in the hope that some one of my readers may repine at this regulation so inimical to the fine arts, whose interest may extend to procure its abolition.

*Bartolomè Estevan Murillo*, or as he is commonly stiled the Spanish *Wandyke*, was descended from a family of respectable rank in the province of Andalusia, and in times past distinguished for their opulency and possessions: The small town of Pilas, about five leagues distant from Seville, has the honour of being the place of his birth, which was in the year 1618. *Castillo,*

*Castillo*, of whom we have frequently spoken, was his uncle by the mother's side, and in his academy at Seville he received his first instructions: How long he studied under this master I cannot determine, but I take for granted not to the time of *Castillo's* death, for he must have been thirty-seven years of age at that period. His first manner was rather black and inky, and indeed the colouring of *Castillo* afforded no good example to his disciples; in all other requisites he was competent to the profession of a teacher. It was then the custom for the young novitiates to expose their productions at the fair, held annually in the city of Seville; many of *Murillo's* first

first pictures were purchased in this manner, and so many were bought up and exported to the West India colonies, that it has given rise to a false tradition of his having gone thither in person. *Velazquez* was painting at the height of his reputation in Madrid, when *Murillo* conceived the ambition of visiting that capital and introducing himself to the notice of that eminent professor. *Velazquez* was of too liberal a genius, and withal too intuitive in his art, to reject the advances of a man of talents and a countryman: He admitted young *Murillo* into his academy, and a new scene instantly presented itself to his view: Here he had access to every thing which the Royal collections.

collections contained, and he was too ardent in the prosecution of his art not to profit by the opportunity: He copied several of the best paintings of *Titiano*, *Rubens* and *Vandyke*, by which he greatly improved his method of colouring: After a proper time thus spent under the eye of *Velazquez*, *Murillo* returned to Seville, and began to resume the practice of his art, but with such advantages in point of improvement, and with so much force of nature and expression, that his fellow citizens were in astonishment, and as *Murillo* was of a solitary and studious turn of mind, it was reported generally and believed, that he had sequestered himself in some retire-

ment for the purpose of a closer application to the study of nature, and that the pretence of an expedition to Madrid was held out to cover the circumstance of his non-appearance at Seville. He now performed his first great work in fresco, being the History of San Francisco, still to be seen in the famous cloyster of that convent; all the figures in this composition are portraits, in which practice I am inclined to think he persisted; for it is in a close and lively imitation of nature he principally excels; all his forms have a national peculiarity of air, habit and countenance; nothing of the academy is to be discovered in his groupess. His Madonnas, his Saints and even his



his Saviours have the Spanish cast of features; and though he oftentimes adopts a beautiful expression of nature, there is generally a peasant-like simplicity in his ideas, holding a middle place between the vulgarity of the Flemings and the elegant gusto of the Italians. In his Rustics we behold the life itself, with a minute observance of *Costuma*. There are many figures of Christ at the age of eight or ten years, of magic lustre and transparency of hue, with a characteristic expression of the eyes, that appears to me to be peculiar and by itself; still there is a mark and cast of features, that to any man who is versed in Andalusian countenances will appear strikingly provincial.

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His Baptist and his Saints; particularly San Francisco Xavier give instances occasionally of great sublimity; but it is a sublimity, that neither forces nor enlarges nature; truth and simplicity are never out of sight: It is what the painter sees, not what he conceives, which is presented to you: Herein he is distinguishable from his preceptor *Velazquez*; that great master by his courtly habits and intercourse with the great contracted a more proud and swelling character, to which the simple and chaste pencil of *Murillo* never sought to aspire; a plain and pensive cast, sweetly attempered by humility and benevolence, marks his canvass; and on other occasions,

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where it is of necessity impassioned or inflamed, it is the zeal of devotion, the influx of pious inspiration, and never the guilty passions he exhibits ; in short from what he feels he separates what he feels, and has within himself the counter-type of almost every object he describes. So far from having ever quitted Spain as Joachim de Sandart and others have asserted, I believe he never made a second journey to Madrid : In the year 1670, when he must have been fifty-seven years old, an Immaculate Conception of his painting was exhibited at Madrid, in the great procession of the Corpus Christi, to the admiration and surprise of the whole court and city ;

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many of his works could not then have reached Madrid, much less could he have practised and resided in that capital, where this picture was regarded as so new and extraordinary a phenomenon, that application was immediately made to his friend Don Francisco Emminente to intercede with him to come up to Madrid; and this was done by order of King Charles the II<sup>d</sup>, then on the throne, with a promise of appointing him one of his Royal Artists: *Murillo*, whose love of retirement and attachment to his native city of Seville was not to be superseded by any considerations of interest or ambition, excused himself from the proposal on account of his age; Emminente

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finding it impossible to prevail with him to accept the royal offer of becoming one of the court artists and of residing at Madrid, was commissioned to desire that he would send up some specimen of his performances, that should be equal in merit to the picture he had exhibited at the solemnity above-mentioned, for which he should be rewarded with suitable munificence: To this message *Murillo* could oppose no absolute excuse, but at the same time evaded an immediate compliance by requiring a longer space of time for executing the commission, than the impatience and curiosity of the King could dispense with: In the mean time therefore *Emminente*

was employed in procuring some pieces of his painting for the Royal Collection; and hearing that *Murillo* had given his uncle *Castillo* a painting of San Juan in the Desert, he purchased that famous picture for the small sum of 125 dollars, now in the palace of Madrid, a very beautiful sample of the master in his clearest manner; several others were afterwards obtained, and now remain in the royal possession, particularly one of exquisite beauty and expression, representing the Saviour carrying a lamb on his shoulder: The bulk of his productions are still to be found at Seville, and the edict above-mentioned, which particularly refers to the works of *Murillo*, serves to

show with what jealousy the court of Spain guards the possession of these valuable remains of his art. Besides the famous cloyster of San Francisco, which we have already noticed, there is at Seville in the christening chapel of the church of the *Miraculous Paduan* a celebrated picture by this author, representing San Antonio with Christ under a glory of Cherubims, the back ground giving the perspective of part of a temple of admirable architecture; and by the side of the Saint is a table, on which is placed a jar with lillies, so naturally represented, that the monks relate the story of a small bird attempting to rest upon the flowers to pick the feeds; a compliment, which probably

probably has been paid to many an inferior artist, but which the Fathers after their manner enlarge upon with rapture. It is dwelling longer on a trifle than it merits, to observe to the reader that the whole back ground of this picture, including the lilies in question, was put in by *Valdez* a contemporary artist, so that we must rest the credit of *Murillo* upon some better testimony than that of the monks and their small birds \*. In the same church there are two fine portraits of Leander and Isidor, brothers and archbishops of Seville; also two compositions on the birth

\* *Valdez* was born in Seville 1630, presided in the academy there for many years, and died of the palsy in 1691.



of our Saviour, accompanied with Angels and a glory of Cherubims in his best manner and brightest colouring. In the church of the Capuchins in the same city they have no less than sixteen pictures upon canvass by *Murillo*, one of which he distinguished by calling it *Su Lienzo*; the subject is San Tomas of Villaneuva distributing alms to a number of poor objects : In this composition the genius of the painter has its full scope and display, which was never so happily employed as in the representation of nature in its simplest and most ordinary forms ; the persons, who are receiving the charity of the Saint, are disposed with great variety of character and effect, particularly

ticularly a man in the fore-ground with his back turned to the spectator, that has a striking force of clear-obscure. In the high altar of the said church is a picture six yards in height, representing the Jubilee of the Porciuncula, illuminated with a glory; Christ is drawn with the cross looking at his Holy Mother, who stands on his right hand in the act of intercession to him for the grant described in the picture, with a variety of beautiful Angels attending; this altar-piece has been celebrated by all artists and others who have seen and examined it. In the Church of the Charity there are several pictures; particularly one which represents *Saint John*

*John of God* carrying a poor man; an Angel supports him in his charitable office, and the Saint regards him with a look of veneration and gratitude, that is beautifully conceived. There is in this church a picture of Saint Elizabeth, Queen of Hungary, in the act of healing a poor leprous man; a Moses striking the Rock, and a representation of the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes, in which he has disposed a numerous collection of people in so many attitudes, with such variety of dresses, flees and ages, that it forms one of the most striking groupes any where to be seen.

*Murillo* executed many pictures for Cadiz; there is one still to be

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seen on the high altar of the church of San Phelipo Neri; also a grand composition on a canvass near six yards high, representing Christ with Mary and Joseph, and above God and the Holy Ghost with a glory of Angels, in the possession of the family of Pedroso.

In the city of Grenada some works of *Murillo* are to be found, particularly a Good Shepherd greatly celebrated in the Sanctuary of the *Nuns of the Angel*; also a small piece in the Prior's cell of the Carthusian convent, representing the Immaculate Conception. There are some at Cordova on scriptural subjects in the possession of the Religious, and many are in private hands throughout

out the kingdom; but of these the most valuable belong to the Marquis de Santiago at Madrid; they consist of five grand compositions exhibiting the Life of Jacob in the different periods of his history, as I before observed; these pictures were originally in the collection of the Marquis de Villamanrique: The first design was to have had the Life of David painted by *Murillo*, and the landscapes or back-grounds by *Ignacio Iriarte* of Seville, who excelled in that branch of the art; *Murillo* desired *Iriarte* to make the landscapes and he would afterwards place the figures; *Iriarte* on the other hand contended for *Murillo*'s placing the figures before he filled up the back-grounds; to remedy

to remedy this difficulty *Murillo* executed the whole without *Iriarte's* assistance, taking Jacob's history instead of David's, and thus it came to pass that these extraordinary pictures remain a monument of *Murillo's* genius in every branch of the art, and a treasure truly inestimable in the possession of a family, which by the precaution of an absolute entail has guarded against any future possibility of alienation. The same gentleman has a Madonna with the infant Jesus, highly finished and in most perfect preservation, the Madonna painted to the knees; I have an engraving from this picture: The Madonna appears to be a portrait, and not of a beautiful subject, in this piece  
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the art is much superior to the design. But there are in the same collection two full-length pictures, companions in size and excellence, which are superior to all the works of this author in the Royal collection, and which no stranger of taste, who visits Madrid, should fail to see; the one a Saint Joseph leading by the hand a Christ of the age of eight or ten years, and over head a glory of Cherubims, the back ground a landscape in a grand stile and exquisite harmony; the other, a Saint Francis Xavier in a sublime and elevated attitude, his eyes raised to Heaven with great spirit and enthusiasm, whilst a stream of light smites on his breast, which is bare, and visibly conveys

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to him the inspiration of the Deity, previous to the commencement of his mission amongst the savages of America, represented at distance in the back ground in a considerable groupe amidst a scene finely varied with sea and land. These two pictures are sufficient to immortalize the name of *Murillo*; they appear to me to possess every perfection, of which the art is capable, both in respect of design as well as execution: As I have never received any competent idea of a picture from description, I may reasonably despair of conveying any by it.

I have seen several portraits by *Murillo*; they are in general a simple representation of nature,  
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according to truth, without any of those ingenious aids and devices, by which modern artists, especially those of England, embellish their characters, and bestow employment and importance upon the idle and insignificant. In the church of the *Venerables* at Seville there is a portrait of the Canon Don Faustino de Nebes universally admired ; he is attended by a little English dog, at which a parcel of curs are barking, the whole expressed with singular spirit, and is the only emblematical accompaniment, that has come to my notice in any of *Murillo's* portraits. I have never heard of more than two portraits of himself by his own hand, from one of these I am told

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an engraving was made in Flanders by *Nicholas Amazurino*. *Murillo* was in his person graceful, of a mild and humble deportment and an expressive handsome countenance; to the allurements of interest or ambition he was equally insensible; he resisted, as we have seen, the offers of Charles, and at his death was found possessed of one hundred rials, which he had received the day before, and sixty dollars in a drawer; He was in his seventy-third year, when mounting a scaffold to make a painting of Saint Catherine for the convent of Capuchins at Cadiz, he fell, and, having already a rupture, bruised himself so as to bring on a violent increase of his disorder;

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but such was the delicacy of his nature, that being unwilling to expose his infirmity to the examination of a surgeon, he suffered in silence, and after some days anguish a mortification taking place, with perfect composure he resigned a life, tinged with no other excess, but that of an inherent modesty, to which, having repeatedly sacrificed what is generally esteemed most valuable in life, he lastly gave up life itself.

*Claudio Coello*, of a respectable Portuguese family, was a native of Spain, born in Madrid in the seventeenth century, but in what precise year I have not been able to ascertain; he was a relation of the famous painter *Alonso Sanchez Coello*,

*Coello*, of whom we have already spoken. His father *Faustino Coello* was of the city of *Tulbusino* in the bishoprick of *Visco* in *Portugal*. He was educated in the academy of the famous *Francisco Ricci* painter to King *Philip III.* and was his favourite disciple; giving early and repeated proofs of an extraordinary genius he completed his studies under the tuition of this great master, by whose means he had access to the royal collection, and copied many works of *Titian*, *Rubens*, *Vandyke* and others.

As *Coello* never travelled out of *Spain* and as few if any of his pictures are in private hands, there is little probability of any of his works being extracted from the

obscurity in which they are immured; and I question if his name has yet found its way beyond the confines of Spain or Portugal; as he was a native of Madrid and resided there constantly, except when he was employed in the Escorial as a Royal Artist, many monuments of his genius are to be found in the convents and churches of that capital; these I have traced with an assiduity that has been richly repaid; for though I have had continual occasion to regret the disadvantageous position of his pictures in those gloomy repositories, yet with the assistance of a most brilliant climate and the kind offices of the Fathers whom I have ever found studious to assist my

my curiosity, I have seen very excellent productions of his pencil; and though I cannot absolutely close with the enthusiasm of some of his living admirers who set *Goetto* decidedly at the head of the Spanish school, preferring him to *Murillo*, *Ribera* and even *Velazquez*, yet there can be no doubt but he is to be ranked in the class of the first, though perhaps not the first of the class. His capital picture *de la Colocazion de las Santas Formas*, on which he expended seven years labour, is an amazing composition, and deservedly maintains its rank at the altar of the grand sacristy of Saint Lorenzo in the Escorial, though in company with the productions

of *Raphael, Titians* and the greatest Italian and Flemish masters. I do not remember ever to have seen such a striking effect of clear and obscure and force of perspective. In the groupe of persons who form the grand procession of the collocation there are to be found the portraits of the King and all the principal nobility of his court, executed to the life itself; every thing is traced with the most masterly and determined pencil. Such a majestic and orderly solemnity is observed in the arrangement of his figures, as bespeaks the art of the composer, and suits the dignity of his subject; all the accompaniments are in such perfect harmony and the colouring of the parts so rich

rich and glowing with such forcible but clear relief, that it forms the most ravishing spectacle, that art can form, nor is it easy to call off the attention to the other great productions that enrich this inestimable repository, till the eye is in some degree satisfied with this striking canvass.

As this picture is undoubtedly the chef d'œuvre of *Coello*, it will not be necessary to enter upon a minute enumeration of his works in the churches and convents of Madrid, Toledo and Zaragossa; it will suffice to observe that there is a *Nativity* by this master in the royal collection at Madrid, which hangs in the same room with the *Adoration* of *Rubens* and is a pic-  
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ture of very high pretensions tho' in such a neighbourhood. In the chapel of the nuns of Saint Placido there is a large altar-piece of *Coello's* painting on the subject of the Incarnation; the Holy Virgin is displayed in the center of the piece, above is a glory of Angels, and in the fore-ground a groupe of Prophets and Sybils who announce the coming of the Messiah. This was the first composition of *Coello*, and was executed by him whilst in the school of *Francisco Ricci*. It is a piece in high estimation, but the unfavourable light in which it is placed and its great height from the eye, (the figures being only of the natural size) scarce allow the spectator to form

form any judgement of its excellence. In the same altar-piece, and in various parts of the same chapel there are many smaller paintings of *Coello* and some slight sketches in the pannels of the altars of distinguished merit: But of all the remains of this master those which in my opinion deserve to be ranked next to his altar-piece in the Escorial abovementioned are two pictures upon canvass in the valuable collection of the Carmelitical convent in the great street of Alcala; but these again are in such lights, or more properly in such want of light, that our gratification scarce balances our regret: On the whole it appears to me that if *Coello's* works could be  
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reprieved from their imprisonment, and were favourably disposed amongst the great collections of Europe they would hold a very distinguished rank, wherever they were placed; of all the masters of established name and character I am of opinion he most resembles *Paula Veronese*; his draperies, colours and characters are mostly of that cast and his compositions fully on a level: In the nude I have seen no specimens and I am inclined to believe there are few if any to be found. In the pictures belonging to the Carmelites, which refer to the legends of two Saints, of which I have lost the remembrance, he is as natural and simple as *Murillo*; but with some-  
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what less rusticity of manners; he is in no case so proud and swelling as *Velazquez* and though he has singular force in his clear-obscure he is never so black and inky as *Ribera*; nor does he like him martyr his Saints or delight in scenes of terror; although *Coello* was so remarkable for a melancholy and saturnine appearance that a certain religious physiognomist observing it to *Francisco Ricci* predicted boldly in disfavour of his genius. *Ricci*, with whom his pupil was in high esteem, replied, *Pues Padre virtudes vencon senates.* Upon the death of *Francis de Herrera*, King Philip the IVth promoted *Coello* to be one of his painters at the instigation of *Car-*

~~reñe~~, and it was not till after the  
 death of *Carreño*, as well as of  
*Francisco Ricci* that *Coello* begun to  
 paint his famous picture of the  
 Collocation; when he had com-  
 pleted that work, he returned to  
 Madrid in the year 1689, liberally  
 rewarded. In a short time *Luca*  
*Jordano* was invited into Spain by  
 King Charles the II<sup>d</sup> to paint the  
 fresco of the great staircase at the  
 Escorial and for other works. His  
 arrival, which took place in 1692,  
 was so deeply resented by *Coello*,  
 that he totally declined any other  
 undertaking, except putting the  
 last hand to his great picture of  
 Saint Stephen for the church of  
 that Saint in Salamanca, which  
 having finished, he exhibited it in  
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the gallery of the grandees at the Pardo to the admiration of the whole court and no less so of *Jordano* himself. The resentful spirit of *Coello* notwithstanding this testimony could never be induced to brook the interposition of a rival, and after venting himself in many bitter satires and invectives against *Jordano*, to which he was naturally too much addicted, he sickened and soon after died in 1693, to the general regret of all who admired his many great and eminent talents; with this melancholy aggravation to the regret which his death universally occasioned, that it was owing to the effects of envy and chagrin operating on a most implacable temper,

per, which all his eminent talents could not conquer or correct.

*Don Juan Nifo de Guevara*, born in Madrid, was a son of the captain of the guards of the Vice-king of Arragon, under whose protection he was put to study painting under *Don Miguel de Manrique* a scholar of *Rubens*. He afterwards removed to Madrid and became a scholar of *Alonso Cano's*, and is supposed to have excelled his master. He resided chiefly at Malaga where he married a lady of noble birth. In this city he died in his sixty-seventh year, 1698.

*Lusa Jordano's* works in Spain are both numerous and considerable: He arrived at Madrid in May 1692 by the invitation of Charles the

the Id, who appointed a very liberal allowance for his journey giving him the steel key on his arrival, though he was now in his sixty-fourth year. He has no where left greater proofs of that dispatch in his art, for which he stands remarkable to a proverb; in the space of two years he covered an immense compass of cieling with fresco in the church and staircase of the Escorial. Of all his frescos that of the staircase representing the famous battle of Saint Quintin and the taking of Montmorency is in the highest estimation. It certainly forms a magnificent display of colour and design, tho' neither the lights nor the architecture set it off with any advan-

tage;



age; the staircase is not uncommonly spacious and of itself offers nothing to the eye, but a melancholy mass of stone-work of the dullest hue, unrelieved by any order or ornament whatsoever. He remained in Spain till the death of Charles the II<sup>d</sup> and accompanied King Philip to Naples in the year 1702; in that period he executed a number of compositions in various manners and with various degrees of merit at Madrid, the Escorial and at Toledo; His frescos in the Buen Retiro are well preserved although that palace is quite dismantled, and are very reputable productions. His facility in assuming the styles of different masters is well known, and Charles

the King never put his talents to better use, than when he employed them in copying his capital pictures. Some original histories of his are admitted into the collection at the New Palace and that collection would certainly be no sufferer by the exchange if his Catholic Majesty thought fit to supersede these pictures by some of his capital Bassans which hang in neglect and obscurity at the Retiro. It rarely happens that industry and address unite in the same person; but *Luca Jordano's* application to his art was fully equal to the rapidity of his execution, and his œconomy was equal to either: It is not therefore to be wondered at that he amassed a considerable fortune in

Spain and elsewhere; impatient to return to his native country, he did not long survive that wished-for event, and died at Naples in 1794 at the age of 76. His school, under *Francisco Solimena* languished for a time; but Italy after this period produced few or no painters of any eminence.

I have now carried down my account to the death of Charles the II<sup>d</sup>, which concludes the seventeenth century and places another family on the throne of Spain. Beyond this period I have pursued no particular enquiries, as to the present state of arts and improvements in Spain few people are in need of information, and I should unwillingly draw any comparisons.

which might not be in favour of living professors. If Spain during the present century has not produced so many eminent painters as in those we have been reviewing, the circumstance is by no means peculiar to Spain as a kingdom; the declension has been as great in Flanders and in France; in Italy much greater: The Princes of the House of Bourbon, who have reigned in Spain, cannot be charged with having starved the arts, if expence be the measure of encouragement: The warmest admirer of *Mengs* will not venture to say that his talents were not duly considered and rewarded by the present Sovereign, in whose pay and employ he died. The

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reputation

reputation of this artist stood high in Europe, perhaps the highest; but he found no solid encouragement until he went into Spain; in Germany he painted miniatures and for England he painted copies; he was a fugitive from Dresden and a beggar in Rome; in the court of the Catholic King he found honour and emolument and exercised his art in as respectable a stile as *Titiano* did under Charles the Vth, *Coello* under Philip the II<sup>d</sup>, or *Velazquez* in the favour of Philip the IVth: Certain it is that under these Princes Spain produced many eminent painters and was resorted to by the most distinguished foreign masters; but neither the good sense of Charles, the

the resources of his successor, nor the professional experience of Philip the IVth could of themselves have created an age of painters in Spain, if the spirit of the nation had then been put under that subjection and restraint, which subsequent connexions have imposed upon it: A variety of causes may operate to depress national genius and character; not one of which may be absolutely chargeable to the account of the Sovereign: A very able Prince may indeed find out temporary expedients to stem the torrent, when Art and Science are rushing to decay; but a man may mean very honestly and yet miss the discovery: When the introduction of foreign professors into any king-

dom is the result of grace and favour, they illuminate the country which receives them and rouse its emulation; but when they enter it, as it were by prescription and authority, it is much if the natives in such a case are not either hurried into violence by resentment, or rendered languid and inanimate by despair: Perhaps an enquiry into the proceedings of this century would shew that both these consequences have obtained by turns in the case of Spain; habits and characters naturally dissimilar will hardly be brought into contact and alliance; and tho' the arbitrary hand of force may bend them into temporary approximation against the grain, there is

much

much hazard in the compulsion and no security can be placed in such uncertain acquiescence.

It would not be easy to account for any rapid decline or sudden dearth of art and science, where there has been no want of encouragement or scarcity of employ, unless by referring to some such over-ruling cause, as I allude to: People, who are curious to find a natural reason for every event in the history of the human mind, have in the map of their discoveries laid down the springs and fountain-heads of genius in certain happy latitudes, as those of Greece, Italy and Spain; but at the same time that a proper temperature of climate is acknowledged necessary



for the exercise of several elegant arts; and perhaps for the investigation of many useful sciences, yet the hypothesis which some adopt is far from satisfactory; it would not be easy to find a reason upon their principle, why the Athenians should be ingenious and the Thebans dull; for whatever may have been said of the fogs of Boeotia in poetical ridicule, truth would tell us that it was the thickness of intellect in the native which gave the climate its character, and not the climate which condensed and clouded the brains of the inhabitants. There is reason to believe that the natives of old Rome, who were so distinguished in science, were defective in arts; their painters, sculptors

and

and architects were Greeks; modern Rome on the contrary has figured more in arts and less in science, than any other of the illuminated states of Europe; if her climate in the mean time has undergone an alteration, it has certainly changed for the worse: Whereas the air of Madrid by the amendment of its police must be greatly better, than it was when the Austrian princes sat on the throne; and if climate is ever to come into consideration, as a moving cause of genius, it will leave us at a loss to guess what kind of inspiration could be drawn from the stench of Madrid in times past, which its present state of purity is not competent to produce;  
for

for my part it is matter of surprize to me, not only how talents could be exerted, but rather how life could be endured in such an atmosphere. If men will absolutely account for every thing by system, let them take that of climate, it will serve as well as another: But to speak naturally in the case, it is observable and without a doubt that the manners are changing; the high-minded independence of the Arragonians and the steady dignity of the Castilians are in the waine; the churches and convents saturated with virtue no longer make any demands upon the arts; the good Fathers have made a full meal and are fallen asleep after it. When ministers were chosen

chosen from the body of the Nobles, the power of the state was often lodged in elegant hands, and the whole order of Grandees seconded the example of the Crown by encouraging talents; the policy of the present century has been to exclude the Nobility from any active share in government, and under the shade of Royal jealousy who can wonder if their dignity has drooped? Though the ambition of subjects may be dangerous to a Throne, it is oftentimes glorious to a state: Shut out all the brighter prospects of life from the view of the rising generations, and you will soon choak the sources of merit in the seeds of education; dependency quickly ends in ignorance.

rance. If the light of the sun is to shine upon none but mercenaries and intruders, the natives who sit in the shade may murmur for a while; but when the darkness thickens and the night falls heavy upon them, their faculties will grow torpid and they will sleep away their lives and their resentments in laziness and oblivion: When the dregs of the vulgar are set over the nobles and made rulers of the people, all conditions of men will be overthrown, no one will be found in his proper class and station; the elevated party will exhibit but an awkward imitation of greatness, and by how much loftier the height so much lower will be the fall of the party depressed.

pressed. Some people have argued against monarchy and despotism, as if they were death to all the liberal arts; I have slightly adverted to this opinion in the foregoing pages and it is not pleasant to hold an argument in opposition to it; but in the case of the particular art, which is the object of the present discussion, experience has much to oppose to the advocate on the popular side of the question; a stupid tyrant may indeed make dreadful havock in the arts, and condemn whole magazines of science to the flames; a silly one, in the wantonness of mischief, may find pastime in defacing *Rafael* and *Corregio*, and Muley Ishmael himself never made

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more destruction of the lives of men, than some have done of their representatives; but instances of this sort do not abound, and for the true destructive spirit of barbarism I am apt to think nothing ever equalled your thorough-paced fanatic; such levellers of mankind are levellers indeed, and the annals of their triumphs from the sacking of Rome to the late conflagrations in our capital, may give the challenge to all that despotism ever did from the foundation of society.

To go back to the subject before us, it is but just to observe that the public works of the present reigning family in Spain have been both numerous and magni-

ficent;

ficent; at the same time if we were to enter into a discussion of particulars, we should find perhaps in each some reason, why a public work has failed of being a public benefit; to employ the arts is one thing, but to improve them is another: The sumptuous gardens of San Ildefonso involved amazing sums; they gave employment to a multitude of artists, who seem to have exhausted their ingenuity in devising modes of torturing nature; the wilderness has at length with much reluctance submitted to the regular approaches of clipped hedges and formal parterres; the mountain rills and water-falls are forced into pipes and made to squirt up again in the shapes



shapes of flower-baskets and pyramids to their primitive levels, or to trickle down a flight of stairs into the oval inclosure of a marble basin. I need not observe that these gardens are laid out in the French taste; the courtiers boast of them and perhaps in reality admire them; but graver people think that the Wood-nymphs of Castile are not benefited by being tricked out in the frippery and furbelows of Versailles.

The removals of the Court from one *Sitie* or country palace to another are regular to a day; in truth every movement of the present Sovereign, whether of business or the chace, is methodized to a minute; the spring is apportioned  
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to Aranjuez, the summer to San Ildefonso where the heats in part are avoided by passing to the northward of the Guadaramas; the autumnal months are spent at the Escorial and the winter at the Pardo; whilst some occasional but sparing portions of the royal residence are bestowed upon the capital: Of all these royal *Sitias* foreigners have generally agreed to give the preference to Aranjuez, and in my opinion it deserves to be preferred: I have never yet met with elms of so magnificent a growth; the ducts which are trained from the Tagus have forced them into an astonishing luxuriance, and the disposition of the avenues and gardens, though in a

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taste

taste of more formality than is now approved of in England, has more local merit than any of a newer fashion would be found to have ; the renegado Tagus, which deserts its native kingdom to give a harbour and commerce to Lisbon, has at least bestowed verdure and refreshment upon Aranjuez in its passage : In some of the fountains and in the parterre adjoining to the palace there are samples of excellent sculpture ; in particular a groupe by *Alexandro Algardi* on the pedestal of which Philip the III<sup>d</sup> has caused to be engraved the date of the year 1621 ; some Tritons by *Alonso Berruguete*, and some statues by *Pompeyo Leoni* : With respect to the palace both in point of

of ornament and convenience much is owing to the improvements made by Philip the Vth and Ferdinand the VIth; the new chapel, which has been erected by the present King upon the plan of the royal architect *Sabatini*, is a most exquisite model of beauty both in design and execution.

The new palace of Madrid, as a single edifice, is probably the greatest work in Europe of the present century. The ancient castle of Madrid is supposed to have been erected by King Alonso the Vth and overthrown by an earthquake; Henry the II<sup>d</sup> built on the same foundation, and Henry the IV<sup>th</sup> made additions to the edifice: The Emperor Charles in the

M 2      year

year 1537 began to modernize and improve this palace, but made no great advances for the remainder of his reign; Philip the II<sup>d</sup> was occupied with his foundation of the Escorial, but the two monarchs next in succession greatly enlarged and beautified the antient structure; some works were also added by Charles the II<sup>d</sup>, but the whole was finally reduced to ashes on Christmas evening in the year 1734. This event determined Philip the V<sup>th</sup> to erect a new palace upon a scale of consummate magnificence; the architect he chose for this purpose was the *Abbe Don Felipe Juvarra*, a person of superior talents and high in reputation throughout all Italy for many eminent works.

This man was born at Messina in 1683, he studied architecture in Rome under the Chevalier Fontana: The King of Sardinia made him first royal architect, and gave him the rich abbey of Selve: He planned several buildings in Mantua, Como, Milan and Rome: He went to Lisbon with permission of the King of Sardinia and executed some designs for the King of Portugal in that capital. Upon the destruction of the palace of Madrid by fire, as above-mentioned, he came to Spain by desire of Philip the Vth, where, in obedience to his commission he formed a model in wood of the most superb edifice in the world, containing church, library, offices

of state and all the appendages of royalty in the greatest extent and splendor. This model is yet in existence and was shewn to me by the royal architect *Sabatini* before-mentioned, and is in truth a wonderful production; What the palace of Nero may have been I cannot pretend to say, but I am certain that Versailles would have stood in no rank of competition with this of *Juvarra's*, had it been carried into execution; and this I was informed from the best authority might have been done within the expence of the present more contracted edifice; Philip not deciding speedily upon this plan, it became in time matter of ministerial discussion and cabal, till after  
much

much irksome attendance and procrastination, *Juvarra* was directed with many symptoms of disfavour to lower his projects, condemned as extravagantly vast, and to reduce his scale to a more practicable proportion; the health of the architect was now declining apace; the vigour of a mind too sensitive for a court was exhausted by disappointment and chagrin, and the present plan, which comparatively with the other is but the abortive offspring of an enfeebled parent, was soon followed by his death: The author being dead, it is little to be wondered at if many errata crept into his copy; more would have followed, if the timely interpolation of *Sabatini*, who con-

M 4      cluded



cluded the building, had not corrected many things and supplied others with distinguished ability; an instance of this is the grand stair-case, the merit of which is entirely with him, and would do honour to the court of Augustus: The site of the edifice upon the antient foundation has been the main impediment and cause of many difficulties in the construction of the whole, it has been thought necessary to give it such a foundation, or rather embankment against the hill, after the manner of the terrace of the Adelphi, that as much masonry has been expended below the surface of the ground, as in the superstructure; *Juvarra's* first ideas had

had been directed to a spot without the walls of Madrid, where the nature of the ground admitted of a much greater display upon the same scale of expence; and it can never be enough lamented that either this situation, or that of the old palace of the Retiro had not been chosen in preference: It is placed as I before observed upon the site of the antient castle, on the edge of a steep hill from which there is a precipitate descent to the river Manzanares, that forms a very meagre current in the bottom: This river, which is flattered with a very handsome bridge, has its fits of flowing, when the snow upon the neighbouring mountains of Guadarama condescends to melt  
and

and make a vehicle of its channel; in the mean time it stands in no better capacity, as an auxiliary to the town of Madrid, than by serving for the general washing-tub of the place; as an ornament to the palace it contributes little else in point of spectacle, but crowds of washing-women not the fairest or most silent of their species, and rows of linen of every sort, size and description in use for either sex hang up to dry upon its banks in view of the apartments: This palace, however faulty, is yet respectable in its exterior, and doubly so in its contents. *Sabatini*, who conducted the fitting, has collected an assemblage of every thing splendid and ornamental that Spain could

could offer to his choice; samples of the rarest and most beautiful marbles from the quarries of Grenada and Andalusia; prodigious plates of glass from the royal fabric at San Ildefonso, and a profusion of porcelaine from the manufactory in Madrid, of which material one entire roof is modelled in a rich and splendid caprice; not deficient in shapes or colouring. Much remains to be done in disposing the ground between it and the river, and his Majesty is now adding wings and a corps of stabling, which are far advanced. Besides the pictures which it contains of the several masters, whom we have mentioned in this short review; there are many of the great

great Italian and Flemish masters, who have not come under consideration according to the limitation of my plan; in particular the most celebrated picture of Rafael, called the *Pasmo de Sicilia*: This picture was painted by Rafael in Rome for the church of our Lady *dello Spasimo*, or the Agony, and thence by contraction called *Pasmo*. Mengs in a letter written to Don Antonio Ponz a royal academician of Madrid, (which letter is published not only in Ponz's *Viage de España* but again in a volume of Mengs' Works collected and made public since his death) gives a long and laboured description of this picture. As I cannot doubt but that these remains of Mengs will soon find

find an English translator and be given to the world entire, I am unwilling to anticipate their publication by any partial insertions; I should else be happy in the occasion of rendering these pages more interesting by copying into them the observations of an Artist and Author, who will universally be supposed master of his subject. I should doubt if Paschall ever studied the Bible more closely than Mengs studied Rafael: He observes upon this picture in general that all the world have given testimony to its excellence, with an exception of one depreciator only in the person of Count *Malvasia*. Ponz quotes some passages from *Malvasia* respecting this very picture:

ture; I have not seen Malvasia's publication; but from these quotations it appears that his intention is to run a comparison between the Roman school and that of Bologna, in contradiction to the general opinion for preferring the former; with this design Malvasia brings Rafael and Guido Aspertini together under review, and in the course of his examination slightly adverts to the picture above-mentioned, saying that Philip the IVth of Spain was betrayed into the purchase by the encomiums, which Vasari had lavishly published of it, and which he would insinuate far exceeded its merit. This publication of Malvasia drew an answer from the celebrated Canon

non Don Vicente Victoria, of Valencia, a disciple of the Roman school, and a painter of considerable eminence; the work was wrote in Italian and published at Rome in 1703 in six books, with a dedication to the Lovers of Painting. The controversy was now fairly set on foot; and disputants were not wanting to enlist on either side: The school of Bologna was piqued to support their champion, however desperate the contest, and Juan Pedro Zanolli, a painter of that city, took up the defence of Malvasia and entered the lists against the ingenious Canon of Valencia: How much farther the controversy proceeded, I have not been interested to enquire: Victoria,



toria, as quoted by Ponz, observes  
 that Philip the IVth, whose judg-  
 ment was universally acknow-  
 ledged, held this picture in the  
 highest admiration and esteem;  
 and that so far from warranting  
 the insinuation of Malvasia that he  
 had been drawn in by the praises  
 of Vasari to make a losing bargain  
 with the Monks of Palermo, he  
 always distinguished this inesti-  
 mable piece from all others in his  
 collection by terming it *la Joya*.  
 The agreement which he made  
 with the Convent of our Lady  
 dello Spasimo was for the annual  
 rent of one thousand scudi; and  
 the subject of the composition be-  
 ing that of our Saviour bearing  
 his Cross to Mount Calvary, Phi-  
 lip

lip affixed the picture to the high altar of his royal chapel in Madrid; it has lately been annexed to the collection in the palace, and Mengs in his remarks upon it, adverting to this disparaging account given by Malvasia, treats his opinion and the whole of his publication with a contemptuous severity, which all who are advocates for the superiority of the Roman school will think this author deserves. It is well known that this inestimable picture was fortunately weighed up out of the sea, in which it had sunk and as it is said without any material damage, but of this latter fact I am inclined to doubt, at least if this accident was the occasion of the re-

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pair

pair by which it has evidently suffered. The subject of this picture as before-mentioned, is that of the Saviour bearing his Cross to Mount Calvary, designed in the background, and he is in that immediate action of prophecy, in which he says to the women who surround him weeping, *Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, &c. &c.* The mother of Jesus is described in a supplicating posture interceding for pity from the soldiers and spectators for her Son, who exhausted with fatigue and anguish has fallen to the earth under the weight of that instrument of torture, with which he is proceeding to execution. Saint John and the two Maries compose the

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groupe.

group about the Mother of our Lord: Mary Magdalen is in the act of addressing herself to the Saviour; his action is undescribably touching and significant; with his right hand he embraces the Cross under which he is sinking; his left is stretched out in a stile of great expression and grandeur suitable to those moving and solemn predictions which he is delivering; the attitudes and employments of the guards and spectators in beautiful gradation compose the ministerial and subservient parts in the tragedy and compleat its pathos. One soldier unfeelingly drags the divine sufferer by a cord drawn tightly round his waist; another strives to replace the cross upon his

N 2      shoulder

shoulder with one hand, and armed  
 with a lance in the other in a me-  
 nacing attitude urges him to re-  
 sume his burthen; a third, whom  
 the spectacle appears to have in-  
 spired with some impression of pity,  
 is assisting to support the weight  
 of the cross, and in a beautiful  
 manner contrasts the relentless  
 brutality of his comrades. The  
 countenance of the Saviour is a  
 composition that can only result  
 from the purest imagination and  
 the most perfect execution: Art  
 perhaps never equalled it and na-  
 ture cannot exceed it, nor is the  
 expression such as mere humanity,  
 without a supernatural alliance  
 with the Deity, can be supposed  
 to have; it is impregnated with  
 all

all that divinity, which sacred story gives to the person designed; no sorrow was ever more deeply painted; the eyes are suffused with tears, the forehead and temples bathed in blood which distils from the crown of thorns, yet the divine beauty of the visage is not disturbed, nor its majesty impaired; meekness and resignation are truly characterized, but it is a meekness that does not detract from dignity, and a resignation that has no connection with despair; a look of celestial benevolence, which seems to triumph over affliction, illuminates the whole visage and seizes the attention of the spectator with irresistible force: With respect to general effect, it al-

ways appeared to me that there was a want of harmony in the composition; the carnations are all remarkably brown and ruddy (in his manner) nor are the figures and objects in the back-ground kept down and softened as they are seen in nature: These defects in part may well be owing to unskilful retouches and bad modes of cleaning and varnishing; one remarkable circumstance is that of a leg amongst the groupe without an owner; a redundancy which the author could never be guilty of, and a collateral proof of the bad hands through which it has passed.

The King of Spain is possessed of a few small pieces by *Corregio*,  
the

the principal of which is a Christ in the Garden, a piece of singular sweetness and coloured with astonishing contrivance. There are examples of both the *Poussins*, but not many; some of *Paul Veronese*, *Tintoret*, *Pedro de Cortona*, and some compositions and heads by *Vandyke* in his best manner; there are also some portraits by *Leonardo da Vinci*, particularly one of Anna Boleyn very beautiful but in a meretricious cast with a most arch insinuating leer. The paintings of the Baffans historical as well as pastoral, including those in the palace of the Buen Retiro, would of themselves form a very splendid and valuable collection: There are some pictures by *Guido Rbeni*,



the principal of which is a *Lucretia* in the *Buen Retiro* very much resembling that in the possession of the Duke of Dorset at Knole. There are several specimens of the earliest masters, which in a collection of such compass and variety, forming as it were a regular series and history of the art, are justly intitled to their place. A spectator naturally regards these instances of reviviscence in the art with favour and respect; we see them with the same sort of pleasure with which we contemplate the first returns of life after its temporary suspension: Their imperfections demand our excuse and their weakness like that of infancy engages our pity; the different manner

manner, in which we are affected by viewing an art in its advance from what we feel when we consider it in its decline, is very observable and at the same time easily accounted for; an object by which the mind is led up and made to look forward to perfection communicates ideas far more pleasing than those which retrospection inspires: we look with very different eyes upon the master of *Raphael* from those with which we scrutinize his scholars: The hard and inharmonious figures of *Perugino* and *Durero* are admitted by collectors with reverence and esteem, whilst the slight and hasty productions of *Sebastian Conca* and his degenerated school convey to  
all

all true, judges little else but indignation or regret; in short there is little after the death of the *Car-rachis* produced by the arts in Italy, which is not painful to contemplate. Many people of great reputed judgment have regarded *Mengs* as the one bright luminary of modern times; in Spain a man would pay his court very ill who did not applaud him, and some of his enthusiastic admirers join his editor Azara in comparing him to *Rafael* and *Corregio*. Some particulars of this painter's history I have extracted from Azara's publication, by which we are informed that his family was originally of *Lusatia*, but had migrated from thence  
to

to Hamburgh where his grandfather settled for a time, and from thence passed to Copenhagen; this man had a very numerous issue, and when the father of our painter was born he had him christened by the name of Ishmael, in pursuance of a silly whim which struck him of opening the Bible and taking the first name in the first leaf that his eye chanced to light upon: Ishmael was put to such masters as Copenhagen afforded to learn to paint: He married the daughter of one Cofrè a Frenchman, under whom he studied painting in oils, but his wife objecting to the scent, he diverted his talents thenceforwards to miniatures, and probably  
made

made no great sacrifice by his gallantry. Soon after this marriage he left Copenhagen upon the plea of avoiding an epidemic distemper, and took his peregrination through several of the German courts, and in Aufsig in Bohemia, a town on the borders of Saxony, on the 12th day of March 1728 was born *Antonio Rafael Mengs*, so named in honour of those great masters *Antonio Alegri de Corregio* and *Rafael*; by these sounding characters our infant painter was ushered into life; Ishmael in some opinions having been guided by a kind of prophetic choice in preferring these names to his own, from which he seems to have inherited little else but the vagrant character  
of

of his Arabic appellation, and the uncontrollable exercise of paternal tyranny in full measure and extent. Ishmael began very early to instruct his son in the principles of drawing, and as he shifted his quarters from Augs to Dresden better opportunities occurred for advancing his education. In the year 1741 he took him to Rome, where he continued him under his own tuition: Augustus the III<sup>d</sup> of Poland had made Ishmael one of his royal painters during his abode at Dresden, and *Antonio* was now employed by his father in copying some pictures of Rafael for the King in miniature which were sent to Dresden. After three years residence in Rome, during which

his father rigidly confined him to his studies, he returned to Dresden; here he was constituted King's painter with a salary, and after a time made a second journey to Rome; he painted miniatures in compliance with his father's predilection for his own branch of the art, during the first four years of his residence, after which he commenced his career upon a greater scale and exhibited a Holy Family of his own composition which was greatly applauded; his inclination was to fix himself in Rome, having married a young woman by name Margarita Guazzi, from whom he had modelled the head of the Madona in the Holy Family above-mentioned; in this inclination

tion he was over-ruled by his father, and in a manner compelled to return to Saxony, where he arrived in 1749; *Mengs* though married and established as an artist of reputation, was by no means emancipated from the tyranny of his father; and although the King was so gracious as to enlarge his pension, he found his situation rendered so miserable and his health and spirits so impaired by *Ismael's* unfatherly treatment, that he solicited and obtained the royal leave to return with his wife and an infant daughter to Rome, where he arrived in 1752; he soon recovered his health in this city, and one of the first works he performed was the copy which he made for the present



Duke of Northumberland of Raphael's School of Athens: He was now in great embarrassment of circumstances, his salary in Dresden having ceased upon the distresses in which King Augustus became involved by the war; he worked for his maintenance at low prices, and with much pains gained a very scanty support chiefly by painting frescos. He had made an excursion to Naples to fulfil a commission he had received from King Augustus, and in that expedition became known to Charles the III<sup>d</sup> of Spain, then King of Naples, who upon succeeding Ferdinand the VI<sup>th</sup> lost no time in sending for Mengs to Madrid, offering him through the channel of the minister

Roda,

Roda, then resident in Rome, a very considerable salary; Mengs could not hesitate to accept these liberal proposals and arrived at Madrid in 1761. He was at first employed in frescos and painted the cieling of the Graces in the King's anti-chamber, the cieling of the Aurora in the Queen's apartment and the altar of the King's private Oratory on the subject of the Nativity. Amongst several easel pictures his composition of the Dead Christ with the Mother, St. John, Mary Magdalen and other attendant characters is the most considerable; of this groupe the figure of St. John is far the most impassioned production of the author. Mengs through

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His whole life devoted himself entirely to his art, at which he laboured without the necessary relaxations of exercise or society. He had left his wife and family at Rome ; oppressed with melancholy and threatened by the approaches of a consumption, he found it necessary to betake himself without loss of time to the more friendly climate of Rome, to which the King with his usual benignity acceded ; his infirmity constrained him to halt at Monaco, where he began to recover, and during his convalescence painted his celebrated picture of the Nativity ; in this piece the light is managed in the way of Corregio's *Noche*, and as a security against injury its royal

royal possessor has covered it with a magnificent glass; amongst the shepherds the painter has inserted his own portrait. Upon his arrival at Rome he engaged in a considerable undertaking for Pope Clement XIV. This and the pretence of health engaged him for a term of three years nor did he return at length to Madrid but with evident reluctance and after every possible procrastination and delay. His Royal Master received him nevertheless with his accustomed condescension, accepted his excuses and continued him in his pay and employ: He now composed the cieling of the great saloon of the palace at Madrid, in which he has described the apo-

lysis

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theosis

theosis of the Emperor Trajan ; a subject selected with judgement and executed in a stile of grand display. A residence of little more than two years and incessant application again impaired the constitution of *Mengs* to such a degree that he plainly perceived Spain was a climate in which he could no longer exist, and he for the last time quitted Madrid and repaired to Rome with plenary indulgence and an augmented stipend from his munificent master : To this capital of the antient arts his wishes always pointed, and his wasted spirits felt a fresh return of vigour, as he approached the favourite spot, to which he finally resolved to devote his future days : The death

death of his wife, to whom he was faithfully and fondly attached soon reversed these happy prospects; the melancholy in which he became involved by this event and the change of habits thereby entailed upon him brought back his old disorders and superadded many new complaints; in this state of desperation he put himself into the hands of an ignorant empiric, and by persisting in his medicines upon the credit of such flattering professions as are usual with this tribe of pretenders, his shattered constitution yielded to the violence of an unseasonable dose of physic and at the age of fifty-one years and three months *Antonio Rafael Mengs* departed this life. The

works of *Mengs* in the royal possession consist of the frescos of the *Trajan*, *The Graces* and *The Aurora*, which are cielingings; the altar-piece of the private Oratory he repainted in oil: There are seventeen easel pictures in the palace of Madrid, exclusive of the *Annunciation* lately arrived from Rome; this picture was the last work of his life and has not received his finishing hand; it was not hung up when I saw it, being just taken out of the packing-case. The picture of the Dead Christ is in my opinion the best of the above number; the figures are of the natural size: The Nativity, which is covered with a single plate of glass, is nine feet ten inches by seven; that of the

2 *Dead*

Dead Christ is considerably bigger: These three pictures of the Death of Christ, the Nativity and the Annunciation, composed at different periods of his life and at different places, the first being painted at Madrid and the two last at Rome, are the compositions that must decide his reputation: In the palace of Aranjuez there are several portraits and a Crucifixion which hangs in the King's bed-chamber: The Prince of Asturias has two pictures, one of which is a Holy Family in his elegant Casino at the Escorial: The Infants Don Gabriel and Don Luis and many Grantees and other distinguished persons have pieces of this author, most of which are portraits; Azara enumerates seven-



by three pictures of *Mengs* existing in Spain.

Living authors rarely find in the voice of the public their proper level, and this artist so lately died that sufficient time has not yet elapsed to cool the heats of partisans, and to let the dispassionate and judicious weigh his merits in their proper scale. This cannot be fairly done by any one who has not seen his works in Spain: It is in that court only where the witnesses can be called to his character whose evidence ought to lead the opinion of such as sit in judgment on his merits: There he will literally be seen always in the *best light*; if indeed that be the best light for any modern

dern author's works so to predominate in a collection of the best artists of the world, as to make what most people will think his superiors recede and give place upon every occasion. Yet this is evidently the case; predilection cannot go further; not that I would be misunderstood to arraign the principle of partiality to a living artist; no flattery, no warmth of favour short of that which tends to lessen his industry or impair his intellects can in such a case be too much: Accursed be that disposition, wheresoever it is found, which can praise no times but those which are gone by; it is easy to know that such encomiums are the effects of spleen under the

the assumption of candour: One applauding sentence bestowed upon contemporary genius is more to the credit of the giver, than volumes of historical panegyric; it is like the mite of the widow thrown into the mass of the treasury, a contribution to be respected not so much for the value of the offering, as for being the tribute of the heart: *De vivis nil nisi bonum, de mortuis nil nisi verum*, is a noble reading of Johnson's: He has said many things well, but he never said anything better than this: Why should we so despair of contemporary merit, as if a painter never could arise to equal them that went before? Let us not bring on the competition

competition by lowering the dead, but by raising the living: So far therefore as this striking preference in favour of *Mengs* had effect in calling forth his exertions and fortifying his genius by a due proportion of self-confidence and proper opinion it appears to have been kingly and meritorious: *Mengs* himself with all his idolatry for *Rafael* thinks the world has produced artists with which he cannot come into competition, and what is singular in the opinion is, that he does not refer to the works of the Grecian sculptors, but to their painters for that perfection, that idea of consummate beauty, which he finds wanting in his own great model. But as *Mengs* takes  
up

up his idea of the superiority of the antient painters entirely upon hypothesis, and no reference being to be had to ocular convictions, which alone can settle the question, the world will gain more by the ingenuity of his conjectures, than truth will by his discovery. There are other positions equally new in his posthumous publication, which I shall be glad to see canvassed in the true spirit of candid criticism! Mengs loved the truth, but he did not always find it out; under all the disadvantages of a contracted education, and sowered by the insupportable severity of his father's discipline, his habit became saturnine and morose and his manners unsocial and inelegant! He had

had a great propensity for speaking what are called plain truths; but which oftentimes in fact are no truths at all: His biographer and editor Azara has given us an instance of this sort in a reply he made to Pope Clement XIV. His Holiness had asked *Mengs's* opinion of some pictures he had collected at Venice: They are good for nothing, said *Mengs*: How so? rejoined his Holiness, they have been highly commended; naming a certain painter as his authority for their merit: Most Holy Father, replied *Mengs*, we are both professors of the same art; he extols what he cannot equal, and I depreciate what I am sensible I can excel. *N. y. yo somos dos profesores*

3

*sesores: El uno alaba lo que es superior á su esfera; y el otro vitupera lo que le es superior.* I should suspect that Clement thought very little the worse of his pictures, and not much the better of *Mengs* for his repartee. Whether *Mengs* really thought with contempt of art which was inferior to his own, I will not pretend to decide; but that he was apt to speak contemptuously of artists superior to himself I am inclined to believe: Azara tells us that he pronounced of the academical lectures of our Reynolds, that they were calculated to mislead young students into error, teaching nothing but those superficial principles which he plainly avers are all that the

author

author himself knows of the art he professes. *Del libro moderno del Sr. Raynolds, Ingles, decia que es una obra, que puede conducir los jovenes al error ; porque se queda en los principios superficiales que conoce solamente a quel autor.* Azara immediately proceeds to say that *Mengs* was of a temperament *colerico y adusto*, and that his bitter and satyrical turn created him *infinitos agraviados y quejosos*. When his historian and friend says this there is no occasion for me to repeat the remark. If the genius of *Mengs* had been capable of producing a composition equal to that of the tragic and pathetic *Ugolino*, I am persuaded such a sentence as the above would never have passed his



his lips; but flattery made him vain and sickness rendered him peevish; he found himself at Madrid in a country without rivals, and because the arts had travelled out of his sight he was disposed to think they existed nowhere but on his own pallet. The time perhaps is at hand, when our virtuosi will extend their route to Spain, and of these some one will probably be found, who, regarding with just indignation these dogmatical decrees of *Mengs*, will take in hand the examination of his paintings, which I have now enumerated; and we may then be told with the authority of science, that his *Nativity*, though, so splendidly encased, and covered with such care, that

that the *very winds of Heaven* are not permitted to visit its face too roughly, would have owed more to the chrystal than it does in some parts at least had it been less transparent than it is; that it discovers an abortive and puiſny bambino which ſeems copied from a bottle; that *Mengs* was an artiſt who had ſeen much, and invented little; that he diſpenſes neither life nor death to his figures, excites no terror, rouses no paſſions, and riſques no flights; that by ſtudying to avoid particular defects, he incurs general ones, and paints with tameneſs and ſervility; that the contracted ſcale and idea of a painter of miniatures, as which he was brought up, is to be traced

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in

in all or most of his compositions, in which a finished delicacy of pencil exhibits the *Hand* of the Artist, but gives no emanations of the *Soul* of the Master; if it is beauty, it does not warm; if it is sorrow, it excites no pity: That when the Angel announces the salutation to Mary, it is a messenger that has neither used dispatch in the errand, nor grace in the delivery; that although *Rubens* was by one of his oracular sayings condemned to the ignominious dullness of a Dutch translator, *Mengs* was as capable of painting *Rubens's* Adoration, as he was of creating the Star in the East that ushered the Magi: But these are questions above my capacity; I resign *Mengs* to abler critics,

critics, and *Reynolds* to better defenders; well contented that posterity should admire them both, and well assured that the fame of our countryman is established beyond the reach of envy or detraction.

Of the marbles, which compose so beautiful a part of the fitting in the royal apartments, I should be glad some such particular description might be given by our travellers, who print their journals, as would attract the attention of this kingdom to the extraction of those precious materials from such parts of Spain at least as border on the Aegean or Mediterranean; I made a collection in Madrid of one hundred and twenty-six different specimens,

cimens, which I brought to England, and had free and liberal permission from his Catholic Majesty to have applied to his royal architect Sabatini for blocks or slabs from any of the respective quarries, if such had been acceptable. *Jacobo Trezo*, a Milanese, of whom Vafari speaks in high terms of commendation for his art in sculpture and the casting of metals, is reported to have carried his researches through most parts of Spain with great success in the time of Philip the Eld, when he was founding the Escorial, and it is thought that he has brought to light many more samples than were known to the Romans, who furnished their capital and adorned their

their villas from the quarries of Spain: Porphyry is found in the vicinity of Cordova and in such vast blocks as to form magnificent columns; Aracena produces jasper, Consuegra, Leon and Malaga abound in alabasters, and the green marble of Grenada fully rivals the verd-antique; of this latter sort it is not easy to procure slabs of considerable dimensions, yet I have seen tables in the palace and elsewhere of exquisite beauty and a magnificent size; innumerable sorts of jasper are to be had in Andalusia, Valencia, Aragon, Biscaya, Cuenca, Tortosa and the Castiles; and the mountains about Toledo, Urda, Murizedro, Badajoz, and P 3

Spain

joz, Talavera and Macael furnish a variety of marbles in an insatiable abundance.

Unhappy kingdom ! as if some evil genius had dominion of thy fate, perverting the course of every natural blessing and turning the most gracious dispensations of Providence to thy loss and disavour. All productions, which the earth can yield both on and below its surface, are proper to Spain; every advantageous access either to the ocean or Mediterranean, every security of an impassable frontier against its continental neighbours are proper to Spain; in short it has all the benefits of an insular situation, and none of its objections. Though formed to be

be a seat of empire and a land of peace, it has been little else but a provincial dependency, or a theatre of internal war and bloodshed. Though it has thrown out many great and eminent characters, both in arms and arts, it was to fill the annals of other countries and not to grace their own; if emperors, they sat on other thrones; if warriors, they fought for other states; if philosophers, they taught in other schools and wrote in other tongues. If every species of subjugation be disgraceful to a state, Spain has passed under every description of tyranny and has experienced a variety of wretchedness. When Carthage was her mistress, it is not easy to conceive a situation



more degrading for a noble people, than to bear the yoke of mercantile republicans and do homage at the shopboards of upstart demagogues ; surely it is in human nature to prefer the tyranny of the most absolute despot that ever wore a crown to the mercenary and imposing insults of a trader : Who would not rather appeal to a court, than a compting-house ? Who would not rather submit and be made a sacrifice to a kingly fiat, than a shopman's firme ? Let the Rajahs of Bengal decide upon the alternative. From the dominion of Carthage she was transferred to that of Rome ; her struggle was obstinate against the transition, and miracles of bravery were exhibited

in

in the persevering contention; in the choice of yokes it is probable she preferred the Roman, her objections were to wearing any; at length she submitted and came into the pale of the empire; we are told of Roman toleration, and the happy condition of Roman provinces; but we have it on the authority of their own historians, and so far as one insignificant opinion goes, I reject it utterly; I cannot comprehend how the servile act of digging in a mine for ore and marble to supply the avarice and encrease the splendour of antient Rome could constitute the happiness or gratify the ambition of a native Spaniard. As Rome made some advances in civilization, tho'

at

at best a very barbarous and ferocious people; Spain perhaps partook of her advances; but it was following at a distance, and subordinate improvements seldom reach far; what she gained by her annexation to Rome is easily counted up, what she lost by it involves a great extent and compass of conjecture; and though modern Spain may celebrate the Apotheosis of Trajan, I am of opinion a true Spaniard will neither compare him to Viriatus, nor Seneca to Ximenes. The next revolution which Spain suffered was by the general inundation of the northern barbarians. To aim at any description of these times is to put to sea without a compass and without

out a star; the influx of their Ma-  
 hometan conquerors furnished the  
 first light that broke the general  
 obscurity; the courts of Grenada  
 and Cordova were profusely splen-  
 did and not devoid of arts and sci-  
 ences: Their commerce with the  
 East supplied them with abund-  
 ance of wealth, and their inter-  
 course with Constantinople gave  
 some faint shadowings of Grecian  
 elegance: The heroic virtues were  
 displayed in a romantic degree;  
 legends of chivalry, poetical tales  
 and love-songs, where courage and  
 chastity were liberally dispensed to  
 the respective sexes, music and  
 dances of a very captivating sort,  
 pharmacy with the use and know-  
 ledge of simples, and a solemn  
 peculiarity

petulianity of architecture were accomplishments of Moorish importation; the insurmountable barriers of religion would not however admit of their incorporation with the native Spaniards, and both parties experienced the horrors of a war at their own gates, which admitted few and short intervals of quiet and repose. At length the long-depending contest was determined, and the total expulsion of the Moors delivered Spain for a time from all internal terrors and commotions: She had scarce enjoyed a breathing space before she started on a course of new and distant adventures in the late discovered world. Every one now flocked with ardour to America;

as

as to a second crusade ; can it be wondered at if arts and sciences stood still in the mean time ? When she had massacred kings and laid waste their kingdoms for the extortion of treasure, she found that the ores of Mexico and Peru, like the streams of the Tagus and the Douro, ran through her dominions only to empty their stores into the hands of her neighbours and rivals : Although these consequences may well result from the bad policy of her proceedings, yet it will naturally be the case that all discoverers of countries, like projectors in the arts, exhaust themselves in the first efforts, and leave others to erect their fortune, where they have laid the foundation :

The

The commerce of the European nations has been established upon the discoveries of Spain, and every other treasury is filled from the mines of the new world except her own : Whilst she was extending her empire over the barren Cordilleras, the richest provinces in Europe fell off from her dominion ; Portugal took the harbour of Lisbon and a valuable tract of coast from the heart of her empire ; the standard of Britain flew in triumph upon the pillars of Hercules, whilst she continued to stretch her feeble arms over half the globe, so to remain, till the first convulsive shock shall make her quit her hold. Still she might have remained respectable in misfortunes, and formidable

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ble though in decay; the last hand, that was put to her ruin, held the pen which signed away her reputation and independence in the family compact; generous, unsuspecting and impolitic, she has bound herself to an ally, whose union, like the action of certain chemical mixtures, will dissolve every noble particle in her composition and leave her spiritless and vapid. Great empires, like great men, are aggrandized and secured by the coalition of inferiors; petty states may sometimes be fostered into temporary importance to serve occasional purposes; but kingdoms, such as France and Spain, of recent equality and emulation, can never find reciprocal advantages



tages in political alliance ; the interests of the weaker party must of necessity become a sacrifice to those of the stronger and more artful, and with which of the two that superiority actually lies, and those advantages are likely to remain, is a point too clear to admit a doubt, or need an explanation.

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