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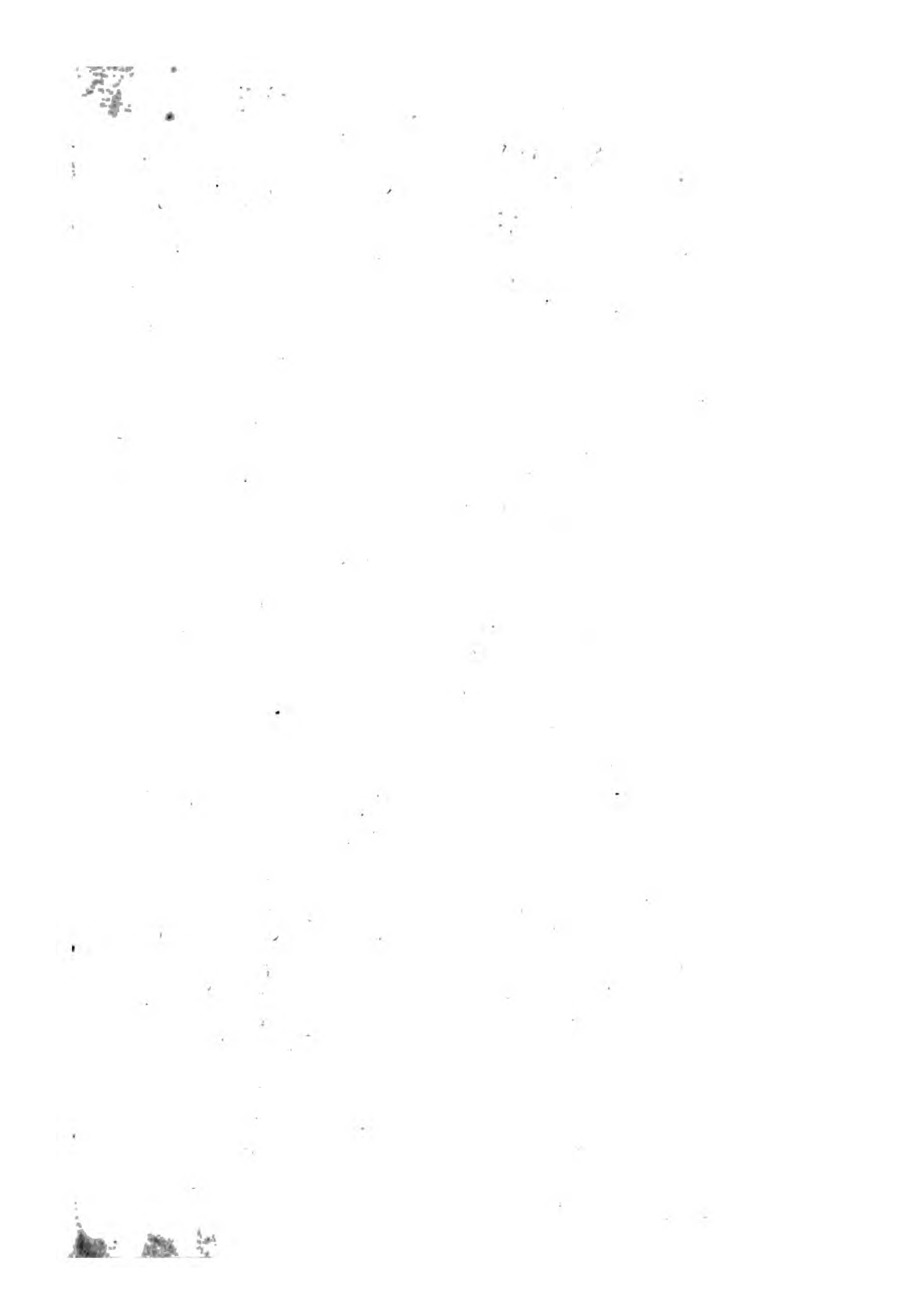
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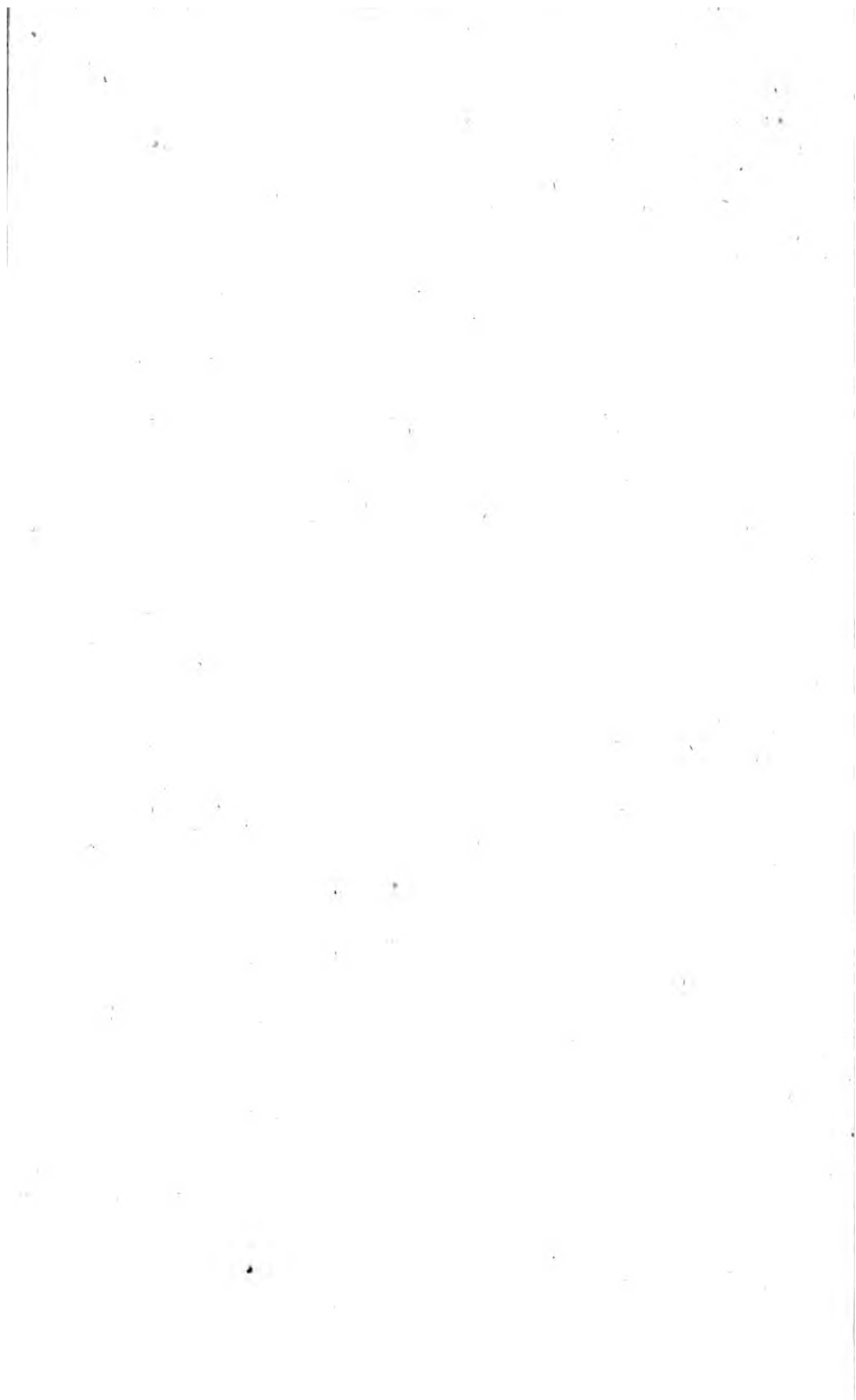
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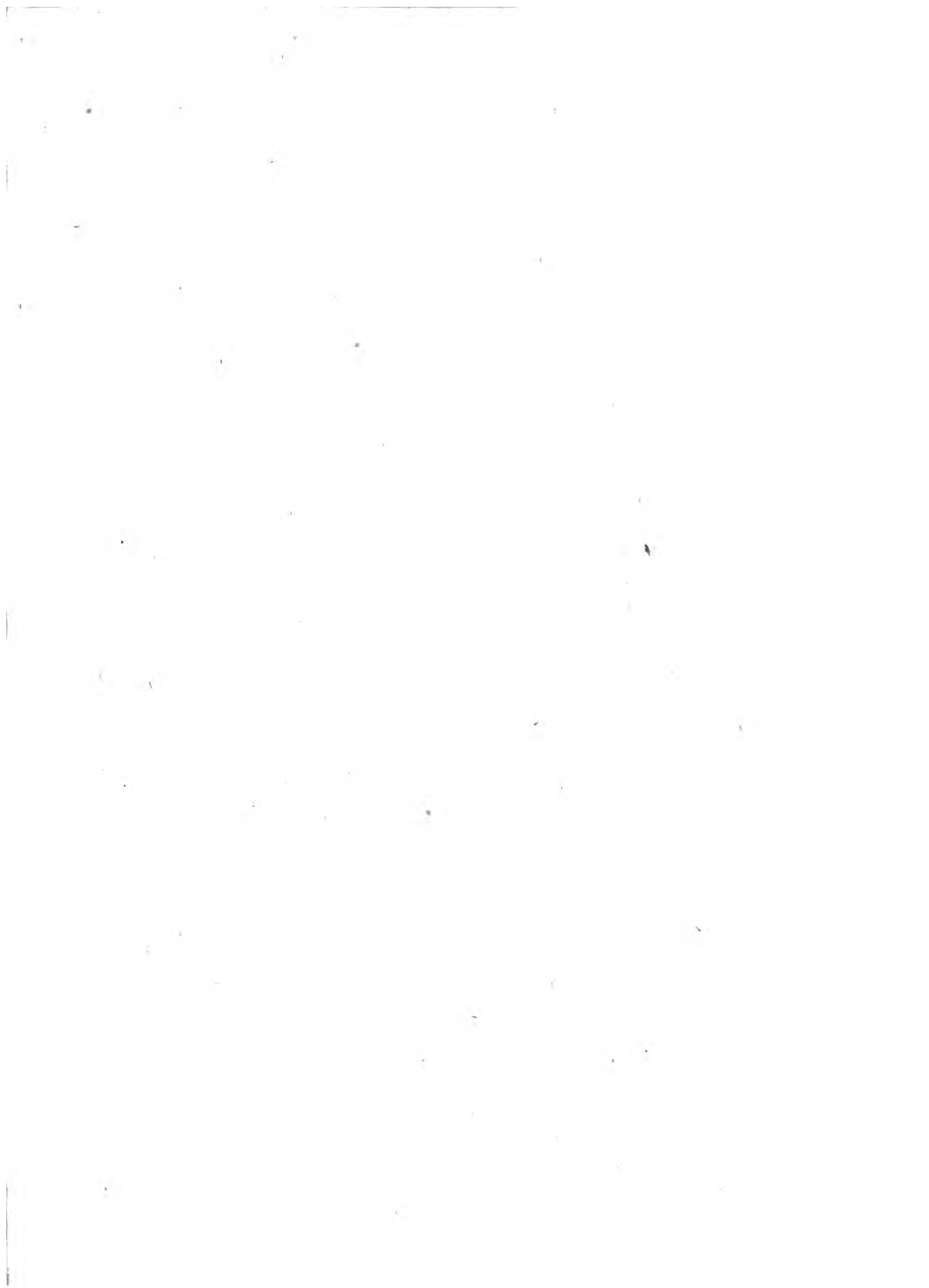
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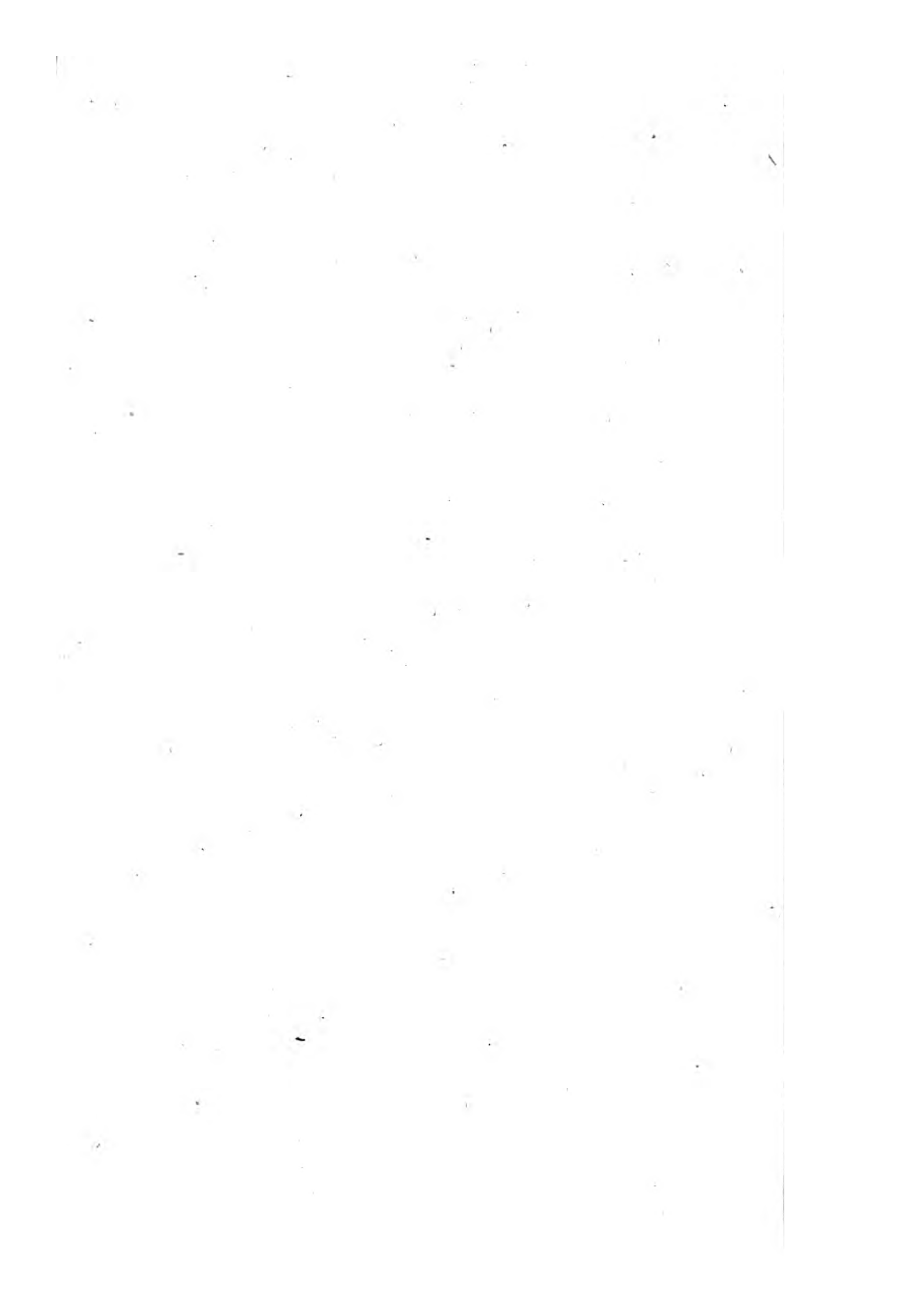
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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
ISLAND
OF
MINORCA.

By JOHN ARMSTRONG, *Esq;*
ENGINEER in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

The SECOND EDITION,
With large Additions by the AUTHOR;
Illustrated with COPPER-PLATES.

L O N D O N :

Printed for L. DAVIS, and C. REYMERS,
against *Gray's-Inn, Holborn.*

Printers to the ROYAL SOCIETY.
M.DCC.LVI.



T O
RICHARD OFFARREL,
Esquire,

Colonel of a Regiment of Foot,

A N D

Major-General of his MAJESTY'S
F O R C E S.

S I R,

IT is not out of Vanity
that I present you with a
Book, that can but ill enter-
tain your Leisure, or satisfy
your Judgment ; but out of a
sanguine Hope, that, with all
its Faults, it may have your
Countenance, as its Author
has had for many Years.

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DEDICATION.

IT is a History of *Minorca*, Sir, Part of which was written when that Island felt the Benefits of your Administration, a Period of Time that will be long remembered by the Natives with Pleasure and Gratitude.

WHAT my Brethren, the Officers and Soldiers, think of you, I shall not venture to relate : It is too delicate to make any Part of an Address, which is liable to a Suspicion of Flattery from its very Title.

FOR

DEDICATION.

FOR I am determined to give you no Offence of this Kind, however I may suffer in the Opinion of the World, for writing a Dedication to so beloved so honoured a Man, without a single Compliment in it.

I am,

With the highest Respect and Esteem,

S I R,

Your most humble, and

most obedient Servant,

*Chelsea,
12 May 1756.*

J. Armstrong.

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PREFACE.

IN the Beginning of the Year 1738, when a War with *Spain* seemed to be on the point of breaking out, I was ordered to my Duty in the Island of *Minorca*. I had not been long there, before I had acquired a competent Skill in their Language, to enable me to converse with the Natives; and as our Discourse generally turned on the History, the Government, and the Produce of the Country, it excited me in an irresistible Curiosity to inform myself in these Particulars, from the best Authorities I should be able to procure.

THE first Book that fell in my Way was *Dameto's* History of the *Balearick* Kingdom. It is wrote in the *Castilian*
A 4 Tongue,

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Tongue, and was printed in a small Folio Volume, at *Palma*, in the Island of *Majorca*, in the Year 1633. This Author was the Historiographer of that Island, and is so much taken up in the Events that particularly concern it, that he furnished me with little matter for my Information in the History of *Minorca*.

THE History of *Vincente Mut* was the next Book I consulted. He was Historiographer and Engineer of *Majorca*; and his Work, tho' it gave me more Satisfaction than that of *Dameto* had done, yet is it equally defective in the Particulars I sought after.

I THEN proceeded to *Mariana's* History of *Spain*, but was still disappointed in my Expectations; for he says very little of our Island, or indeed of the rest of the Islands, which, with this, composed the *Balearick* Kingdom.

I TURN-

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I TURNED over a great many other *Spanish* Books, with no better Success; at last I determined to compile such Facts as I had taken the Pains to extract from the two Histories of *Dameto* and *Mut*, and to work them up, with whatever I was able to procure among the most intelligent of the *Minorquins*, into a first Draught of the Civil-History of the Island, with Intention to add, improve, and alter it, as any authentick Materials came afterwards into my Possession.

I HAVE hitherto made no Mention of the History of the *Balearick* Islands, printed in *Octavo* in *London*, *A. D.* 1716. It is only a Translation of some Part of *Dameto* and *Mut*, and was of no Use to me, as I had the Originals before me.

My next Care was to throw together all the Information I was able to procure

x P R E F A C E.

ture concerning the Constitution and Government of *Minorca*, which by the Assistance of my Friends I afterwards enlarged and corrected: When no more Materials offered themselves, I reduced it to the Order in which it stands in the following Work.

I HAVE ever thought it a useful and entertaining Study, to enquire into the Trade and Manufactures of a Country, and to note down whatever was excellent or defective in either; from hence a valuable Lesson is learned, of imitating the one, or avoiding the other. I therefore applied myself to understand the foreign Commerce of the *Minorquins*, and considered the Manufactures they raised from their native Commodities, with the Attention they deserved.

UPON a nearer View, I discovered with Astonishment and Concern, that these poor People trifled away their
Time

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Time in childish Amusements, and neglected almost every Advantage of their Climate and Situation, and were contented to import a thousand Necessaries, and twice the Number of Superfluities, from foreign Countries, for which they paid ready Money. This Discovery raised an honest Indignation in me, which frequently broke out in my Conversation with some of the most sensible of the *Minorquins*; and I fear I have not been able to keep it wholly out of that Part of the History where this Subject is particularly treated.

Thus far I had gone, before I conceived the Design of giving a topographical Description of *Minorca*. This I afterwards perfected, visiting every Place, and contriving to make all my Excursions, and Parties of Pleasure with my Friends, subservient to my Design.

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ON these Occasions I never failed to collect whatever could be of Use to me in giving an Idea, such as I was able to give, of the Natural History of the Island. I made indeed a considerable Collection of Fossils; but those I never pretended to distribute into their proper Classes, until Dr *Hill's* Book appeared. If I had had so useful a Guide, while I was upon the Spot, this Part of my Work would have been more worthy the Perusal of the Publick.

THE Animal and Vegetable Kingdoms were no less the Objects of my Enquiry. I confess I have not treated those Subjects either as a Naturalist or a Botanist, having in general confined myself to such of both Kinds as most raised my Curiosity, or were of the greatest Use, for the Sustainance of Life, or for carrying on and extending the Commerce of the Natives.

My

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My Acquaintance with the *Minor-quins* enabled me to draw a Character of them, such as I still think a just one; and, all Things considered, I believe they have no Reason to be ashamed of the Figure they make in my History.

THAT the Work might not be imperfect, I added to the rest an Account of the Antiquities that are still observable in the Island. Of these, the *Cairn*, and *Heathen-Altar*, have a particular Description bestowed on them; and I have been at the Expence of getting a Plate engraved, the better to illustrate what I have said concerning them. It is finely executed by *Vivares*, after a beautiful Drawing of my Friend, the ingenious Mr *George Lambert*.

IN the first Sketch of the Topography, I made an exact Description of the Fortifications of *St Philip's Castle*; but when I came to consider, that such
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a Description, coming from one of my Profession, might possibly be attended with Consequences that it were much better to prevent, I changed it to what it now is, a general Idea of those Works, a Conduct, I believe, that will easily be forgiven me.

I HOPE Major-General *Offarrel* will excuse my inscribing the Book to him, without his having any previous Knowledge of my Intention : I have so many Obligations to that Gentleman, that I could not think of making the Compliment, if it be one, to any other Person.

I HAD made several Remarks on the Weather, and on the Diseases of the Country: But I am very agreeably prevented from exposing myself on those Heads, on which my learned Friend, Mr *Clegborn*, has lately published a very useful Book. If that ingenious Gentleman had extended his Plan to the History

story and Topography, the Trade and Government of the Island, and been a little more copious on its Natural History, the Publick would never have seen any Thing of mine on a Subject, for which he is so much better qualified.

IF any should enquire, why the Publication of my Book has been so long deferred, they may please to be informed, that while my Health and Strength enabled me to do my Duty, I had no Leisure to bestow on Things of this Kind. For almost three Years past indeed, the Gout has kept me so close a Prisoner, that I was glad to employ the short precarious Intervals of Ease in putting the last Hand to my Collections. And this served to divert the Gloominess of my Reflections, and to soften the Rigours of a tedious Confinement.

SUCH

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SUCH as the Book is, I here offer it to the Reader. If he is a candid one, he will make every reasonable Allowance: If he is otherwise, he will be pleased that I have furnished him so many Opportunities of gratifying his Spleen.



C O N-

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Explanation of *PLATE IV.*

Fig. 1. is a Silver Coin of *James* the Second, King of *Majorca*, which was struck about *A. D.* 1300. See Page 116.

Fig. 2. is a Shark's Tooth, found in the solid Freestone, described Page 143.

Fig. 3. is an *Echinites*, described Page 147.

Fig. 4. is a Fossil Body, found in *Minorca*, and now in the Possession of the Reverend Mr *Gostling*, of *Canterbury*, who gave me Leave to make a Sketch of it. It has so much of the Character of an *Echinites*, that I shall make no Scruple of referring it to that Class of Bodies.

Fig. 5. is a Shark's Tooth, described Page 142.

Fig. 6. is an elegant *Echinites*, found in *Minorca*.

Fig. 7. is the other Side of the same Body.

Fig. 8. is an *Echinites*, described Page 147.

This Plate was engraved from my Drawings by *RAVENET*.



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THE
HISTORY
OF THE
Island of MINORCA.

LETTER I.

S I R,

MINORCA, 3 *June*, 1740.

YOUR obliging Letter of the 2d of *February* did not reach me before yesterday, and I could wish that for the future you would write by Post, that I may have the Pleasure of hearing from you with more Certainty and Expedition than by these tedious Ships, which sometimes wait whole Months for a Convoy, before they can safely begin their Voyage.

The Task you enjoin me of giving you some Account of the Island of *MINORCA*, you prepared me to expect, when at our parting

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in *London*, you advised me from my very first Arrival here, carefully to examine all the Remains of Antiquity, and the natural Curiosities that were to be found; to describe the Towns and Harbours; to search into the History, Antiquity, and present State of the Country; to take Notice of the Tempers and Customs of the People, and observe their Methods in Agriculture, Trade and Manufactures; and lastly, to give you an Idea of the Natural History of the Island, with whatever was observable in the Fossil, Animal, and Vegetable Kingdoms. All this I have performed to the best of my Judgment, and my Collections for these two Years past compose a Pile of Papers sufficient to terrify me when I think of revising and putting them in Order.

I could start another Objection to this Undertaking, besides the Tedioufness and Difficulty. You have at present a much better Opinion of me than I deserve, and it is possible what I am going to do may dispose you to think worse of me than I would have you: Consider the Risque, and then put some Value on my Friendship, that will not suffer me to refuse you any Thing you ask. Without further Preface therefore, or Apology, I will proceed to give your Curiosity all the Gratification in my Power.

The Island of *MINORCA* lies in the *Mediterranean* Sea, about sixty Leagues to the southward

Island of Minorca. 3

southward of the Coast of *Catalonia* in *Spain*. In its Neighbourhood are *Majorca*, *Ivica*, and *Formentera*, which, together with this, constituted the ancient Kingdom of *Majorca*. The Latitude of *Port-Mahon* is $39^{\circ} 40'$ North.

It is scarcely possible to consider the Map of this Island, without observing how far the Weather has by Degrees influenced the Figure of its Out-Line. As the northerly Winds are the most frequent and the most violent of this Country, those Parts of the Coast that are the most exposed to their Rage, are cut and indented into a prodigious variety of Creeks and Inlets; while those of a southerly Aspect are infinitely more even and regular, and every where shew the gentle Effects of a more temperate Exposure. It is from the same Cause that the Mountain-Pines, and especially the Olive-Trees, are ever stunted and withered in great Numbers, and even those that thrive best make all their vigorous Shoots, and produce their Cones and Fruit on the Side that is best sheltered from those blustering Enemies, from which they incline their Trunks, and as it were stretch out their Arms to the mild southern Winds for Protection.

MINORCA is upwards of thirty-three Miles long, and varies in Breadth from eight to twelve Miles and more; so that it is nearly of the same Bigness as the Isle of *Wight*, and contains 236 square Miles, and 151,040

4 *The History of the*

square Acres. It is 62 Miles in Compass, and is divided into 4 *Terminos*, the *Termino* of *Mabon*, the *Termino* of *Alaior*, the united *Terminos* of *Mercadal* and *Fererias*, and the *Termino* of *Ciudadella*.

The *Termino* of *Mabon* is bounded on three Sides by the Sea, has the *Termino* of *Alaior* to the north-westward, and joins that of *Mercadal* a little more to the northward. Its greatest Length is 14 Miles, and it is above 8 Miles over, where at the broadest. This *Termino* contains about 13,000 Inhabitants, and its chief Town is *Mabon*.

The *Termino* of *Alaior* is washed by the Sea to the south-westward, and borders on the *Termino* of *Mabon* to the eastward; to the northward is that of *Mercadal*, and the *Termino* of *Fererias* lies to the north-westward. Its greatest Length is upwards of 8 Miles, and it is about 7 broad. It contains about 5000 Souls; its chief Town *Alaior*.

The *Termino* of *Mercadal* is above 12 Miles long, and more than 10 broad. It has the Sea on the north Side, and the *Termino* of *Mabon* to the South-East; that of *Alaior* joins it to the south-westward, and the *Termino* of *Fererias* (to which it is united) lies to the westward. Its chief Town is *Mercadal*, and the most noted Places within its District are *Mount-Toro*, *Fornelles*, and *Sancta Agatha*. It may contain about 1700 Inhabitants.

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Island of Minorca. 5

The *Termino* of *Fererias* (to which that of *Mercadal* is united) is a long narrow Stripe, extending from Sea to Sea quite a-cross the Island, which is here but little more than 10 Miles over. It is scarcely any where more than 4 Miles broad. It is bounded to the Eastward by the *Termino* of *Mercadal*, and that of *Alaior*, and the *Termino* of *Ciudadella* joins it to the westward. Its chief Town is *Fererias*; and its Number of Inhabitants does not exceed 1126.

The *Termino* of *Ciudadella* takes up the west End of the Island. Its greatest Length is the same as that of the *Termino* of *Fererias*, which joins it to the eastward, and its Breadth, which in some Places is less than 5 Miles, enlarges itself in others to upwards of 8. The Sea washes it on the North, the West, and the South Sides. It contains about 7000 Inhabitants, and has *Ciudadella* for its Capital.

The Word *Termino*, which I have been obliged to repeat so often in this Letter, is derived from the *Latin Terminus*, a Bound, Limit, or Border; so the *Terminalia* were Feasts instituted by the *Romans* in Honour of *Terminus*, the Guardian of Boundaries and Land-Marks: This Festival was celebrated at *Rome* on the 22d or 23d of *February* every Year, when Cakes and Fruit were offered to the God, and sometimes Sheep and Swine. He was represented under the Figure of an old Man's Head and Trunk to the Middle,

without Arms, which they erected on a kind of Pedestal that diminished downwards to the Base, under which they usually buried a Quantity of Charcoal, as they thought it to be incorruptible in the Earth; and it was criminal by their Laws, and regarded as an Act of Impiety to this Divinity, to remove or deface any of the *Termini*. Nay they visited them at set Times, as the Children in *London* are accustomed to perambulate the Limits of their Parish, which they call processioning; a Custom possibly derived to them from the *Romans*, who were so many Ages in Possession of the Island of *Great-Britain*. By a *Termino* then (in the Sense we understand it here) is implied a Part of the Island divided from the rest by known Bounds, as the Counties are in *England*.

This is the general Division of the Island of *Minorca*. In my future Letters you shall have an Account of what is most observable in all the *Terminos*, of which I shall treat in the same Order I have named them. Your present Trouble I will cut short here, but not until I have assured you, that

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R II.

L E T T E R I I .

S I R, M I N O R C A , 19 *July*, 1740.

I HAVE often thought that a Traveller should seize the first Opportunity to note down the Things that strike his Imagination ; whereas if he defers it until the Objects are grown familiar to his Sight, his Observations will be of little Entertainment ; but while the Impression is fresh and lively, his Accounts will be interesting, and his Descriptions warm and animated.

Having now reviewed my Collections and Journals, and digested their Contents in my Head, I mean so far as they relate to the Subject of this Letter, I proceed in acquitting my self of the Promise contained in my last.

Mahon is the Capital of the *Termino* of the same Name, and of the whole Island, since it has been in the Possession of the *English*, who removed the Courts of Justice hither from *Ciudadella*, making it the Seat of Government. To this they were induced by its Situation near the principal Harbour, as well as its Neighbourhood to *St Philip's* Castle, the only Fortrefs of any Consideration in the Country.

It was antiently furrounded with a Wall, which is still entire in most Places ; but within these thirty Years the Buildings having dispersed themselves to a considerable Extent without the Walls, at this time compose several Streets in the Suburbs, which do not yield in Elegance and Regularity to any that are within the Town. *Mabon* is built on an elevated Situation, and the Ascent from the Harbour, over which it seems to hang, is steep and difficult : Hence the Prospect is extended, and the Air rendered more pure and wholesome ; neither are the Flies (and especially that very troublesome Kind the *Musquita*, or *Gnat*) such a Pest here all the hot Weather as in the other Towns of the Island.

The Buildings are universally of Freestone, and either covered with Tiles, or flat-roofed and terraced ; which Terrace is the Matter of which their Floors are likewise made, resembling those so well known of late Years in *London* by the Name of *Venetian-Floors* : But the Masons here are so expert at their Business, and the Materials that enter into the Composition of the Terrace so reasonable, and Labour itself so cheap, that they are executed with greater Firmness and Expedition than our Workmen can perform them, and for one tenth part of the Expence.

Their Rooms are generally vaulted with the same Freestone (of six, or four, and sometimes of only two Inches thick, according to
the

the Weight they are intended to sustain) and these Vaults are the same with what our Artificers call *Groins*, springing from the four Angles of the Room. The Cavities, or *Span-drils*, are levelled, and another Terrace laid for the upper Floor; and then if there is to be a flat Roof, another Goin is turned, levelled and terraced as before; and thus all is finished by the Mason without Timber, which saves a great deal of Charge in a poor Country, where that Commodity bears an excessive Price, and also frees the Inhabitants from the Terrors of an Element which makes such dreadful Ravage in many of the other Parts of the World: And it must be allowed at the same time, that the Natives of *Minorca* have no small Obligation to the Mildness of their Climate on this Account, since they are not often under a Necessity of lighting a Fire, except for culinary Uses, or in the Shops of such Artificers whose Trades require it, of whom too the Number is but small.

I cannot help mentioning another Particular concerning these Groins. The Masons are no way beholden to Centers of Wood and Boards for the Truth and Exactness of their Work; for having first fashioned a Stone with the nicest Care, (the horizontal Joints of which being each of them formed into a *Radius* to the Center of the Arch) they place one of them in the Situation where it is to remain, and prop it with a Pole; When they
find

find it lies as they would have it, they point all the Joints with Mortar, only leaving a small Hole at the Top to receive the *Guish*. This Cement they put into an Earthen Pitcher, having in it a proper Quantity of Water, and then stir it well about: A violent Ebullition ensues, and then they pour it in at the Hole. In an Instant it disperses itself every where to the Thickness of a Crown-Piece in the void Space of the Joints, hardening and setting throughout in a Moment. They now remove the Prop, and thus proceed on every Side upwards, until the Key compleats the whole Groin.

But if the House is to be roofed with Timber, a slight Arch is turned a-cross the Room, and run up to a Level, to do the Office of a Ridge, and support the Ends of the Rafters, which are generally crooked, knotty, and unequal, of the Growth of the Country, which produces but few Trees that deserve the Name of Timber.

One End of the Rafter rests on the Top of the Side-Wall, and the other lies on the Ridge. I have never observed any Beams to be extended athwart the House to tie the Feet of the Rafters together, and yet the Roofs being light and the Walls strong, these last are never thrust from their Perpendicular. The Rafters usually lie at about two Feet asunder.

A-cross

Island of Minorca. 11

A-cross these Rafters the Reeds or Canes of the Island are bound close together. These Canes are of the same kind with those that are imported into *England* for the use of the Woollen-Manufactures, and last a long Time.

The Tiles used here are of one common Form, which is readily conceived by supposing an Earthen Tube, wider at one End than at the other, cut lengthwise through the Center, by which Section two Tiles are produced. The concave Sides of the Tiles being turned up, they are laid close to each other on the Canes, well bedded in tempered Clay, the upper lapping over the lower one about two Inches, in ordinary Work, but in the best, not less than four Inches: For this purpose the narrow End is placed next the Eaves, and the broader one upwards. Over these another Course is laid; the concave Sides of these are turned down, and also lap over; so that they cover all the Joints of the undermost Course, and being well pointed with Mortar, make a very good Covering. The Roofs have a great Slope given them, not less than what is called the *Pediment-Pitch*, which is not to be wondered at in a Country where they rarely see any Snow in seven Years together.

Their Freestone is pretty much like the *Bath-Stone*, both in Colour and Hardness: Like that, it yields freely to the Impression of the Ax or Saw, when it is first drawn from the Quarry, and by standing in the Air acquires

acquires a solid Crust that sufficiently secures it against the Weather of the Climate. It abounds all over the Island; and far from being under a Necessity of searching for it, or digging to great Depths to come at it, they find it open to the Day in most Places. It is generally raised in what they call *Cantoons*, each two Feet long and one square, when wrought, that is a *double Cube* of a Foot. The Quarriers first mark out the *Cantoon*, a little larger than the Size, to admit of hewing; then with their Ax they cut a Channel a Foot deep, and as narrow as may be, at the inner Side, and at each End, so that it adheres to the *Stratum* at the Bottom only; then they apply their Wedges, and so forcibly rend it from its Bed. The *Cantoons* are usually delivered on the Spot for Two Shillings and Six Pence the Dozen, well squared and smoothed with an Ax. The Country affords great Plenty of excellent Lime-Stone, and they build their Kilns for the most Part in the Woods, for the Conveniency of being near their Fuel.

Their Pits of Guish are no where at such a Distance as considerably to advance the Price of that valuable Cement, which is a grayish *Gypsum*, moderately hard, and possessing a small Degree of Transparency, more especially in the Masses that incline to Whitishness.

The *Cavaliers* and the most wealthy of the *Burghers*, build their Houses on two or three
Sides

Sides of a square Court, and some of them on all the Sides: These are of two Stories; the Ground-Floor contains the Offices, and the Servants Lodgings; the Principal-Story is taken up by the Master and his Family, and the Upper-Floor is used as a Granary. For as the Farmers here pay great Part of their Rents in Kind, the Landlord lays up his Wheat and Barley in his own House. The Walls of these larger Houses seldom exceed the Thickness of a single *Cantoon*; those of the poorer Tradesmen and Labourers, which do not often rise more than ten or twelve Feet high, are of half, or it may be two thirds of that Thickness, and yet are sufficiently strong and durable. Linings of Wainscot, and Tapestry-Hangings are equally unknown here. The better Sort content themselves with Plaistering and White-washing their Houses on the Inside, as the poorer People whiten them only. The Stairs are always of Stone, and generally very narrow and uneasy.

I have hitherto spoke only of the Dwellings of Particulars; I come now to their Publick Buildings. These are to be considered as the weak Efforts of an indigent People to adorn their Country; and if this Allowance is made, they will not be found void of Embellishment or Magnificence. The great Church of *Mabon* makes no contemptible Appearance, even to such as have observed our best *Gothick* Churches in *England*, where I could name

two or three Cathedrals, though this be none, that are far from surpassing it, either in Greatness or Decoration. † It may be said of their Churches in general, that they are worthy of being put to a better Use than to be made the Scene of those pious Fopperies that are daily exhibited in them.

They exclude the Sun in a great Measure from their Churches, and supply the Absence of his Light by a Number of small Lamps fixed in Sconces and Lustres, that disperse a glimmering Twilight, inspiring the Congregation with a religious Awe, of no small advantage to their spiritual Guides. Thus cunning Linen-Drapers darken their Shops, to exempt their Wares from the nice Scrutiny of their Customers: Thus Jugglers act their Tricks by a doubtful Light, the better to impose on their Spectators, and avoid Detection. Yet hence these Churches derive a Coolness that renders them very supportable in the hotter Weather of this Climate.

It is easy to discover that this Custom of shutting the Day-Light out of their Churches is not quite so antient as the Edifices themselves; for I have observed the Work with which the Windows are walled up to be somewhat different from the rest, and apparently of a later Date. You should be told
that

† They have lately set about rebuilding this Church.

that their Churches have as many Windows as ours have, only they are all stopped, except one or two of the upper ones.

The *Franciscan* Convent, that of the *Augustins*, and the Nunnery of *Sancta-Clara* are rather large than elegant Fabricks; yet they are convenient enough, and have each of them a Chapel prettily set off with Carved-Work not unartfully wrought.

The Governor's House is a straggling irregular Pile, consisting of several Apartments, erected at different Times, and in as many various Stiles of Building. The *Suite* of Rooms built some Years since are well enough calculated for the State of the Inhabitant. Governors Houses are apt to be extreamly subject to this Irregularity and Patchwork, each inclining to make some Addition in his own Time, either to enlarge his Conveniencies, or to augment the Splendor of his Dwelling: And as this is usually done in Neglect of the Symmetry of the Whole, to comply with his own bad Taste, or for want of a good one in his Operator, it is highly possible it may not please him when it is finished. But a great Man, that snuffs the *Barbary* Air, and is invested with the Power of obliging or of mortifying the People under his Command, in Proportion to their Ductility or Untractableness, can go on again, without Opposition or Controul, until he is accommodated to his Humour.

There

There is generally a Regiment quartered at *Mabon*. The Officers have a House assigned to each of them, and the Private-Men are dispersed in those of the lesser *Burghers*, which are converted into Barracks for their Use. The Proprietors, who are obliged to make Room for these unacceptable Tenants, receive a small Rent from the Magistrates, and accommodate themselves elsewhere as they can. The Officers and Soldiers have a Proportion of Wood and Oil provided for them by the Town. A Subaltern's Allowance of Oil is sufficient for one Lamp, and his Wood, with very good Management will boil his Tea-Kettle two Mornings in the Week.

The Streets of this Town, which are generally very narrow, are none of them paved. The native Rock appears almost every where, and in some Places is very uneven and troublesome to pass. At least some of us, who through the Tenderness of our Feet, are nice Criticks in these Matters, do not fail to find it so.

At the Foot of the Hill on which *Mabon* stands is a fine Wharf of great Extent in Length, and proportionably broad. The whole western End is set apart for the Use of His Majesty's Ships, and here all Manner of Naval-Stores (except Masts, which are kept on the opposite Side of the Harbour) are laid up in convenient Magazines, to be in a constant Readiness for careening, repairing, and supplying the Men of War. The Depth of
Water

Water at the Key is such as enables Ships of the largest Size to come as near it as they have Occasion. As there is no Tide, a Dry-Dock has never been hitherto attempted at this Place, though surely it would not be a Work of such mighty Difficulty as it is usually represented, and yet be of infinite Service if it could be accomplished: For the present Method of *beaving-down*, as practised here, is liable to many other Objections besides the more obvious one, of its being a dangerous Strain to the Masts and Timbers of the Ships. But *non nostrum tantas*————

The eastern Part of the Wharf is taken up by the Merchants, near which is the *Pratica-House*, where Ships newly come into Port must apply, and shew a clean Bill of Health, before they are admitted to break Bulk.

A little out of Town in the Way to *St Philip's* stands a small Convent of *Carmelite* Fryars, where lately a sumptuous Edifice was begun by those Fathers, but stopped by Order of the Government. A great Number of *Roman* Coins, Lamps, Urns, and *Lachrymatories*, were discovered on opening for the Foundation.

From hence some Gentlemen amongst us reason a little whimsically. They say these Antiquities prove this Spot to have been the original Site of the Town of *Mabon*: Now I cannot well comprehend, how the Remains of the *Romans* come to denote a *Carthaginian*

Foundation ; for *Mago* is by universal Consent allowed to have built the Town, and to have given it his Name. Then they say the *Romans* rebuilt *Mabon* : And it is very likely they might : But it is equally probable they rebuilt it on the same Ground where *Mago's* Town stood, and that by Piecemeal, as we pull down a few decayed Houses in our Streets, and run up new ones on the same Spot. But if they have no better Grounds for their Opinion than these Remains, and the Multitude of Graves cut every where hereabouts in the Rock ; these certainly make against them, and evince the Place not to have been a *Roman* Town, but a *Roman* *Cæmtery*, since by an express Law of the Twelve Tables, that People were restrained from either *burying or burning their Dead within the City* : *Hominem mortuum in urbe ne sepelito neve urito*. This Custom of burying without the City Walls, was in Use with most other Nations, especially with the *Greeks* and the *Jews*, as is easily proved if it was necessary.

And now, my good Friend, tell me freely, do you not shudder at the Length of this Letter, when you consider that the Task you have engaged me in requires many others of unrelenting Tedioufness ? If you do, blame your own Want of Discernment that made so ill a Choice ; but acquit me, I beseech you,
for

Island of Minorca. 19

for the Readiness with which I set my self to work to obey your Commands.

I am ever,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R III.

S I R, MINORCA, 17 Aug. 1740.

ABOUT a Mile below the Town of *Mahon* is the *English-Cove*, which is the general Watering-Place for the Navy. It is plentifully supplied with sweet Water, and here the Harbour is near a Mile over, almost its greatest Breadth. Half a Mile lower, and about a Mile short of *St Philip's*, lies *Bloody-Island*, making almost an equal Division of the Harbour yet leaving the greatest Breadth and the deepest Water on the *Mahon* Side. Here is a capacious Hospital belonging to the Navy, with Lodgings for the Naval-Officer, Surgeon, and others, and an Apartment for the Commodore of the Fleet has been sometimes fitted up here. The cool Breezes of the Sea, to which this little Island lies open, render it a comfortable Residence in Summer :

C 2

And

And though at present it contains no more than this single Pile of Building, it could easily admit of many others, its Area containing, as I judge, not less than 12 Acres; and here the Freshness of the Air, and the amusing Prospects of the more improved Spots, broke here and there with Rocks and Precipices, and intermixed with scattering Houses; and the Castle and Town of *St Philip's*, the Fort of *Philipet*, and the Signal-House at *Cape-Mola*, at a picturesque Distance; with the moving Scene all round on the Water; these, I say, all together, compose a Situation highly capable (if the Hospital were taken down) of being improved into one of the most delightful Retirements for a contemplative Mind that is to be found in this Part of the World.

This Hospital was built when Sir *John Jennings* was Commander in Chief of the Fleet in the *Mediterranean*, Anno 1711, in lieu of an old one that was inconveniently situated. Mr *Griffith*, who was at the same Time Agent to the Commissioners for Sick and Wounded Seamen, made the Contract for the Building, by Sir *John's* Order, for the Sum of 3600*l*.

The *Oyster-Cove* lies almost opposite to *Bloody-Island* on the *Mahon* Side, where the *Spaniards* dive for that delicious Shell-Fish in 10 or 12 Fathoms Water. This Cave (or Cove, as they are universally called in this Country) is scooped out of the Rock, and as
it

it has a North-East Aspect, and is consequently shaded from the Sun, it is a pleasing Receptacle for a Company of Friends in a Summer's Afternoon. I need not insist, that as the diving for Oysters can only be practised in Summer Time, the Oysters are eaten to great Disadvantage; yet though they are not so fat and well fed as some of ours are in *England*, they have a pleasant Flavour that highly recommends them.

When you have engaged a Couple of *Spaniards* before-hand, you proceed by Water to the Scene, where their Method of diving is thus: One of the Fellows prepares without Loss of Time for the Adventure, and stripping himself stark naked, takes his Post at the Prow of the Boat; then fastening a small Hammer to his right Arm, and committing himself to the Protection of his favourite Saint, with much crossing, and not a little Apprehension, plunges into the Deep. The Anxiety of his Comrade, whose Turn is to be next, is visible enough in his Countenance; but it does not last long; for the Diver, having wrenched as many Oysters from the Rocks, with his Hammer, as he is well able to bring up, or, which oftener happens, having staid at the Bottom as long as his Breath will hold, springs upwards, and revisits the Day. His left Arm, on which the Oysters are piled up, is instantly unloaded of its Freight; he is helped into the Boat, and

comforted with a Dram, and then the other makes himself ready to follow his Example.

As we row from hence to *St Philip's*, we leave the *Quarentine-Island* on the left Hand : It is less than the former, and much nearer to the *Cape-Mola* Shore. Within this little Island Vessels arriving from *Barbary* and the *Levant*, when those Parts are visited by the Plague, are obliged to perform the usual *Quarentine*. The least Remissness in a Matter of so serious a Nature would be wholly unpardonable. The Havock made by the Plague at *Marseilles* is not to be suddenly forgot, and *Algiers* is seldom a Year without it ; and the Neighbourhood of these Places, and the frequent touching of our homeward-bound *Levanters* here, are Considerations that keep up a constant Vigilance and Caution in these People. It happened lately under my own Observation, that two *Algerine Gallies* (at a Time when the Plague raged in their Capital) having been denied Entrance at several Ports, and beat from others, forced into this Harbour under the Fire of our Batteries, preferring any Risque in Port to the Certainty of starving at Sea. But the *Turks*, having been a long Time on a Cruise, happened to be free from Infection, so that no bad Consequence ensued.

We come next to *St Philip's* Castle, situate at the Entrance of *Mabon-Harbour*, to which it is the Key, and the principal Fortification

Fortification on the Island. It is seated on a Neck of Land between *Mahon* Harbour and *St Stephen's* Cove, and its numerous Out-works extend themselves to the Shore on both Sides. The Body of the Place consists of 4 Bastions and as many Curtains, surrounded with a deep Ditch hewn out of the solid Rock which furnished Freestone for the Walls. The Area is bounded on every Side with Buildings, consisting of the Governor's House, a Chapel, Guard-Room, Barracks, &c. In the Center of the Square is a Pump to supply the Troops with Rain-Water from a large Cistern, and the whole Square is well paved and kept very clean.

Over the flat Roofs of the arched Buildings is a spacious Rampart, affording an extensive Prospect to the Eye, and the Bastions have Guns mounted on them. The Communication from the lower Area to the Top of the Rampart is by a Pair of Stairs; The Steps are about 10 Feet long, 3 Feet broad, and rise one Foot. The lower Edge of the Step is of Freestone, and there the Rise is only 3 Inches, the rest slopes gently upwards, and is of common Pavement. I have been the more particular in describing these Stairs, as they are not only of easy Ascent for Men, but also for Mules and Asses carrying their Burthens on their Backs. Up these the Artillery People likewise draw their Guns when there is Occasion; and if they did not

take up so much Room, they would be well worth our Imitation.

The whole Body of the Place is undermined, and very serviceable subterraneous Works are contrived in the Rock, and communicate with one another wherever it is necessary. In one of these are repositied the Remains of Captain *Philip Stanhope*, Commander of the *Milford* Ship of War, who acting on Shore as a Volunteer under his Brother General *Stanhope* at the Siege of this Castle, was on the 28th Day of *September* 1708, unfortunately killed, after he had given signal Proofs of an undaunted Courage.

The Chapel, which is reserved for the Service of the Church of *England*, is the least adorned of any in the whole Island; for as the *Spanish* Governors constantly resided at *Ciudadella*, at a remote Distance, it received but little Improvement in their Time; and our Governors living altogether at *Mahon*, it has been equally neglected by us. It still serves as a Burying-Place, and an elegant *Latin* Inscription has been lately put up here in Memory of Brigadier *Kane*, whose Body lies near it. Though it is pretty long, I would freely transcribe it for your Perusal, if a Friend had not assured me that the same Inscription, Word for Word, is also set up in *Westminster-Abbey*, with a Bust of the Brigadier, exactly resembling him, done by *Rysbrack*. This Gentleman was many Years in
the

the Government of *Minorca*, and is universally acknowledged to have been one of the best Officers of his Age, and one of the most deservedly beloved Men that ever lived. When he first came here, there was great Scarcity of fresh Provisions: Goats-Flesh indeed might be had; but there was little Beef or Mutton, and tame Fowls were a greater Rarity than the wild. Mr *Kane* procured Numbers of Cattle and Flocks of Sheep; he had Supplies of Poultry from *France, Italy,* and *Barbary*, and distributed them, together with great Quantities of Eggs, among the Farmers and Peasants, settling a Price at which they were to be sold, that encouraged them to set seriously about increasing the Breed. The Gentleness of his Administration reconciled the *Minorquins* to the *English* Government; and the Troops observed an exact Discipline under so nice a Judge. The Roads were every where so narrow and stony, and in many Places so steep, that they were excessively difficult and tiresome to a Traveller: Mr *Kane* made a noble Road, that extended (in as direct a Line as the natural Irregularity of the Country would allow) from *St Philip's* Castle, the whole Length of the Island, to *Ciudadella*. In short, if the Life of this amiable Person was writ with the strictest Regard to Impartiality, it would seem to those who knew nothing of him to be rather a Panegyrick than a History.

Before

Before the Entrance of the Castle is a *Hornwork*, with other *Outworks* to this and the rest of the Fronts: But it is not my purpose to enter into a minute Detail of all the Works that constitute the Strength of this Fortrefs: It would possibly be invidious, would certainly be tedious, since the bare Sight of a Plan will give you a better Notion of them than the best Description I am able to frame, tho' I were to spend a Week in so unprofitable an Attempt.

There is a great Number of large Guns mounted towards the Entrance of the Harbour, besides those that point to the Land which would require the Service of a vast many *Artillery*-People on Occasion, as indeed the various Works demand a very considerable Garrison to dispute them with an Enemy.

Of the utmost Advantage to this Place are certainly the capacious *Galleries* that are cut out of the Rock, and extend themselves under the *Covert-Way* throughout all the Works, as I think. This was an Undertaking equally necessary and expensive; for otherwise the People must have been torn to Pieces by the Splinters of Stone in Time of Action, as well those off Duty, who had no Cover to secure them, as those who were obliged to expose themselves. But these *Subterraneans* afford Quarters and Shelter to the Garrison, impenetrable to Shot or Shells, and not to be come at but by cutting a Way to them

them through the living Rock, against which too they are provided with a Number of *Counter-Mines*, at proper Distances, and in such Places as by their Situation are most exposed.

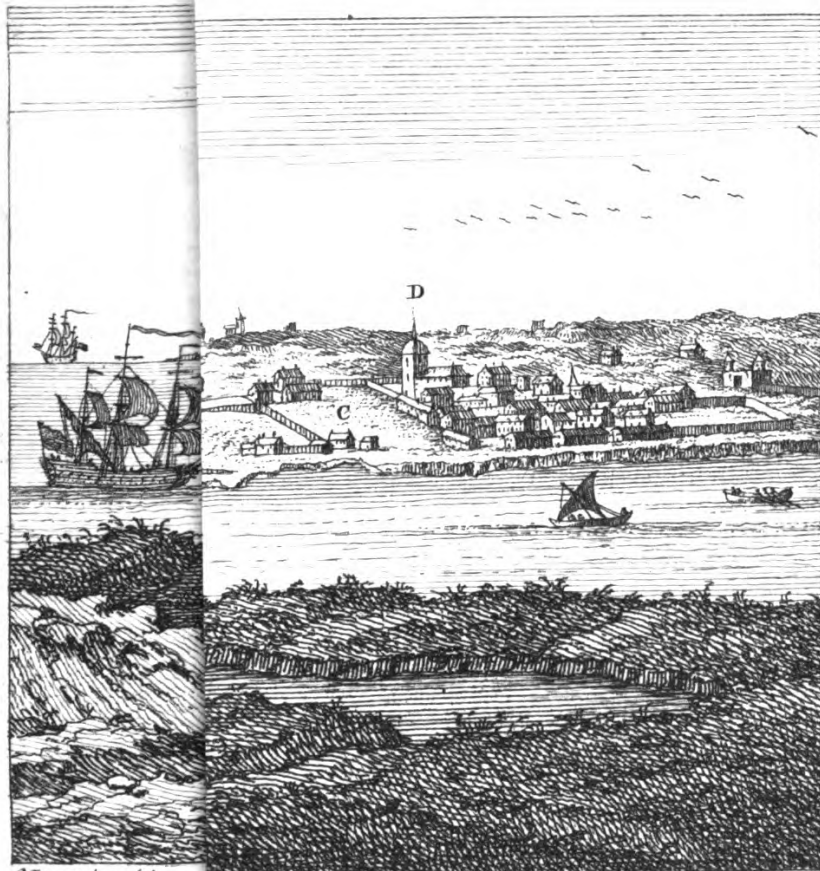
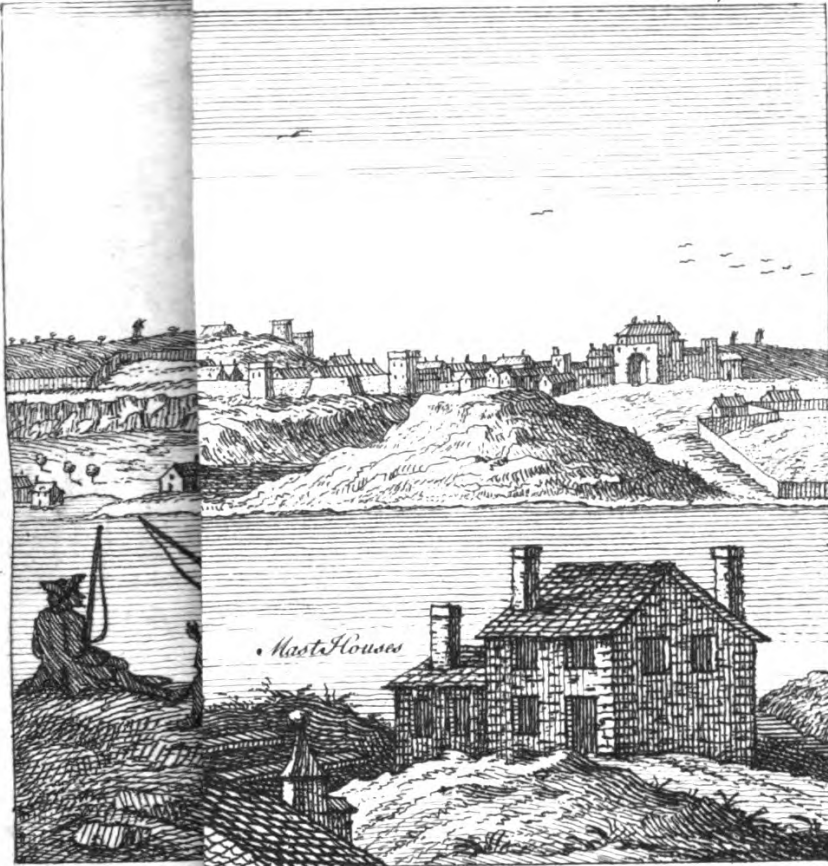
In the *Main-Ditch* is a small *Powder-Magazine*; another much larger is under the *Covert-Way* of the Place, and there are Store-houses sufficient for every Occasion, with an *Hospital* near *St Stephen's Cove*: And as a Cistern is obnoxious to Accidents from the *Bombs* of an Enemy, there are several Wells within the Works, and a Quantity of every Species of Provisions is constantly kept up to support the whole Soldiery of the Island in Case of a Siege.

On the Point of Land to the Eastward of the *Castle* is *Charles-Fort*, built by the *Spaniards*, and of little Consequence, as it now stands. The *Grand-Battery* lies down at the Water's Edge, and has a high Stone Wall for the Protection of the Gunners, who ply their Ordnance through a long Range of *Embrasures*. This is the common Burying-Place of the Garrison. The *Queen's Redoubt* is the most advanced of all the Works towards the Country on the Side where it stands: Between it and the Harbour are two other Works, one of them lately finished. On the other Side of *St Stephen's Cove* is the *Marlborough*, a very chargeable Work, which took its Name from the great Man who was *Master-General* of the *Ordnance* not long before it was built.

I have

I have contented myself with giving you only a superficial View of the Castle of *St Philip's*; and now you will naturally expect my Opinion, what Degree of Resistance it is capable of, if the *Spaniards*, who are now at War with us, should make a Descent upon the Island. That I may not wholly balk your Curiosity on this delicate Subject, I must say somewhat of the present Strength of our Garrison. We have now in the Island five old Regiments of Foot, I. Brigadier *Read's*; II. Lieutenant-General *Tyrrel's*; III. the Royal Regiment of Foot of *Ireland*, commanded by Major-General *Armstrong*; IV. Brigadier *Paget's*, and V. Major-General *Anstruther's* *. Here is also a Company of the Royal Regiment of *Artillery*; so that our whole Strength may be about Two Thousand Four Hundred effective Men. Of these only one third can be put upon Duty at once, and we have a vast extent of Works for 800 Men to defend: Then an Allowance must be made for the Detachments to be drawn from these, for serving the *Platforms*, repairing the Damage done by the Enemy, and other Emergencies; besides a considerable daily Abatement to be expected by the Sick, killed,
and

* These Regiments have been relieved since this Letter was written.



C. Lemprère del.

the Harbour of Philipet Cove

W. H. Toms Sculp.



and wounded, not to say Deserters. These things considered (tho' I make no Doubt, and indeed cannot doubt, of the Goodness of the Troops, knowing them so well as I do) I fear that if we were not suddenly relieved by our Fleet, a powerful Enemy, well provided for such an Undertaking, would too soon make himself Master of the Place.

But it is not to be imagined that while we continue Masters at Sea, the *Spaniards* can ever get together a sufficient Embarkation to subdue *Minorca*, with such Expedition and Secrecy as to escape the Intelligence of our Ministry, and the Vigilance and Interception of our Fleet*. Indeed if we are to suppose a Series of Misfortunes on our Side, and Successes on theirs, and the Course of the War should, beyond all Expectation and Likelihood, give up the watry Element to their Dominion, I see no Remedy but that this Island must fall to them in the common Calamity. Yet I strongly hope our King will ever be able to speak of the King of *Spain* in the Words *Virgil* has put in the Mouth of *Neptune*,

Non illi imperium pelagi, scævumque tri-
dentem,
Sed mihi sorte datum. Tenet ille immania
saxa—

* At the Time when this Letter was written, the *Spaniards* were the only Enemies we thought of: Things are otherwise now.

But

But it is now high time to allow you a Pause, and indeed I have almost tired my Hand, tho' it be pretty well accustomed to Employment. I look upon it as a great Piece of good Fortune that I am able to amuse myself within Doors, being doomed, for some time at least, to a Climate where the Heats all the Summer Months are so violent, that a Man must be very unhappy who has no Relish but for Company, and is therefore under a perpetual Necessity of hunting for People as idle as himself, to countenance his Insignificancy, and keep him from thinking.

I am,

with an unalterable Friendship,

S I R,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R I V.

S I R, MINORCA, 16 Oct. 1740.

TH E *Araval*, or Suburb of *St Philip's*, consists of Officers Quarters, Barracks for Soldiers, the Church, and some hundreds of Houses inhabited by *Spaniards*. Since the Outworks of the Castle have been run out to such an Extent, the *Glacis* almost reaches the Buildings in some Places; so that as Things at present stand, an Enemy would find these Houses a convenient Shelter to favour his Approaches, and cover his Workmen in the Construction of his Batteries: Wherefore the Houses ought certainly to be forthwith cleared away, to such a Distance every where, as to leave a sufficient *Esplanade* between the Village and the Fortifications*.

The Commanding-Officer of the two Regiments that are quartered here resides in a mean House on the *Little-Parade*. The rest of the Officers are dispersed about the Town, and most of them lodged at their own Expence; for the greater Part of the Quarters that were at first allotted them are now gone to Ruin: On this Account many Gentlemen
have

* This has been since done.

have built themselves Houses, which they easily lett when they are ordered to any of the Out-Garrisons of the Island. The *Great Parade* is now roomy enough for reviewing and exercising two Battalions of Men, and is to be further enlarged and levelled, so as to receive a much larger Body.

Near this is the *Main-Guard*, where a Captain, a Subaltern, two Serjeants, two Corporals, two Drums and thirty-two Private-Centinels do daily Duty*. The *Chief-Engineer's House* stands at some Distance from hence, fronting the *Parade*; and though it is of a singular stile of Building, I think it convenient enough, and well adapted to the Climate, enjoying a healthy Situation and a noble Prospect.

The *Church* is near that Part of the *Line-Wall* that is next the End of the *Great-Road* as it enters *St Philip's*. It is suitable enough to the Congregation it was built to receive, which is chiefly composed of indigent People, of the lowest Rank.

The *Line-Wall* is wholly of Rough-Stone, piled up without Morter, and extends from the Head of *St Stephen's Cove* quite cross the Neck of Land to the Harbour. There is a raised *Banquette*, or Step, for the Men to stand on, and then the Wall is just high enough

* This Guard is now kept near the Church.

enough to fire over. This Wall has several *Towers* in it's Range, which are of much greater Antiquity, and are placed at proper Distances. They are built of squared Free-stone, laid in Mortar, and run with *Guish*, as appears where the Work has yielded to the Impressions of the Weather and the Injuries of Time. The *Line-Wall* was hastily run up a little before General *Stanhope* arrived here in 1708, and is certainly of small Consequence to the present Strength of the Castle: It's principal Use is to prevent the Natives from bringing Corn and some other of the Necessaries of Life into the Town, and thereby oblige them to resort for these Particulars to the publick *Stanc* *, where great Care is taken to furnish them, without the *least* View to private Advantage or Perquisite. †

The *Baranco* is a hollow watery place, as the Name imports, and is the most considerable Garden from whence the Garrison and Town of *St Philip's* are supplied. It is a flat irregular Plot of Ground, bordered on both Sides by Rocks, and extending from the upper End of *St Stephen's* Cove a good way within Land. It is a fertile Spot, and produces in great Abundance every kind of
D Fruit,

* *Stanc*, q. d. *es tanc*, from the Verb *tancar*, to shut, or lock up: The Governor's Stores for supplying the Garrison and Inhabitants with Corn, Wine, *Aguardiente* (a kind of Spirits), and Oil.

† The *Line-Wall* is since pulled down.

Fruit, Greens, Herbs, Roots, and Pulse, that is known to the *Minorquins*. It's Surface is but little raised above the Level of the Water, and there is no question but that the Harbour which goes under the Name of *St Stephen's Cove* once possessed this whole Region, until the Land-Floods, which here are sudden and violent (as the Rains are) washing the finer Parts of the Soil from the Upper Grounds, filled it up above the Height of the Water, and converted it by Degrees to a rich Earth. This was the Original of all the *Barancos* at the Heads of the greater and lesser Harbours throughout the Island; and in all the Harbours here, where the Sea is smooth within them, and where there is no Back-Water to force down the Earth, nor Tide to carry it off, the *Barancos* must for ever enlarge themselves, and constantly encroach on the Water.

St Stephen's Cove is a small Inlet of the Sea, easily admitting Boats with Supplies of Fuel and Provisions whenever the Circumstances of a Siege allow of it, at the same time that they render it more difficult to approach the Garrison by the Way of the Harbour.

On the Coast to the Southward are many Coves in the Rocks, formed by the dashing of the Waves, and abounding with Wild-Pigeons; and hereabouts the Fishermen exercise their Art, when the Weather will not admit of their going further out to Sea.

In

Island of Minorca. 35

In this Neighbourhood lies *Laire de Mahon*, wick we now call *Coney-Island*. It is separated from the Main by a Sound of about two Miles over, of very dangerous Navigation to Ships of Burthen, on account of it's Shoals and foul Ground. This little Island, which appears to be a sterile Rock, yet has ever been plentifully stocked with Rabbets, from whence it has received it's modern Name; and here no inconsiderable Quantity of Salt is yearly made, which by a particular Indulgence is exempted from the Payment of the usual Duties, rigidly enough exacted every where else in the Country.*

I have never been much surprized to find very gross Errors and Misrepresentations in the ordinary Level of Travellers, but I confess I was struck with Astonishment on reading the romantick Description it has pleased the Cardinal *de Retz*, one of the greatest Men of his Age, to give the World of *Mahon Harbour*. I shall transcribe it for you at length, as I find it in the *Amsterdam* Edition of his *Memoirs*, printed in 1718, p. 301, of the first Volume.

His words are as follow: *Port Mahon, qui est le plus beau de la Mediterrannée— Son embouchure est fort étroite, et je ne crois pas que deux Galeres à la fois y pussent passer*

D 2 *en*

* I am told the Rabbets have been in a great Measure destroyed since the Death of Mr *Nugent*, who farmed this little Island; and that very little Salt is now made here.

en voguant, il s'elargit tout d'un coup, et fait un bassin oblong qui a une grande demi lieüe de long ; une grande montagne qui l'environne de tous les côtez fait un théâtre, qui par la multitude et la hauteur des arbres dont elle est couverte, et par les ruisseaux qu'elle jette avec une abondance prodigieuse, ouvre mille et mille scenes qui sont sans exageration plus surprenantes que celles de l'opera ; cette même montagne, ces arbres, ces rochers couvrent le port de tous les vents, et dans les plus grandes tempêtes, il est toujours aussi calme qu'un bassin de fontaine, et aussi uni qu'une glace—Minorque donne encore plus de chair et de toutes sortes de victuailles necessaires à la navigation, que Majorque ne produit de grenades, d'oranges et de limons—Dans ce beau lieu la chasse étoit la plus belle du monde en toute sorte de gibier, et la pêche en profusion.

*“ Port-Mahon is the finest in the Mediter-
 “ ranean—The Entrance is very narrow,
 “ and I do not think that two Gallies could
 “ row by each other there ; but it widens all
 “ at once, and forms an oblong Bason of a
 “ good League in Length and more than
 “ half a League over. A great Mountain
 “ surrounds it on every Side, and forms a
 “ kind of Theatre, which in the Number
 “ and great Height of the Trees with which
 “ it is covered, and the Streams it sends
 “ forth in vast Abundance, presents to the
 “ View an infinite Variety of Scenes, much
 “ more*

“ more astonishing, without Exaggeration,
“ than those of the Opera. This Mountain,
“ these Trees and Rocks, shelter the Port on
“ every Side from the Winds, so that in the
“ most tempestuous Weather it is as calm as
“ a Bason, and as smooth as a Piece of Ice—
“ *Minorca* furnishes more fresh Meat and
“ all Sorts of Provisions for the Use of
“ Ships, than *Majorca* does of Pomegranates,
“ Oranges, and Lemons—In this delight-
“ ful Place we found every kind of Game,
“ and a Profusion of Fish.”

I must observe to you, Sir, that this gay Picture is full of false Colouring; for the Harbour is not surrounded by a Mountain, though the Land is high in some Places; there are no high Trees, nay scarcely any Trees near it, nor is it probable there ever were many; no Stream of Water falls into it; and Boats are frequently over-set here by sudden Flurries of Wind. What the Cardinal says of *Majorca* is not to be readily accounted for, that Island having ever produced the Necessaries of Life in much greater Abundance than *Minorca*, as it certainly does at this Day.

To sail into *Port-Mahon*, they bring *Mount-Toro* to bear with the Middle of the Harbour, and to keep it 'till they are got the Length of *Bloody-Island*, taking Care not to come too near *Philipet*, where there is a sunk Rock: They are then in 9 or 10 Fathoms

Water, and good Ground. If they would go above *Bloody-Island*, they must leave it on the Right-Hand, and there is Water enough quite up to the Key of the Town. Whenever they would approach the *Cape-Mola* Side, they must keep the Lead a-going, for the Water shoals every where there, whereas there is a sufficient Depth on the other Side, for the most Part, from one End to the other.

There is a good Key at *St Philip's*, for the Use of Ships; on the other Side of the Harbour, but a little lower down, where is the narrowest Place, stands Fort *Philipet*, where a small Guard does Duty for the Security of the Powder there lodged in a Magazine. Here is a Battery of Guns, on a Level with the Surface of the Water, for defending the Entrance of the Harbour. Between this Fort and the *Cape-Mola* Shore is an Opening, which as been sometimes fatally mistaken for the Mouth of *Mahon* Harbour. On the elevated Top of *Cape-Mola* is the Signal-House, from whence the Garrison has due Warning on the Approach of Ships and Vessels from Sea: A Bush hung out denotes a small Vessel, a Ball a Ship, 2 or 3 Balls the same Number of Ships, and a Flag a Fleet; these Signals are hoisted on the Side where the Ships are discovered.

Cape-Mola is high Land, and is almost severed from the Island by *Philipet* Cove and a small Bay on the North-Side, and is universally

verfally eſteemed capable of being rendered an almoſt impregnable Fortrefs, at no more than a moderate Expence.

It is every where, except within the Harbour, ſurrounded by inacceſſible Precipices; and the Height (though there much diminiſhed) is very great next the ſandy Neck that joins it to the Country; and if it were even adviſable to make it an Iſland, the Experiment would be no wiſe difficult.

It muſt be owned that this advantageous Situation has not been wholly overlooked, for ſince we have had the Iſland in our Poſſeſſion, ſome conſiderable Works have been taken in hand, though they were never perfected; and this ſeems to have been the Reason: When we firſt got *Minorca* into our Hands, it was but reaſonable to expect that the *Spaniards* of King *Philip's* Party would make ſome Efforts towards recovering it into their Poſſeſſion, and therefore ſome Addition of Strength was haſtily made at *St Philip's*. When the Peace of *Utrecht* was afterwards concluded, which confirmed the Iſland to us, ſome Uſe was made of the Calm that enſued to begin theſe Works at *Cape-Mola*; which however were ſoon diſcontinued, on an Alarm of the *Spaniards* having made Preparations to invade us; and then ſomething was further done at *St Philip's*, to put it into a preſent Poſture of Defence. At Length *St Philip's* growing in Extent and

Number of Outworks to be a great Place, and having cost an immense Sum of Money to make it so, it was judged too good to be demolished; and thus *Cape-Mola* came to be slighted, and the Works of the Castle were ordered to be further improved.

At the upper End of the Harbour of *Mabon* are *St John's* Gardens, situate in a large *Baranco*, from whence *Mabon* is principally supplied with Vegetables. This *Baranco* is of far greater Extent than that I mentioned at *St Philip's*, to which it bears about the same Proportion that the Harbour does to *St Stephen's* Cove, and affords not only sufficient Supplies for the ordinary Demands, as well of Soldiers as Natives, but is likewise able to furnish a Fleet, when we have one, though not without raising the Prices of these useful Provisions in the Market.

Santa Gracia is a little Mile to the Southward of *Mabon*, and is not an unpleasant Place for this Country. Its Lanterns and Cupolas give it an Air of Grandeur at a certain Distance, and its Gardens are well improved and kept very clean.

The *Barancos* which I have mentioned are not the only Gardens that supply *Mabon* and *St Philip's*; several others bring in their Quotas, so that I do not know any Place that is better served with Garden-Stuff than *Minorca* is, nor on more moderate Terms.

About

Island of Minorca. 41

About four Miles to the Northward of *Mahon* are the *Buferas*, or Lakes (the Word *Bufera* in *Arabick* importing a Lake) abounding with excellent Mulletts, and some other Kinds of Fish, and harbouring in Winter an amazing Number and Variety of Wild-Fowl. The Water of these Lakes is salt, and it is not strange it should be so, since they are only separated from the Sea by a Sand, through which the Water easily filters, and keeps up to a Level, with the Surface of the Sea, or near it; for there is sometimes an observable Difference; as when the *Levanders* set in, the Sea falls away faster than the Water in the Lakes can pass through the Sand, to sink them in Proportion; and at such Times the Lakes will be higher than the Sea: Again, when the westerly Winds blow with Violence, and swell the Sea, its Surface will be higher than that of the Lakes, for the same Reason.

Colomba Island lies in the Neighbourhood of the *Buferas*, and had its Name from the vast Number of Wild Pigeons that breed in its rocky Cliffs. Here have been found some Specimens of Copper-Ore, of which none (so far as I have seen) appear to hold a Quantity of that Metal sufficient to defray the Charge of working it. But possibly a richer Sort might be discovered by digging to a proper Depth, these having only been withdrawn from the Surface of the Rock.

If

If there are any other Places worth describing in the *Termino* of *Mahon*, I freely confess I do not know them; so that in my next I shall proceed to that of *Alaior*.

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R V.

S I R, MINORCA, 13 Dec. 1740.

GOVERNOR *Kane's* Road runs through the whole Island, from *St Philip's* to *Ciudadella*, in as direct a Course as could well be given it in a Country so very mountainous and irregular; and by that means necessarily leaves some of the Capitals of *Terminos* on one Side, through which the old Road led. The Town of *Alaior*, which is the principal one of the *Termino*, and the best in *Minorca*, after *Ciudadella* and *Mahon*,
lies

lies half a Mile out of the great Road on the left Hand ; and this was unavoidable, unless Mr *Kane* had made his new Road almost as winding as the old one was, which many of the *Spaniards* obstinately use at this Day, though it be one of the worst I ever saw, and in many places scarcely to be passed.

We reckon *Alaior* good Quarters for a Regiment, though only nine Companies are usually placed in Garrison here, the other being sent to the Castle of *Fornelles*. The Officers Houses and the Barracks are not much to be found Fault with, Provisions are plenty, the Duty easy, and many of the People conversable and obliging, when we have once got their Language, which we find it necessary to learn as expeditiously as we can, and that on more Accounts than one.

Alaior stands high and airy, and is tolerably well built. On an Eminence is the great Church, a handsome *Gothick* Structure, all of Freestone, and considerably antient, having a square Tower, crowned with a tall light Spire, seen at a Distance, and contributing not a little to the Ornament of the Town.

The Streets for the most Part are narrow enough, and as none of them are paved, a tender Foot is sensible of the uneven Rock in most Places,

The

The first Pile of Building that strikes the Eye as we enter the Town, is a neat Church all of squared Freestone. It is quite plain on the Outside, but set off within, as the Churches of this Island generally are, with every Ornament in Painting and Sculpture that can be expected from the Genius and Ability of the Natives. There is at present a Sculptor in *Alaior*, where, if I do not mistake, he was born, who without any Master but Nature, or any School but what he found in the Works of Geniuses far inferior to his own, and without a Rival to excite Emulation, has executed several Altars in the Churches of *Minorca* that deserve our Commendation. I have seen many Statues as large as the Life, carved in Wood by the Hand of this Artist, that were of exact Proportion, and in very pleasing Attitudes. He knows the just Measures of the several Orders of Architecture, and finishes the Capitals in a masterly Manner; and his Ornaments in Fruits and Foliage are of so delicate a Taste as to astonish a Judge of these Matters, who at the same Time reflects on the Difficulties he must have encountered, the slender Encouragement he found, and the inconsiderable Reward he had to expect, no more than the scanty Support of his Family in strict Frugality, under a constant Practice of the most severe Oeconomy.

The

The Churches of this Country are ever without Pews, the People throwing themselves on their Knees in front of the High-Altar, the Men and Women separately, where with an uncommon Appearance of Devotion they attend the Celebration of the Mass.

Near this Church is the *Casa del Rey* *, or *Stallage*, where a Traveller finds Proviender for his Beasts, and where he may lodge, if he has no Acquaintance in the Town to go to. When this House, which is the utmost Progress *Minorca* has yet made towards an Inn, happens to be in the Hands of a Native, the Fare is hard, and the Bed uneasy : Eggs are ever to be had, and brown Bread, and sometimes a Fowl may be procured ; but greater Dainties must not be expected in a Part of the World where there are but few Travellers, and where the Heat of the Climate will not admit of a constant Larder to be kept up, as the Demand too is purely casual. But the *Stallage* here is generally kept by a Soldier, who provides for the Entertainment of several Gentlemen of the Regiment, and has always somewhat to spare for a chance Comer, let his Condition be ever so mean. For as to Gentlemen, who come into Port, and have a Mind to see the Country, they

* The King's House.

they are constantly entertained at the Houses of the Officers, with great Freedom and Hospitality, let their Stay be what it will.

There is but one Convent in *Alaior*, and that belongs to the *Franciscans*. It is built on all the Sides of a square Court, with Cloisters and Galleries, painted with the History of the Founder of the Order. The Chapel is large, and not ill proportioned. These Fryars take a singular Pride in shewing their Library, which consists of some thousands of Volumes, and contains all the Learning of the School-Divinity, and the Legends of most of the Saints enumerated in their Calendar.

One Church remains to the *English*, for the Celebration of Divine-Service whenever it happens that a Man of War lies in the Harbour that has a Chaplain belonging to it; or else these five Regiments (each of which has a Chaplain commissioned for its ghostly Instruction, at a yearly Stipend of 121 *l.* 13 *s.* 4 *d.* besides a Chaplain-General to the Island) are generally left to pray for themselves in a popish Country, where many a Priest does not earn ten Pounds a Year, though he is constantly employed in the Exercise of his Function.

The Town-House stands near the Center of *Alaior*, and is a decent Pile of Building.

The Wells from which the Town is principally supplied are in a Valley on the
North

North Side, near the Exercising-Ground for the Discipline of the Regiment : Besides these the Burghers have several Wells of their own, and Cisterns for Rain-Water are to be found in almost every House in Town.

In a Country where there is no River, the Inhabitants are obliged to dig Wells in the Rock, to furnish them with Water for the common Uses of the House. Their Depth depends on the Height of the Ground where they are to be made ; for they must be ever carried to the Level of the Sea ; and though this is not a great deal at *St Philip's* or *Ciudadella*, it is yet very considerable at *Mahon* and *Alaior*, which are built on Eminences. They usually dig to a blackish kind of Slate-Stone, upon breaking of which, the Water gushes out with such Violence, at the Vent they give it, that their Lives are in the utmost Danger if they do not retire with all possible Diligence. The *Minorquins* are constantly exercised in this mining and burrowing in the Rock, and are so skillful and ready at it, that it comes very reasonable.

As for their Cisterns, they are hewn out of the Rock, and contrived of a Size to contain a sufficient Quantity of Water for the Family to drink. They are carefully plastered with a good Cement, and then Canals are laid that convey to them all the Rain-Water that falls on the Roof of the House ; only they suffer the first Showers to run off
in

in Waste, to clean the Tiles, or the Terrace; after which they give free Admittance to all that comes until the Cistern is full, allowing the Water some Time to deposite its Sediment before they use it. These Cisterns are various and irregular in their Figure, which however more frequently approaches that of a Sphere, than any other.

Sometimes the Water happens to corrupt in their Cisterns, for which they have their Remedies: Two or three little Eels thrown in alive generally do the Feat; but if these fail, they try an Arm-full of the green Tops of Myrtle: If neither Method succeeds, which is not often the Case, they empty and clean them, and the first Rains furnish them with good Water again.

They have never been accustomed to calculate the Content of their Cisterns, and proportion them to the Demands of the House, and thence regulate the Extent of Roofing that is necessary to supply them with Water: Yet the Method is easy enough. Suppose, for Example, that a Family has daily Occasion for eight Gallons of drinking Water, that is 2920 Gallons in a Year. The Quantity of Rain-Water that falls in a Twelve-month on a superficial Foot of horizontal Surface in *Minorca* we will reckon, one Year with another, at 27 Inches; but allowing for Waste, we will take it at no more than 20 Inches: A Vessel of one Foot square and 20
Inches

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Inches in Depth contains 2880 cubical Inches of Water: wherefore a Surface of 240 superficial Feet of Roofing will furnish 691200 Inches cubical of Water, which divided by 231, the Number of such Inches in a Gallon, of Liquid-Measure, make 2992 Gallons, a little more than the Quantity required.

There are several Woods in the Neighbourhood of *Alaior*, but the Ground is covered with loose Stones, that render the walking rugged and troublesome, so that we are inhospitably debarred the Benefit of their Shade. Brigadier *Paget* has lately cleared a large Space in one of them, by setting the Soldiers of his Regiment at Work, to remove the Stones, and fill up the hollow Places; and it is now a fine Lawn, covered with Turf, which by the Shelter it receives from the Trees that encompass it (which are chiefly of that kind of Oaks that preserve their Verdure all the Year) is never scorched by the Sun; neither has it that Moisture under Foot that is so much complained of in other Countries.

St Puig in this *Termino* deserves to be remembered, on account of the House Colonel *Bettesworth* built there some Years ago; and here a Lead-Mine was wrought to Advantage within these forty Years, but has been for some Time neglected.

If I observed a strict topographical Method, I should tire you to Death with circumstantial Descriptions of Places, which must be all taken Notice of, because they are all to be found: But I will neither abuse your Patience, nor mis-employ my Time, to so little Purpose. Suffer me then to say I have done with the *Termino* of *Alaior*, and to conclude this Trouble with the Assurance of my being unfeignedly,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R VI.

S I R, MINORCA, 2 Feb. 1740-41.

MERCADAL, though the Capital of a *Termino*, is but a poor Place, and very meanly built; yet as it stands near the Center of the Island it is the common Stage in passing from *Mabon* to *Ciudadella*. The Accommodations at the *Stallage* are so wretched, that we usually lodge at a private House, where about a Shilling contents our Host for the Use of his Bed. We take Care to carry some Provision of Wine and Meat along with us, a Precaution which a Travel-
ler

ler will scarcely neglect a second Time in this Country.

The Church is seated on an Eminence, and is a Building of less Beauty than Antiquity, now tending to Ruin. The poor Inhabitants are anxious enough to restore it, and have accordingly begun a Foundation; and if their Opulence bore any Proportion to their Zeal, I am confident the pious Work would advance with a Rapidity more like the Effect of Magick than the Labour of the deliberative *Minorquins*.

On the opposite Side of the Town is a Cistern for Rain-Water, that which they draw from their Wells being reckoned unwholesome. Above the Cistern a large Area is inclosed with a Stone Wall; the Floor is well terraced, and laid sloping every way to the Hole, at which all the Rain-Water that falls on the Area runs into the Cistern. There is something squalid and haggard in the Countenances of these People, beyond what we observe in the rest of the Natives of *Minorca*, and especially in the Women; but whether it is occasioned by the Badness of their Water, which is the Cause that is usually alledged for it, or is owing to the frequent Visits of their charitable Neighbours, the *Austin* Fryars of *Mount-Toro*, I will not venture to determine. These holy Men have their Convent on the Summit of the Mountain, at the Foot of which *Mercadal* is seated.

Mount-Toro (or the Mountain of the *Bull*) had its Name from the miraculous Actions performed by one of those Beasts several Ages since *. This Mountain stands near the Center of the Island, which it proudly overlooks, and is steep enough in the Ascent, and narrow and perillous in many Parts of the winding Road that leads to the Convent, by which the Area on the Top is entirely taken up. The Chapel is a neat Building, and is painted with the legendary History of the *Bull*. These Monks have a Rain-Water Cistern within their Walls, besides which there are several Sources that break out among the Rocks dispersedly here and there on the rugged Sides of the Mountain. *Mount-Toro* is of the Sugar-Loaf Make, and its vast Cone is elevated on a Base that is many Miles in Diameter. Hence the Prospect is very extensive and amusing, and the Air in the hot Months is constantly tempered with refreshing Breezes, that render it extremely delightful at that parching Season.

Fornelles-Castle is built on the western Side of the Entrance of a large Harbour of the same Name, situate about six Miles to the northward of *Mount-Toro*. It is a square

* This is the usual Etymology, but it is more probable the *Moors* called it *el Tor* [*the Height*] by way of Eminence, as it was the highest Ground in the Island.

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square Fort, faced with hewn Stone, and consists of four Bastions and as many Curtains, with very little of a Ditch, and no Outworks before it. The Inside is built on every Side of the Square with Houses for the Reception of the Troops, and for laying up the necessary Provisions and Ammunition; and as they are all strongly vaulted, the Rampart is over them. The Commanding-Officers have of late converted the Chapel into a Cellar; and as the *Minorquins* were heretofore comforted from hence with *holy Sprinklings* and *Benedictions*, our Soldiers have their Hearts no less rejoiced by the *Wine* and *Strong-Waters* here retailed to them at a *very reasonable Price* by their *Commandant*, who is *the Suttler of the Garrison*.

A few Fishermen live by the Water-Side, near the Walls of the Castle, who daily supply the Garrison with Plenty of Fish. The Duty is done by a Company of the *Alaior* Regiment, which is relieved every Year, as all the rest of the Troops throughout the Island usually are.

On a very high Land at the opposite Side of the Harbour is an *Athalaia* †, from whence the Signals are easily distinguishable at the Castle.

E 3

Though

† A Signal-House.

Though the Port of *Fornelles* is very large and spacious, yet as it has many Shoals and much foul Ground, none care to venture in but such as are well acquainted. Of this Number are the Masters of our Packets: When they meet with contrary Winds in the Gulph of *Lyons*, on their Passage to *Marseilles* (and these are but too frequent all the Winter Season) they immediately put about, and make the best of their Way for this Harbour, where they are securely sheltered until the Gale abates and the Wind comes to be favourable. They are not ignorant to how little Purpose it is to contend with the furly *Levanters*, which blow hard, and generally continue a long Time; and as they are directly against them in their Course to the Coast of *France*, they choose to refuge themselves in any tolerable Port until their Rage is spent, and the milder westerly Winds succeed.

Yet large Ships have occasionally put into *Fornelles* Harbour, and particularly at the Time of the Surrender of *St Philip's* Castle, when two Men of War were sent to take in this Garrison, as I shall have Occasion to shew more at length hereafter.

Mount-Agatha is about four Miles to the north-westward of *Mercadal*, very near the Confines of the *Termino* of *Fererias*. It is a high Mountain, eminently exalting itself above the other high Mountains that environ it, and presents to the Eye such an un-

bounded

bounded Scene of vast Deserts and wild elevated Tracts of naked Rock, as possesses the Mind with a kind of awful Delight that for a Time suspends all other Reflections, except such as arise from a Contemplation of the Wonders of the Landschape.

On one Side Hills rise above Hills, deriving a barren Nakedness from their northern Exposure. The Soil which once covered them has been washed away by the violent Rains of many Ages; or rather (as one is tempted to believe, that views their rocky Entrails) shook off at once by some terrible Convulsions of the labouring Earth. On another Side, Valleys, Plantations and Vineyards interrupt the hideous Prospect, and Hills of gentle Ascent are marked with the Furrows of the Plough, or covered with Flocks to the very Top.

I had here an Opportunity of observing the Structure of a neighbouring Mountain, all composed of a naked Rock, that was divided into a great Number of *Strata*; but these were not parallel to the Surface of the Earth, as they are usually found in our Quarries, but formed an Angle of at least thirty Degrees with the Horizon. Now whether the Mountain was left in this Condition by the *Deluge*, which seems to contradict the Opinion of those Philosophers who suppose, that the different Parts of Matter, of which the Earth is composed, at that Time subsided from the Water, according to their respective Degrees of Gravity,

vity, and formed regular horizontal *Strata* throughout; or this inclining Direction of the *Strata* is to be referred to some succeeding Change in the Face of Nature, I shall leave to the Consideration of those learned Persons who dispute about the Original of Mountains, and the internal Structure and Contents of the Globe.

Mount-Agatha is ascended for the most Part by great Rocks, that have been hewn into a kind of gigantick Steps, which our Mules easily climbed, with their Riders on their Backs; but I chose to return on Foot, as the Springs that issue here and there had rendered this huge Stair-Case (if I may so call it) slippery, and dangerous, as I thought, in many Places: There is a Space on the Top of five or six Acres, where the delicate Herbage is cropped by a few Sheep, that are looked after by a poor Fellow who sojourns with his Family in this airy Region. Here is a neat little Chapel dedicated to *Santa Agatha*, a Saint much revered all over the Island for the Cures that are daily performed at her Intercession in all Diseases of the Womens Breasts.

A Priest frequently ascends this stupendous *Balearick Alp*, to officiate in the Chapel, where many pious People assemble from the adjacent Country to attend him, especially such of the other Sex as labour under Complaints in that delicate Part of the human Body. The Altar is hung with *Votive Figures*

Figures of the Seat of the Distemper, and there are some hundreds of the Representations of little Breasts, in Wood, Wax, and Silver, which have been devoutly placed there, in Gratitude to the Saint.

The Summit of the Mountain was strongly fortified by the *Moors*, and was in their Days easily defended against every Enemy but Famine; and accordingly they held it out against a numerous Army, long after the *Christians* had beat their Countrymen in the Field, and dispossessed them of all the other Holds in *Minorca*.

I could not here discover any *Vestigia* of the *Romans*, wherefore it is that I say this Fortrefs was the Work of the *Moors* (which History likewise confirms) and there is an antient Inscription over the Door of a Tower, almost defaced by Time, which, so far as it is legible, appears to be of the *Arabick* Character.

The Plan of this Fortification is very irregular, its Figure having been accommodated to that of the Plain it was built to inclose. A Range of *Curtains* quite round, with Towers at proper Distances, was raised on the very Edge of the Precipice. Within this a lesser Circuit was contrived on the highest Ground, to enable the Garrison to make a more strenuous Defence, when the outward Works should be forced, and an Enemy in Possession of the Plain.

Here

Here are two remarkable Rain-Water *Cisterns*, which were built by the *Moors*, and continue entire to this Day. They are seated at the lower End of the Plain, the better to receive all the Rain-Water that falls upon it; and contain together, for I measured them, 2173 Tons, or 547,596 Wine-Gallons, which at an Allowance of one Gallon a Day, would furnish 1500 Men with Water throughout the Year. But this Allowance might admit of being retrenched in the Time of a Siege, and the Water be dealt in half the Quantity to 3000 Men, the Survivors of whom would come by Degrees to enjoy this useful Element in Plenty, as the Siege advanced and their Numbers diminished.

These *Cisterns* are composed of a kind of *Tapia*, or Cement, moulded in Frames (the Marks of which I saw) and plaistered nicely over with a finer Cement. This Manner of Work was much used by the *Moors*, wherever they came, and the ingenious Doctor *Shaw* informs us in his Travels †, that *most of the Walls of Tlemsan (in Barbary) have been moulded in Frames; and consist of a Mortar made up of Sand, Lime, and small Pebbles; which, by being well tempered and wrought together, hath attained a Strength*
and

† Pag. 48.

and Solidity equal to Stone. He adds, *the several Stages and Removes of these Frames are still observable.* The *Moorish Castle at Gibraltar* is the most noble Specimen of this kind of Work that I have seen; which having withstood the Weather for many Ages, was in the last Siege Proof against the Enemy's Shot; which made little Impression on it; either sticking in the Face of the Wall, as some of it did, or only striking against it, and falling to the Ground, deadened by the Blow.

I shall mention but one Place more in this *Termino*, and that is *Adaia*. It is a *Possession* (as the Farms of this Island are called) situate at the Side of a large Harbour to the eastward of *Mount-Toro*.

It lies in the Form of a Theatre, open to the Port on the eastern Side, but surrounded on every other Quarter by a Chain of Hills, rising with a gradual Ascent to a great Height. These are mostly naked of Greenward to detain the Earth, and that which has been constantly washed down from thence by the Rains has considerably enriched the Soil: The Hills likewise afford *Adaia* an useful Shelter from the bleak north-westerly Winds of this Climate. The Air derives a Temper from these Advantages that gives it, in my Opinion, an indisputable Preference to that of every other Spot in *Minorca*.

The

The Gardens too are laid out in a tolerable Taste for this Country, and produce every kind of Vegetable, which these People cultivate, in the greatest Perfection and Abundance. Here are delightful shady Walks, with others that are more airy, when the Sun is retired behind the western Mountains. The Grape, the Orange, and the Pomegranate, present their cooling Juices in Profusion; and the Water-Melons, which the *Minorquins* esteem the Almighty's Blessing on a hot Country, offer their delicious Store. Hither a pure Stream of living Water is conducted from a neighbouring Spring, and throws itself from a Height into a large Bason, from whence it glides gently through several Canals, and waters every Part of the Gardens.

Besides the Charms of the Garden, the Harbour is itself extreamly pleasing to the Eye. As its Entrance is covered from our View by the Interposition of high Grounds to the northward, it appears like a great River, bordered by a Variety of ever-green Shrubs, that yield to the Impression of every Breeze, and slope their Tops, as if they delighted to view their Pride of Foliage in its glassy Bosom. The exquisite Polish of its Surface is sometimes broke by the leaping of little Fishes at their living Prey, spread by the bounteous Hand of Heaven in infinite Numbers for their Sustenance. But its
Gloss

Gloss returns as the spreading Circles die away.

You will say I wrote this in a romantick Humour : I confess it freely ; and I shall ever think of *Adaia*, and of the Company I enjoyed at that charming little Retirement, with the utmost Complacency and Satisfaction.

This Harbour, though one of the principal Ornaments of *Adaia*, is of no sort of Use to the Navigation of the Island, on Account of its Rocks and Shelves———*Statio malefida carinis.*

Of the *Termino* of *Fererias*, united to this of *Mercadal*, but little is to be said. The Town lies out of the Road about a Musket-Shot on the left Hand : and as its Appearance at this Distance gives a Traveller but little Curiosity to view it nearer, I will content myself with telling you, it is a poor mean Place.

It boasts however of a Church, of no mean Antiquity, which is at present in tolerable Repair ; and near it is the House of the Rector.

These united *Terminos* are the poorest and the least cultivated of the Island ; yet they abound most with Game, as is observed in other Countries ; for the feathered Tribe will naturally frequent a Region where they are but rarely disturbed : Yet here are several considerable Tracts of Land that seem to encourage the Husbandman and invite his
Toil ;

Toil; if the Expence of clearing the Ground of the vast Incumbrance of Trees and Shrubs that over-spread it, did not prove an invincible Obstacle to an impoverished People, harrassed by a tyrannous Clergy, who riot in Luxury and Profusion, which they must toil in Penury and Wretchedness to support. Yet a little Tendency to Improvement has lately discovered itself in these *Terminos*, but its Efforts are feeble and its Progress slow: Time may bring it to something; and nothing but Time can reclaim a People, naturally indolent and desponding, into a Train of Thinking that tends to their Advantage and Prosperity; Points they seem to have long given up, as totally out of their Reach, and which are almost grown to be equally out of their Wish.

I have brought this Letter to a Conclusion, and in my next I shall lead you to the *Termino* of *Ciudadella*. I am in the mean Time, with my warmest Wishes for your Health,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R VII.

S I R, M I N O R C A, 28 *March* 1741.

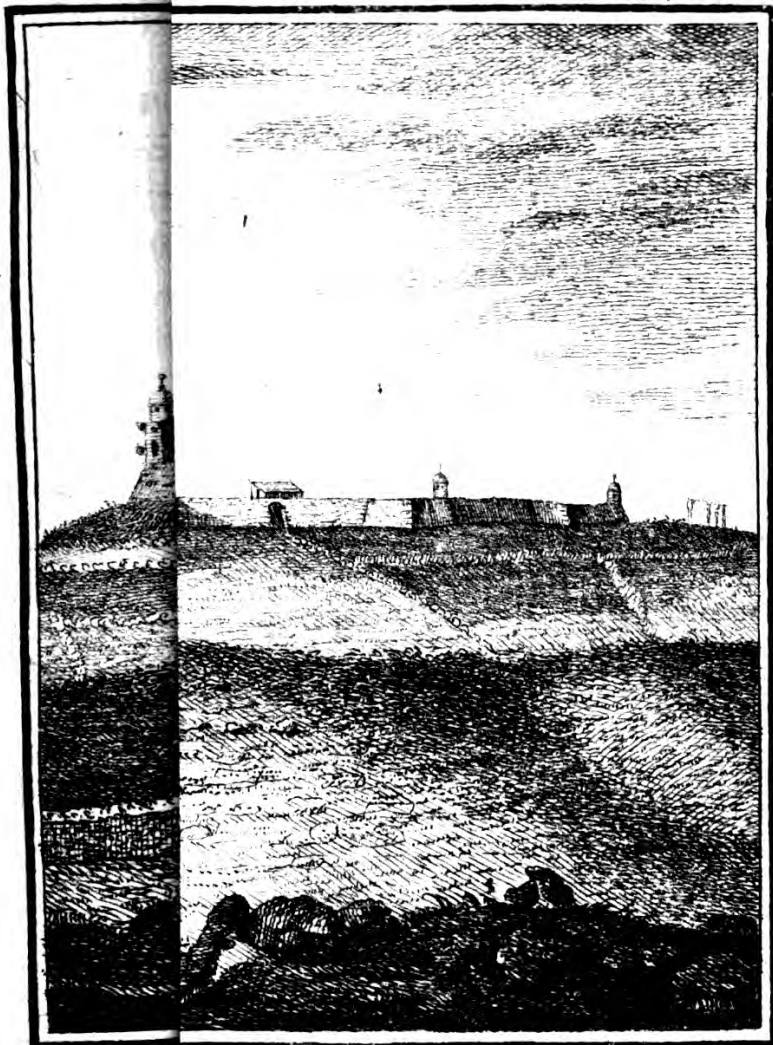
CIUDADELLA was the Capital of *Minorca*, when it was surrendered by the *Moors* to King *James* of *Arragon*, A. D. 1232, and continued to be so from that time until the Courts were removed to *Mabon* by our Governors, who made that Town the Place of their Residence: Before it was deprived of those Advantages, it was a flourishing Town, well built, and sufficiently populous. Its Harbour served very well for the Barks that traded to *Majorca* and the Continent, and it supplied *Mabon* with foreign Goods, as it is now, for the most Part, supplied with them from thence; and all Intelligence, when the Circumstances of the Times required Circumspection, was necessarily sent from this Port.

But this important Step was no sooner made, but *Ciudadella* visibly declined in its Trade, and its Wealth decreased in the same Proportion; and the Number of its Inhabitants suffered, by swift Degrees, a very sensible Diminution. Yet in this impoverished State, it may still boast of more *Dons* and *Cavalleros* within its Walls, than are to be found in all the rest of the Island put together.

ther. In this Town are about six hundred Houses, most of which are inhabited.

It is an Observation of *Cæsar*, that the *Kentishmen* were the most civilized of all the *Britons*, which he attributes to their being a maritime People, more conversant with Foreigners than the rest of their Countrymen were. And it may be said with equal Truth, that the People of this Town derived a Courtesy and Politeness from the same Cause, that still distinguish them from the rest of the *Minorquins*.

Ciudadella is entirely walled in: That Part that is next the *Baranco* is the Work of the *Moors*; and though it is a bold Wall, and of great Height, it stands tolerably well, considering it must have been built above six hundred Years. The rest is more modern, and consists of a *Rampart*, with a great many *Bastions* and *Curtains*, all of squared Freestone. Though the *Rampart* is narrow at the *Curtains*, the *Bastions* are roomy enough; and the *Parapets* are all of Stone. A good *Ditch* has been laid out, and cut to a considerable Depth in the solid Rock, in some Places, with the *Parapet* of a *Covert-Way* before it; but it is little more than marked in others, where it was intended to be made. These Works have been slighted ever since *Minorca* has been in our Hands, and the Garrison, upon an Alarm, is to make



J. Armstrong

W. H. Jones Sculp.

Justin Fryars.....



make the best of its way to *St Philip's Castle*, driving before it all the Cattle that are to be easily found; and spoiling the Roads, the better to obstruct an Enemy on his March.

Ciudadella stands at the Head of a little Harbour, where the Coasting-Vessels are sheltered in a sufficient Depth of Water, close to the very Walls of the Town.

At the Corner of the Great *Parade*, next the Entrance of the Governor's House, stands the *Exchange*; an ancient Structure, raised on *Gothick* Arches of considerable Height: From hence is a Passage, where we descend by a *Postern*, and a very great Number of Stone Steps, to the *Key*.

The Governor's House, or *Palace*, as the Natives call it, because it was the constant Residence of the *Spanish* Governors, is a large, irregular Fabrick, built in the *Gorge* of a *Bastion*; the Ground-Floor contains the Offices; the principal Story communicates with the *Rampart*, and is upon a Level with it; and here is a pleasant Walk, that commands a noble View of all this Part of the Island, a great Extent of Sea, and *Majorca*, at the Distance of ten Leagues.

The Commanding-Officer of the Regiment lives in this House, where he finds the necessary Conveniencies: There is a good Garden belonging to it, divided from the *Parade* by a high Stone-Wall; but little Care is taken of it; and indeed the removing of the Regiments

every Year, is apt to discourage a Person from making Improvements from which he can propose but small Returns of Profit in the Time he has to continue : For the proper Season for putting a Garden in Order, is passed before he comes into Garrison, which is not till May ; and if he does any Thing the ensuing Spring, he is obliged to be gone before many of the Things come to be fit for Use.

The Governor's House has a small Chapel within it, of which no Use, or at least no religious one, is now made. Whenever we have Divine-Service in this Garrison, it is performed in the great Hall of this House, which is a very spacious Room, and I think the largest in *Minorca*.

The Officers Houses here are in general well enough to be liked, and this Town is allowed by every Body to be the best Quarters in the Island for a Regiment ; for the Duty is very easy, the Provisions good and reasonable. We are out of the Way of Temptation to unnecessary Expence ; and if we are remote from the Seat of Government, *procul à Jove*, it is no small Comfort to reflect, that we are also *procul à fulmine*.

The great Church stands near the Center of *Ciudadella*, and is a noble *Gothick* Pile of Building, the largest in the Country, and the Cathedral of the whole Island. It has a handsome square Tower, and a light octangular Spire, all of hewn Stone ; and is one of the
principal

principal Beauties in the Prospect of the Town as we approach it at a Distance.

I think it reasonable to suppose that this Church was not built before King *Alphonso* of *Arragon* drove the *Moors* out of the Island, *A. D.* 1287: It is probably of no greater Antiquity; for though we read, * that in the Reign of the Emperor *Honorius*, *A. D.* 418, *Minorca* had *St Severus* for its Bishop, whose Seat was at *Ciudadella*, then called *Jamnon* (a Corruption of *Jamon*, the Name it received from its *Carthaginian* Founder) and I make no Difficulty in granting, that if there was a Bishop, there also must have been a Cathedral: But surely the Building in Question cannot be proved to be the original Cathedral, but one that has been since erected on the Ruins of the old, which might be destroyed by the *Moors*, who afterwards were a long time Masters of the Country. I shall not contend any further on this Head, having no Opportunity of satisfying myself, or convincing you: However, though it may be difficult to ascertain the precise time of its Foundation, that it stood as it now does in 1360, is evident from an Inscription, in the Character of that Age, still legible over the Door in the South Porch, which I will here transcribe for you, in Hopes that you, or some of our

F 2

Friends,

* *Dameto*, p. 150.

Friends, may favour me with an Explanation of it, for I freely acknowledge I understand it but imperfectly.

It is in the following Words :

Aci . Ihu . en . & . de . Cor
 fa . Prevera . quifo . Of
 cial . de . Manorca . lo . q
 ual . passa . defoa . di
 da . axi . de . juliol . land
 MCCCLX . doc . Deo . laia .

It imports, I think, that there lies *John*, a Native of *Corsica*, who was an Officer in *Minorca*, and died the xi. *July* MCCCLX.

On the South Side of the Church, after a smart Shower of Rain, we may discern a vast Number of Graves, that have been hewn in the Rock ; in many of which the human Bones appear at such times : Many antient Graves are likewise to be seen without the walls ; but the dead Bodies are at present constantly deposited in the Vaults of the Churches.

There is a neat Church not far from hence, which was reserved for the Use of the *English*, when the Island first came into our Possession : It still retains the Name of *the English Church*, though a great many Years are elapsed since it was delivered up to the
 Natives,

Natives, by the Commander in Chief at that Time, *for many and weighty Reasons.*

Near *Mabon-Gate* is a Convent of *Austin* Fryars, a large Edifice, having a handsome Chapel within it, adorned with an elegant Cupola. Here Disputations in the Philosophy of the Schools are held at certain Times, and are very notably handled by the learned Fathers. The Point under Debate when I happened to be present (for they are well enough pleased to give us Hereticks an Opportunity of admiring their singular Erudition on such Occasions) was, *whether Matter or Form first existed*; and this shrewd Question was litigated with at least as much Earnestness and Vociferation as its Importance deserved. The Pain I was in for poor *Priscian*, for they tried to talk *Latin*, would not suffer me to stay above two Hours, a Space of Time that had only sufficed to put those warm Disputants at a greater Distance than they were, at their first setting out.

Learning of some sort these Fryars certainly have; but surely it is an untoward kind of Learning that consists only of Terms and Jargon, expressed in barbarous *Latin*. One of them, that was lately returned from his Studies at *Majorca*, gravely told me, *there was a new Philosophy taught there, which was founded on Reason.*

The *Franciscan* Convent fronts the great Parade, and is a large irregular Pile of
F 3 Building,

Building, with a Chapel belonging to it (as all the Convents in the Island likewise have) and a good Garden. One of the Fathers keeps a School in the House for the Instruction of the Youth of the Town, whom he carefully grounds in the various Superstitions of the *Romish* Church, and in a due Reverence for his holy Order. Another keeps an Apothecary's Shop in one of the Cells, where he dispenses the several Drugs which these People have in Use among them.

The Nuns of *Santa Clara* have also a Convent in this Town, and we have easy Access to their Parlour, where we converse with them through the double Grates. They are meagre squalid Creatures, with wrinkled Foreheads, and Eyes much *used to the melting Mood*.

The Fryars go out in Couples, as often as they will, and deny themselves no *reasonable Liberties and innocent Diversions*, as the *French Ladies* (and possibly some others) very *justly* call them: But these Recluses have Bodies emaciated with Grief, hard Fare, and Confinement, and Minds tortured with Inclinations they can neither gratify nor suppress; so that they sink by swift Degrees into Diseases and Misery. And to add to the Unhappiness of their Condition, these poor Nuns are ever revolving in their thoughts the imaginary Comforts by which they were deluded to take the Veil (all which vanished the
Instant

Instant they made their Profession) and magnifying the Pleasures of the World, now it is wholly out of their Power to enjoy them, And I believe they are not the only Persons who have grown weary of a Solitude of their own chusing, and heartily sick of the Companions of their Retirement. But it little avails these forlorn Sisters to complain to their Parents of their wretched State: That were only to furnish a favourite Topick for them to display their Eloquence upon; it would put them on extolling the Felicity of their present Condition, and the certain Happiness that awaits them hereafter, in reward of temporary Inconveniencies and fancied Evils; for they could be no other, considering whose Spouse they were, with a great many of the like Consolations; to avoid which, and not to draw the Resentment of the Community on them, they carefully dissemble their Discontent, and like the first Hypocrite,

*Each Perturbation smoothe with outward
Calm.*

We are glad in Summer to resort to the Cloysters of the Convents for a shady Walk, and there are *Piazzas* of a good Length in the principal Street of the Town. I need not say these are much frequented all the hot Months, in a Climate where the shady Side

of the Street is very much cooler than that on which the Sun shines, where indeed the Heat is almost suffocating.

For a Winter's Walk, when the Sun is bright (which is here generally the Case) we have the Road to *St Nicolas*, which is straight, and near a Mile long, reaching from the Wall of the Town to the Sea, near the Entrance of the Harbour. Here stands a Chapel, dedicated to *St Nicholas*, to which the Sailors resort, that have suffered Shipwreck, to return Thanks for their Preservation, and to hang up *Votive Pictures* (representing the Danger they have escaped) in Gratitude to the Saint for the Protection he vouchsafed them, and in Accomplishment of the Vows they made in the Height of the Storm.

This Custom, which is in Use at present throughout the *Roman-Catholick* World, is taken from the old *Romans*, who had it among a great Number of other Superstitions from the *Greeks*; for we are told that *Bion* the Philosopher was shewn several of these *Votive Pictures* hung up in a Temple of *Neptune* near the Sea-Side. *Horace* alludes to them in the following Passage :

————— *Me tabulâ sacer*
Votivâ paries indicat uvida
Suspendisse potenti
Vestimenta maris Deo. Lib. I. Od. 5.
St Nicholas

St *Nicholas* is the present Patron of those that lead a sea-faring Life, (as *Neptune* was of old) and his Churches generally stand within Sight of the Sea, and are plentifully stocked with these pious Moveables.

Near this Church a small Castle remains, which was built to defend the Mouth of the Harbour. But whatever it's Importance might be in former Times, it is certainly of very little Use at present, and is incapable of obstructing the Entrance of the smallest Frigate we send to Sea.

At a little Distance from hence we see a Rent in the Rock, to which the Sea has made a subterraneous Passage, through several irregular Caverns. Our Soldiers have given this Hole the Name of *the Devil's Bellows*; and the Noise made by the rushing in of the Water, at every Surge that beats against the Shore, does not a little resemble that which is made by a large Pair of Bellows.

There is a Convent of the Order of St *Antonio* a little without the *Mahon Gate*. The House is small, as the Number of the Fryars likewise is, yet it is well endowed, and has a decent Chapel; and at a little Distance, a very romantick Garden is contrived in the Quarry from whence the Stone was drawn with which the Convent was built.

Ciudadella is plentifully supplied with Vegetables, the far greater Part whereof
grows

grows in the *Baranco* to the northward of the Town.

About two Miles North-West of *Ciudadella* stands *Toro del Ram*, the Light-House for this Part of the Island. But here I must caution you, that you may not take these Light-Houses, Signal-Houses, or *Athalaias*, (as they are indifferently called) for Places where Lights are constantly kept in the Night, to direct Mariners as they approach the Coast; for of such this Island is wholly unprovided. These are in Truth no other than Watch-Towers, where Signals are made on the Sight of all Vessels that pass within the View of the Signal-Men (as I have already mentioned in my Letter of the 16th of *October* 1740); and in Time of War, if a Fleet draws near the Shore, the Country is alarmed from hence, by a Smoak, if it is in the Day-Time; but if in the Night, by a great Fire.

Few People come to *Ciudadella* with so little Curiosity as not to be desirous of seeing *Cova-Perella*, a vast natural Cavern in the Rock, about two Miles to the Southward of the Town. It's Entrance is narrow and steep, but it widens every Way as you descend, and the Light of your Torches discovers the Mouths of several lesser Caves, that have a Communication with the principal one. In most of these Cells the Water (which is copiously impregnated with a Sparry Matter) perpetually drips from the irregular Prominences

nences of the Roof, and forms an infinite Number of *Stalactites*, or Stony-Icicles, of the Colour of brown Sugar-Candy, for which it has been sometimes mistaken, and of a vast Variety of Figures. These *Stalactitæ* are all composed of divers Coats or Crufts, of very little Lustre or Transparence; and as some of them are no bigger than a Goose's Quill, others are immensely large, and combining together, form vast Columns of the *Gothick* Kind, that seem at present to support the Roof of this strange Cave, as they will in all Likelihood fill up it's whole Space in a long Run of Years.

One may easily observe the several Gradations in the Progress of these Petrifications (if we may so call them). In some Places we see small Capitals descending from the Roof, and making their Way downwards, while proportionable Bases are rising underneath, as the Spar concretes that distils though the Rock, and drops from above. In other Places, not only the Base and Capital, but the Shaft itself of the Column, is likewise seen; some very imperfectly, and others compleated to a rude Resemblance of the *Gothick* Style of Columns; that is, they form together a huge Compages of lesser Pillars adhering to each other. These Masses have probably been a great many Ages in advancing to their present Bulk; and though they are ever increasing, their Growth is so slow, that many more
Ages

Ages must pass, before the whole Cavern is filled up by them.

Great Quantities of these sparry Concretions lie under Foot every where, to a considerable Depth; not that they were ever rent from the Roof by Earthquakes, which seldom happen here; or loosened by Frosts, or disjoined by the Winds, being secured from the Operations of both by their Situation so far below the Surface of the Ground; but the younger Shoots, gradually increasing in Bulk, have thrust the old ones from their Places, and overspread the Floor with their glittering Ruins. I have been the more Particular in what I have said of *Cova-Perella*, as there is here a greater Abundance of these Bodies than I ever saw together in any other Place.

We are constantly carried from hence to a neighbouring *Cove*, where is little remarkable to be seen besides a Pool of Water, which by its Saltness, must have an under-Ground Communication with the Sea.

As I walked on the Rocks at the Sea-Side, near these subterraneous Regions, I observed in the Sand a considerable Mixture of the small Fragments of red Coral; though that is seldom seen by our Fishermen, whilst intire Trees of the white Kind are every Day brought to Light (not by Design, for here is no Coral-Fishery, but) in casting their Nets for Flat-Fish, they are torn from the Rocks, and so drawn

drawn up. These Fragments are thrown up from the Sea in hard westerly Winds, and then the *Cavall-Marin* (as the *Minorquins* call the *Hippocampus*, or *Sea-Horse*) is no Rarity, and sometimes we find the *Stella-Marina Arborescens*, but much injured, by being beat against the rugged Rocks on the Shore.

These *Coves* are situate in a very barren Spot, if we only regard the Interests of the Farmer; yet here is the greatest Plenty and the greatest Variety of beautiful Marbles, with a vast Number of Fossile Shells, that are to be found in any one Part of the Island of *Minorca*.

And now, Sir, I have finished the *Topographical* Part of my Task. What remains, I have thrown into some Method, and shall dispatch it to you as fast as I can. In the mean Time, do me the Justice to be persuaded that I am with a zealous and unalterable Friendship,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R VIII.

S I R,

MINORCA, 2 May 1741.

IT is pleasant to consider the vast Solemnity with which Historians usually set out in giving us the Original of their Nation, and the Phlegm with which they wrest the doubtful Passages of obscure Authors, and warp them into notable Proofs of a fancied Descent from the Heroes of the most remote Ages. Yet there are but few Nations in the World that can clearly make out their Pretensions to the Antiquity they claim; and it is probable the first Planters of Countries were too busily employed in clearing the Ground of it's Incumbrances, and disposing it to produce the Necessaries of Life for their Sustenance, to spend much Time in minuting down their Transactions, for the Information of their Posterity. Thus an imperfect Tradition was left to supply the Place of History, and this coming in Process of Time to be corrupted by Error, and clouded by Fiction, involved their Original in an impenetrable Obscurity: Instead therefore of attempting to throw Light on such Passages and Events, I imagine it would be more satisfactory to the Generality of Readers, to have the Course of Things traced from Periods of greater Certainty, and to view
Matters

Matters of Fact established on less questionable Authorities; and hereby a Number of fine Conjectures and ingenious Hypotheses would be excluded from History (whose Business is Truth), and reserved for the Embellishment of Works of Curiosity and Amusement, whereof, it must be acknowledged, they constitute the principal Ornament.

The *Balearick* Authors are not without their Share of this national Vanity, and deduce their Original from a certain Race of *Giants*, who, as they pretend, possessed this Country long before the Reign of *Gerion*, it's first King, as well as the first Monarch of all *Spain*.

However that may be, it is probable enough that they were a considerable Nation when they first came under the Power of the *Carthaginians*, 452 Years before the *Christian Æra*. These Strangers built them three Towns in the Island of *Minorca*, calling them, after the Names of three of their most famous Captains, *Magon* now *Mahon*, *Jama*, undoubtedly *Ciudadella*, and *Labon*. Of the last, *ipsæ periere ruinae*, for there are no Remains at this Day to give the least Indication of the Place where it was founded, unless we pitch upon *Alaior*, on account of it's Situation not a great Way from the Centre of the Island, convenient for Travellers, on their Journey from one Port-Town to the other.

other. And indeed there is something in the modern Name that strongly marks *Labon* for the Original, from whence it was corrupted; first into *Lavon* (the Nations in this Part of the World confounding the *b* and the *v* together) then *Laion*, *Laior*, and at last *Alaior*.

As for *Ciudadella*, I have not the least Doubt but that it was the *Jama* of the *Carthaginians* (though *Dameto* places it at some Distance from hence, not considering that there are no Ruins, or any other Traces of a Town, any where near it, to countenance his Opinion) and might have it's present Name given it by the *Spaniards*, when they new-built most of the Walls with Bastions and Curtains *à la moderne*. St *Severus* Bishop of *Minorca* (in his noted Epistle, dated 13 Feb. A. D. 423, and printed at Length in *Dameto's* History of the *Balearick* Kingdom) says, the City of *Jamnon* (for so it was then changed from *Jama*) stood at the west, and *Magon* at the east End of the Island; that the latter was at that time a *Municipal* City of the *Romans*; and that these two Towns were thirty *Roman* Miles asunder; which agrees perfectly well with the present Distance between *Ciudadella* and *Mahon*.

Mela (who was himself a *Balearian*) speaking of the two Cities in *Minorca*, *Mago*, and *Jamno*, says they were at first probably

probably no more than Forts, or Castles ;
“ but (say the Authors of the Universal Hi-
“ story, Vol. vii. Part 1. of the Folio Edition)
“ as they seem to have been both built near
“ the Mouths of two convenient Harbours,
“ which are in this Island, it is hardly to be
“ doubted but these soon grew into consider-
“ able Sea-Ports, especially that of *Mago*.”
These Gentlemen say, “ the *Phœnicians*
“ were the first that possessed the *Baleares*,
“ and held them till *Q. Metellus* brought them
“ under the *Roman Yoke*.” But surely they
were peopled before.

As to the Original of the Name of these
Balearick Islands, some say they had it from
the *Greek* Word *βάλλειν*, to throw, the Na-
tives being famous Slingers: But *Bochart*,
with greater probability derives it from *Baal*
and *Jarah*, two *Carthaginian* Words of the
same Signification.

It is not easy to determine which of
the *Carthaginians* of the Name of *Mago*
built *Mahon* ; yet as the elder *Mago* (to whom
the *Balearick* History ascribes this Honour)
continued but a short time in the Island, it is
more probable that *Mahon* was indebted for
its Foundation to *Mago* the Brother of *Han-
nibal*, who resided here several Years.

These Islands continued under the Domi-
nion of *Carthage*, until that Commonwealth
was subverted by the *Romans* ; and during
this Period *Hamilcar* is said to have come

into *Minorca*, having with him his Wife, who was here delivered of the famous *Hannibal*, one of the greatest Generals that ever lived. The *Balearians* were employed in great Numbers in the *Carthaginian* Armies, and were justly famous for their Dexterity at the Sling, which it is thought was of their own Invention. Many of them served under *Hannibal*, their Countryman, when he defeated the *Romans* at the Lake *Tharasymentus*, and afterwards at *Cannæ*; and they were stationed, among the other Mercenaries, in his Vanguard, at the Battle of *Zama*.

These Islands followed the Fate of *Carthage*, and about the Year 212, *ante J. C.* submitted themselves to the Power of the *Romans*, by the Management of *Scipio*. They afterwards sided with *Pompey* against *Cæsar*. Upon the Division which *Augustus* made of *Spain*, into Provinces, he annexed them to the *Provincia Bætica*: It was in his Reign that the *Balearians* petitioned for a Force to destroy the Rabbits, that were multiplied here to such a Degree, that they had eat up the Corn, and thereby caused a Famine. These People continued firmly attached to their *Roman* Masters until the Empire declined; and hither many of the *Roman* Delinquents were banished at different Times, and for different Crimes.

The barbarous Northern Nations, the *Alans*, *Vandals*, and *Suevi*, having expelled the
the

the *Romans* out of *Spain* under the Emperor *Honorius*, possessed these Islands in their Turn. And, as the *Romans* had planted their Religion here on the Ruin of that of the *Carthaginians*, so the *Remains* of theirs gave way to the Worship of the Barbarians, who were at first *Arian* Christians, but afterwards became Orthodox. For, that there were many Christians (as well as Jews) in *Minorca*, while it was under the Power of the *Romans*, is sufficiently evident from the before-cited Epistle of *Severus*. These Northern People, were soon reinforced from the Continent of *Spain*, by fresh Colonies of *Huns* and *Visigoths*, who perfectly agreed with them in the Hatred they bore to the *Roman* Name; so all together set zealously about destroying every Monument of the Pagan Magnificence; Temples, Altars, Statues, fell before them.

*See, the Cirque falls, th' unpillar'd Temple
nods,
Streets pav'd with Heroes, Tyber choak'd
with Gods.*

Dunciad.

They here established a new Form of Government (and new Laws were instituted) and continued Masters from the Year of our Lord 421, until the *Saracens* dispossessed them, *A. D.* 697, or, as others affirm, 790,
G 2 when

when our Islands were totally subdued by these Infidels.

But these *Saracens*, or *Moors*, as they had kept the Northern Men in constant Inquietude, by the Alarms they gave, and the Descents they made on their Coasts, were themselves grievously harrassed by the Christian Princes, who being either moved by the Pope, or excited by their own Ambition to extend the Bounds of their Dominions, made several Attempts on the *Balearick* Islands, though with various Success. *Charlemagne* conquered them in the Year 801, and drove out the *Moors*; who nevertheless recovered them again into their Hands in 807. After this, many bloody Battles were fought both by Sea and Land, between the Christians and the *Moors*; and these last maintained their Possession until King *James* the first of *Arragon* (being stung by their continual Depredations at Sea, wherein his Subjects were plundered and carried into Slavery; and particularly incensed at the ill Treatment of his Minister, whom he had sent to the *Moorish* King of *Majorca*, to complain of these Injuries) resolved on an Expedition against them. In Order hereto, he assembled together an Army of about twenty thousand Men, including the Adventurers from *Provence*, *Genoa*, and other Countries, that joined themselves with his Subjects and their Allies in this Enterprize, and setting Sail from the
Port

Island of Minorca. 85

Port of *Salou* * on the first of *September*, *A. D.* 1229, in a few Days landed his Troops in the Island of *Majorca*, and after some sharp Skirmishes with the *Moors*, fate down before *Palma*, the Capital, which, after a long Siege, he took by Assault on the thirty-first of *December* following. The victorious Monarch having settled all Matters in the Island to his Satisfaction, and rewarded his Soldiers and the Adventurers with the Lands of the vanquished *Moors*, returned in Triumph to the Continent.

The King, returning to *Majorca* in 1232, resolved to make himself Master of *Minorca*, the lesser *Balearick* Island; but to prevent the Effusion of Blood, he first tried what was to be done in the way of Negotiation: Accordingly he sent Deputies to *Ciudadella*, the Capital of the Island, who demanded in his Name that the Country should be forthwith surrendered to him; promising his Royal Protection to the Inhabitants, if they complied, and threatening them with every Effect of his severe Displeasure, if they refused. And the better to intimidate the *Minorquin Moors*, and to shorten their Deliberations on this important Business, he caused great Lights to be made on that Part of the Coast of *Majorca* that was opposite to *Ciudadella*, and full

* In *Catalonia*.

in the View of the *Moors*; which so far wrought on them (thinking a great Army was assembled there ready to invade their Country) that they presently determined to submit themselves to his Majesty's Obedience; and accordingly the *Almoxariffe*, attended by some of the principal Inhabitants, waited on the King in *Majorca*, and paid his Homage, binding himself to hold the Island of *Minorca* for the Time to come of the Conqueror, and to pay him a stipulated yearly Tribute for his Protection.

The Conqueror afterwards, *A. D.* 1256, made a Partition of his Dominions, giving to *Don Pedro*, his eldest Son, the Kingdoms of *Arragon* and *Valencia*, and other States on the Continent, and to *Don James*, his Second Son, the Islands of *Majorca*, *Minorca*, and *Ivica*, and some Provinces on the Continent, with the Title of King of *Majorca*; and put them into immediate Possession of their respective Territories. But this Division gave a great deal of Offence to *Don Pedro*, who thought his Father had favoured his younger Brother too much; and his Hatred to *Don James* being fomented by certain evil-minded Persons, as is usual in such Cases, increased to such a Pitch, that nothing less than seizing on his Dominions could satisfy his Resentment. But he did not survive his aged Father long enough to accomplish his Design, though, under Colour of making an Attempt on the *African* Coast,

Coast, he put into *Mahon* Harbour, where he brought the *Moors* to submit the Island to him. He died not a great while after his Return to *Spain*, leaving Don *Alphonso*, his Son, Heir to his Kingdoms and to his Resentment.

King *Alphonso* considered the *Minorcan Moors* as a piratical State, whom he resolved to extirpate; accordingly he got together a great Army, with all the Secrecy and Expedition he could, and equipped a vast Fleet, to transport it for the Conquest of this Island.

But these extraordinary Preparations could not be made without alarming the *Almoxariffe*, who procured considerable Succours from his Friends in *Barbary*, and omitted nothing that was necessary to enable him to make a vigorous Resistance.

In 1287, therefore, *Alphonso* set out on his Expedition against *Minorca*, and on his Arrival found the *Moors* fully prepared to oppose him, and ready to give him Battle: But his Troops exerted so determined a Courage in the Engagement, that it ended in his Favour, and the *Moors* were defeated, with a prodigious Slaughter of their Men. Those *Moors*, that escaped the Rage of this first Battle, were worsted a little after in a bloody Skirmish, where many of them lost their Lives; whereupon the *Almoxariffe*, with the Remains of his Army, retreated to Mount

Agatha, which, as it was a Post of great natural Strength, improved according to the best Rules of Art then in Practice, he resolved to defend to Extremity.

Hither he was followed by the victorious Monarch, who made many courageous Attempts to force the Place, and his People, animated by his Presence and Example, performed Wonders against the Defendants; but the Situation of this Fortrefs on the Summit of a steep and very high Mountain, accessible only on one Side, where the Way was so narrow and difficult, that a Handful of Men could oppose a whole Army, with the desperate Valour of the *Moors*, kept them long at a Distance, and left them no other Hopes of getting the Castle into their Hands but by starving the Garrison.

And indeed at length, the *Moors*, having but little Provisions left, and all their Hopes of Relief from *Barbary* beginning to fail them, consented to a Treaty with *Alphonso*, wherein it was agreed, that the Island should be forthwith surrendered to him, on Condition that such of them as were able to pay a certain Ransom, should be transported in Safety to *Barbary*, and the rest to be made Slaves.

In order to carry this Treaty into Execution, the same Day that *Agatha* was surrendered to the King, which was the Seventeenth of *January* 1287, the *Almoxariffe* and his Family, with about an hundred other Persons

sons of Note, were embarked for *Barbary*; but they all perished at Sea, or as some think, were thrown over-board by the *Arragonian* Seamen that were appointed to conduct them. About twenty thousand more of these vanquished People, who could not pay the Ransom, became the Slaves of the Conquerors, a severer Fate than that which befel their more wealthy Countrymen, who accompanied the *Almoxariffe*.

Thus the Island of *Minorca* was wrested out of the Hands of the Mahometans by the King of *Arragon*, who planted Colonies of Christians throughout the Country, amongst whom he distributed the Possessions of the *Moors*, to reward them for the Toils and Dangers of the Expedition. And thus ended the Domination of the *Moors* in this Island; after it had subsisted almost five hundred Years, in spite of the repeated Efforts of the Christians, the Exhortations of the Pope, and the many fruitless Leagues and Projects that had been formed for its Extinction.

The Seventeenth of *January*, therefore, is the Epocha of the Conquest of *Minorca*, and is observed here as a high Festival in Honour of King *Alphonso*; as the thirty-first of *December* likewise is, in Commemoration of King *James* the First's taking the City of *Palma*, in *Majorca*, by Assault, in Consequence of which, the *Moors* were driven from that Island. On both of them solemn Pro-
cessions

cessions are made, and a great deal of Pageantry is exhibited, to the great Satisfaction of the *Minorquins*, who are apt to be extremely delighted with every kind of Spectacle and Show. The Persons who represent these conquering Kings and their Warriors, always put me in mind of those that so worthily represent our King *John* and his Courtiers every Year at *Horn-Fair*.

Notwithstanding the violent Hatred which the *Spaniards* bore to the *Moors*, they suffered a great Number of the Names of Places in *Minorca* to continue the same that were given them by that People; those that begin with *Ben*, or *Bini*, are numerous (*Ben* in *Arabic* signifies Son, *Bini* the Sons or Descendants of) as are those that have *Rafal* joined to them, for so the *Moors* called a House or Farm that was contiguous to a City; and many more.

In the Reign of *Peter* the Third of *Arragon*, A. D. 1343, these Islands were formally annexed to the Crown of *Arragon*. But they enjoyed but little Peace, from the Time the *Moors* were expelled from them, for several Ages; that restless People were ever projecting Invasions, and making Descents, to pillage the Inhabitants, and carry them into Slavery: And yet it does not appear that they ever after made any Armament with a View of recovering the Islands once more into their Possession, though many Opportunities must have

have presented themselves, during the Distractions in the *Arragonian* Affairs, in a long Course of Years, as well as since the several Kingdoms of *Spain* have been united under one Head.

Thus have I traced the History of *Minorca*, from the earliest Accounts to the Period when it was quietly settled under the Kings of *Spain*; rejecting all that was trivial or fabulous in the Writers I had an Opportunity to consult, and carefully inserting every material Incident that occurred in my little Reading, that had a Tendency to illustrate the Transactions of a People little treated of, and consequently little known. For the *Spanish* Authors, however voluminous they are, give little Insight into the History of this Island, which they have either wholly omitted in their Books (as some of them have done) or confounded it with that of the greater Island. Even the two *Majorcan* Historians, *Dameto* and his Continuator *Mut*, from whom one would think a good deal of Information was to be expected on the Subject, are both of them so taken up with relating every minute Circumstance that relates to their own Island, that they furnish very little Matter for the Civil History of *Minorca*.

How this Island came into the Hands of the *English*, a few Words will be sufficient to relate: The Transaction was short, and so shall the History be.

Upon

Upon the Reduction of *Sardinia*, and the Return of the Fleet to the Coast of *Catalonia*, Major-General *Stanhope* projected an Expedition for the Conquest of the Island of *Minorca*, then garrisoned by the *French* and *Spaniards* for King *Philip*.

He accordingly procured the necessary Orders for embarking a Body of Troops amounting to two thousand six hundred Men (for so it was given out, though in reality there were not more than two thousand) twelve hundred of whom were *British*, including the Marines, six hundred *Portuguese*, and the rest *Spanish*; these were put under his Command, and arrived at the Island on the fourteenth of *September* 1708, N. S.

They met with a great deal of Difficulty in landing and transporting the heavy Artillery in so rugged a Country, where there were but few Beasts of Burthen that they could come at; yet with continual Labour they brought their whole Train (consisting of forty two Guns and fifteen Mortars) in twelve Days Time, to the Ground, where they intended to employ them.

In the mean while, *Fornelles* Castle was briskly attacked by Captain *Butler* in the *Dunkirk*, who got into the Harbour two Hours before the *Centurion*, Captain *Fairborn*, (which was dispatched with him from the Fleet) and fired thirty-six Barrels of Powder against the Castle, which made a gallant Defence.

Defence. But the Garrison, finding the *Centurion* was able to get in, and had begun a warm Fire on them, thought proper to surrender themselves Prisoners of War, having had but one Man killed and four wounded, whereas the Ships had eleven killed and about sixty wounded. The Garrison consisted of about fifty Men, and had twelve Guns mounted for its Defence.

This Success intimidated the Garrison of *St Philip's* Castle, and contributed a good deal to hasten its Surrender to the Confederates.

On the Twenty-eighth, at Break of Day, the General opened a Battery of nine Guns against the two middlemost Towers that defended a Line the Enemy had lately made, and beat them down, making some Breaches in the Line-Wall itself (which was no difficult Task, as it was hastily run up with loose Stones, without Mortar) which the General resolved to have attacked the next Day, if he had not been prevented by what happened.

For Brigadier *Wade*, being posted at some Distance on the Right, with two Battalions, some of his Grenadiers entered the Line without Orders, which the Brigadier no sooner perceived, than he advanced with all the Men he could suddenly get together to sustain them.

When

When the General heard their Fire, he marched the ordinary Guard of the Battery up to that Part of the Line that was nearest, which put the Enemy into so great a Consternation, that they immediately abandoned the two other Towers (which could not have been taken without Cannon) and retired precipitately within the Works of the Castle.

The Allies lodged themselves the same Evening at the Foot of the *Glacis* of *St Philip's* Castle, and traced out their main Battery; but the next Morning the Enemy beat a Parley, and a Treaty ensued, that ended in a Capitulation, which was signed at five of the Clock that Afternoon; in consequence of which, the General took Possession of the Place on the Thirtieth, and found the Garrison to consist of one thousand Men under Arms, Part of whom were to be transported into *France*, and the rest of them to *Spain*.

The Loss of the Confederates was inconsiderable, and did not exceed forty Men, killed and wounded; among the former was the brave Captain *Stanhope* of the *Milford*, already mentioned in my Letter of the Seventeenth of *August* 1740.

We are told this Castle was built by *Charles* the Fifth, repaired and beautified by *Philip* the Second, and enlarged by *Philip* the Fourth.

A Detachment of Foot was sent to *Ciudadella*, which immediately surrendered; and here a Garrison of one hundred Men were made Prisoners of War.

Thus the whole Island was happily reduced under the Obedience of King *Charles*.

In *St Philip's* Castle were found one hundred great Guns, and three thousand Barrels of Powder, with every Thing necessary to sustain a Siege.

Brigadier *Petit*, the Engineer, a *French Refugee*, was made Governor of *St Philip's* Castle for the King of *Spain*. He soon after built a large Battery for the Defence of *Mahon* Harbour; and Brigadier *Durand* begun to fortify on the *Cape-Mola* Side, of which I have already given you some Account in a former Letter.

After this Manner the Island of *Minorca* came into the Possession of the Allies; and a very valuable Acquisition it was, on every Account, especially its excellent Port, which immediately became the ordinary Rendezvous of the *British* Fleet in the *Mediterranean*. For here they could assemble as many Ships as they pleased in the utmost Secrecy, without having their Destination discovered to the Enemy, as was likely enough to happen in the Harbours of the Continent. Here too they were a kind of Curb on the *French*, and other maritime Powers. But among the several Advantages that redounded to the *British* Nation

tion from this Conquest, it raised their Figure in those Parts, and gave the *Moors* and the *Italian* States an Idea of them more favourable than they had entertained before, and rendered them more tractable in certain Negotiations that ensued, than they would possibly have been, if this Enterprize had not been crowned with Success.

On the Peace of *Utrecht*, *Minorca* was yielded to us, and has ever since remained quietly in our Hands.

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R IX.

S I R, *MINORCA, 27 June, 1741.*

THERE cannot be a more lively Instance of the Force of Custom and of the Infatuation of Mankind, than that the Natives of this Island, groaning under every Oppression, and by every Wile and Subtilty of wicked and avaricious Men, reduced to a State of Slavery and Want hardly to be equalled, should yet insist with Mr *Stanhope*,
that

that they should continue to be governed by their old Laws, without the least Infringement or Alteration. This, and the free Exercise of their Religion, were granted them by the Capitulation, and they enjoy them in the same Latitude as before, to the no small Satisfaction of their Priests and Lawyers, whose Counsel it is likely they followed at that time, as they have been implicitly conducted by it ever since.

The Court of *Spain* has never been over nice in the Choice of the Persons to whom it has committed the Government of its Provinces. The vicious Favourite of a Courtier, worn out in the Drudgery of Pimping and Flattery, is rewarded for his Services by an honourable Retirement; a Grandee who has impoverished himself in splendid Embassies to the several *European* Courts, has an Opportunity given him at last of plundering a whole People to retrieve his broken Fortunes; or an old Soldier, whose Merit and Pretensions have been long overlooked, and, what is very common in *Spain*, whose Arrears amount to a Sum which a Minister either cannot readily discharge, or perhaps does not chuse to discharge at all, is sent out a Governor, and left to pay himself. In all these Cases it is easy to see what is to become of the Subjects: If they are obedient and passive, they are suffered to enjoy some Part of their Property in Quiet:

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if they complain, they are not heard, and if they resist, they are undone.

And though these Islands have been at different Times delivered up to the Pillage of some of the most consuming Tyrants that ever disgraced human Nature by seeming to be of the Species; the *Minorquins* fatally missed a favourable Opportunity of becoming Partakers of all the various Benefits of the mildest Constitution of Government upon Earth. For at the Time that the Treaty of *Utrecht* yielded their Country to *Great-Britain*, if they had made Application, that they might for the future be governed according to our Laws, I make no doubt but their Request would have been readily complied with.

What surprizes us most in their neglecting to take this salutary Step, is the Information they must have received of the Advantages that must have unavoidably attended such a Privilege. However that is, they continue their old Constitution, and, as one Consequence of it, pay a Multitude of Taxes and Impositions to the Publick, and have such Sums extorted from them for the Support of their Clergy, as are excessively burthensome and oppressive.

Hence it is that the Universities * of all
the

* By Universities here, are not to be understood Colleges, or Seminaries, for Education or Learning, but the governing Part of the Magistrates in every *Termino*, by whom Taxes are laid on the People, and the publick Treasure is disposed of.

the *Terminos* are run into great Debts, which are continually increasing; and this Poverty of the Publick is by no means recompensed by the Wealth and Affluence of Particulars, as is the Case of *Genoa*, and some other Countries; for their Contributions to the Expences of the Government, are of themselves sufficient to impoverish them; besides which they are loaded with a numerous Race of idle Locusts, black, white, and grey, that sit heavy on their Industry, and after all traffick with them, as our Merchants do with the Savages, exchanging Beads, Pictures, and Baubles, for every Thing of Value they have in the World.

I have in my Custody an authentick Paper, that contains a State of the Capital Debts of all the *Terminos* of the Island, which I will transcribe in this Place for your Satisfaction.

The *Termino* of *Mabon* owes, Principal-Money

	<i>Livres.</i>	<i>Sols.</i>	<i>Dineros.</i>
- - -	43014	8	0
<i>Alaior</i> , - - -	12188	0	0
<i>Mercadal</i> and <i>Fererias</i>	12938	13	0
<i>Ciudadella</i> - - -	54058	11	1
Total - - -	122199	12	1

Which Sum is in Sterling-Money,

£ 18330 0 0

H 2

There

There is yearly raised in the several *Terminos*,

	<i>Livres.</i>	<i>Sols.</i>	<i>Din.</i>
Of <i>Mabon</i> - - - - -	7717	5	0
— <i>Alaior</i> - - - - -	2834	11	9
— <i>Mercadal</i> and <i>Fererias</i> -	1785	1	4
— <i>Ciudadella</i> - - - - -	9063	16	11
Total - - - - -	21400	15	0

Or in Sterling-Money £. 3210 0 0 near.

Their Rate of Interest is 8 *per Cent.* so that it requires no less than £. 1466 8 0 Sterling (a vast Sum in this Country) to pay the Interest of the above Principal-Money, as it becomes due every Year: The Remainder, that is, £. 1743 12 0, is equally necessary to be raised for the Support of the publick Officers, and the Charge of providing the Troops with Quarters, Wood and Oil, and Beasts and Vessels for removing their Baggage, as they are shifted from Garrison to Garrison.

The Constitution by which the Island of *Majorca* is governed, was copied by King *James* the First from that of his Kingdom of *Arragon*, and introduced there soon after the Conquest; as that of *Minorca* was established here by King *Alphonso*, on his reducing this Island to his Obedience. Both have undergone some Alterations (tho' in the main they are agreeable enough to the first Institution) and they differ little from each other, except that all the Magistrates of this Island are subordinate to those of *Majorca*. These Islands have lost the Privilege they once enjoyed, of

being

being represented by their Deputies in the *Cortes of Arragon, Catalonia, &c.* for having sometimes forbore to send them, when they were unable to bear the Expence.

The Court of Royal-Government is the principal Tribunal of the Island, in all Causes wherein the Crown is concerned (except such as regard the Royal-Patrimony) in all Matters relating to the *Jurats* of the several Universities, or *Terminos*, and in all criminal Cases; hither Appeals are made from the inferior Courts.

The Governor presides at this Court, and all the Proceedings are in his Name. He is obliged to attend in Person at the Tryal of Criminals; but in Civil Cases of little Moment, his Presence is dispensed with.

He is assisted by two Officers of the Court, an *Assessor* and *Fiscal*: The first is his Counsellor, to manage the Tryals; the other is Advocate for the Crown. These sign the Sentence with the Governor.

When the Governor absents himself from the Tryal of Civil Causes of small Importance, the *Assessor* is the chief Judge, and signs the Decree alone, in the Governor's Name; for the *Fiscal* is not properly a Judge in Civil Affairs.

In Causes where the *Assessor* is known to be concerned in Interest, or where he is liable to be biased by Enmity, Friendship, or Kindred, the Governor may appoint another Law-

yer (against whom these Objections do not lie) to officiate in his Room.

There is a *Procurador-Real* to attend the Court, and inform them of such Matters as are to be brought before them, and to push on the Tryal. Other inferior Officers there likewise are; an *Escriban*, or Secretary; an *Alguazil*, or Bailiff; a *Macero*, or Mace-Bearer; and a *Carcelero*, or Gaoler. This Court of Royal Government was subordinate to the Court of Royal Audience in *Majorca*.

The Royal-Patrimony, or Crown-Revenue, is regulated by a Council, consisting of the *Procurador-Real* (who is the President) the *Assessor*, and the *Fiscal*. They hold Inquiries into the concealed Branches of the Revenue, see that the *Decimos* (or Dues of the Crown that are paid in kind) are sold to the best Advantage, and settle all new *Cencoes* (which are a Sort of Crown-Rent, or yearly Acknowledgment) fixing their Rate.

The *Procurador-Real* is Receiver and Paymaster of the Royal Patrimony, and holds a Court, in which the *Fiscal* and *Assessor* are the Judges; he himself having no Vote there.

The *Fiscal* of the Royal-Government acts in this Court as Judge in Ordinary, and Counsellor to the *Procurador-Real*.

The *Assessor* of the Royal-Government is likewise a Judge in this Court, and the Sentence principally depends upon his Opinion; for though the *Fiscal* should differ from him, yet he

is

is obliged to sign the Sentence. Whenever it happens that they are of different Opinions, the Decree is thus worded. “ By the Advice “ of the *Assessor*, and the Intravention of the “ *Fiscal* ;” and the Secretary is to make an Entry of the Proceedings in his Books, and attest it.

There is besides a Deputy-Receiver, who has his Under-Receivers, or Collectors, in the several *Terminos*.

The *Escrivan*, or Secretary, keeps the Records, the *Alguazil* acts as a Catch-pole, to arrest Delinquents, and the *Sach* is the Porter and Cryer.

The principal Magistrates that are set over the several *Terminos*, are the *Jurats*: Those of *Ciudadella* are *Jurats-General* of the whole Island. All *Jurats*, whether collectively or separate, are honoured with the Style of *Señor Magnifico*. Their Office is to lay before the Governor occasionally all the Grievances and Hardships of the People, to the end that they may be redressed; and to see that the Markets are duly supplied with the Necessaries of Life.

Tho' the *Jurats* have no executive Power of their own, they may impose Taxes on their *Termino*, with the Consent of their ordinary Council, to whom they are accountable for the Money so raised.

They had formerly the Privilege of engrossing the Corn, and of settling the *Aforacion*,

or Rate at which it was to be sold to the People; but this has been long discontinued.

The *Jurat-Major* is to be always chosen out of the Body of the *Cavaliers* (who are all *Donzells*, or Gentlemen, with the Title of *Don*), another out of the *Ciudadans*, or Citizens, another is a *Mercader*, or Merchant, and a fourth is a *Menestral*, or Artisan. To these we may add the *Jurat-Pejez*, who is a Peasant. And thus all the Orders of Men, of which the Inhabitants of every *Termino* are composed, have their proper Representatives among the Magistrates by whom they are governed.

When the *Jurats* have served out their Year, their Successors are elected, and take the necessary Oaths to qualify them to enter on the Administration of their Office. None on whom the Election falls can decline the publick Service, and no one *Jurat* can be chosen two Years successively. The new *Jurats* immediately appoint their Counsellors to assist them.

The *Termino* of *Ciudadella* has a *Jurat-Clavario*, which none of the others have. This Officer is the Public-Treasurer, and the second *Jurat* in Rank. By him all Matters are proposed at the Meetings of the *Jurats*, and when the Governor comes into the *Termino*, he is the first that is to address him: But when the Magistrates attend the Governor at any Place that is without the *Termino*, this Honour belongs to the *Jurat-Major*.

With

With the *Clavario* all the publick Money is lodged, and his Disbursements are regulated by the Orders of the *Jurats*, with the Approbation of the Council. At the Close of the Year his Accounts are audited, and the Balance is paid into the Hands of the new *Clavario*.

When the *Jurats* think it necessary to call a General-Council, they apply to the Governor for his Summons; on the Receipt whereof the Deputies of all the *Terminos* assemble at *Ciudadella* at the appointed Time. This Council is composed of twenty-four Members, besides the *Jurats-General*, which last have no Voice, unless a *Syndico* * is to be sent out of the Island, and then they are at Liberty to vote in the Choice of the Person.

The Business that usually employs a General-Council, is to impose new Taxes; to enquire whether any *Termino* has paid more than it's just Proportion to a former Tax; to provide for any extraordinary Expence that is about to be incurred by the Island in general; and to take into Consideration the State of Affairs, and represent all Hardships and Oppressions to the Governor, or even to lay them before the King, for Redress; if they are driven so far, by having their former Remonstrances slighted by the Governor.

The

* From *Syndicus*, *Lat.* an Advocate appointed to defend the Rights of any City, People, &c.

The Governor, or Commander in Chief, cannot assemble a General-Council on his own Authority; it can only be convened at the Request of the *Jurats*, who are under no Necessity of acquainting him with the Business that is to be the Subject of their Deliberations, even tho' their Intention should be to send a *Syndico* to the King: But it is customary, when their own Affairs are once dispatched, to desire to know if he has any thing to offer for the Service of the Crown. After they are broke up, indeed, the *Fiscal* of the Royal-Government may demand of the *Jurats-General* the Resolutions of the General-Council, which he is then at Liberty to lay before the Governor: But this seems to be an In-croachment of the Prerogative, as it in a great Measure defeats the above Privilege, and renders it of little Value.

Any one *Termino* may, at its own Expence, dispatch a *Syndico* to the King, without applying to the others for their Consent.

There is a *Bayle* in every *Termino*, who carries his Rod of Justice every where within his own *Termino*, but not out of it. He holds a Court, from whence an Appeal lies to the Court of Royal-Government.

The *Bayle* of *Ciudadella* has the Appellation of *Bayle-General*, and to him the *Bayles* of the other *Terminos* are in some Degree subordinate: He carries his Rod all over the Island.

Hereto-

Heretofore, when a Governor died, the Command of the Island devolved on this Officer, and he enjoyed half the Salary until a new Governor arrived. He holds a Court, wherein he is assisted by his *Assessor*; and here all Causes (except some few of a particular Nature) are tried, with an Appeal to the Court of Royal-Government.

The *Bayle-General* is Judge in Ordinary of the whole Island, and to him all Proclamations are directed. The Orders of March for the Troops, and the Business of quartering them, fall to his Province.

All the *Bayles* have their *Lieutenants*. The *Lieutenant* of the *Bayle-General* never carries a Rod in his Presence, tho' the other *Lieutenant-Bayles* have this Privilege in the Presence of their respective Principals.

The *Bayle-General's Assessor* is his Counsellor and Assistant in all Matters that are brought to a Tryal in his Court.

The *Bayle-Consul* tries all Causes for five *Livres*, and under, in a summary way, which keeps a Multitude of trifling Business out of the superior Courts. All maritime Affairs are brought before him as *Consul*, and an Appeal from his Decisions lies to the Governor only.

All the Magistrates enter upon their Office annually on *Whit-Sunday*, and take an Oath of Allegiance.

The *Almutazen*, or *Mustafaf*, as he is corruptly called, is Clerk of the Markets, whose
principal

principal Charge is to look to the Weights and Measures, of which he is the Judge, as his Title imports, in the *Arabick* Tongue. With the Assistance of two *Promens*, this Officer keeps a Court, from whence Appeals are made to the Governor. In lieu of a Salary, he is allowed one third of all the Fines and Penalties laid in his Court, a Motive to Vigilance that has its proper Weight in his Breast. The *Almutazen* is likewise to see that the Streets are kept clean, and free from Obstructions of every kind.

Coroner's Inquests are held by the Officers of the Court of Royal-Government, by whom a great many ridiculous Fooleries are practised, such as whispering the Deceased, to know who killed him, and the like.

The Spiritual-Court is at present held by the Vicar-General at *Cuidadella*, and this Person possesses the highest Dignity in the Church of *Minorca*. He has an *Assessor* to assist him. Heretofore Tortures were in Use here, and there was a Court of Inquisition. Appeals lay to the Court of Royal Audience in *Majorca*, and finally to the Council of *Arragon*.

This Island once had a Bishop of its own, but Pope *Boniface* the Eighth subjected it in Spirituals to *Majorca*, by his Bull, dated the Eighteenth of *July*, 1295; and so it continued until *Minorca* came into the Hands of the *English*. The Bishop of *Majorca* drew

con-

considerable Revenues out of this Island, which now go to the Government.

The Governor is now the General Patron, and presents to all the vacant Benefices. The Rectors of the five Parishes that are in the Island, receive their *Decimos*, and the inferior Clergy are supported by their Masses, Collections, Holidays, &c. &c. &c. from whence a comfortable Maintenance arises, and they leave no Project unattempted that can contribute to continue and improve it.

The Monks have their Governor abroad, on whom they are dependant, and are here under the Direction of Guardians. The *Austin* Fryars of *Mount Toro* have Lands to the Amount of Two hundred and sixteen Pounds Sterling * a Year, in Money, and 265 *Quarteras* of Corn. Every Nun that professes brings two hundred *Livres* into the Convent, about Thirty Pounds Sterling.

In 1713, there were in *Minorca* Eighty-five Nuns, One hundred and forty Fryars, and Seventy-five of the Secular Clergy, in all Three hundred Persons; and if we take the Number of the Inhabitants at Twenty-seven Thousand Souls, as I think they are, this poor Island supports in Idleness one out of every Ninety of its whole People; whereas
England

* 1444 *Livres* of *Minorca* Currency.

England has not one Clergyman of the established Church to three hundred of the Laity: And as these in *Minorca* profess Celibacy, and are *strict* Patterns of Continnence, their Number readily accounts for the Depopulation and Poverty of the Country.

The Royal Patrimony, or Crown Revenue arises from several Taxes and Impositions, whereof the Church has a Part.

All Goods that are either exported or imported as Merchandize, pay a certain Duty on their being weighed or measured. All the Salt that is made in the Island pays one Eleventh of the full Value. One Eleventh Part is likewise paid for all Greens, including Barley for Forage, and Tobacco: Only the green Barley that is raised by the Farmer for the foraging of his own Beasts is exempted from Duty.

Hemp pays one thirteenth Part, and Flax one Fifteenth. All Cattle pay one Fifteenth of their yearly Increase, and Grapes one Eleventh.

Corn, whether Barley or Wheat, pays one Eighth. This, it is probable, was the Rate that was at first settled; but now it actually pays Twelve out of the Hundred, which is one Eighth and an half. To give you at once an Idea of our *Minorca* Harvests, and that you may be enabled to form a Judgment of the Value of this Tax, I will here set down the Quantity of Corn that was raised

A. D.

Island of Minorca. I I I

A. D. 1736, a Year wherein the Crops were neither remarkably abundant, nor defective.

W H E A T.

In <i>Ciudadella Termino</i> - -	13686 <i>Quarteras</i>
— <i>Mahon</i> - - - - -	16212
— <i>Alaior</i> - - - - -	10874
— <i>Mercadal and Fererias</i>	15842
	<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
Total of Wheat -	56614

B A R L E Y.

In <i>Ciudadella Termino</i> - -	8392 <i>Quarteras</i>
— <i>Mahon</i> - - - - -	5451
— <i>Alaior</i> - - - - -	3619
— <i>Mercadal and Fererias</i> -	6620
	<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>
Total of Barley -	24082

Out of the 56614 *Quarteras* of Wheat produced in *Minorca*, in 1736, the Farmers paid 47 *Quarteras Tax*, which, as the *Aforacion* was that Year at two *Livres* and eight *Sous* the *Quartera*, were worth £. 17 4 0 *Sterling*; and the Barley produced £. 3 5 0 at one *Livre* and twelve *Sous* the *Quartera*.

This small Sum is divided thus: Out of every Hundred *Quarteras*,

The

	ℓ	B	M
The King has - - - -	7	4	1 $\frac{3}{7}$
The Bishop and Chapter -	2	3	2 $\frac{4}{7}$
The Rector - - - -	1	4	1 $\frac{5}{7}$
In all - - - - -	12	0	0

These Imposts are sold every Year by Auction; the Bishop and Chapter's Part comes now to the Crown.

The other Taxes are, *Cencoes*, or a yearly Rent, or Acknowledgment to the Crown. They are 847 in Number, and being very small and difficult to be collected, they bring in but little. Some of them are under three *Dineros*, and the highest but 15 *Livres*.

Eight *Sous* must be paid for every Licence to sell an Estate, or appoint Guardians.

All Fines go to the Royal Patrimony; so does one Fourth of all the Legacies that are bequeathed to the Church; also one Tenth of the Purchase-Money, when Houses or Lands are sold for ever; and this as often as they are sold.

This Tax now produces a considerable Sum of Money in the Year, especially since the *Minorquins* have begun to apply themselves a little to Trade, by which Fortunes are suddenly made, that occasion frequent Changes in the Property of Lands.

There is something peculiar in the way of collecting this Tax; for first one Tenth of the

the whole Sum is taken, and then a Tenth of that Tenth, and so on, diminishing in this Proportion down to the very lowest Denomination of Money; so that on the Upshot, there is little less than 12 *per Cent.* paid to the Crown on every Alienation of Houses and Land throughout the Island.

Every Mortgager likewise pays one Tenth of the Money he takes up on his Estate; besides the Eight *per Cent.* Interest; no small Spur to a strict Frugality in the Land-Owners of *Minorca*. In letting an Estate for ever five *Sous* are paid for the Consent of the Crown. All contraband Goods are forfeited to the King, to whom also all Wrecks and Strays belong. When the *Vernish*-Mines were wrought (about forty Years ago) the Crown had one fifth Part.

The Spirits these People drink are imported from abroad, there being no Distillery here. The *Stanc* is farmed out. In the Year 1725, and from thence to 1738, inclusive, it amounted in the whole Island to £. 925 0 0 *Sterling per Annum*, one Year with another. But this is no Part of the publick Revenue: it is appropriated to the making of Roads, and other publick Works; and though some Governors have made it a Perquisite, yet that has heretofore been otherwise, and may be again.

The Anchorage of *Mabon*-Harbour in 1720, produced 800 Dollars; it has diminished since gradually, so as to have been, *Anno* 1737, no more than 208 Dollars.

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The whole Revenue is about 27000 *Livres*, or £. 4050 0 0 *Sterling* a Year; out of which several Salaries are paid; particularly, to the

	l. s. d.		l. s. d.	
Governor, <i>per Ann.</i>	365 0 0		2158 15 0	
Lieut. Governor	365 0 0		Chaplain-General	365 0 0
Receiver General	821 5 0		Physician	365 0 0
His Deputy	60 0 0		Consul at Majorca	150 0 0
Chief-Engineer	547 10 0		Agent for the Pacquet	60 0 0
	2158 15 0		3098 15 0	

And many others.

There were heretofore certain Impositions, which (tho' they are now no longer in Use) it may not be amiss just to mention to you. The Crown had a Fifth of all Prizes taken at Sea, and Ten *Livres* for every *Moor*. In all Bargains Three *Dubleros* in a *Real* were paid, both by the Buyer and Seller; and every Ship that entered *Port-Mahon*, paid Twenty-four *Reals* for Anchorage, *Setias* Twelve, or Six *Reals*, according to their Tonnage, and Twenty *Reals* a Day *Quarentine-Fees*.

I shall now give you some Idea of the Coins, Weights, and Measures that are used here, that you may the more readily comprehend the foregoing Calculations.

The Troops are paid in *Johanneses* and *Moydores*, and the Parts of them, so that we rarely see any Gold here but that of *Portugal*. The *Johannes* goes for Nineteen *Dollars*, a *Moydore* for Seven *Dollars* and a *Real*. The Silver is altogether *Spanish Dollars* and the Parts of them. This is the old *Plate Dollar*, less
in

in Value than the *Mexican*, or *Pillar Dollar*, this last going for Ten *Reals*. The *Dollar* is worth Three Shillings and Six-pence, or Three Shillings and Eight-pence, *English Money*, according to the Fluctuation of Exchange.

The Copper Coins are *Spanish*, and consist of *Trefettas*, *Dubleros*, and *Dineros*. The *Dublero* is the most frequent of these Coins, and was, I believe, almost the only Species that was current in the Island before it came into our Hands; for when the *Minorquins* would signify to you that a Man is very rich, they for the most Part express themselves after this Manner; *te mult de Dublés*, he has a great many *Dubleros*.

The Proportion which these Coins bear to one another appears in the following Table.

Dinero					
2	Dublero				
6	3	Trefetta			
36	18	6	Real		
72	36	12	2	Pesterine, or Piastrine	
288	144	48	8	4	Dollar, or Piece of Eight.

This is according to our Account, for the Natives compute by *Livres*, *Sous*, and *Dineros*; twelve *Dineros* make a *Sou*, and twenty *Sous* a *Livre*; which is equal to seven *Reals* and a *Dublero*, or Three Shillings within less than a Farthing, *English Money*.

Besides the *Dubleros* above-mentioned, we have still remaining no inconsiderable Number,

ber, which are of a mixed Metal, and a whitish Hue, which they owe to a Mixture of Lead or Tin. These are truly the Coins of the *Balea-ric* Kingdom, struck in *Majorca*, by Virtue of a Licence from King *James* the Second, of whom I have had Occasion to treat in the foregoing Letter, who granted a Mint to these Islands for Silver and Copper, *A. D.* 1300.

The *Real*, as I hear, went only for seventeen *Dubleros*, until Colonel *Pinfold*, a few Years since, when the Command of the Island devolved on him, as the senior Officer, on the Death of Brigadier *Kane*, raised it to eighteen; and tho' he was censured by some People for this Measure, it certainly made Silver more plenty in the Country than it had been before, by taking away one Temptation of exporting it, and consequently affording Encouragement to bring it in.

It has been my Fortune to see several of the Silver Coins of the Workmanship of the *Majorcan* Mint; and altho' their Currency has been long at an End, I have taken Pleasure in drawing you one of them, which is now in my Possession; It is Figure I. of the Miscellaneous Plate.

The Weights and Measures still in Use here were established by King *James* the Third, which I choose to give you in Tables, as they present themselves to View at once, and are understood as soon as they are seen.

Ounce,

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Ounce, equal to one Ounce and Six Grains *Troy*.

12	Short Pound		
3 ¹	3	Long Pound	
1248	104	34 ² / ₃	<i>Quintal</i> , equal to 91 lb. 8 oz. <i>Averdup.</i>

A *Rove* is one Fourth of the *Quintal*.

Long-Measure.

Inch

8	Palm, equal to seven Inches and three qrs. <i>English.</i>
64	8 Cane.

All Masons Work, whether Superficial or Solid, is measured by the *Cane*, which is equivalent to five Feet and two Inches *English*.

Dry-Measure.

Mut

6	Bersella		
36	6	<i>Quartera</i> , equal to two Bushels and one Eighth <i>English.</i>	These Measures are striked when Corn is sold, but when Pulse is to be disposed of, they are heaped.

Liquid-Measure.

Quartillo

5 ¹ / ₄	Barillon		
21	4	Cargo	
84	16	4	<i>Bota</i> , or Butt, equal to 133 Gallons <i>English</i> Wine-Measure.

I will now leave you to your Thoughts on the Matter of this long Letter, and beg you would assure yourself that

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R X.

S I R,

MINORCA, 3 August, 1741.

THE Prosperity of every trading People is well known to depend on the Value which its Superfluities of every kind bear in other Parts of the World, in Proportion to the foreign Commodities which they are obliged to import. This strikes the Ballance in Trade, and easily determines the Question, whether a Nation should carry on a foreign Commerce at all, and to what Degree; or ought rather to confine their whole Consumption to the Produce of their own Country.

That Trade brings Riches, is a Maxim universally received, and we observe that the Nations who enjoy the most extensive Commerce are without Competition the most wealthy; But Experience will also convince us, that many Nations are undone by extending their Trade, when their Exports are not of Value to purchase what they may fancy they have Occasion for from abroad.

Thus a People may be undone by Trade; and it is demonstrable, that if we import to the Value of ten thousand Pounds a Year of foreign Commodities, and yet cannot make up more than one thousand in our Produce and Manufactures at home, the Ballance in
Trade

Trade is against us nine thousand Pounds a Year, which must in a few Years accomplish our Ruin.

Thus the *Irish* and the *North-American* Trade to *England*, is a destructive one to *Ireland* and *North-America*; the former being obliged to remit at least one Third, and the other two Thirds in Money to pay their Balance: And thus the *English* themselves suffer in their Commerce with *France*, which produces many Things they make necessary to their very Being, and yet are able to return very little which that Nation has Occasion for; being our Rivals in almost every Manufacture we cultivate, and wanting little from us, except our Wool, which yet they obtain in an illicit Way in sufficient Quantities to enable them to undersell us in every Market they resort to.

In *Minorca* this Misfortune is more sensibly felt. There are few Exports of any Account, and they are obliged to their Neighbours for near *one Third* of their Corn, *all* their Oil, and *Aguardiente*, and such a Variety of Articles of less Consideration, that nothing could preserve them from a total Bankruptcy, but the *English* Money circulated by the Troops, which is exchanged for the daily Supplies of Provisions, increased by the Multiplication of Vineyards, the breeding of Fowls, and the Production of Vegetables, in a Proportion of

at least five to one since the Island has been in our Possession.

It will not require many Words to enumerate their Exports: They make a Sort of *Cheese*, little liked by the *English*, which sells in *Italy* at a very great Price; this perhaps to the Amount of eight hundred Pounds *per Annum*. The *Wool* they send abroad may produce nine hundred Pounds more. Some *Wine* is exported, and if we add to its Value that of the home Consumption, which has every Merit of an Export, being for the most part taken off by the Troops for ready Money, it may well be estimated at sixteen thousand Pounds a Year. In *Honey*, *Wax*, and *Salt*, their yearly Exports may be about four hundred Pounds, and this comes pretty near the Sum of their Exports, which I estimate together at Eighteen thousand one hundred Pounds Sterling *per Annum*.

A vast Ballance lies against them, if we consider the Variety and Importance of the Articles they fetch from other Countries, for which they must pay ready Cash. Here it may be necessary to withdraw some Things from the Heap, such as their Cattle, Sheep, and sometimes Fowls, on which they get a Profit; for the Country does not produce them in sufficient Abundance to supply us, especially when we have a Fleet of Men of War stationed with us.

What

What remains they purchase from abroad, and I assure you I do not jest when I tell you I believe I have omitted at least as many Particulars as I have been able to recollect on the Occasion.

Their Imports then are, Corn, Cattle, Sheep, Fowls, Tobacco, *Aguardiente*, Oil, Rice, Sugar, Spices, Hard-ware, and Tools of all kinds; Gold and Silver Lace, Chocolate, or *Cacao* to make it, Tobacco, Timber, Plank, Boards, Mill-stones, Tobacco-pipes, Playing-cards, Turnery-ware, Seeds, Soap, Saddles, all manner of Cabinet-makers Work, Iron, Iron Spikes, Nails, fine Earthen-ware, Glafs, Lamps, Brafiery, Paper, and other Stationary-wares, Copperas, Galls, Dye-stuffs, Painters Brushes and Colours, Musical Instruments, Musick, and Strings; Watches, Wine, Fruit, all manner of fine and printed Linens, Mullins, Cambricks, and Laces; Bottles, Corks, Starch, Indigo, Fans, Trinkets, Toys, Ribbands, Tape, Needles, Pins, Silk, Mohair, Lanthorns, Cordage, Tar, Pitch, Rosin, Drugs, Gloves, Fire-Arms, Gun-powder, Shot and Lead; Hats, Caps, Velvet, Cotton, Stuffs, Woollen-Cloths, Stockings, Copes, Medals, Vestments, Lustres, Pictures, Images, *Agnus Dei's*, Books, Pardons, Bulls, Relicks, and Indulgences.

It must be confessed, that if the *English* have brought Money into the Country, they have

have for the Time much infected the Inhabitants, by setting them an Example of spending it.

Many of them have learned to multiply their Wants, and fall by Degrees into a Way of Luxury and Extravagance, perfectly new to them.

The *Dons* are above Trade, and the rest of the Natives are unable to exercise it to any Purpose. Yet if this infatuated People would set themselves seriously to make the most of their native Produce, a few Years Industry would enable them to traffick with their Neighbours to Advantage, and even to provide Exports of considerable Value for an *English* Market. To instance in a few,

The Cotton-Shrub has been tried here, and succeeds to Admiration: They have *Spart* growing in many Places, in sufficient Plenty to make all their own Cordage, and to spare. The *Tunny-Fish* abounds on their Coast, and they might easily fall into the Method of curing it: By this the *French* of *Languedoc* and *Provence*; their Neighbours, make a vast Advantage.

They have Abundance of *Olive-Trees*, yet they make no Oil of the Fruit, and are utterly ignorant of the right Method of pickling it.

Some *Capers* they pickle, and might, from the Frequency of the Plant, improve this into a valuable Export.

Hemp

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Hemp and *Flax* do extremely well, and might be encreased and manufactured for Exportation. Their *Canes* or *Reeds* are of Use in the Clothiers Trade, but they export none; and they have great Plenty of excellent *Slate*, but do not work it.

It might possibly answer to send their *Canton-Stone* to *England* as Ballast; but certainly their *Marble* would be a valuable Commodity with us, of which no Country can boast a greater Quantity in Proportion, nor of greater Beauty or Variety, than this poor Island.

Squills they have in Abundance, *Mastick*, *Aloes*, and some other Drugs, which they neglect.

Their Bees thrive well, and should be carefully managed, and increased as much as possible; their Wax is inferior to none, and their Honey cannot fail of being extremely delicate and fine in a Country abounding with such a Variety of aromattick Plants, and is therefore in high Esteem every where.

They raise a little Tobacco, but seldom half the Quantity they consume; and they make a kind of Snuff in small Quantities, which is in no respect inferior to that of *Lisbon*.

Their Neighbours of *Majorca* make good Advantage of their Plantations of Saffron, which these People use in their Cookery, and yet will not take the Pains to raise it.

Their

Their Palm-Trees, for want of a proper Cultivation, produce no Dates, and they send none of their Fruit abroad, though they have it in their Power to supply us with as good Figs, Prunes, Almonds, Raisins, Pomegranates, Oranges, Lemons, and several other Kinds, as any Country in *Europe*.

But I will close these Hints of what an industrious People might do to enrich themselves, and this indolent Generation of Men carelessly overlook; with the Mention of *Salt*, a Ready-Money Commodity every where, and of which they might easily make a thousand times the Quantity they now do. Their Method requires so little Trouble, that I will lay it before you.

There are a great many Places on the Coast of the Island, where the Rock is but little higher than the Surface of the Sea, and is flat for a great Way together. In Gales of Wind the Sea is beat all over these Levels, and the Salts have by Degrees corroded the softer Parts of the Stone, and reduced its Face to an infinite Number of small Cavities, divided from each other by the more solid Veins, which have resisted their Impression.

These Cavities they fill with Water from the Sea, by means of Scoops, and one Day's Sun suffices to evaporate the Water, and leaves the concreted Salt dry in the Cells. The Women and Children gather it in the Evening,
and

and carry it home, and the Cells in the Rock are filled as before.

Having instanced to you some of the natural Produce of this Island, slighted by the Inhabitants, which yet are capable of being improved into very valuable Articles of Commerce; I will attempt an Estimate of the Charge they are at in their Importations.

I have in my Possession an authentick Paper, which contains an exact Account of their Harvests for thirty-seven Years. By this it appears, that there are annually raised here Fifty-three thousand five hundred and one *Quarteras* of Wheat, and Twenty-two thousand six hundred eighty three of Barley, one Year with another.

Wheat is their only Bread-Corn, all their Barley being given to their Beasts. Of the last they seldom import any great Quantity: But they have Occasion for thirty five thousand *Quarteras* of Wheat every Year, which at nine Shillings each, amount to Fifteen thousand seven hundred and fifty Pounds.

They import Oil yearly to the Value of ten thousand Pounds.

I have by me an exact Account of the *Stanc* of *Aguardiente* for fourteen Years, and find they import annually of this Spirit a Quantity that costs them Nine thousand two hundred and fifty Pounds, allowing only ten *per Cent.* for the Profit of the Farmers; and this, at Six-pence a *Quart*, makes their yearly

Consumption of this Spirit to be upwards of 1540 Hogsheads.

They import Tobacco to the Amount of One thousand two hundred Pounds a Year.

We may compute that their Imports in Linen and Woollen Goods of all kinds do not come to less than fifteen thousand Pounds. It is not possible to make a nice Calculation of the Value of all the Residue of their Imports, so I shall set them at a round Sum, which I dare say they do not fall short of, twenty thousand Pounds.

So that here we have an annual Expence of Seventy one thousand two hundred Pounds, from which if we deduct Eighteen thousand one hundred Pounds, the Amount of their Exports, the Remainder Fifty three thousand one hundred Pounds *Sterling* is a clear Balance of Trade against them.

To enable these People, in some Measure to support the Charge of this enormous Balance, we are to reckon the large Sum of Money yearly brought into the Island, and spent among them by the Troops; a Sum, as I have computed it, that falls but little short of their whole Balance, the greatest Part of which goes to Market for the common Necessaries of Life.

Every Vintage produces thirteen thousand Hogsheads of Wine; and if we allow for the *Clergy* two thousand Hogsheads, and for all the rest of the Natives one thousand, the

the remaining Ten thousand Hogsheds are sold to the *English* for Seventeen thousand five hundred Pounds in ready Money, the Price of a Hogshed taken at a Medium at thirty five Shillings.

This is a very considerable Article in their Favour, and they are so sensible of the Advantage they draw from their Vineyards, that they are continually enlarging them and increasing their Number, notwithstanding they are very highly taxed.

They are indeed tied down to a set Price for their Red Wine, and the *Aforacion*, or Rate, is settled the Beginning of the Year; but for their White Wine (which is not included in the above Computation, being no great Quantity) they are at Liberty to drive their Bargain as advantageously as they can.

It is certain this People can never be rich, unless they become industrious; the Sea is open to them as well as to their Neighbours on every Side, who thrive by a foreign Commerce, and yet not one of them can victual or navigate their Vessels near so cheap as these slothful *Minorquins*, who lie in the Centre of so many trading Ports, that it is amazing how they can have so long overlooked their true Interest, and suffered themselves to be supplied with so many of the Necessaries of life in foreign Bottoms.

The *Minorquins* are naturally listless, and if they can contrive the Means to keep their
Families

Families from the sharp Gripe of Poverty, they are but little solicitous to enquire into the Arts and Manufactures by which sudden Fortunes are acquired on every Side of them. Tell them the *Maltese* are enriched by the Quantities of Cummin and Anise-seed they export; remind them that the Plant which produces the Canary-seed grows spontaneously all over the Island, or that a Gum is produced from the Mastick-Tree, of very great Value abroad (and though the Tree is an Incumbrance which they eagerly root out of their Grounds) they treat you as a Visionary, and with a Shrug of Contempt seem to thank Heaven that they have no Turn to Whims and Projects, but are contented to jog on in the plain Track which their Fathers trod before them.

But I must not anticipate the Subject of a future Letter, wherein I shall endeavour to make you better acquainted with the Natives of *Minorca*. I am for the present,

S I R,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R XI.

S I R, MINORCA, 17 October, 1741.

I HAVE put up my little Collection of FOSSILS, and sent them by a Friend, who has promised to deliver them to you. They are all Natives of *Minorca*, where, especially, such Numbers of what are commonly called *Petrified Sea-Shells*, and the *Parts of Fishes*, are found every where embodied in the Rocks, and many Times loose on the Surface of the Earth, that the Present would have been much more worthy of your Acceptance, if the violent Heats of the Summer Months did not prevent my Excursions, and the Ruggedness under Foot limit and shorten them, when the Weather allows me to go abroad. Besides, it is no very easy Task to disengage these Substances from the Stone in which they are fixed, without breaking them, and I was unwilling to send you any but such as were entire.

The *Soil*, or *vegetable Earth*, of this Island is of several Kinds; that of the Hills and upper Grounds is of a Colour nearly approaching to black. It is light, fine, and extremely fertile, and though it is very thinly spread over the Face of the Rock, it yet produces tolerable Crops with very little Cultivation. It has a small Intermixture of Sand, which

K disposes

disposes it to separate freely before the Plough; a Quality very advantageous to the *Minorquins*, as it saves them a World of Labour, as well as Expence.

The *Soil* of the *Plains* is far less fertile than that of the rising Grounds: It is cold and clayey, and equally unfit for Agriculture and Pasture; and produces only a sour Herbage, that is excessively distasteful to Cattle, great Plenty of Rushes, and a Variety of Weeds. The *Valleys* indeed have been enriched by the Earth that has been washed on them from the adjoining Hills to a great Depth: But the Hills have been impoverished by the same Means, and in the same Proportion. However, we frequently see Stone-Walls, that have probably stood many Ages, run across the Sides of the Hills, to detain the Soil; and such Hills yield good Crops to the very Summit, which must otherwise have had their rocky Entrails laid bare, as is visible, wherever this Caution has been neglected.

They use only one Sort of *Clay*, that I know of, which is of a greyish Colour, and burns to a pale Brown. Of this their Tiles *, already described, are made, and a coarse Earthen Ware for common Use, the finer Sorts being imported from *Spain* and *France*. Of this Clay their Water-Jars are made, and a few ordinary Dishes and Drinking-Vessels.

The

* I have been since told that some Tiles, now in Use among the *Minorquins*, are of a reddish Colour.

The Potters use a Wheel, and mould their Ware with their Hands and small wooden Tools: They burn it in Kilns, but do not glaze any of it. I have frequently seen blue and yellow Clay in many Places about the Country, but they are put to no manner of Use.

Marle might possibly be discovered here, but I do not know that it has ever been sought after. Perhaps they may be Strangers to that useful Manure.

Of that kind of *Gypsum* which they call *Guysh* I have already taken Notice, in my Letter of 19 July, 1740, and of which I send you five several Specimens. It is a Sort of *Plaster of Paris*, and abounds in many Parts of the Island. There is a good deal of this valuable Cement imported from *Majorca*, and it is of a better Kind than any that is found in *Minorca*. Not much unlike this is the *Perelle*, with which they fine their Wines, but of a whiter Complexion, and much more friable and sparkling.

It has never been my Fortune to meet any of the columnar *Crystals* here, though I have diligently searched the perpendicular Fissures of vast Masses of Slate-Rock, and those of hard Stone in the Mountains, where they are often found in other Countries. But of that kind of *Spar* which incrusts Plants and Vegetables, I have had an Opportunity of observing a great Number at a Place called *Bocca del*

Rio, (the Rivers Mouth) in the Termino of Alaior. Here is a large Pool of stagnate Water, extending near a Mile in Length, and reaching within an hundred Yards of the Sea, from which it is usually separated by a flat Sand; though heavy Rains and hard Gales of Wind do sometimes open a Passage. On a little sandy Eminence near the Shore, most of the Plants and Twigs are incrusted, to the Thickness of a Quarter of an Inch, with this Substance, which is of a crumbly, coarse, sandy Texture, and grey Colour, on the Surface, but whiter within, and of a stony Hardness. Of these I send you several Specimens, from three to seven Inches in Length, which last they seldom exceed. These Bodies are constantly formed on the Stems of the Shrubs, and never on the Branches, that I could discover. Many I saw lying on the Ground, hollow within, the Plants on which they grew, having been blown down by the Winds, or decayed by Time, have left the Cavities open which they filled while they stood erect in the Earth. This Matter essentially differs from the *Osteocolla* of the Shops, in that it contains no surrounding Crusts, but is composed of one uniform Body, hard next the Twig, and gradually more friable and crumbly from thence outward to the Surface, where it readily crackles and breaks away between the Fingers on the slightest Pressure. Neither has it any Lines or Marks of a *spiral* Figure,

as that Body is observed to have for the most Part, especially on the Inside, as if it had once been a flat Substance, and was afterwards rolled up into a *Cylindrick* Form; nor is it found compressed, like the *Osteocolla*, but ever exhibits the distinct Lineaments of the Plant about which it was originally con-creted.

I have said a good deal in my letter of the 28th of *March*, 1741, of the *Stalactitæ* in *Cova-Perella*, to which I have nothing to add, but that I have sent you near twenty Varieties of them. Whether there are any different Species among them you will easily satisfy yourself, as soon as they come to Hand. I have likewise treated in another Place of the *Minorca* Freestone, and shall only observe here, that the Masons in burrowing into the Rocks are frequently interrupted by Veins of a flinty Hardness, which they are obliged to blow with Gunpowder. The *Strata* of this hard Stone are seldom above a Foot thick, and then the Freestone appears again as before; only this last is observed to be somewhat harder as the People work downwards, and much freer from Sea-Shells and other extraneous Bodies, than the *Strata* that are nearer to the Surface, which abound with great Variety of these Substances. As the porous Texture of the Freestone is easily pervaded by Water, the Masons let it lie some time to season, before they use it, and frequently white-wash the

Walls on the Outside, as soon as they are built, to keep out the Wet.

Lime-Stone is plenty enough, and in some Places the Fence-Walls consist of no other Materials, particularly at the Western End of the Island. It is of a light grey Colour, very hard, and shining where it is fresh broken. It makes excellent Lime, and contains a great Number of *Echinitæ*, and other Remains of the Deluge, especially in the upper *Strata*. Though there are considerable *Strata* of this Stone in particular Spots, it more frequently occurs in detached Nodules, and Fragments, plentifully dispersed in the Corn-Fields; and when they are not too large, and do not lie too thick on the Ground, so as to hinder the springing of the Corn, they are no Bar to its Vegetation, but rather favour it by their kindly Warmth, and the Shade they give to the young Shoots, at their first coming up.

Minorca affords great Quantities of *Slate*, and there is a good Kind on *Cape-Mola* Neck, lying very convenient for Water-Carriage; but the general Use of Tiles has excluded this valuable Covering from the Buildings of the *Minorquins*. It is very smooth and glossy, of a dark blue Colour, and contains many white Veins throughout. It has a great Number of perpendicular Fissures, that divide it into Masses of such a Size as to be easily managed by the Workman. It splits and works as well as any *English* Slate does.

I shall

I shall only say of *Marbles*, that this Island, in my Opinion, affords them of as great Beauty and Variety as any Country in the World; and if our Workmen were once acquainted with them, I make not the least Doubt but they would be quickly brought into general Use in *England*; both as Labour is extremely cheap here, and they are easily come at, without digging to discover them, lying exposed on the Surface sometimes for half a Mile together, and after a smart Shower of Rain, displaying all the Luxuriance of their Variegation to the greatest Advantage. The Specimens I send you are ill polished, these People being utterly unpractised in such Matters; but some of them are so elegant in native Beauty, that I think you must be glad to have them even in this rough Condition, which you can easily improve, where you are, at a moderate Charge.

I have picked up some small Fragments of *Alabaster*, in my Walks, one of which I send you; but I have not hitherto been so fortunate to discover it in a *Stratum*.

Here is an excellent *Stone* for the Uses to which it is applied in the Fortifications of *St. Philip's Castle*, and it is found in Plenty at the the very Foot of the *Glacis*. It bears a great Resemblance to the *Devonshire Moor-Stone*, both in Texture and Hardness, and being cloven with Wedges, and fashioned by the Mason, makes *Steps* and *Platforms* that

set the Iron Teeth of Time at Defiance. It were to speak doubtfully to tell you it resembles the *Moor-Stone* in Colour (that of our *Minorca* Stone being ferruginous) for I have seen *Moor-Stone* in the Hands of a Gentleman in *London* of near Unity Varieties, as I think, with regard to Colour only; and as he had put himself to the Expence of getting them exquisitely polished, many of them in Beauty and Elegance surpassed the finest *German Agates* I ever saw.

I cannot omit mentioning here the huge Masses of *Granate* that lie dispersed on the Surface of the Earth in many Parts of the Island. I send you a few Samples of them, which will convince you how highly worthy this Country is of being carefully searched by a skilful Person in these Matters, as it possesses an immense Treasure in Marble, at present wholly lost to the World.

Of those Bodies the Naturalists call *Septaria*, I have met with several in my Rambles, but I confess I neglected to make any Collection of them, looking on them and some others in no other Light than as the Lumber of a great *Cabinet*, where every *Fossil* must have a Place, without Regard to Beauty or Value, from the *Diamond* to the unformed Lump of *Clay*.

But I was not quite so careless of the Bodies marked N^o 68, though I am at a Loss to name them, unless they are a Species of the
Pudding-

Pudding-Stone of our Lapidaries. They seem to be a Congeries of brown Pebbles of different Sizes, from that of a small Pea to the Bigness of a Hazle-Nut, united firmly by a cementitious Matter of the same Substance, both equally hard, and of the same Colour externally; but ths Pebbles, on being cut, discover several Crusts of different Hues surrounding a small *Nucleus* at the Center, which in some of them is black, but more commonly white: But the *Nucleus* is not discernible in all. A smart Blow with a Hammer seldom fails to dislodge some of the Pebbles from the Mass, and then we observe their Sides to be flatted, and even impressed with deep Cavities, at the Places where they came into Contact with others of different Degrees of Hardness at the Time of their Concretion. The general Complexion of the Inside of the Pebbles, from which they seldom vary considerably, is grey; next to the brown outside Crust, or Coat, is often a white one, then a dark grey, and then a lighter grey; next comes a dark grey again; which immediately surrounds the *Nucleus*, when it is white; for if it is black, it is surrounded by a Crust of a pale grey. This is the general Structure of this Body, which though it does not want Hardness, does not seem to be very capable, or indeed very deserving, of a high Polish; however, it helps
to

to furnish out a pleasing Variety in a Collection, and more especially its Pebbles, when detached from the Cement, which not a little resemble some of the *Regular-Bodies* of the *Geometricians*.

Flint and *Chalk* are not Natives of *Minorca*, so far as I have been able to find upon Search or Enquiry. *Flints* for their Guns are imported, and one Use of *Chalk* is better supplied by the Abundance of excellent *Lime-Stone*; the Taylors have from *Italy* the *Neapolitan Marking-Stone*, which answers their Purpose quite as well as *Chalk*, and the Mafons mark their Work with black and red *Slate*.

Vast Quantities of *Pebbles* lie in the Neighbourhood of *Colomba-Island*; but I have never had the Curiosity to break any of them, to examine the Colour of the Crusts of which they are composed. Some are so exactly round, that the *Artillery* People collect them in great Numbers, and carry them to *St. Philip's Castle*, to be flung from their *Mortars* on Occasion.

There are many *Sandy Bays* about the Coast, where the *Sand* is for the most Part of a whitish Colour, tolerably fine to the Touch, not crackling much between the Fingers, and copiously mixed with the Fragments of *Sea-Shells*. But the *Sand* employed in the Works at *St. Philip's Castle* is found
in

in plenty near St. *Stephen's* Cove. This *Sand* is of a dark grey Colour, very pure, and free from heterogeneous Matter of every kind, and crackling between the Fingers; being what our Workmen call a *hungry Sand*, and requiring a good deal of Lime to be mingled with it for the Composition of strong Mortar.

Our Shores likewise furnish many very beautiful *Gritts*, which have been disunited from the Rocks by the beating of the Waves in hard Gales of Wind.

I have not had the Luck to meet with any *Pyritæ* here, though they are far from being rare in many Parts of the World. Indeed many are the promising Spots in the Island, which I have never attempted to search; and such is the Ruggedness of the Country in general, that many of its *Fossils* will, in all Probability, remain undiscovered to the End of Time.

Iron-Ore is so plentifully dispersed over the whole Face of the Earth, that it is not surprizing we find it in *Minorca*. Its ferruginous Colour and great Weight distinguish it, in many flat Masses, of from four to ten Inches Diameter, in most Parts of the Island. But it is not converted to any Use here; whether on account of its Unfitness to make Iron alone (if it has ever been tried, which I much question) the Scarcity of Fuel, or the
Want

Want of Skill in the Natives, I will not take upon me to determine.

I have already taken Notice that a poor *Copper-Ore* is found in *Colomba-Island*: Near *Mount Agatha* other Specimens have been picked up; but none of them promise any great Matter.

But of *Lead-Ore* here is a Mine at *St. Puig*, which has been worked to Advantage within these 40 Years, and the *Ore* sent into *France* and *Spain*, for the Use of the Potteries of those Countries. The Proprietor discontinued his Work on some small Discouragement; and it must be owned, that these People are of all Mankind the most easily put out of Conceit with an Undertaking that does not bring them in Mountains of present Gain, or that admits of the slightest Probability of disappointing their most sanguine Expectations: Nor will their Purse admit of many Disappointments; and thus their Poverty co-operating with their natural Despondence and Love of Ease, is the principal Cause of their Backwardness to engage in Projects, though never so promising, for the Improvement of their private Fortune, and the Advantage of their Country. This *Lead-Ore* went under the Name of *Vernis* among the Native, as it was wholly used by the Potters in varnishing and glazing their Earthen Vessels.

Of

Of *vegetable Substances* buried in the Earth, I have not met with any here; but of *Sea-Shells*, and the *Parts of Fishes*, vast Numbers appear almost every where, not only in the Surface of the Rock, but to considerable Depths in digging. These are called by the Naturalists *extraneous Fossils*, as they are Natives of another Element, and lodged in the different Strata of the Earth at the Time of the *Universal Deluge*, as is the general Opinion at present; though many learned Persons have thought otherwise, and preposterously contended that they were only *the Sports of Nature*, and *Lapides sui generis*, a Notion which the bare Inspection of the Bodies themselves is sufficient to refute. These are of two Kinds, I. Such as have preserved the original Substance of the Bone or Shell, either intire or in Part; and, II. Such as were formed in the Shell, as in a Mould, and are every where impressed with the Lineaments of the Inside of the Shell, which has been long perished.

The first of these are found with their Cavities constantly filled with the Matter of the Stone in which they are bedded, at least so far as I have seen here, whether it be the common Freestone (to which our Searchers are chiefly confined, as it is ofteneft broke into, and they are more easily extracted from thence) or the harder Lime-Stone, or Marble. The second Sort lie loose in the Strata, the
decaying

decaying of the *Shell* having made Room for them, and are for the most Part of the same Kind of Stone with that in which they are enclosed; though they are sometimes of a different Matter; as I have found them of Lime-stone included in a *Stratum* of Free-stone, which however is not so common.

The *Minorquins* call the *Glossopetræ* Serpents Tongues, as Mr. *Ray* informs us the *Maltese* also do; but they have been incontestably proved to be no other than the *Teeth* of the *Shark*, to which they bear an exact Resemblance. They are frequently found by the Quarriers in coming at the Cantoons, and I have seen them sticking out of the Rock in the Cliffs adjacent to *Mahon*-Harbour. The largest of those I send you is of a whitish brown Colour, two Inches and a Quarter long, and almost two Inches broad at the greater End, where there is no Root. It is slightly serrated at the Edges, and has its Point turned a little downwards. The original Matter of the Tooth remains pretty entire, and the Cavity is filled with Free-stone. It is rounded on the upper Side, and flat on the other, with a *Sinus* extending from the Middle to the lower End.

The next Specimen differs from the other in little more than its Colour, which is perfectly white, and of an exquisite Polish; and in its having a Root of Free-stone, tinged of a greenish Hue by Particles of Copper, that
has

has been dissolved by Acids somewhere in its Neighbourhood. The former Specimen is not wholly free from this Stain, though the two *Fossils* were found at some Miles Distance from each other.

Another *Shark's Tooth* I also send you, much smaller than either of the former, and scarce an Inch long, but without a Root. This, as well as the others, has preserved the original Texture of the *Tooth*, and like them is filled with Free-stone, and appears to be transparent, being held before a Candle. The Smallness of this elegant *Fossil* is so far from being an Objection to its having been a *Shark's Tooth*, that we seldom find the *Teeth* of that Fish recent so large as this is: And to enable you to judge for yourself on this Head, I send you some I took from the Jaws of one that measured full 17 Feet in Length: What Monsters of the Deep then must they have been, that had *Teeth* above twice the Size of my first described *Glossopetra*, as our daily Discoveries here and in other Countries evince some of them to have had?

I send you a Fish's Tooth, but dare not affirm it ever belonged to a *Shark*. It is an Inch long, and so writhed, as almost to resemble the Letter S. It is of a reddish yellow Colour, very bright and shining, and retains the original Substance of the *Tooth* on the Outside, having its Cavity filled, like the others, with the Free-stone
of

of the *Stratum* in which it was found, but no Root.

The Bodies that go under the Name of *Bufo-nitæ*, or *Toad-Stones*, cannot be in greater Plenty even in *Malta*, (the most noted Magazine for these *Fossils*, as well as the *Glossopetræ*) than they are in *Minorca*. The Natives rank them among the Gems, and wear them in Rings and Buttons, without polishing; and indeed they do not need it, being ever of a bright glossy Surface with us. Their Colour is a brownish Yellow, deeper in some Specimens than in others. Some of them have a slender Circle at the Base, of a true Gambouge Colour, and others a second Circle above that, of a dark brown, and some of them are observed to be all over slightly powdered with white.

I have hitherto observed but four Varieties of the *Bufo-nitæ*, which I will not venture to call Species: You are the best Judge. I. Such as approach the hemispherical Figure, and are slightly hollowed within: These, so far as I have observed, are never circled at the Base, but are of one uniform Colour, and that the brightest and the palest of all the *Bufo-nitæ*. II. Such as agree in their exterior Form with those last mentioned, but are very much hollowed at the Base, so as to have but little Substance left, and sharp Edges. III. Such as rise higher than either of the two former, are deeply hollowed, and
have



Fig.1.



Fig.2.

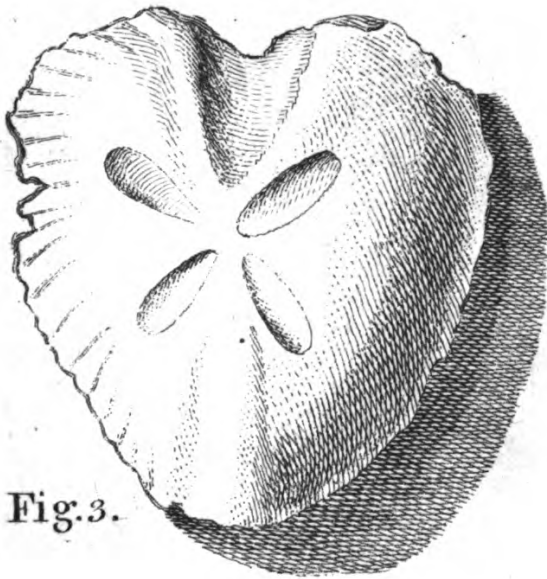
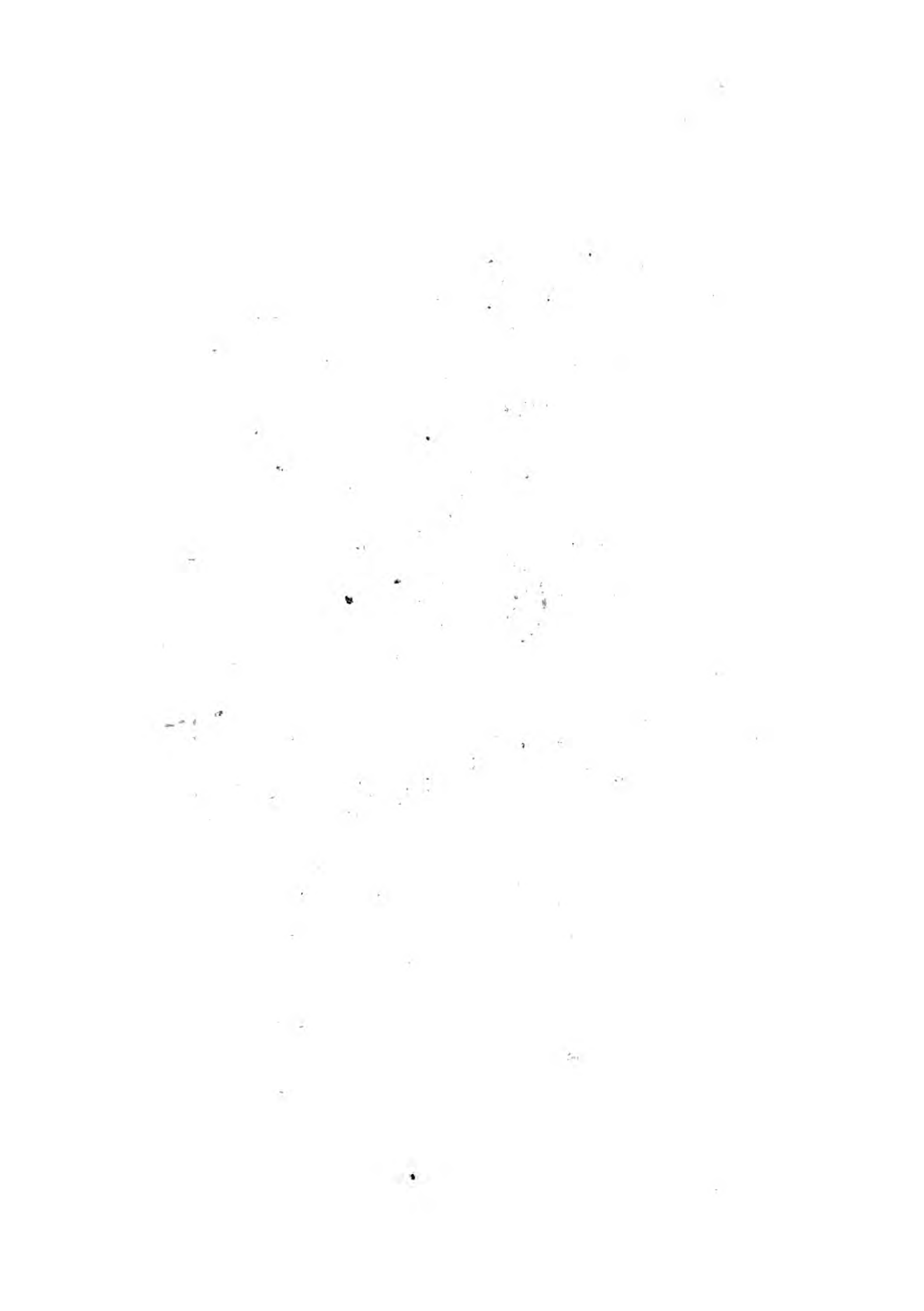


Fig.3.



have thick Edges: These are never without Circles of a different Colour, and are the deepest-coloured of any we find in the Island. And IV. Such as rise into the Figure of a Cone, and are deeply hollowed, some of them having Circles of different Colours at the Base, while others are wholly without them. One of these has a white Circle at the Base; and this it is which, of all our *Bufonitæ*, is the only one that is sometimes powdered with white on the Surface.

Some of our *Bufonitæ* are a little flattened on the Sides, by accidental Injuries, which must have happened before they attained their present Hardness; and others are depressed on the Top, as they are frequently observed to be in other Countries. I have never known them to be found here except in the common Freestone, with which their Cavities are filled.

The Opinion that these Bodies were generated in the Head of a *Toad*, on which Account their Name was given them, has been sufficiently exploded. They are unquestionably the Teeth of a Fish, and I can take upon me to say, that I lately picked up a Fish's Jaw on the North Shore of the Island that had many Teeth in it that bore an exact Resemblance to them, in every Particular, except the Colour, but I cannot affirm it to have been the Jaw of the *Wolf-Fish*. Our *Minorca Bufonitæ* (to which only re-

lates what I have said of those Bodies) seldom exceed half an Inch in Diameter, in the largest Specimens, nor do they fall much short of it in the smallest: Their usual Standard may be fixed at four Tenths of an Inch.

Of the *Bivalves* we have several Kinds found fossile here: The *Ostracites* is common enough, but I have not been able, after many unsuccessful Attempts, to get any of them out of the Rock, without breaking. We have *Cockles*, and the *Conchæ Anomiæ*, both smooth and striated, in some Places in the *Termino* of *Ciudadella*; but they are ever divested of the *Shell* in which they were originally moulded. And here I must tell you, that I have never found any one *fossil Shell* in this Country, properly speaking, whether retaining its natural Texture, or having its Pores filled with an adventitious *Sparry*, or other Matter; what we have being always the *Casts* formed in the *Shell*, which is now decayed and gone.

We have good Store of *figured Stones* which were formed in *Turbinated Shells*: The *Trochi*, *Cylindri*, *Buccina*, are very frequent in many of our Fence-Walls.

Of *Echinitæ*, or Bodies formed in the *Shell* of the *Echinus*, or *Sea-Urchin*, we have an amazing Plenty, especially a little to the Westward of *Ciudadella*, where I think there are some *Genera* that are undescribed by Authors: But it is next to an Impossibility to get them
out

out of the Stone in which they are bedded, without breaking them, and I will conclude nothing from Fragments. I send you two Varieties of *Echinitæ*, being all the entire Specimens I have been able to procure.

One of them is of the *Echinus Cordatus* Kind, and common enough in the Quarries of Canton-Stone, of which Substance it is wholly composed. It happened to make its Appearance at an Angle, and a lucky Blow freed it from its Confinement without Injury.

The other is an *Echinites*, and for any thing I know may be an undescribed Species. It has five Cavities or Furrows, the middle one considerably broader and deeper than the rest, and reaching more than half the Length of the Body; one lesser one at each Side of this, but not exactly parallel to it, and two that are still smaller, near the Head of the principal Furrow, where they all meet: It is of the common Freestone.

I shall conclude this Account of my little Collection of *Minorca Fossils* with observing, that generally such *Shells* as are most common on our Shores, the *Scallop*, *Muscle*, *Tellina*, &c. are very rarely found *fossile*: Nay, tho' the *Echinus Orvarius*, which in its recent State is every where spread as thick as it can lie on the Rocks in the Water, yet I have never discovered it in the Quarries; though the other Species, the *Cordati*, *Discoides*, &c. or rather *Casts* of Stone formed in the Shells

of them, are Plenty enough; and yet I have never observed the Fishes themselves to be Natives here, nor have ever found their Shells in the Sandy-Bays, amongst the Numbers of others that are continually washed up by the Sea.

I will now take a little Breath, and renew your Trouble the first Opportunity.

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R XII.

S I R,

MINORCA, 2 December, 1741.

TH E S E People are not very solicitous to increase the Number of their Horses, as they are more tender and subject to Maladies than the Mules, and more chargeable in keeping. However, it is necessary to have a Number of Mares for the He-As, to keep up the Breed of Mules, which are the Beasts they principally rely on for Burthen, and for the Saddle. The Horses, like their Masters, have a certain Stateliness in their Gait, that promises more Proof than is in their

their Nature; for they are both arrant Jades at the Bottom: They are smaller than ours, and are oftener of a brown Bay than of any other Colour. As here are no Meadows, the Wretchedness of their Pasture, which consists chiefly of Weeds (for I do not remember that what we call Grass makes any Part of it) stands in Need of an additional Provision of chopped Straw and Barley, which are however dealt to them with no very liberal Hand.

The Mules are strong and hardy, and are so far from being nice or delicate in their Diet, that they make Shift with whatever comes in the Way, and generally keep in Flesh, if they are not over-worked. These Creatures, like other Monsters in Nature, never breed, though they mix freely, and that sometimes without Distinction of Sex. They are very sure-footed, but extremely vicious, with a Sagacity that is surprizing. I have known them take a Frolick of galloping with their Rider down a steep Hill; and their Restiveness has frequently brought them to the Brink of a dangerous Precipice. But their Cunning is not limited to these Tricks: They will edge to the roughest Part of the Road, to have an Excuse to go softly; or move to the Fence-Wall by Degrees, and entertain themselves with rubbing your Leg against the Stones; then if a Stirrup slips off, or the Bridle escapes from your Hand, they

quickly seize the Opportunity, and use a thousand Wiles to dismount you ; so that you are obliged to a constant Vigilance to be able to keep your Seat. May be you may think this is trifling, but give me Leave to assure you, I have been in every Circumstance of these ridiculous Distresses myself, and never was more serious in my Life *.

The Asses are likewise used in carrying Burthens, and are much rode by the *Spaniards*, as indeed they are by us, on our shorter Excursions, and Parties of Pleasure. It is no uncommon thing here to see a lusty Gentleman mounted on one of these Animals, almost covered with Furniture ; and the Frequency of the Sight has so far familiarized it to us, that we are no longer struck with the Ridicule which it presented us with on our Arrival in the Country.

Both the Mule and the Ass grow to a greater Size here than they generally do in *England*, and are very strong and hardy. The *Minorquins* slit up the Nostrils of their Asses, to give them more Air, and to ease them in their Respiration.

The Hire of a Mule for a Day is fixed at two *Reals*, or one Shilling ; that of an Ass at Nine Pence. From *Mabon* to *Ciudadella*,
a Mule

* *Pliny* mentions a Mule that lived eighty Years : Ours frequently live, and are useful, to thirty, and sometimes to thirty-five Years of Age.

a Mule Four Shillings, an Ass Three Shillings. We are allowed three Days to return the Beast, which if we exceed, we pay Nine Pence a Day for the Mule, and for the Ass Six Pence. Other Distances are regulated in Proportion to these. A Horse is lett at the same Rate as a Mule, and the Rider is obliged to find the Beast in Provender until he returns it.

Their Cow-Kind are smaller than our's. Their Flesh is commonly very lean, and such as would hardly escape being burned for Carrion, if it was exposed to Sale in an *English* Market. The Cows give little Milk, and the Butter these People make of it is extremely disagreeable to three of the Senses. But it is considerably excelled by their Cheese, on which the *Italians* set a high Value, preferring it to their own *Parmesan*.

The *Minorquins* do not geld their Cattle, but squeeze their Testicles when they have attained a certain Age; and this seems to be a *Moorish* Custom, which, among many others, they have retained; the *Mahometans*, (as Dr. *Shaw* observes) thinking it great Cruelty to castrate any other Creatures besides those of their own Species.

As the Pastures of different Proprietors are not always divided from each other by Fences, and a good deal of Confusion might be occasioned by their Cattle running together in common, they are marked every Year by

the Magistrates, in such a Manner, that every Farmer can easily distinguish his own. These Marks are certain Slits or Notches on one or both Ears, which they diversify into such a Variety, as to serve all the Land-Owners of a *Termino*.

Every Regiment has its particular Butcher, who once a Week applies to the Magistrates for an Order directed to some Farmer of the *Termino* to supply him with a Beast for the Use of the Regiment. If the Butcher cannot agree with the Farmer about the Price, the Farmer drives his Beast to the Shambles, and sees it slaughtered, and the Quarters weighed, when he receives ten *Dubleros* a long Pound for the Beef, and makes what he can of the Head, the Skin, and the Offal. The Quarter-master constantly attends at the Butchery, and calls a Roll of the Officers Names, according to which they are served in their Turns, after the Commanding Officer has taken what he has Occasion for.

Our Mutton is no better than our Beef; and I believe many of our Gentlemen regret the Flesh-Pots of *England* as much as the *Jews* of old did those of *Egypt*, and with at least equal Reason. There are seven Sheep killed every Week for the Officers of a Regiment, and now and then a Calf or a Lamb; and these, with the Bullock, make up the Sum of our Expectations from the Butchery; But we contrive to better our Commons, by
taking

taking Care to be constantly supplied with Fowls, wild and tame, Rabbits, and Fish, as they severally come in Season.

The Price of Beef is regulated by Authority at Four Pence the long Pound, of Mutton and Veal at Six Pence. It is a good Sheep here that weighs twelve long Pounds. Lamb is never sold by Weight ; the Quarter goes for a Shilling.

Notwithstanding what I have said of our Beef and Mutton, which is true in general ; I have sometimes eat as good Meat of both Kinds here as ever I wish for : And though it is less fat, and of a smaller Size, than what comes to your Table, yet it is exceeding juicy, and of a delicate Taste.

Here are great Numbers of Swine, that are turned into the Woods in Autumn, where they are quickly fattened by the vast Quantities of Acorns which the Peasants beat from the Ever-green Oaks for their Food. From hence they are housed, and when their Flesh has been duly hardened by a Barley-Diet, they are as good Pork as any in the World. Some of them are immoderately large and fat, and these are in the highest Esteem with the Natives, who salt them up for the Use of their Houses, and a small Quantity is sometimes exported. This Fondness of the *Minorquins* for fat Pork will appear the more preposterous to those that have observed their unconquerable Aversion for the fat Beef with which

which the Troops are victualled from *Ireland*. Their Sucking-Pigs are sold reasonably cheap, and are excellent Meat.

Of Goats we have many great Herds in the Island, but their Flesh seldom finds a Place at our Tables, except that of the Kid, which is very delicate.

We reckon *Minorca* to have at this Time between six and seven thousand great Cattle, sixty thousand Sheep, twenty thousand Goats, and four thousand Swine.

This Country breeds great Numbers of very good Rabbits, which harbour in the Thickets, and in the Crannies of the Rocks: But, as no Use is made of their Fur, the Skins bear no Price among us; *Minorca*, like most other hot Countries, affording no Furs of Value. We know that the Beaver of *Hudson's Bay* is of a superior Goodness to that of *Carolina*, and that such Sheep as are sent from *New-England* to *Jamaica*, soon grow hairy; so that I suppose in general, rich Furs may be looked upon as the Produce of cold Countries, the Author of Nature having provided a warmer Cloathing for such of his Creatures as his Providence thought fit to expose to the Rigours of a severe Climate.

I am aware of an Objection in Favour of the *Spanish* Wool, which is confessedly finer than that of the Countries that lie nearer the Pole. But this I could easily obviate by reminding you, that my Supposition related only
to

to Furs, and did not extend to Wool: But does not Dr. *Shaw* *, who lived many Years in *Barbary*, affirm the Sheep of the *Sabara* to have Fleeces as coarse and hairy as those of the Goats? For this the Doctor assigns a physical Cause, and thinks it may be occasioned by *the Heat of the Climate, the Scarcity of Water, and the Coarseness of the Herbs they feed upon.* *Pliny* says the same thing of the Wool of *Istria* and *Liburnia*, and of that of the Southern Parts of *France*: He adds, that the like hairy Wool is found in *Egypt*; and these are all hot Countries.

As to the remarkable Fineness of the *Spanish* Wool, it may be possibly owing to the delicate Pastures in the Neighbourhood of *Segovia*, every way agreeable to the Nature of the *English* Sheep settled there from *Cotswold*.

The Wool of the *Minorca* Sheep is of a middle Staple, neither very fine, nor so coarse as to be unfit for Use. A good deal of it is manufactured in the Island, and the Remainder is exported, and fetches a good Price abroad.

We have no Deer in *Minorca*, and Hares are likewise Strangers at present. Governor *Kane* indeed procured a few of the latter, and turned them loose; but two or three pleasant Gentlemen could not resist the Temptation of hunting and shooting them, and so the small Stock was quickly brought to nothing.

There

* Travels, p. 241.

There are many Hedge-Hogs, which the *Spaniards* make no Scruple to eat; but I have never heard of the Porcupine here, though it is very common in *Barbary*. The Land-Tortoise is far from being a Rarity; and its Eggs are very large for an Animal of that Size. The Number of our Lizards is scarcely to be conceived: One sees them basking in the Sun in every Cavity of the Fence-Walls throughout the whole Island. *Theophrastus* (says *Pliny*, *lib. viii. cap. 31.*) reports, that the Lizard casts the Skin, in the same manner as the Snake does, but immediately devours it. This great Philosopher took the vulgar Error upon Trust. He did not think it impossible that the Lizard might cast its Skin, and as he had never found the *Exuvia*, he gave too easy Credit to the rest of the Fable.

Every Morass and Pool has its Colony of Frogs, and their Note has been sometimes mistaken by Strangers for the Cry of the Wild-Duck.

The common Snake and the Viper are the only Kinds I have had an Opportunity of seeing here.

The *Scorpion* lurks among Heaps of Wood, and often comes into our Houses. These venomous Reptiles frequently do Mischief here. Their Method is to take fast Hold with their Crab-like Claws, and turn their Tail

is

is lodged) over their Head, with the sharp Point of which they make a Wound, and so mix their Venom with the Mass of Blood.

The *Centipedes* almost cover our white Walls by Candle-Light, and vanish again on the first Dawn of Day. Their Bite is accounted venomous, and the *Minorquins* take Care to be furnished with Oil of Olives in which these hateful Animals and Scorpions have been infused, and it never fails of the wished Success, when they apply it in Time. But some Experiments, made by the Viper-Catchers in *England* before the Royal Society, sufficiently shew, that the Virtue of this Specifick resides in the Oil, independent of the Animals that have been steeped in it.

We have many Spiders, some of which these People imagine to be poisonous; but I do not think the small black Spider, so frequently found in cleaning and picking our Sallads, to be the *Tarantula* (of which so many pleasant Things are reported by the Naturalists) though it is here looked upon to be such.

I now proceed to give you some Account of the Birds of this Country, a Tribe that will be soon dispatched, as we have but a few Species that have any thing extraordinary to entitle them to a particular Description.

Many Eagles breed in the craggy Hills on the North Side of the Island, building their Nests in Places inaccessible to Men. We frequently see them in the Country, as also the Vulture, whenever there happens to be a Carrion ;

tion; which does not tally exactly with the Opinion of some Authors, who declare the Eagle never eats the Flesh of any Animal that it has not killed itself. On such Occasions the Eagle and Vulture seem to agree perfectly well, and appear to exercise a Kind of Discipline, some of them being detached to certain Distances, where they keep Watch on rising Grounds, while the rest feed in Security. The Bird commonly called the Mount *Toro* Eagle is a Sort of Carrion-Crow, only of different Colour from ours, being mostly white, and somewhat larger.

We have several Species of Hawks, and so many Owls, that we are every where entertained with their Note all Night long.

*Seraque culminibus ferali carmine bubo
Visa queri, & longas in fletum ducere noctes.*

VIRG.

The Ass usually joins in the Melody, and, when the Moon is about the Full, the Dog likewise intrudes himself as a Performer in the Concert, *making Night hideous.*

Swallows and Martins are very numerous all the Summer long. Colonel *Des Puig*, now a Prisoner of War here, assured me, that a famous *Italian* Miniature-Painter, whom he knew at *Florence*, made Use of the small-pointed Feathers of the Martin's Wing as Pencils: I procured some of them, and found them to answer very well, where a fine Point is necessary.

We have great Plenty of the red-legged Partridge, a beautiful Bird, and very delicious
Meat,

Meat, from the Middle of *August*, until the Corn fails them, and they are obliged to eat wild Garlick, and the Berries of the *Lentiscus*, which give their Flesh a disagreeable Taste, though they are little spared on that Account. Neither do we want good Quails in the Season.

The Blackbird, Starling, Lark, Sparrow, and many other Kinds of small Birds, are as common here as in *England*, and equally good: The Thrush is an excellent Bird.

We frequently see the Wheat-Ear in this Country, but it is far inferior to that of the *Suffex Downs*.

The Wild-Pigeon breeds in the Caverns of the Rock all round the Island, and the young ones are deservedly much esteemed at our Tables. The Ring-Dove, both the brown and the white, we have common enough in the Woods. The *Minorquin* Peasants take the young ones from the Nest, and sell them to some of our Gentlemen, who like to keep them in Cages; but their continual Cooing is intolerable to some Ears.

We have Woodcock and Snipe in abundance, all Winter long; and Wild-Duck, Widgeon, and Teal, as good and as Plenty as any where.

As to the Bat, which some contend to be a Quadruped, while others labour to prove it is a Bird, as I think it certainly is, we have it in great Numbers. It has been long observed to be the only Bird that brings forth its Young alive, or suckles it, or that has Wings of thin
Skins,

Skins, without Feathers on them, and the Body covered with Hair. If it feeds on Gnats, as *Pliny* says, it is not likely to want Food in *Minorca*, where I think here should be a Law to forbid the Destruction of Bats.

For of all our Insects this *Musquita*, or Gnat, is the most troublesome, and if it were not for the Canopies of Gauze or Muslin, with which our Beds are constantly enclosed during the hot Months, it would be impossible to get a Moment's Rest.

We have a great many Butterflies, some of which are very beautiful. The Locust and Beetle are likewise frequent; but above all the Grasshopper, which grows to a large Size, and flies strongly a great Way, when it has been disturbed; its under Wings are of a beautiful red Colour, and it makes a great Noise in its Flight, as it constantly sings while it rests on the Ground. The Moths devour our Cloaths and Books, which it is impossible to secure from these pernicious Insects: The Ants ever get at our Honey and Sugar; and the Flies every Day mix themselves with our Potations.

You will, no doubt, observe that I have been silent in this Letter as to domestick Fowls; I shall speak of them, as well as of the Bees, in a future Trouble; wherefore I will here put an End to this, with assuring you, that I shall be all my Life,

S I R, Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R XIII.

S I R,

MINORCA, 18 Jan. 1741-42.

THE *Minorquins* are very great Bigots, and, of Course, strict Observers of the Fasts and Abstinence enjoined by the Church. The Sea that surrounds them teems with a Variety of Fish; and though these People are no great Adventurers, they yet take them in sufficient Quantities to supply their Markets all the Year round.

The *Dorada*, the same as the *Aurata* of *Rondeletius*, is an excellent Fish, and very common here: Its usual Size is from twelve to eighteen Inches in Length.

We have great Shoals of *Anchovies* on our Coast during the warm Months; but these People have not learned the Method of pickling them, nor are they any way inquisitive about it; though they have been told of the Advantages which accrue to their Neighbours from the vast Quantities of this delicious Fish, which they annually export.

The *Donzella* is the *Julis* of *Rondeletius*, and is an excellent Fish. It is frequent on our Shores at all Times of the Year.

The *Molio* (which I take to be the *Physis* of the same Author) is a common Fish, and,

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in my Opinion, is not surpassed in Delicacy by any other of the finny Tribe in the *Mediterranean*.

It is equal to the best Whitings of the *Ocean*, so far as I can trust my Palate, but of a larger Size: Like them too, it has the Stones in the Head, as Mr. *Ray* truly observes most of the squameous Fishes have.

I have found Stones in the Heads of a great Variety of the Scaly Tribes, though they are not to be discovered in the Herring, Pilchard, and Sprat, nor in the Mackarel, or the *Trachurus*, or Horse-Mackarel.

We have the Skate on our Coast in sufficient Plenty at all Times. It is remarkable, that this Animal protrudes its living young ones in square Bags, containing besides them a yellow Liquor.

The Skate commonly produces no more than two at a Time, each enclosed in its separate Bag. Of these Bags I have seen great Numbers on the Shore. They lie among the Sea-Weed, and much resemble it in Substance, as well as Colour.

The Plaife, Sole, Dab, and Flounder, are more rare; and it is great Pity these People do not catch more of them, since they are certainly as good as any in the World.

The Turbot is so seldom met with, that I know but of one that has been taken since my coming to the Island, and that was near *Ciudadella*.

Lampreys,

Lampreys, Congers, and more especially Eels, are very common here, and much esteemed.

The Fishermen frequently catch the *Hippocampus*, or Sea-Horse, in their Nets. This little Animal has a Fin behind the Head, that a good deal resembles a Horse's Mane: But it generally falls off in the drying.

The *Acus* of all Authors, or Sea-Pike, as our Soldiers call it, comes on our Coast in vast Shoals in the Autumn, and sometimes sooner.

This Fish is highly valued by the *Spaniards*, and is frequently brought to our Tables.

It eats somewhat like the Mackarel, and as we have not that Fish, that I know of, we are glad of this, which makes some little Amends for the Want of it.

Besides the above Names, it goes by several others in different Places; as, the Needle-Fish, the Gore-Bill, the Horn-Fish, the Gar-Fish, the Piper, &c.

But if we have not the Mackarel, we have the *Trachurus*, or Horse-Mackarel, in great Plenty all the hot Weather. The *Minorquins*, who have good Stomachs, and are not very nice in eating, are very fond of this coarse Fish, but we think it of a little Value.

We have none of the *Aselli*, or Cod-Kind, that frequent our Shores, so far as I have been able to learn: For I have never seen the se-

cond *Anthias* of *Rondeletius*, which Mr. *Willughbey* * says is a Species of this Kind.

The Salmon and Trout are not to be looked for in this Country, which is destitute of Rivers. But we have the Smelt in Plenty, which has the Violet-Smell, or rather the Cucumber-Smell, as some incline to think it.

The *Sardina* abounds on our Coast, during the warm Weather, and the Natives pickle a few of them.

Mr. *Willughbey* takes the *Sardina* to be a small Pilchard, † that of the *Ocean*, as this great Man will have it, growing to a larger Size than this of ours in the *Mediterranean* ever attains to.

He likewise thinks Sprats to be no other than young Herrings and Pilchards, in which last Opinion Mr. *Ray* agrees with him ‖.

Now, Sir, I bespeak your Candour to believe, that it is with the utmost Diffidence I venture to mention a Particular or two, which incline me to suspect, that these excellent Authors, whose successful Labours in Natural History can never be too much commended, are in an Error concerning the Sprat and the *Sardina*.

I hope it will be allowed, that the Herring and Pilchard arrive at their full Growth
before

* *Hist. Pisc. l. iv. cap. 27. sect. 1.* † *Ibid. l. iv. cap. 9. sect. 2.* ‖ *Ray's Letters, p. 261.*

before they breed; for Mr *Ray* himself says, in his Letter to Dr *Tancred Robinson*, of the 15th of *April*, 1692, that both these Fishes come to their *full Growth* in a Year's Time, and *then breed**.

Now if the Sprat is found to be full-roed, and its Roes are as large and turgid, in Proportion, as those of the Herring or Pilchard, and yet of not half their Length, which I have not known it to exceed, it may possibly be concluded that Sprats are a distinct Species of the *Harrengiformes*, and never can become Herrings or Pilchards.

And that Sprats *are* full-roed, at the usual Time of catching them, I have myself seen, with the naked Eye, a thousand Times, and could easily distinguish between the hard Roes and the soft ones.

Besides, as some few Herrings are now and then taken amongst the Sprats, and these are constantly observed to be shotten, as the Fishermen term it, that is, to have cast their Spawn; does not this shew us, that the Herring and the Sprat have different Seasons of spawning.

Then how are we to account for the Difference in their Size at that Time? If it be answered, that the Herrings are upwards of a Year old, and the Sprats but half a Year,

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this

* *Ray's Letters*, p. 261.

this corresponds but ill with the foregoing Observation, that Herrings and Pilchards *come to their full Growth, before they begin to breed.*

Again I would ask, whence comes it, that we never see Herrings and Pilchards of all the intermediate Sizes between theirs and that of the Sprat, as several chance Herrings are taken by the Fishermen on the Coast of *England*, in most Months of the Year, and particularly among the early Whitings in *April* and *May*, and among the Mackarel all the Season, and yet they are ever at their full Growth, or fall very little short of it?

I could add, if it were necessary, that all the Fishermen I have had an Opportunity of talking with, are clearly of Opinion, that Sprats are by no means young Herrings or Pilchards; and some of them have pointed out to me a real Difference in the Make of the Head.

Besides, if the Shoals of Sprats are young Herrings and Pilchards, how comes it to pass, that they herd together; whereas Pilchards and Herrings, though both of them gregarious, never mix at all; unless you will except a Straggler, now and then, as we find some among Whitings and Mackarel?

Then, as to the *Sardina*, do not the black Spots on the Sides, mentioned by Mr *Willughbey*, distinguish it from the Pilchard, which has no such Marks? Perhaps it may

not be amiss to mention another essential Difference that there is in the Shapes of both, the Pilchard being more flat and compressed, and a much broader Fish than the *Sardina*.

This is all that occurs to me on the Subject; and I will not be so vain to flatter myself, that I have established this Point of natural History on a new Basis; but leave it to you, to determine on the Subject, as you shall think fit: What I have said was with a View to your Satisfaction, and your Acceptance of it is my Reward.

The *Buferas* abound with Mulletts, that grow to great Bulk there, and are very good. Of the Roes of the Female Mullet, *Botargo* is made, being no other than the *Ova* salted and dried. This helps a decayed Appetite, and gives Relish to a Glass of Wine, and might be easily prepared and cured here, where the Fish is so plenty and cheap.

But the commonest Fishes we have are those our Soldiers call Rock-Fish, from their keeping near the rocky Shores in the several Harbours of *Minorca*.

Vast Quantities of them are daily brought to Market, and nothing can be more beautiful than their Colouring, being marked across their Bodies with very lively Stripes of Blue, Red, or Green. They seldom exceed eight or nine Inches in Length, and are sold for about Four-pence Halfpenny the long Pound.

The Cuttle Fish is not uncommon on our Shores, and its Bones, the *Os Sepia* of the Shops, are found in sufficient Plenty, for the Use of the Silver-smiths and Apothecaries.

I have often tried its Ink in Drawing, and find it to be a warm Colour, more beautiful than Bistre, and working freely and pleasantly with Water; in which Respect it is not surpassed by *Indian Ink* itself.

The Ink is contained in a Kind of Bladder, which being taken out of the Body, and washed, is then emptied into a Tea-Cup, where it soon dries, hardens, and cracks into several Pieces, which then are to be managed exactly as *Indian Ink* is.

This Use of the Cuttle Fish Ink was suggested to me, on seeing some of it spilt on the Deck of a Boat, as I trawled for Flat-Fish at *Spithead* in 1734, and I contrived to save a little to make the Experiment.

This Fish discharges its Ink when it is pursued, with which it tinctures the Water to so deep a Colour, that it easily escapes from its Enemy; as is observed by *Pliny*, in the xxixth Chapter of his ninth Book.

Its Beak is of a horny Substance, and the upper Part turns down on the lower, somewhat like that of a Parrot.

This Ink was well known to *Aristotle*, *Oppian*, *Horace*, and others among the Ancients; but I do not know that it was ever
used

used by them or the Moderns in Writing or Drawing.

Of the crustaceous Fishes, we have only one in Plenty, and that is the Sea Cray-Fish, which is deservedly esteemed here. The Lobster, the Crab, and the Shrimp, we sometimes have, but their Numbers are small.

The Soldier-Fish is common enough: The *French* call it *Bernard l'ermite*; but our *English* Name (which does not come from its red Colour, as some imagine) is certainly more expressive of the Nature of a Fish, which being possessed of no House of its own, is obliged once a Year, to hunt out for an empty Shell, as he out-grows the old one, and will maintain an obstinate Fight with any Competitor that pretends to dispute the Prize with him.

That Part of the Soldier which lies towards the Bottom of the Shell (which is generally of the *Buccinum*-Tribe) is only covered with a Membrane; but its Fore-Parts are crustaceous; so that possibly it ought to be ranked among the Semi-crustaceous Fishes, if the Naturalists have any such Distinction.

The most numerous of our Shell-Fish is undoubtedly the *Echinus*, or Sea-Urchin; the Sea-Egg of our Soldiers; for it sticks every where to the Rock, in such Plenty, that we are obliged to wear our Shoes as we go into the Water to swim, or to bathe ourselves,
or

or their Prickles would make miserable Work with our Feet.

Of these we have little Variety, only two Species of the *Echinus Ovarius*, that I have observed; one of them is sometimes more than three Inches in Diameter, very thick set round with small black Prickles; the other is smaller, but the Spines a good deal longer.

Among the Shells we find on our Shores, may be reckoned Limpits, Sea-Ears, *Tellinæ*, *Chamæ*, Scollops (with one Ear, and with two, both excessively beautiful, and of all Colours, but very small) Cockles, the Razor-Fish, Mussels, Purples, Whilks (a great many Species) *Neritæ*, *Con hæ Veneris*, and many more, which by the Varieties of their Species, and their different Colours, furnish out a Number of Cabinets here that are very well worth seeing.

The *Nautilus* is far from being scarce on our Coast, but it is so tender a Shell, that it is extremely difficult to avoid breaking it. Of large Conchs we have several Kinds: The *Spaniards* eat the Fish, and blow with the Shell, instead of a Horn (when they are at Work among the Rocks) to alarm the People, on their preparing to spring a Mine.

One Inducement to their using this Shell, and sometimes that of the great Whilks, arises from that Hatred they bear to the Sight and Name of a Horn; for they never
mention

mention it but in Anger, and then they curse with it, saying, *Cuerno*, as they would *Diablo*.

And now, Sir, I fear I shall bring my Credit with you into some Hazard, being to relate what is scarcely to be believed, and yet is an indubitable Fact; and that is of a certain Muffle (the *Pholas* of *Rondeletius*) that lies hid in the Rocks at the Bottom of *Mahon* Harbour, and in other Places about the Island.

To come at these *Datyls*, as the *Spaniards* call them, from *Dactylus* (Δάκτυλος) a Finger, to which they bear some remote Resemblance, a huge Stone is haled ashore with Ropes, and broke to Pieces with Iron Sledges, and then they appear lying in all Directions to the very Center of the Rock.

The Fish is contained in two similar Shells about the Bigness and Length of a Finger, little depressed, and of nearly the same Breadth from one End to the other.

I make no doubt but that the minute Bodies from which the *Datyls* have grown to this Bulk, were at first worked into the natural Cavities of the Rock, by the Force of the Water, which has conveyed the necessary Sustenance to them by the same Channels ever since.

Nay, the Salt-Water may, for aught I know, have formed those very Holes originally, and multiplied them by Degrees, so as
to

to receive such incredible Numbers of these testaceous Inhabitants.

Mr. *Lbwyd* affirms, in a Letter to Mr. *Ray*, that he has seen Stones containing *Pholades*, without any visible *Meatus*, from the Surface, or the other Holes; but some that I have examined, have a small *Meatus*, and, as *Rondeletius* justly remarks, it scarcely admits of a Needle to be thrust into it; yet this Chink must be large enough to give Entrance to the Fish's Food, or it could not live a Minute.

Mr. *Lbwyd* also says, "it is manifest from Experience, that the Spawn of Animals may insinuate itself into the Mass of Stone."

And indeed it is not more surprizing to find them here, than that Toads have been frequently found included within the most solid Marble, without either Cleft or Hole to be perceived, through which it was first admitted, and received Air and Nourishment, of which many Instances are to be found in Dr. *Plot's* Natural History of *Staffordshire*.

It is not to be supposed, that the *Datyls* we thus find in Stone have lived there from the General Deluge; neither can it be imagined they have propagated their Kind ever since; for in that Case, a huge Heap of their Shells must have remained, as Mr. *Lbwyd* long since observed on a like Occasion.

Our

Our *Datyls*, so far as I have observed, are ever found in the common Cantoan Stone, already described.

The *Datyl* is certainly the most delicious of all the Muffle-Kind, and the Expence is not great of procuring them.

Out of a Rock of about a Ton Weight, we got upwards of a Peck of them.

I never could discover the offensive Smell *Athenæus* imputes to the *Pholas*, as quoted by *Rondeletius*; but that they are very nourishing, I can easily grant him.

The *Nacar* is a very large Muffle, taken here in great Numbers. It is the *Pinna magna* of Authors, and extends from the *Cardo* to the Verge three Feet in Length; though some are not more than half this Size; and is there from sixteen to eighteen Inches broad.

The Inside is of the beautiful Complexion of Mother of Pearl, but it is rough, and in some Measure prickly without. It is worked by the *French* into Toys and Trinkets of a thousand Sorts.

Near the Joint is a Bunch of yellowish filky Matter, from four to ten Inches long, and when squeezed together, as thick as one's Finger.

This Silk, as I shall call it, is capable of being spun, and knitted into Stockings or Gloves, as it frequently has been out of Curiosity,

riosity, and Dr. *Shaw* supposes it to be the *Byffus* of the Ancients *.

Pliny † cites *Athenæus*, who affirms the *Nacar* to be the same as the *Pecten*; but he is certainly mistaken, for it is not a Scallop, but a Muffle.

We frequently find the empty Shells of the *Pinna parva* on our Shores, not exceeding half an Inch in Length; and they are generally rubbed in the Sand to the Appearance of Mother of Pearl on the Outside; that is, their rugged Crust is worn off by their having been long beat about in the Sand, by the Waves of the Sea.

The *Purpura*, from which the *Tyrian Dye* was procured, is very frequent about the Island; of which the History is well known. The Entrance of the Shell is well secured by an *Operculum*, or Lid, which adheres so firmly to the Fish, that it can protrude it at Pleasure, when it would search for Food, and draw it in again, upon the least Apprehension of Danger.

This Lid is of an Oval Figure, flat on the Side, by which it is made fast, and of a pale yellow Colour, but somewhat rounded on the upper Side, and when first taken out, of a florid Red.

Such of them as are picked up on the sandy Shores are faded to a dull Yellow.

On

* Travels, Excerpt. p. 51. † Nat. Hist. l. ix.

On the flat Side we see certain obscure Lines, turning spirally, and shewing how its Dimensions were enlarged, that it might continue to fit the Mouth of the Shell as it grew.

When broken, they are white within, and are of a testaceous Substance; it is no wonder then, that being *Alcalies*, they should move in *Acids*, from whence our People have given them the Name of *Creeping-Stones*.

We see *Opercula* in most other of the turbinated Shells, but they are in some, composed of very different Matter from these, but all that I have seen agreeing in the spiral Lines, which are deeper cut in some than in others.

Of the Sea-Star we have great Numbers, but little Variety. Of the common Sort, the first Species of *Rondeletius*, we have them of two, three, four, and five Rays; these last are the most frequent, from whence they are vulgarly called *Five-Fingers*. These Sea-Stars suck in a great Variety of the smaller Shell-Fish into their Maw. The Collectors of Shells sometimes find not fewer than fifty Shells in one Sea-Star, many of them very curious and beautiful.

But much more rare is the *Stella-Marina Arborescens*, which it has never been my Fortune to find entire; though, as I have already said *, I have seen many Fragments of it.

Of those Sea-Stars that have twelve or thirteen Rays, I have never seen any here, though they

* See Letter VII.

they are not unfrequently found on the Coast of *Kent* and *Suffex* in *England*.

These Stars are great Enemies to Oysters, and the other bivalve Shell-Fishes, getting into the Shells, and sucking them; and you know the Dredgers in the *Thames* are obliged to destroy them on this Account, or incur a severe Penalty, if they neglect it.

They are very quick of Motion, which they perform by extending their Rays, or Fingers, and then suddenly contracting them again.

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

LETTER

L E T T E R XIV.

S I R,

MINORCA, 9 Feb. 1741-42.

IT is of great Advantage to the Inhabitants of a warm Climate, to be well supplied with Vegetables, of which *Minorca* boasts a large Catalogue, as well for the Table, as for the Consideration of the Botanist. But I shall confine what I have to say on this Subject to the former Kind, many of which are of an exquisite Flavour, and coming to Maturity at different Seasons, furnish out great Plenty and Variety round the Year.

Wheat and Barley are the only Kind of Corn that these Islands sow, if you will not except a very inconsiderable Quantity of *Indian-Corn*, in the Neighbourhood of *Adaia*, and some few other Places.

Their Harvests are generally gathered by the Middle of *June*; and as the Corn ripens, a Number of Boys and Girls station themselves at the Edges of the Fields, and on the Tops of the Fence-walls, to fright away the small Birds with their Shouts and Cries.

This puts me in Mind of *Virgil's* Precept, in the first Book of the *Georgicks*,

Et seditu terrebis aves——

and was a Custom, I doubt not, among the
N *Roman*

Roman Farmers, from whom the antient *Minorquins* learned it.

They also use for the same Purpose a split Reed, which makes a horrid Rattling, as they shake it with their Hands.

Their more common Produce is six for one ; but nine for one is reckoned an extraordinary Crop. Their Corn is trod out in the Field ; the Beasts, that tread it out on the bare Rock, these People have so little Conscience as to muzzle, either out of Ignorance, or in Defiance of the positive Injunction to the Contrary in the Old Testament. They winnow their Corn likewise on the Spot, by tossing it up in the Wind, and store that and their Straw very carefully.

The *Minorquin* Farmers manure their Corn-grounds with whatever they have about their Habitations that can be applied to answer that End, in which the Dung and Litter of their domestick Animals, and the Sweepings of their Houses, make no small Part.

Straw is the only Fodder, and when it is chopt small, that, and a little Barley, are to the Horses, Mules, and Asses of *Minorca*, what Hay and Oats are to our Horses.

It is probable that Peas and Beans were introduced here by Governor *Kane*, though now they are sufficiently Plenty, and come in early in the Spring.

The *Spaniards* are still fond of their Garvançoës, and Lentils, which some of our Soldiers

diers have learned of them to eat; as they also use *Calabashes*, or Pumpions, and *Tomas* in their Soups, with Leeks, Onions, and Garlick, in Imitation of these People. The *French-Bean* abounds here in its Season, and is very good.

Their Turnips are hard and sticky, and therefore much inferior to ours, yet they are a grateful Article in the Composition of our Soups. Their Parsnips and Carrots are of a good kind.

The Collyflowers are extremely good, and continue in Season six or seven Months of the Year; and their Cabbages are the best I ever eat any where.

They have Plenty of these, as they likewise have of Spinage, Savoys, Coleworts, and several other Kinds, very cheap; of which our Soldiers eat great Quantities with their Salt-Beef.

Their Lettuce is of a bad Sort, but their Sallad is easily improved by a Mixture of Garden and Water-Cresses, young Radishes, and Chervil. In the Spring, Dandelion (which these People call *Camarojas*) is eaten by many; but its extream Bitterness was ever distasteful to me, though it is accounted very wholesome. I cannot commend their Artichoak; though the young Stalks, if boiled till they are tender, and carefully stripped, are of a delicate Flavour.

Their Celery is very good, as likewise is the Endive, and many of their Musk-Melons are excellent: But the Water-Melon, which comes in by the latter End of *June*, when the Weather is at the hottest, is so cooling, so juicy and delicious, that it cannot be sufficiently commended. It never surfeits in any Quantity; nay the *Spaniards* give it freely to their Children in Fevers, without the least Apprehension of its doing them Hurt: It continues to the Middle of *October*.

Egypt itself cannot boast of better Leeks, Onions and Garlick, than are produced here, in great Abundance; and indeed the Gardens furnish us liberally with many other useful Plants for our Tables, such as Thyme, Hyssop, Winter-Savoury, Marjoram, Marigold, Fennel, Sage, Parsley, Succory, Shallots, Sorrel, Beets, Radish, Horse-Radish, Mint, &c. The Cucumbers are excellent, and much larger than ours.

Of late a little Asparagus has been propagated here, which does not succeed so well as one could wish. Of the wild Kind, there is Plenty every where. What we eat are the young Shoots of a prickly Shrub of the Size of a Gooseberry-Bush. They require to be steeped all Night in Salt and Water, to take off their bitter Taste, and are then agreeable enough to the Palate. They are said to be dieuretick, and (in two or three Hours after we have eat them) constantly

put

put us in Mind of another Quality they likewise possess in common with the Garden-Asparagus.

Here is great Plenty of the *Guinea-Pepper*, the green Pods of which the *Minorquins* are excessively fond of. Of these a valuable Pickle is made. Such as they suffer to hang till the Seeds are ripe, acquire a red Colour, and being dried, and reduced to a fine Powder, are much used in their Cookery, and are well known to the World under the Name of *Cayan-Butter*.

Rosemary and Wormwood, grow wild on the rocky Hills, with a happy Variety of other Medicinal Plants, which however it is no Part of my Intention to enumerate in this Place.

Vast Quantities of Samphire grow on the Cliffs by the Sea-Side, some of which our People frequently pickle. It is larger and more luxuriant than that of *Dover-Cliff*, and at least equal to it in Flavour.

There is scarcely an old Wall in the Island that does not produce the Capre-Plant in great Abundance. The Capres are no other than the Buds of the Flower, gathered before they expand, and dried in the Shade: They are then put up in Pots, with Vinegar and a little Salt, and kept for Use.

The *Spaniards* usually sell them to us when they are thoroughly dried, and then we have nothing to do, but to add the Vinegar and

Salt; but sometimes our Officers Wives take the Trouble to go through the whole Process themselves; and when they manage them skilfully, and with the Care that is necessary, I think they are the best Capres in the World.

We are not to look for either Beauty or Regularity in the Gardens of these People, who only study to turn their Spot of Ground to the greatest Advantage.

Their Leeks, Onions, Carrots, and some other Kinds, they sow very thick in Beds, and afterwards transplant them to the Place where they are to remain until they come to Maturity.

Every Garden is provided with a Well, from whence the Beds are constantly watered every Evening, without which the young Plants must inevitably perish in the frequent Droughts of this Climate, which often continue three or four Months together.

Every Bed has a slender Mound about its Edge, to confine the Water which is let in, from the bordering Channel, to the Height of two or three Inches.

The Water is drawn out of the Well by the *Persian-Wheel*, as it is called simply, though the Engine really consists of two Wheels. I shall give you such a Description of it, as will, I flatter myself, give you a clear Idea of this useful Machine.

And

And I shall do this the more willingly, as it is the only Contrivance for raising Water that is in Use here, and the principal one all over the *Levant*; though the Authors, who have treated of these Parts, have contented themselves with barely mentioning it.

Over the Center of the Well is a Wheel, of about five Feet Diameter, vertically placed, and sustained by an Axis, which rests, at both Ends, on the Kirb.

Over this Wheel is a loose Band made of Myrtle-Twigs, and reaching a Foot or two below the Surface of the Water.

A competent Number of Earthen Pitchers, holding about three Pints a-piece, are fastened to the Band, by the narrow Neck, their Mouths all turned the same Way.

An Horizontal Wheel is fixed near this, in such Manner, that its Pinions, or Trundles, may fall in very exactly with the Coggs, or Pins of the vertical one. The Axis of this last rises to such a Height, that a long Pole, tenented into it at the Top, freely goes round, over the whole Work, without rubbing.

At the outward, or smaller, End of the Pole, a Cow, or an Ass, is yoked, and gives Motion to the Engine. As the Pitchers come to the Top, they empty themselves into a Stone-Trough, from whence the Water is conveyed by a Canal into a Cistern, which stands high enough for the Water to run freely to all Parts of the Garden.

The Water lies some Hours in the Cistern, exposed to the Rays of the Sun, by which a good deal of that Chilness is removed, which would be very prejudicial to the tender Plants; and I have known very skilful Gardeners in *England*, who, when their Pots were filled, set them for some Time in the Sun, for the same Reason.

Of Fruits, the first Place is due to the Grape, not only on Account of the Wine which is made of its Juice, but with respect also to the Grapes themselves, which come to ripen in *July*, and continue to be gathered from the Vine until the latter End of *October*.

Then a fresh Supply is taken from the Ceilings, of such Bunches as were hung up by the Stalk, as soon as they were ripe: These preserve themselves plump and juicy till the Spring, and then they are followed by the Grapes dried in the Sun, or Raisins.

Their Grapes are of several Kinds; the large round red, and the large round white Grape; the long red Grape, and the long white Grape; the small round Grape of both Colours; the small black Grape, in scattering Clusters; the white Muscadel Grape, and many others. All these are indifferently mingled together for the making of Wine.

We may form a Judgment of the Quantity of Grapes produced yearly in *Minorca*, by the Tithes, which amount to fourteen thousand *Quintals*, in the following Proportions.

Ciudadelle

Island of Minorca. 185

<i>Ciudadelle Termino</i> pays - -	2000 <i>Quintals</i>
<i>Mabon</i> - - - - -	6000
<i>Alaior</i> - - - - -	2000
<i>Mercadal and Feaerias</i> - -	4000
<hr style="width: 20%; margin: 0 auto;"/>	
Total - - - - -	14000

These Tithes are paid in Kind, and are one eleventh Part of the whole ; so that a Hundred and fifty four Thousand *Quintals*, are the annual Produce of the Island.

The Value of the Grapes, at seven *Reals* a *Quintal*, as they are usually sold, is Twenty six thousand nine hundred and fifty Pounds Sterling.

It is known by Experience that a *Quintal* of Grapes makes five *Quaotillos* of Wine ; and therefore if all this Quantity was sent to the Wine-Press, it would produce Eighteen thousand three hundred and thirty-three Hogsheds of Wine : But a great Deduction must be made for those Grapes that are eaten by the *Minorquins*, whether they are fresh gathered from the Vines, or such as they hang up in Houses, which they preserve by this Means plump and juicy till the Middle of *March* ; or lastly, those they dry and cure for Raisins. When proper Allowances have been made for the Grapes thus diverted from the Press, I think we may compute that there are made in this Island annually, one Year with another, Thirteen thousand Hogsheds of red Wine, which,

which, at thirty-five Shillings a Hogshead, are worth Twenty-two thousand seven hundred and fifty Pounds Sterling. The Wine made here in 1740, was, within a Trifle, agreeable to our Computation; a Year that produced a Vintage neither abundant nor defective.

But it is necessary I should apprize you in this Place, that the Natives every Year increase their Plantations of the Vine, and therefore the Quantity of Grapes will in all Probability, in a few Years, double that I have mentioned above, which shews only the present State of their Vineyards.

The *Spaniards* begin cutting their Grapes about the sixth of *September*, and as soon as they are all brought in, the Wine is begun to be made.

In *December* we taste the Wine, and mark what we like, appointing a Time when we propose to draw it off. If it turns Sour, in the mean while, we leave it.

The *Minorquins* are at Liberty to sell their Wine among themselves after *St. Martin's Day, N. S.* but they are forbid selling it to the *English* before *St. Thomas's Day, the twenty-first of December, N. S.* under the Penalty of ten *Dollars*.

We seldom begin to drink our new Wine before the Month of *April*, but the Soldiers have it retailed to them as soon as the above Regulation allows it.

There

There is but little White-Wine made here, though the Price might well tempt them to go more into it, being four Times as much as the Red-Wine goes at.

They usually boil it, and then it is of a disagreeable luscious Taste: But a Kind has been lately made in small Quantities at *Alaior*, that is little inferior to the best *French* White-Wines.

The Red-Wine of *Minorca* is not of the same Complexion and Flavour in all Parts of the Island. That of *Ciudadella* is good Wine, of a deeper red than the rest, and very strong.

That of *Mahon* is most esteemed, being of a beautiful Amethyst Colour, smooth in the Mouth, and of a sufficient Strength to preserve it in the Country for several Years, and to admit of its being sent to *England*.

But the *Alaior* Wine has certainly the best Flavour, and some of it approaches very near the Excellence of *Burgundy*, and is of the same Colour, But it wants much of the Strength of the other, and therefore it will not bear the Sea.

What they make in *Mercadal* and *Fererias*, is inferior to all the other Wines, except that which is produced from the old Vineyards belonging to the Fryars of *Mount-Toro*.

I have already said, we begin upon our new Wine in *April*, which is generally the Case; though some curious Gentlemen keep theirs to a greater Age, even three or four Years, and then hold it in great Esteem.

But

But I cannot think the Wine is hereby improved, as it becomes tawny, and loses a good deal of its Flavour, a Loss the *Minorca* Wine does not so well bear as those of the *French* Growth, which are more remarkable for a full Flavour.

I should think I trifled with you in observing, that a red and a white Grape, when the Skin is peeled off, are of the same Colour, if so great a Man as *Sir Francis Bacon* had not been of a contrary Opinion, and affirmed, that the red Grape was of the same Colour throughout. The Experiment is so easily made, that I will say no more on this Head.

The *Minorquins* are careful to manure their Vineyards in the best Manner they are able, and to defend their Grapes from the Wind, and secure them against Thieves, they surround the whole with a high Wall of loose Stones. They are very punctual in seizing the proper Times for pruning and dressing their Vines, and constantly keep the Ground about them free from Weeds, and destroy every Kind of Vermine by which their Vines might be hurt or the Fruit destroyed.

The Apricot of this Country is insipid and unwholesome; the Peaches are very bad: But I have eat some excellent Nectarines at a Vineyard near *Alaior*, where however they are produced in no great Quantities: Yet these few shew the Soil to be kindly enough
for

for the Nectarine; and as it is the only Stone-Fruit that arrives to any tolerable Perfection in this Country, it is Pity they do not increase it.

It may be thought superfluous to add to this Remark, that we have here no good Plumbs or Cherries: But it may not be impertinent to inform you of a Gum produced from a small red Plumb in great Plenty.

It is an Exfudation from the Fruit, and adheres to it in white transparent Grains; and I can assure you, from my own repeated Trials, that it is equal to the best Gum-*Ara-bick* for the Use of a Draughtsman: But the Gum that issues from the Branches of the Tree is vastly inferior to this.

The large black Fig, and the small white one, are both excellent, and so are many of the Pomgranates. The Mulberries and Almonds are very Plenty among us, and very excellent they are. The Almond Tree is an early Bearer, and its Bloom is extremely delightful to the Eyes, and perfumes the vernal Air with a Profusion of Sweets.

Though I do not know that we have the white Mulberry Tree in *Minorca*, yet as the red thrives well, there is no Doubt but the Soil is as suitable to the other.

It would therefore be extremely worth while to propagate it, and then the Silk-Worm would introduce among these People a very valuable Article of Commerce, so advantageously carried on in the Countries about them.

We

We have a few Walnuts, and a Chesnut-Tree or two, which hitherto have turned to little Account. But Hazel-Nuts and Filberds are not to be found here.

Dr. *Auchmutty* procured, some Years since, a few Gooseberry and Currant Trees, and planted them in his Vineyard near *Mabon*; where indeed they bear, but their Fruit continually degenerates both in Size and Taste.

There are several Palm-Trees here, but the People are ignorant of their proper Culture, and therefore they produce no Dates that ripen; so that as their Trunks, tho' very large, and of a considerable Length, are of no manner of Use, either as Timber, or for Fuel; they are planted meerly for Ornament, and make a pleasing Variety among the other Trees of their Gardens.

The red Mulberry arrives to great Perfection in this Climate. The Tree is large, and its thick-leaved Branches afford a comfortable and extensive Shade in hot Weather, as its Fruit affwages Thirst, and regales the Palate.

The Olive-Tree grows wild all over the Island, and generally bears very well; but either the Olives are not of the right Kind for Pickling, or the *Minorquins* are ignorant of the right Way of doing it; for those that they pickle, none but themselves can eat.

Neither do they attempt to make Oil from their Olives, alledging that their Country is so much exposed to the Northerly Winds,
that

that their Fruit is spoiled by them, and made unfit for the Press.

But this is not the only Instance of their covering their insuperable Indolence with idle Excuses, that have been a thousand Times exposed and refuted.

The Wood of the Olive-Tree is the best Fuel we have, and I have often seen the large Trunks split for the Fire, so beautifully veined and variegated, that they would have been highly Ornamental in the finest Works of a *London* Cabinet-Maker.

We have Lemons in great Plenty throughout the Year, except in *August* and *September*, when they are sometimes scarce, and sometimes wholly fail us, as they did in *August*, 1738: But for the most Part we are well supplied.

We have the *Seville* and the *China* Orange in Abundance; and during the Winter Months they are exceeding cheap. Here are also the *Burgamot*, and the *Citron*. I know but of one Lime-Tree, and that grows in the Gardens at *Santa-Gracia*, and bears very well.

I must not any longer defer acquainting you, that (the Vine excepted) the *Minorquins* never prune a Tree, thinking it irreligious in some Degree to presume to direct its Growth; and if you express your Wonder that they forbear this useful Practice, and inform them of the Advantages that attend it in other Countries,

Countries, their Answer is ever ready, *God knows best how a Tree should grow.*

The Quince and Medlar are very common here; of the former the *Spaniards* make a Marmalade, that they are very fond of.

The Prickly-Pear is observed in every Garden and Vineyard. The Natives make Fences of it, and increase it with very little Trouble. They only thrust a single Leaf half Way into the Earth, and it rarely fails to strike Root, and thrive.

They are fond of its Fruit, and reckon it wholesome; but its flat sweet Taste does not recommend it to a Place at our Tables, where we give the Preference to Fruits of the tarter Kind.

Mr. Ray thinks * the *Prickly-Pear*, or *Ficus Indica*, as he calls it, is not a Native of *Europe*, but originally an *American*; and Dr. Shaw † seems to think it a Foreigner in *Africa*, and says, the *Algerines* call the Fruit of the *Opuntia*, *Kermex Nassarah*, the Fig of the Christians, perhaps (says he) from being originally brought from *Europe*. The *Minorquins* call them *Figos Moriscas*, *Moorish* Figs.

The *Arbutus*, or Strawberry-Tree, deserves to be mentioned here, on Account of its Fruit, which the *Spaniards* feed upon, and esteem a Dainty, though we despise it for its luscious Taste.

It

* Letters, p. 160.

† Travels, p. 227.

It is the only Tree I know that bears a Fruit resembling that of a reptile Plant. This Tree produces a constant Succession of ripe Fruit round the Year, and at the same Time shews a pleasing Variety of green Fruit and Blossoms.

It is also a Native of the Western Parts of *Ireland*, from whence Lord *Edgcomb* procured some of the Plants for his Gardens at *Mount-Edgcomb*, where I once saw them; and tho' they thrive very well, they are far from attaining the Height and Luxuriance of those in *Minorca*.

The *Romans* called this Fruit *Unedo*, as it was of so bitter and unpleasant a Taste, that not above one could be eat at the same Time with Satisfaction, though it must be confessed, our *Spaniards* are not altogether so squeamish.

The Myrtle is a very common Shrub with us, and a very useful one to the Natives, who feed upon the Berries, and employ the young Tops in dying, and in tanning their Leather.

If our Tanners in *England* could fall into this Method, for some of their Leather at least, our best Oaks might be felled at the proper Season, and would be much more durable than they are; being cut down in Summer, when the Sap is up, purely for the Ease of stripping off the Bark.

Nor is this quite so chimerical as it may appear at first Sight to some, who do not know that the Myrtle is a Native of *Cornwall*; and as it grows there very plentifully, it might be easily propagated in *Devonshire*, and other Counties, so as to be produced, in the Course

of a few Years, in any Quantities that should be found necessary.

The Pine is common on the Mountains: The Olive likes a Plain: But the most flourishing Timber-tree is the Ever-green Oak. Of this there are large Woods in many Places; but those that prosper best grow about *Alaior*, and *St. Patrick's Well*.

The Ever-green Oak is a fruitful Bearer, and its Acorns have been sent into *England*, where the Tree flourishes. *Virgil* mentions the Acorns to have been the Food of the Swine in his Age, as I have already shewn they are at present the principal Nourishment, while they last, of the Hogs of our Island. The *Spaniards* share these Delicacies with their Swine, and laugh at us for not partaking the Regale.

The Elm is a Foreigner, yet a few of them thrive very well by the Harbour's Side, at the *Pratica-House*.

I have observed the White-Thorn in a Wood near *Alaior*, but it is not used in Fences, these People enclosing their Grounds wholly with Stone-Walls.

I will mention another Tree which I once saw in the *Termino* of *Mabon*, and which is not very Plenty here; I mean the Locust-Tree.

It is a tall spreading Tree, bears a vast Quantity of Pods, that resemble those of the largest *French-Beans*, and have their Seeds disposed in the same Manner.

The

The *Spaniards* feed upon these Pods as long as they continue, and they are of a sweet Taste that is far from disagreeable. The Fruit of this Tree some think to be the same that, with the Addition of Wild-Honey, supported St. *John* the Baptist for some Time in the Wilderness.

We have the Canary-Seed growing wild in many Parts of the Island. A few Oats are observed among the Wheat, but they have every Effect of a Weed here, as they were accounted by the Old *Romans*.

Steriles dominantur avenæ.

Mushrooms we have, and very good, after a Shower of Rain; and Morells are very common, tho' they are never brought into Use: We see them every where in our Walks in great Plenty.

Coral, Coralline, and a Variety of Submarine Plants, are to be seen on our Shores.

We have likewise great Numbers of Sponges on all our Coasts, which have been thrown up by the Sea.

The large ones are so coarse, as to be good for nothing; the small ones are very fine. I make no Doubt but very valuable ones might be found, if our Sea was well searched by these People, who are very good Divers.

Though I could add a great deal to what I have said of the Natural History of *Minorca*, yet as I set out with an Intention of confining myself to such Objects as were either curious,

or useful, I have kept pretty close within the Limits of my Plan; yet not so scrupulously, as to deny myself the alluring Pleasure of falling into occasional Trifles, as they occurred to my Imagination; a Liberty which would not fail of a severe Censure in a regular Work intended for the publick View; but which I hope may be very pardonable in a familiar Intercourse between Friends.

Neither have I any great Reason to be satisfied with the Method I have observed in ranging the Contents of this and my three former Letters; but the friendly Latitude you have indulged to me, and your partial Commendation of what you have received, have proved I fear but weak Incentives to an indolent Creature, ever fond of dispatching Things with as much Ease to himself as possible. But I am come to the End of my Paper, and must now conclude, with assuring you, that

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R

L E T T E R XV.

S I R,

MINORCA, 26 *March*, 1742.

TH E Inhabitants of this Island, who were so justly famous in Antiquity, for their Dexterity at the Sling, and their Bravery in War, are now sunk into a shameful Degeneracy and Indolence. Their antient Freedom has been long lost, and the very Spirit of Liberty seems at present to have no Existence among them, and their Courage is vanished with it; as if an enslaved People were of Opinion, they had nothing left that was worth fighting for.

There is nothing more certain than that the *Minorquins* were a brave People while they were engaged in continual War with the *Moors*; and what *Tacitus* says of the antient *Gauls*, * *Gallos in Bellis floruisse, accepimus, mox segnities cum otio intravit, amissa virtute, pariter ac libertate*, may with equal Justice be applied to them: For as a long War trains an unwarlike Nation to Military Exploits, so a profound Peace, with a total Disuse of Arms, in Proceſs of Time naturally dejects the Spirits of a People, and renders them supine and daſtardly.

They have lived long under a hard Government, and have Spirits broke to Servitude,

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tude,

* *In Vit. Agricol.*

tude, and Bodies inured to Labour. They are effectually subdued to a blind Obedience to those that are set over them, and seem chearful and contented under Poverty and Oppression; but their mean Natures are apt to be too much exalted by Prosperity and Power, which give them a Glimpse of greater Happiness than they are able to compass, and then they grow factious and malecontent.

They are naturally contentious, and carry small Quarrels to a great Height, entailing bitter Enmities on their Posterity; and as these often proceed from slight Provocations, it sometimes happens, that these Animosities subsist between Families, long after the Differences which occasioned them are forgot.

They are so suspicious of one another, that they think no Man can be in the Possession of Power, without using it to the Prejudice of his Neighbour; and therefore it is, that, tho' they pay a World of Respect to Persons in Office, they ever attend upon their Behaviour with a watchful and a jealous Eye.

These People make but few Improvements, adhering with great Strictness to the Customs of their Forefathers, from which they seldom deviate in any Thing.

They pay their Taxes chearfully; are extremely temperate in their Diet, eating but little Flesh, with great Quantities of Vegetables and Spices, and a great deal of Bread.

Garlick

Garlick and Onions are seldom omitted in their Cookery, which is very offensive and fordid on our first Acquaintance with it.

Their ordinary Drink is Water ; and a Dram of *Aguardiente*, to crown the whole, turns their Meal into a Feast.

A little foul Wine they drink at the Vintage, and such as turns sour upon their Hands; the rest goes to the *English*. *Sic vos non vobis mellificatis apes!*

Notwithstanding the Purity of their Air, and the Lightness of their Diet, they want much of the Briskness and Vivacity of the *French*; nor does their Wine exalt them much above the usual Level: And indeed it cannot be said to exhilarate the Spirits, like that of the Countries all about them, especially *France*; so that if they were to drink *French* Wine, and the *Frenchmen* theirs, they would both be better Company by the Exchange.

Though there are Schools in the Convents for the Instruction of Youth, yet the little they get there is soon lost again: And it may be truly said, that the Learning of these Seminaries consists in little more than the Acquisition of the *Latin* Tongue by Rote, without any Initiation into the Rudiments of the Sciences, which are unknown here, few having attained even a slight Smattering of the Mathematicks, or being well acquainted with the common Rules of Arithmetick.

The very Clergy, among whom Learning usually makes some Stand, before it utterly forsakes a Country, are pitifully ignorant and stupid, and have nothing to preserve them from Contempt, but the excessive Bigottry of the People.

There is scarce a Woman in the Country that writes or reads, which does not proceed from their Want of Capacity, but is the Consequence of the jealous Nature of the Men, who are not willing to furnish them with the Means of intriguing, to which the Heat of the Climate does not a little incline them, in which however they are extremely cautious and secret.

Their Lovers are very assiduous to gain their Affections, exposing themselves whole Nights under a Window; and, as *Shakespear* expresses it, *cooling the Air with Sighs*; and he is like to be most favoured, who gets a swingeing Cold, or breaks a Limb in these nocturnal Adventures. For the Ladies are well apprized, that the more Rigour they treat their Lover withal, the better is their Usage likely to be after Marriage.

But this Obsequiousness in the Lover is generally of short Duration; and the Marriage Ceremony is scarcely over, when the Husband throws off the Mask, and early exerts the Tyrant; whilst the poor Spouse insensibly sinks into a contemptible Household Drudge for Life.

The Housewifery of these Females lies in small Compass: They spin their Wool and Flax, of which their ordinary Dress principally

pally consists; make and mend the Linnen of the Family, and some of them weave a little Lace, for their own Wear, on extraordinary Occasions.

I did not intend the *Cavaliers*, when I mentioned the poor Fare of these Islanders: They live well in their Way, but are naturally abstemious and sober; some of them never drinking any Wine, though they all have it in their Houses.

They seldom make Entertainments, and are no great Visitors, preferring a Life of domestick Quiet and Retirement; and as this Privacy is suitable to the Oeconomy they are under a Necessity of observing, it is likewise more agreeable to their Disposition, as it favours their natural Taciturnity, and enables them to keep their Wives under a more constant Observation.

The Priests live well, and drink Wine freely, taking Care to be well provided with the best of the Growth of the Island. They make no Scruple to indulge themselves in the Conversation of the other Sex, and have every Opportunity they can wish for, in an unsuspected Access to the Houses of all their Neighbours. And yet they are much more upon their Guard to avoid Scandal, and preserve their Character, than the Monks are; whose Lives are such, as our History informs us, first opened the Eyes of our Countrymen, and made Way for the Reformation.

There

There is no Degree of Superstition into which these People have not been led. They pay large Contributions towards praying the Souls out of Purgatory; and many Times a devout Person gives a Hog, a Sheep, and even a Fowl, to be sold by Auction, and the Money applied to this pious Use.

The Priests and Fryars entertain them on Holy-Days with Spectacles, and sometimes with Comedies; making all the publick Diversions subservient to their Interests.

During the Carnival, the Ladies amuse themselves in throwing Oranges at their Lovers; and he who has received one of these on his Eye, or has a Tooth beat out by it, is convinced, from that Moment, that he is a high Favourite with the Fair-One, who has done him so much Honour. Sometimes a good Handful of Flour is thrown full in one's Eyes, which gives the utmost Satisfaction, and is a Favour that is quickly followed by others of a less trifling Nature.

The Carnival is a Season of outrageous Mirth and Jollity; both Men and Women allowing themselves a full Swing of Freedom, intermixed, however, with the Superstitions and Ceremonies of their Religion. And we well know, that the Holy-Days of the antient *Romans* were, like these Carnivals, a Mixture of Devotion and Debauchery.

All Day, Masses, Feasting, and Processions; all Night, hurrying from one Church to another; Balls, Maskings, and Intrigues.

This

This Time of Festivity is sacred to Pleasure, and it is sinful to exercise their Calling, until *Lent* arrives, with the two Curses of these People, Abstinence and Labour, in its Train.

Their Races are of several Kinds; Asses contend with Asses, Men with Men; and it is not unusual for a considerable Number of *Spaniards*, of every Degree, to mount their Horses, Mules and Asses, at the End of a Street (and these are generally narrow enough) some with Biddles, Saddles, and Furniture, others bare-backed; and starting all together, whip, spur, kick, drive, and shout, to the other End; where you may observe as much Earnestness and Anxiety in the Countenances of the Riders, and as much apparent Delight and Satisfaction in those of the Spectators, as ever you saw at the finest Match at *Newmarket*.

Running at the Ring is now much disused here, and even a Bull-baiting is a Rarity. I saw one; but the Bull wanted Spirit, though the Dogs were very contemptible Assailants; so that I was very little pleased until it was over.

During the Carnival, and all Winter long, they dance in their Houses; in Summer this Diversion is taken in the Street, by Torch-Light. Their Musick is the *Guittar*, on which most of the Men and Women play.

They dance in Couples, the Man exerting his whole Strength and Activity, while the Woman moves slow, and looks all the Time
on

on the Ground. And though the Performance be never so wretched, the Spectators never fail to cry out, *Long live the Dancers!* which they return with, *Long live the Lookers-on!* Sometimes the Man is desired to *say something to his Partner*, on which the Compliment is always this Question, *What would you have me say to her, but that she has the Face of a Rose?*

They have but few Tunes, and these are dull too; though not altogether unsuitable to the Measure of the Lady, whose Looks are not in the least affected by the Diversion; and I have often thought their Countenances had more of Solemnity and Mortification on these Occasions, than in the most serious Exercises of their Religion, that we Hereticks are allowed to be witnesses to.

It is observable, that they seldom practise those Diversions and Exercises in which the more warlike People of *Europe* delight. Their Sling is at present in little Use, except among the Shepherds, who are dextrous enough, in hitting a refractory Sheep, or Goat, at a great Distance.

Their hunting of Rabbits, with their Dogs, in the Woods, or taking them by Means of Ferrets, when they have refuged themselves in the Crannies of the Rocks, cannot so properly be called a Diversion, since the Motive is the Gain they make of their Flesh.

The few that shoot, follow it as a Trade, for which they are very well-paid, and they
certainly

certainly deserve to be well paid, for there are few better Marksmen in the World, as they rarely miss above once in fifteen or sixteen Times; if it happens any oftner, they cry they are bewitched, *jo sum bruxat*.

The Governor and the Commanding-Officers of the Regiments, have each one of these Fellows, under the Title of *Cassador*. He has no fixed Salary, but is paid for his Game, as he brings it in, at a regulated Price.

The Officers and the *Spanish Cavaliers* are under no Restraint, but may shoot Partridges from the Middle of *August*, when the young ones are able to fly, to the Middle of *February*, when they begin to pair, and lay their Eggs.

As for Birds of Passage, they are lawful Prey at all Times, and few Countries have them in greater Abundance.

The meaner Sort are disarmed all over the Island, which was done on very good Grounds many Years ago; and this has been attended with one incidental Advantage, that it has prevented the Destruction of the Game. The Gentlemen are permitted to wear Swords, and use Fire-Arms, as well for the Security of their Houses, as for their Diversion in the Field.

The Pointers of this Island have long been famous. They have good Noses, and are extremely staunch: The latter Quality may be owing in a great Measure to the rigorous Discipline of the *Cassador* that teaches them, which is savagely cruel and brutal.

But

But these Dogs are observed to want Speed, when they are sent into *England*, and therefore the Strain is usually crossed with our Spaniels; and this Mixture produces a Race of as good Pointers as any in *Europe*.

These Islanders are of a swarthy Complexion, more particularly the labouring Men, who are much exposed to the Sun: But many of the Women and Children are fair, having for the most Part regular Features, black Eyes and Hair, and very good Teeth.

When a Child happens to have grey Eyes, and fair, or red Hair, which sometimes is the Case, the Husband shrugs up his Shoulders, and suspects his Spouse of Infidelity; and it is certain the Women have a World of Vivacity, and love Money, which are powerful Incentives to an illicit Correspondence with the Officers of the Troops.

The Dress of the lower Rank of the Men consists of a loose short Coat, or Jacket, a Waistcoat, with a red worsted Girdle, going many Times round the Belly, or a broad Leather Belt; a coarse Shirt, a coloured Handkerchief about their Necks, a red Worsted Cap, a Pair of Breeches, reaching down almost to the Ankles, coarse Stockings, broad flat Shoes, with little or no Heel, made of white Leather, a flapped Hat and a Cloak.

The better Sort wear Wigs, cocked Hats, and Swords, and have their Cloaths cut in our Fashion, but generally black. When they

they are in Mourning, they draw a Case or Sheath of black Cloth over the Scabbard of their Sword, and this they think a sufficient Distinction.

The Women's common Dress is a close Waistcoat of black Stuff, opening wide at the Neck, and close buttoned at the Wrist, where the End of the Shift-Sleeve is commonly turned up. A Petticoat of coloured Stuff, or printed Linnen, comes over this, and is tied at the Waist.

The Petticoat is full-gathered, to make them seem large about the Hips, which they think becoming, and is made so short, as seldom to reach below the Middle of the Leg.

Their Stockings are of Worsted, red, blue, or green, with Clocks of other Colours; and their white Shoes have Heels moderately high, with red Tops, and are broad at the Toes, where they are pinked full of small Holes, which make them easy and cool, and are besides in their Opinion ornamental.

About the Head they wear a *Robazilla*, of white or printed Linnen, or of Silk, which is pinned close under the Chin, and falls about the Shoulders; and when it is blown open by the Wind, it shows the Neck, which has no other Covering, to great Advantage.

In putting on the *Robazilla*, they are ever careful to draw it close under the Chin, by which Contrivance their Cheeks are puffed out, which these meagre Ladies are very vain of;

of; Plumpness being valued by them, as most Things are apt to be, because it is so rarely seen among them.

They are ever perfectly straight and well-shaped, for they wear no Stays; those cursed Machines, which are such a Confinement to the Body, under the Notion of directing it in its Growth, serving only to warp and deform it.

The Dress of State is the black Veil, which turns over the Head from the Waist, but never wholly hides the Face.

Their Hair is gathered behind, and sometimes plaited, but more generally bound about with a coloured Ribband, and reaching down almost to the Heels among the Women of Condition, but much shorter as others wear them; they generally end in a small Curl. In their high Dress they seldom go without a Fan in one Hand, and a *Rosario* in the other.

The Opportunities these Females have of appearing in their Gaiety, are but few, and their Time is employed in domestick Affairs; so that, as the Fashion never varies, their best Cloaths descend to the third or fourth Generation, and we often see a Bride dressed out in the Wedding Garments of her great Grandmother.

They marry at thirteen or fourteen Years of Age, and sometimes earlier, and begin to break by the Time they are four or five and twenty.

When

When a Woman is saluted, she never curtesies, but gently bows the Head. It is the highest Affront to offer to kiss them, or even to touch their Hand, before Witnesses; and their usual Saying on such Occasion is, *Mira, y no tocas*; Look at me, but touch me not.

The very poorest of these People eat good brown Bread, made of Wheat, which is their principal Nourishment; and lie in tolerable Beds, the Sheets of which they frequently shift; so that we are not shocked here with that squalid Poverty and Wretchedness, which display themselves in the Houses of the Poor in other Countries, and even in *England*, remote from the Capital.

They take a Pride in keeping their House and Utensils clean; though we are apt to tax them with Filthiness, on Account of the noisome Smells that strike the Sense, when we enter their Dwellings, which really are not to be imputed to a Want of Cleanliness in the Women, but to the nasty Oil they burn in their Lamps, and the Garlick they use in their Cookery.

The Furniture of the Kitchen is mostly of Earthen Ware, few having a Copper-Kettle, or Pewter-Dish in their Possession. The *Ollas*, or Pots in which they stew their Victuals, though they are very light and thin, yet bear the Fire well.

They have no Jacks, and bake their Meat oftner than they roast it. They generally put

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Almonds

Almonds into the bellies of their Pigs, Geese, and Turkeys; but such Dishes rarely make their Appearance, except at Christenings or Weddings.

A Mefs of Oil, Water and Bread, with Pepper and Garlick stewed together, often dines the whole Family; and their favourite Dish is an *Olia*, which is at present well known in the most elegant of the *London Taverns*.

These People rise early, breakfast on a Piece of Bread, and a Bunch of Grapes, or Raisins, according to the Season, take a Draught of Water, and so to work.

They dine at Noon, sup betimes, sit some Hours at the Door in Summer, or by the Fire in Winter, smook a good many Pipes, and so to Bed.

They are indeed great Smokers universally, and not very nice, either in their Tobacco, or their Pipes; the latter serving as long as they can be kept from Accidents.

These Pipes consist of a Bole (which they import) made of Clay, into which they fix a Reed, and have a Mouth-Piece of Horn, and sometimes of Silver, at the other End.

Their Fuel is altogether Wood, either the Trunks and Branches of Trees, or their Roots; of which the Olive is by much the most chearful and durable. It is delivered in to the Buyer at Three-pence or Four-pence the *Quintal*.

This

This Island was formerly much more populous than it is at present, vast Numbers of its Inhabitants having been killed, or carried away into Captivity by the *Moors*.

Some Share they also had in planting the *American Colonies*; and then if we compute the Numbers that are put into Convents, and lead a Life of Celibacy; the Ravage made by the Small-Pox every now and then, and the Practice of the Women in suckling their Children for two Years together, that they may not be starved by a numerous Progeny: I say, if we revolve these Circumstances, and add, that *Minorca* is a barren Country, and receives no Reinforcement of People from abroad, we are not to wonder, if, in its present Condition, the Number of its Inhabitants is vastly diminished from what it has been.

And this may serve to explain what I have had Occasion to say in the Course of this Correspondence, of the Resistance which King *Alphonso* met with from the *Moors*, when he atchieved the Conquest of the Island.

The *Moors* indeed, besides the Numbers of their Countrymen that resorted to these Islands from various Motives, had another Advantage over the *Christians*, that beyond all others, tended most to the peopling of the Countries they possessed; I mean a Plurality of Wives, which will ever keep them up a numerous Race of Men.

In their religious Ceremonies, the *Minorquins* differ little from the *French* and *Spaniards*; only as they are secluded, by their Situation, from the rest of the World, their Notions are contracted, and their Minds more subject to be wrought upon and moulded by the Priests; by whom they are absolutely governed, and who may be truly said to be their temporal, as well as their spiritual Guides.

There is one Thing remarkable in their Funerals, which I cannot pass by, without mentioning it to you.

The *Minorquins* have so great a Reverence for the Fryar's Habit, that it is very common for them to be carried in that Disguise to the Grave.

I have seen an old Woman placed on a Bier, dressed like a *Franciscan* Monk, and so conducted by the good Brothers of that Order, with singing, and the tinkling of the Hand-Bell, to their Church.

This Superstition was observed by *Milton*, in his Travels through the *Roman-Catholick* Countries; for when he is describing the *Paradise of Fools*, he does not forget to mention those,

—Who to be sure of *Paradise*,
Dying, put on the *Weeds* of *Dominick*,
Or in *Franciscan* think to pass disguis'd.

Paradise Lost, l. 3.

The

The Funeral Proceſſion ends at the Church, and there the Body is ſet down before the High Altar, and the Company is diſmiſſed.

At Night it is thrown into the Vault, with ſome Lime; and as theſe temporary Repositories come by Degrees to be filled, the Bones are occaſionally taken out, and interred in Places ſet apart in every Town for that Purpoſe.

And now I am not without Hopes that I have kept my Word, and made you acquainted with the Natives of the *Island of Minorca*; but it may ſtill be a Queſtion whether you are obliged to me for the Trouble I have taken.

Allow me however to tell you, that though there are many Nations in *Europe*, whoſe Character is more intereſting, whoſe Affairs are more important, and whoſe Virtues are more conſpicuous; I am far from regretting the Time I have ſpent, in withdrawing the Veil, that has ſo long hid theſe Islanders from the Obſervation of their Neighbours, and continued them, though they make a Part of our *British* Dominions, as utter Strangers to the good People of *England*, as the Hunters of *Æthiopia*, or the Artificers of *Japan*.

We reckon the *Minorquins* to be Fifteen Thouſand Males (whereof, at leaſt, one Fifth, or Three Thouſand, are of a proper Age for fighting Men) and Twelve Thouſand Females; in all Twenty Seven Thouſand Souls.

I cannot conclude your present Trouble, without mentioning, that there are not in Nature, according to Sir *William Petty's* Calculations, any more than One in Five Hundred, that are so far crippled, or deformed, as not to be in a Condition to get their Bread.

The Felicity of the *Minorquins* is in this Respect very remarkable; for here are so few that labour under this Incapacity, that, I dare say, we have scarcely thirty Persons in the Island, who have not the full Enjoyment of their Strength of Body, and Faculties of Mind, at least, so far as to get their Bread in an honest Industry, without depending on the Benevolence of others for their Support.

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

L E T T E R.

L E T T E R XVI.

S I R,

MINORCA, 4 April, 1742.

THE Method I laid down on my undertaking this Task, requires that I should give you some Idea of the *Antiquities* that are observable in this Island, which naturally range themselves under the three following Heads. I. Such as are the Remains of the earliest Times. II. Those that carry evident Marks of a *Roman* Original; and, III. Such as are only to be ascribed to the *Moors*.

Of these, The first Place is certainly due to what the Natives call *Altars de ces Gentils* (the *Altars of the Gentiles*) and we *Heathen-Altars*.

To enable you to form a right Judgment of these Works, I shall first describe a remarkable one, which I lately visited, and which stands about two Miles to the Eastward of *Alaior*, and then acquaint you with my Thoughts on the Subject.

It is seated on an Eminence, and is enclosed by a Fence of large flat Stones, set on their Ends close together, and forming a circular Plan of about 200 Yards Diameter.

In the Center of this Enclosure is a huge Mass of great rough Stones piled on each

other, without Mortar, in the Figure of a Cone, being about 30 Yards in Diameter, and very near as many in Height.

It has a Cavity at the Base, the Entrance of which is to the South, and easily admits of a Man to enter it, though not without stooping; but as I was assured before-hand, that nothing curious was to be discovered there, I did not provide myself with Lights to enable me to view it.

There is a Way near three Feet broad, contrived on the Outside of the Pile, by which we ascend with a great deal of Ease in a spiral Line to the Top, where was a flat Area, capable of receiving our whole Company, being Six in Number, at the same Time. From hence we had a noble Prospect of the Sea to the Southward, and an extensive View over the Country, which Way soever we turned ourselves.

Within the Enclosure, at some Distance from the massy Pile I have just described, are two Stones, the one set on Edge in the Ground, and the other placed horizontally, and resting on the upper Edge of the first.

I measured the upper Stone, and found it to be sixteen Feet long, seven broad, and twenty Inches thick: The Dimensions of the other differed but little from this, I mean the Breadth and Thickness; for I could not come to measure the Height, as great Part of it was buried in the Earth.

They

They were both corroded by the Salts, with which the Air of this Country is impregnated, into a good deal of Irregularity, and no Traces of the Chiffel remained on either, to give me Room to think that they had ever had any Inscription, or other Sculpture, bestowed on them.

From the Description I have given you, I know you will conclude, that these two Stones together compose what was properly the *Heathen-Altar*, to which Use their Figure and Situation were perfectly well adapted.

The flat Stone was proper for offering the Sacrifice on, only, as it stood between eleven and twelve Feet above the Level of the Ground, it was of an inconvenient Height for the Priest to attend on the Circumstances of the holy Ceremony: Wherefore I suppose he made Use of something to exalt himself on, as a Ladder, Scaffold, or the like; for the regular Position of the Stones at the Foot of the great Stone that supports the Altar, evinces that Part to have remained as it was at first finished.

You may then reasonably ask, to what Purpose were those stupendous Piles of great Stones raised, and why are they constantly found in the Neighbourhood of the *Altars*.

Diodorus Siculus informs us, that the *Balearians* heaped Stones over the Graves of their Dead: But as we have no great Number of these Monuments in the Island, I suppose

pose we are to understand, that this Honour was done to the Remains of some eminent Personages among the Natives, and not that they were ever the common Burying Places; for his Words plainly signify, that the Bodies were first interred, and the Stones piled up afterwards. So that I make no Doubt, but if these Places were opened, and carefully searched, we should find human Bones in all of them, as they are occasionally discovered in the *Barrows* all over *England*.

And thus, these Heaps served as a Kind of mute Histories, before the Invention of Letters, to perpetuate the Memory of eminent Persons; and the Songs of the People, that were transmitted from Father to Son, may be considered as so many Comments on them.

But though I think it is plain, that these Piles were erected as Monuments, over the Graves of such of their Countrymen, as the ancient Inhabitants of *Minorca*, were desirous of distinguishing, on Account of the Services, they had rendered to the Publick; yet it is obvious, from several Circumstances, that they had a secondary View in the Labour and Expence which they bestowed on them.

They are ever seated on an Eminence, and so dispersed, that from each of them others are discerned at proper Distances throughout the Country; from whence I have been apt to suspect, that these Repositories of the illustrious Dead were made to contribute to
the

the Safety and Preservation of the Living, and that they were used by the old Inhabitants as *Speculæ*, or *Watch-Mounts*, to discover the Approaches of an Enemy at a Distance, and by proper Signals to warn the Natives of their impending Danger; by which means they had Leisure to consider whether they were strong enough to encounter the Invader in the Field, or to provide for their Safety by retiring with their Families into the *Criptæ*, or Caves, cut every where in the solid Rock, in great Numbers, all over the Island.

One Circumstance gives Force to this Opinion; the Natives at this Day calling them *Athalaias*, a Name that can only belong to them, on Account of their serving as *Speculæ*.

If you reflect on the Situation of this Island, and the different Nations whose Yoke it wore at different Periods of Time, you will make no Difficulty to allow, that the Inhabitants lived in continual Terrors and Alarms; and what was more natural for a People so exposed, who were jealous of their Liberty from having been often conquered, and who lived among enterprizing Neighbours (who received no Law but from their Ambition) than to think of the most probable Means of gaining Time to deliberate how they were to repulse, or how they were
to

to avoid the Attacks to which they were continually exposed?

This was the Case of the old Inhabitants of *Minorca*, and these Structures were of the utmost Advantage to them, in propagating the Alarm, on every Occasion, all over the inland Parts of the Country.

The commodious Way by which they were so easily ascended on the Out-side, is a strong Argument in Favour of this Opinion, and the Cavity below might serve to shelter the Persons who were destined to look out, on every sudden Change of Weather to which this Climate is subject.

There was a great deal of Propriety in placing the *Altars* near these *Speculae*, as I take the Liberty to call them; for the holy Persons who were set apart for appeasing the Wrath of the offended Deity by Sacrifices and Oblations, could pitch upon no Spot so suitable to their Purpose as that from whence their Danger was discovered; and their Incense was wafted to Heaven, with purer Vows, and their Prayers preferred with unusual Fervency, whilst the Enemy was in Sight.

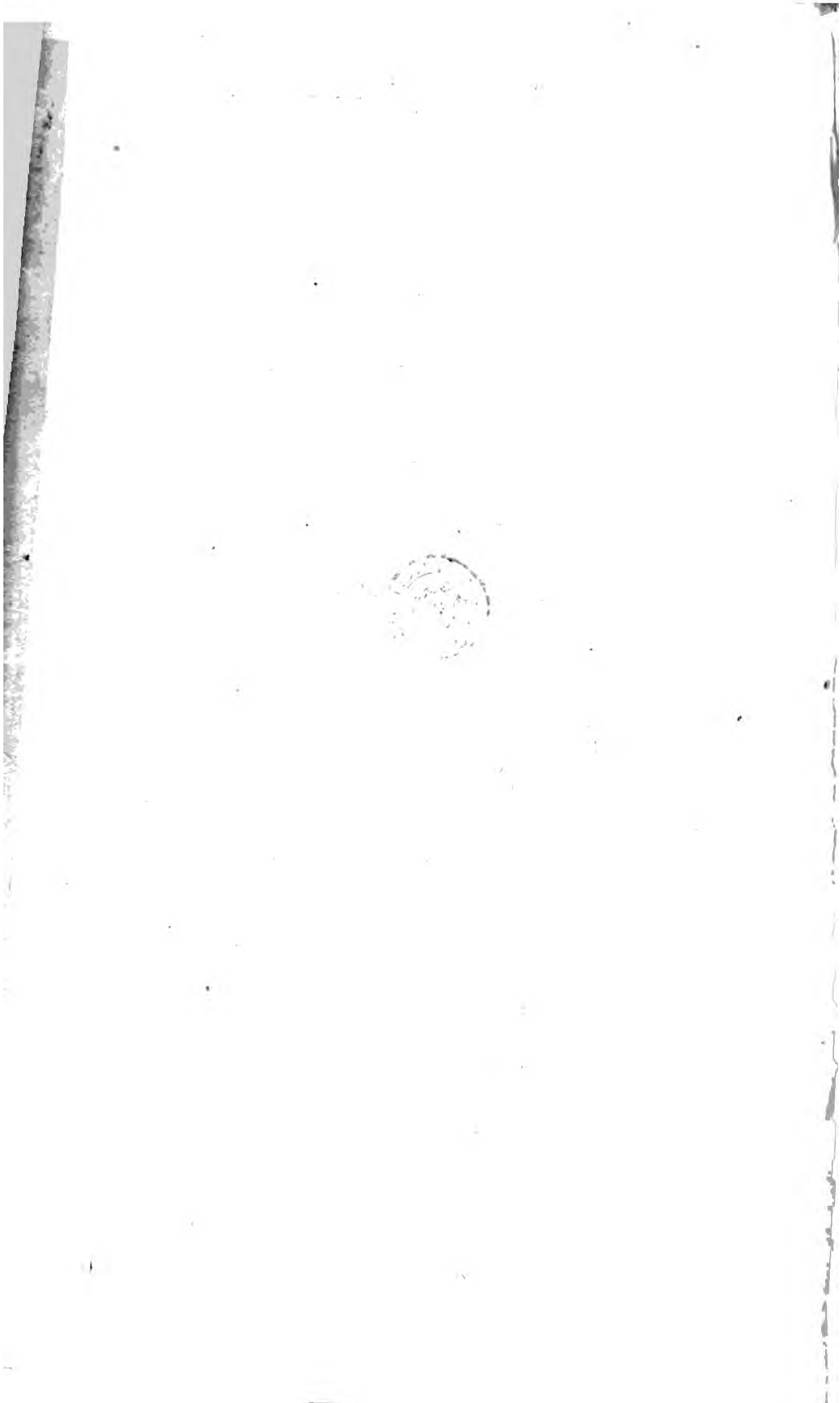
As I suppose the whole Area to have been set apart for religious Uses, the Fence of upright Stones served to secure it from the unhallowed Tread of Man and Beast.

Having satisfied myself, at least, however it may fare with you, concerning the Design
of



J. Vivares Sculp.

... as they
Minorca?



of erecting these Monuments of Antiquity, I now proceed to give you the best Lights I am capable of furnishing, to enable you to judge who were their Founders.

In the early Ages of the World, Religion was incumbered with but few Ceremonies; Sacrifices were offered to the Divinity of the most precious Things that were to be had on the Place, to deprecate his Wrath, and implore his Protection.

The *Altars* were rude and unadorned, being only composed of such Materials as were next at Hand, whether Earth or Stone, and were erected on a rising Ground.

The *Celtick* Druids erected vast Numbers of these *Altars* wherever they came, and many of them are still subsisting in the Highlands of *Scotland*, in *Ireland*, and in the Island of *Anglesey*.

Mr. *Rowlands* * is so particular in the Account he gives of those last (which he calls *Crom-lech*) that I can make no Doubt, but these of ours are indebted for their Original to the same Nation, though it is probable they are of still greater Antiquity, than those he speaks of, as the *Celts* had overspread these Islands long before they reached that remote Part of *Britain*, and yet he seems to refer this last to the third or fourth Generation after *Noah*:

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* *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*, Sect. VII. p. 45, 46, 47.

What the same Author says * of the lesser *Carnedde*, in the Isle of *Anglesey*, agrees so well in the descriptive Part with what I have told you of the conical Heaps of Stone, that I shall chuse to refer you to his learned Book, rather than run my Letter to an unnecessary Length, by transcribing from thence what you can so readily come at.

As to what Mr. *Rowlands* says of the greater *Carnedde*, I shall leave it to you to judge of it as you please; only I must put you in Mind that we have none of the standing Pillars near them in this Island, so far as I have been able to learn. And thus much of the *Heathen Altars*.

On looking diligently about me not long ago, in the Neighbourhood of one of these *Heathen Altars*, I chanced to find an *Earthen Bead*, of near an Inch in Length, with a Hole through it, and three Quarters of an Inch in Diameter: It is rude in its Make, and of a yellowish Clay, that does not appear ever to have been glazed; and was probably an *Amulet* of the *Celtick* Druids, as one is apt to suspect, not only on Account of the Place in which I discovered it, but its near Resemblance to the Bodies described under that Name by Mr. *Lbwyd* in the Additions to *Cambden*, and by Mr. *Morton*, in his History of *Northamptonshire*, Chap. 10.

I have

* *Mona Antiqua Restaurata*, Sect. VII. p. 48.

I have already had Occasion to take Notice of the great Numbers of *Caves (Covas)* that are to be found in *Minorca*, which are either such as are natural, as *Cova Perella*, (described in my Letter of 28 March, 1741) and several others; or II. Such as have been made by the Waves of the Sea in tempestuous Weather, and are very frequent on the Shores of the Island; or III. Such as were scooped out of the solid Rock, by the Labour of the Natives, in very remote Times.

These last are by far the most numerous, and are capable of containing all the Inhabitants of the Country upon Occasion: To these therefore I shall confine what I have to say on this Subject, the other Kinds not coming regularly to be considered in this Place, as they do not make a Part of the Antiquities of *Minorca*.

Kircher, in his *Mundus subterraneus*, acquaints us, that several *Maltese* Families did in his Time inhabit the *Criptæ* in the Rocks of that Island; and affirms the same Thing of the *Italians* in the Neighbourhood of *Viterbo*, in *Etruria*; and *Dr. Shaw* says, many of the *Moors* of *Barbary* live in *Mattamores*.

That these *Caves* of ours differ little from the subterraneous Habitations mentioned by those learned Writers, can admit of no Dispute; wherefore I make no Difficulty to conclude, that they were originally contrived
with

with the same Design, and applied for many Ages to the same Use, as some of them are still actually inhabited by the poorest of these People.

When in Process of Time the *Minorquins* were civilized by the polite Nations that had conquered them, it is probable, that in Imitation of their Masters, they built them convenient Houses, calculated in the best manner to shelter them from the Inclemencies of the Weather.

But I do not conceive that the Use of the *Caves* ceased on the Erection of Houses; for there is Room to imagine, they served the Natives as a Retreat for a long Time after, and a Place of Security for their Women and Children, their Cattle, and the most precious of their Moveables, on any extraordinary Alarm, where they were safely concealed until the Danger was over.

And we learn from *Dameto's* History of the *Balearick* Kingdom, that the *Moors*, a little before their final Expulsion from *Majorca*, not only drew vast Advantage from them in this Kind, but were enabled to make a noble Defence against the victorious Arms of the Conqueror, and to cut off great Numbers of his Men, before they could be totally reduced.

Frequent is the Mention of *Caves* in the Sacred Writings, which were put to this twofold Use, and served the People for Places
of

of Retreat in the Hour of Danger, as well as Numbers of them were their ordinary Habitations; and I am apt to think there is scarcely a Country in the World, where they are practicable, that has not some of them remaining at this Day; a Consideration that will excuse my passing to the next General Head of Antiquities, *viz.* Such as carry evident Marks of a *Roman* Original.

It may seem a little odd at first, that we find no Traces of a *Roman* Road in this Island, though it continued in Subjection to that People from the Conquest of *Quintus Cecilius Metellus*, 121 Years before the Birth of *Christ*, to the Year 421, of the *Christian Æra*, when it was subdued by the *Vandals* under their King *Gunderick*.

The *Balearick* Navy that was defeated by *Metellus*, was so considerable, according to *L. Florus*, *lib. iii. cap. 8.* that in Hopes of Booty, it ventured to attack that of the *Romans*, and rushed on them with such a Shower of Stones, discharged from Slings, as at first greatly terrified the Enemy: But being at length over-powered, they were obliged to retire, and yield the Victory to *Metellus*, who was honoured with a Triumph, and the Surname of *Balearicus*, for this important Service.

It is probable, that the *Romans* took Care to secure their Conquest, by keeping up a Power at Sea that was more than sufficient to

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cope

cope with any of their Rivals in the *Mediterranean*.

What I mean by all this, is to let you understand what I take to be the Reason why the *Romans* made no Military Ways, for an easy Communication between their Towns of *Ciudadella* and *Mabon*.

Whilst they were Masters at Sea, their Fleet easily transported their Troops on every Exigence from one Place to another; and in the Summer Time, the Season for Action, the Passage was expeditious, and by no means dangerous.

Neither was there any Hazard in a Winter's Expedition, proportionable to that an Enemy was exposed to, since the Islanders were acquainted with the Coast, and had nothing to apprehend, if they should be obliged, by the Fury of sudden Flaws and Tempests, to put into any of the numerous Creeks and Bays with which it abounds.

Besides, if it was at any Time necessary to raise the Country, the Farmers were no where above four Hours easy March from the Sea, nor more than eight Hours from *Mabon* or *Ciudadella*, even as we may suppose the Roads to have been at that Time.

When in the Decline of the Empire, the *Romans* neglected their Navy, the *Vandals* made an easy Conquest of *Minorca*; and possibly no Island will ever be capable of holding

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ing out long against the Attacks of an Enemy that is superior at Sea.

As there were no *Roman Roads* in *Minorca*, neither were there any Camps, of which the smallest *Vestigia* have fallen under my Observation. And it is probable, that the Bulk of the *Roman* Soldiery were kept in the great Towns, and the Remainder dispersed, for the Cultivation of the Earth, in the several Villages and Farms about the Country.

As to *Roman Buildings*, I do not think it possible to fix on any one Structure in the Island, and prove it to have been the Workmanship of that People. The Truth is, the Freestone of this Country, for it does not appear that they opened any Quarries of Marble here, is subject to be corroded by the Salts of the Air, and wants much of the Solidity that is necessary to enable it to stand so many Ages ;

—*Non lapides quoque vinci cernis ab aevo ;
Non altas turres ruere, et putrescere saxa ?*

LUCRET. l. v.

It is not likely that the *Romans* ever prepared Bricks here, as we never find the Remains of any, and we may presume, that the old Buildings, going by Degrees to Decay, were pulled down, as there was Occasion, and others built in their Place, in Conformity to the Taste of the Age.

We may observe in general of the Churches, that none of them seem to be of Antiquity enough to have been the Temples of the *Roman* Gods; besides, the Columns and Pilasters (when there are any) with which they are adorned, are much corrupted from the Purity of the *Roman* Architecture, and give sufficient Testimony of a more modern *Saracen* Admixture, especially in the Foliage of their Capitals.

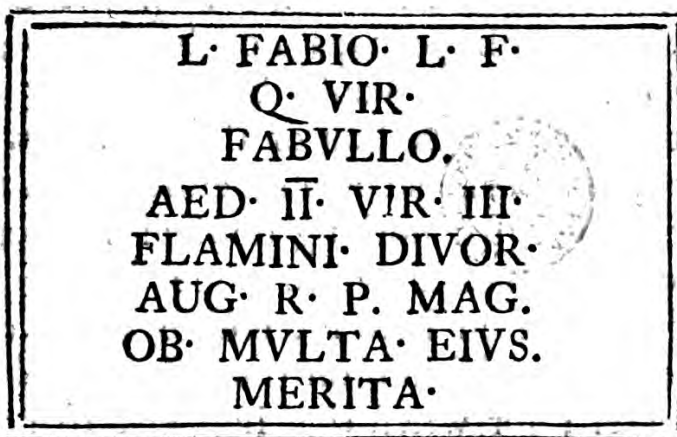
Neither have we any elegant Remains of the *Roman* Sculpture to boast of. There is indeed an old mutilated Statue, not far from *Mabon*, of no Value, in its present Condition; and I make no Question but there were several others set up by the *Romans*, while they were Masters of the Island, which were afterwards broken and defaced by the barbarous Nations that succeeded them; the *Vandals*, *Goths*, and *Mahometans*, having constantly exerted a Rage against the Ornaments of Sculpture, as the latter made a religious Merit of destroying the noble Workmanship of the *Greek* and *Roman* Statuaries, wherever they came.

I have by me a *Lar's* Head in *Bronze*, that was plowed up about two Years since in the *Termino* of *Alaior*, and appears to have been broken off at the Neck; but the Body was never found.

There are some *Roman* Inscriptions in the Town of *Mabon*, one of which has only the first Line that is legible, *viz.*

Q. C O R N E L I O.

There is another Inscription on a *Cippus*, that is fixed in the Wall of a modern Dwelling-House, the better to preserve it. It is all in *Roman Capital-Letters*, well cut, and is as follows ;



The Meaning of which I take to be this.

“ The *Roman People of Mahon* erected
“ this Monument to the Memory of *Lucius*
“ *Fabius*, (the Son of *Lucius*) on Account of
“ his great Deserts: He was a *Quintumvir*,
“ and of the Tribe *Fabullus* ; also *Ædile*,
“ three Times a *Duumvir*, a Priest of the
“ Gods, and *Augur*.”

There are several other *Roman* Inscriptions in the Island, and I viewed all that I was able to hear of ; but they are so shattered, that it exceeded my Power to decypher any of them.

I now come to the *Urns*, and *Lamps*, so frequently found in this Island, that the Nations among whom the Custom prevailed of burning their Dead, must have been very numerous here, and of long Continuance.

We have Room from History to conclude, that not only the *Romans*, but the *Carthaginians* used *Urn-Burial*: and even the *Celtick* Druids, though perhaps not constantly; on which Account it would be extremely difficult to prove the Nation of the Persons whose Ashes these Vessels contain, either from their Form, which has nothing unusual in it, or the Matter of which they are made.

I do not mean here such *Urns* as have the Name of the Maker on them in the *Roman* Character; for when that happens to be the Case, we can be at no Manner of Loss. Others, we may add, that bear a Device, which appears to be the Work of a *Roman* Artist: Both these must contain the Ashes of a *Roman*, and not those of any other People.

At the Time these Islands were annexed to the Dominions of *Rome*, it is certain the *Romans* burned their Dead, and I suppose, most of the *Urns* in *Minorca* were charged with the Ashes of that People; they are generally of a well-burned Earth, of a fine florid red Colour; some few of them are black, but the *Lamps* are all red.

I am apt to imagine these *Urns* and *Lamps* were imported from the Continent, as the only
Potters

Potters Clay in Use here, burns to a yellowish brown, especially as I have not been able to learn that any Traces of a *Roman Pottery* have ever been discovered in the Island.

One Inducement that contributed not a little to establish this Practice among the Antients, was the securing the Remains of the Dead from the Outrage of their Enemies. Besides, one Portion of the Body (a small one indeed, and much altered in the Fire) was hereby preserved from perishing by Degrees in the Grave, or becoming the Food of Reptiles.

Though the *Christian Inhabitants of Minorca* might discontinue *Urn-Burial* (as the *Christians* every where did) yet probably it continued in Use among the *Romans*, until *Christianity* was fully established here.

And the succeeding Nations have ever since buried the Bodies of the Dead, either in Graves cut out of the solid Rock, (or as the present Practice is) in the Vaults of their Churches.

The *Lamps* are all of the common Form. They sometimes bear a Device in the hollow Part of the upper Side, a Fish, a Ram, &c. and sometimes the Name of the Potter appears on the Bottom.

Both *Lamps* and *Urns* are found in the Graves, and not unfrequently *Lacrimatory Vessels*, in which the Tears of the surviving Friends were supposed to be put.

There is a Passage in the 8th Verse of the 56th Psalm (*Thou tellest my Flittings, put my Tears into thy Bottle, &c.*) which would make one believe this Practice to be of very great Antiquity.

There have been no *Urns* found in *Minorca*, but such as are of Earth, very few of the *Romans* having their Ashes enclosed in Metal, which might have proved a Temptation to search for them, whereby their Remains would come to be disturbed. This Consideration was so forcible with them, that they forbid the Use of Gold in the Rites of Burial, unless in particular Cases.

Hence the Frequency of Brass Coins taken out of the *Roman* Graves in this Country, yet I do not hear that a Gold or Silver one is ever brought this Way to Light.

And this brings me to speak of the *Roman* Money that has been found in *Minorca*.

Several of the Consular *Denarii* have been found here, and of the Coins of the Emperors, I have seen four or five in Silver, among which was a well-preserved Medal of *Carausius*; and the following Imperial ones in Brass; *Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus, M. Aurelius, L. Verus, Commodus, Sept. Severus, Geta, Alexander Severus, Maximin. Gordian* the Son, a beautiful Medal of the large Brass; the Reverse, *Pietas Augg.* with the sacrificing Vessels, &c. *Pupienus, Gordianus*

Gordianus Pius; a fine Coin in large Brass of *Otacilla*, the Wife of *Philip*, *Gallienus*, *Postumus*, *Claudius Gothicus*, *Aurelian*, *Dioclesian*, *Constantine the Great*, and his Sons, a vast Number of *Constantius*, (who had for his Lot the Eastern Division of the Empire. This great Abundance of his Coins shews the *Balearians* of that Age to have carried on a considerable Trade to the *Levant*) *Valens*, *Arcadius* and *Honorius*.

Under these two last, *Arcadius* and *Honorius*, the *Roman* Empire was shook with terrible Convulsions by the successful Irruptions of the barbarous Nations, and this Island becoming the Property of the Conquerors, declined in its foreign Commerce, and sunk in Figure; and few Coins of the Successors to those Masters of the World, enumerated in the preceding Catalogue are found here.

I now proceed to the last General Head of the Antiquities of *Minorca*, the Remains of the *Moors*.

Of *Mount-Agatha*, and the antient Buildings of the *Moors*, still remaining there, I have already said enough in a former Letter; I have also told you, that Part of the Wall that encloses *Ciudadella* at this Day, was of their Workmanship, and I think *Mabon* appears to have some Obligations of the same Kind to this People.

However barbarous the first *Mahometans* were esteemed by their Enemies, it is to them
the

the World is indebted for the Way of Building, which goes under the Appellation of the *Gothick* Stile, as the *Italians* called whatever was not after the *Roman* Stile: But as the *Goths* were rather Destroyers than Builders, this should certainly be called the *Saracen* Stile, the better to mark the Authors of the Invention.

For these People, in the midst of their Conquests, built them Mosques and other Edifices, devising a Manner of Architecture suitable to their Force and the Hurry they were in, and hewed their Stone into portable Masses, none exceeding the Burthen of a Camel; and thus, as their Stile itself was diminutive, so were the Parts of which their Fabricks were composed*.

The *Christians* learned this Manner in the Time of the *Croisades*, and spread it through *Italy, Spain, France, England*, and the rest of *Europe*.

I presume that most of the Watch-Towers all round the Coast were likewise the Work of the *Moors*, as it is probable many of the small Castles were, that are so plentifully dispersed all over the Country. Every Individual, that was the Owner of the Land, was, I suppose, under a Necessity of making his ordinary Dwelling capable of Defence against the frequent Invasions of those turbulent Times;

as

* See *Parentalia*, p. 297.

as the numerous Castles in the Borders of *England* and *Scotland* were built to secure the Inhabitants from the daily Inroads and Depredations of their restless Neighbours.

I have here thrown together all that I have had an Opportunity of observing that regarded the Antiquities of the Island of *Minorca*, and now I put an End to your Trouble, with assuring you, that

I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

P. S. I have mentioned an *Arabick* Inscription at *Agatha*, Page 57; there is one in *Gothick* Characters, over an Arch near the East End of the Great Church of *Mabon*, which, for Method's Sake, I have reserved for this Place, as it does not properly come under any of the three Heads of the Antiquities of the Island; and that you may the better understand it, I will give it you in a Character that is somewhat more familiar to you, as follows;

XVI..... FEBROARII· ANNO· DNI· MCCLXXXVI· PO· PRESA· LA· YLA· DE· MENORCA· RNAM· NOS· BON· REY· D'ARRAGO· †

This

This is as exact as I have been able to take it, and though it is imperfect, there is enough remaining to inform you, that the Inscription was set up as a Memorial to Posterity, in Honour of *Alphonso, the good King of Arragon*, who took the *Island of Minorca* on the *Sixteenth of February, Anno Domini, One Thousand Two Hundred and Eighty Six.*

This Inscription contradicts the *Balearick* Historians, * who affirm, that King *Alphonso* finished the Conquest of the Island, and had Mount *Agatha* surrendered to him by the *Moors*, on the *Seventeenth of January, 1287.* I shall not pretend to reconcile the Historians to the *Mason*, on this Occasion, but content myself with having barely hinted this to your Memory.

* See Letter VIII.

L E T T E R XVII.

S I R,

MINORCA, 9 June, 1742.

I Do not love to be importunate, and I always thought the teizing a Friend to fulfil his Engagements, and keep his Word, was a bad Compliment to his Sincerity. Yet I may be allowed to mention my Weariness of this Country, without Reproach either to your Memory or your Zeal. I know you will get me out of it when you can, and that you wish for the Power to do it suddenly and agreeably, with as much Ardour as I can possibly feel on the Occasion.

I would not have you entertain the least Suspicion, that my Impatience in this exiled State arises from any Inconstancy of Temper, or a Love of roving, which really proceeds from a Train of serious Reflections. Here my Youth passes in Obscurity and Indolence; my little Usefulness is lost; my Friends grow old, and my Pretensions (amongst other Things of small Account) are forgot; whilst my Juniors are promoted by being on the Scene; and my Letters make but little Impression in my Absence.

If it were not for the Interest of my Fame and Fortune to return to *England*, I could pass my Days in this Island without any other Regret, than my being obliged to live

at

at a Distance from my old Friends, a small, but select Sett: For here all the Necessaries, and many of the Elegancies of Life are within the Reach of my Purse; the Climate is grown easy to me, and the Divisions of my Time bring about a Revolution of Study and Amusement, that if it does not amount to perfect Happiness (if there is any such Thing on this Side the Grave) yet makes a tolerable *Something*, in which Time slides away, without being either tedious or irksome.

I have a good House, decently furnished, *Iliacis erepta ruinis*; I rise early, and breakfast generally alone, then read, write, or draw, till Noon. It is then Time to dress, after which I walk till Dinner is ready, at a Publick-House, at One; where eight of us, who like one another, eat very well for 12s. a Week, finding our own Wine, which costs only Three-halfpence a Bottle, and is very good. After Dinner, we walk again, or make a Party at Cards, or to the Gardens, and so to Supper at Eight o'Clock.

Thus our Time rolls on in Gaiety and good Humour: Having no Business of our own, we are too much of Triflers to think of that of other People, and we are too busy to lose a single Moment on such a Trifle as Politicks. Spleen and Care seldom associate with red Coats; and if we can keep out of Debt, wear good Linnen, and find a *Moidore* left

left at the End of a Muster, we reckon ourselves Oeconomists.

If I were not to mention the Ladies, a Gentleman of your Gallantry would have Cause to be offended. In the Commerce with them, two Things are requisite, an open Hand, and a close Mouth; and I venture to say, little else is necessary here to accomplish a successful Lover, or what the *French* call *Un homme à bonnes fortunes*.

There is scarce an Officer among us whose House does not afford a spare Bed for his Friends, and if your Inclination or Occasions require your Stay for a Month or six Weeks together in another Garrison, you are treated from House to House with great Chearfulness, and with a Plenty of Cheer, that surprizes one who constantly hears heavy Complaints of the Scarcity and Badness of the Provisions.

At our Messes we seldom dine without a Soup and a Dish of Fish, with a Couple of other Things, as a Piece of Beef, a Joint of Mutton, a Turkey, Goose, Ducks, Fowls, wild and tame, Rabbits, a Pudding or a Pye, in their Turns, with Plenty of Roots, Greens and Fruit, all according to the Season.

We have very good *French* Bread; our Cheese comes from *England*, and our Butter from *Ireland*; from which last Country we are also supplied with Salt Beef for the Troops, (which furnishes us with an excellent
Dish

Dish for Variety) Neats Tongues and Potatoes.

We are apt now and then, for Want of other Discourse, to complain of the Hardness of our Duty. It is true, the Heat of the Climate indisposes us to Action; and it is impossible to rouse us from our Indolence, without putting somewhat of this Kind into our Heads: Yet, to speak honestly, one undergoes more Hardship and Fatigue in one Day's Shooting, which we call a Diversion, than in three Weeks of the strictest Duty an Officer is put to in the common Course of our Service.

We have good Opportunities furnished us of corresponding with our Friends in *England*, by the two Packets that run between *Mahon* and *Marseilles*, and sometimes bring our Letters to us in twelve or fifteen Days after they are wrote; we have the *French* Papers by the same Means, and are also supplied with many Necessaries which we should be much puzzled to procure otherwise: Cloaths, Malt-Liquor, Cyder, Books, and a long *et cetera* come by the *London* Ships.

In *June*, *July*, *August*, and Part of *September*, the Weather is excessively hot; and then we keep as much in the Shade as we can.

The Rains follow; and as soon as they are over, our rambling begins, and we have in general very fine Weather till the Summer comes on again; and I cannot close the Paragraph,

graph, without assuring you, that for near nine Months of the Year this is the finest Climate I ever knew; but the hot Months are intolerable, and make Life a Burthen.

You must perceive I treat you honestly in what I say of the Climate of *Minorca*; so I should do, if I wrote from the frigid or the torrid Zone. Yet Historians grossly impose upon us in this Particular, and you can scarcely read of any Country in the World, that is not seated in a charming mild Climate, neither too hot in Summer, nor too cold in Winter; as *China* is not too hot, says one, though the *Europeans* are obliged to lie many Hours a Day in Water, as Cattle sometimes do in *England*, in the Months of *June* and *July*.

Another gravely assures his Readers, that *New-England* is not a Jot too cold, though many of the Natives lose their Fingers and Toes, by their being frozen, and some are actually froze to Death every Winter.

This Partiality, that so strongly carries away the Generality of Authors, to magnify the favourable Circumstances that relate to the Country they write of, and at the same Time disposes them to soften, or explain away, the inconveniencies and Disadvantages that attend it, I have endeavoured to exclude from these Letters; and I am not without Hopes, that you will acquit me from the least Imputation of having misrepresented the *Minorquins*, or
R their

their Island, from any such Motive, or indeed from any Motive whatever.

And now, Sir, my Task draws to a Period. If your Indulgence to me had been less, my Presumption would not have been so great, and I should have contented myself with writing you such Matters only as I judged capable of conducing to satisfy your Curiosity concerning the Island of *Minorca*, which merits a better Historian; instead of running out of my Way, as I confess I have done, in several Places, to please myself, and indulge my Imagination.

I can only say, in Excuse for these Excursions, that they helped to relieve the inevitable Tedioufness of so dry a Subject; and I flatter myself, that as they are neither very long, nor too thick sown, nor, I hope, very impertinent, you will not wholly condemn me, for having allowed them a Place in the Course of our Correspondence.

I need not put you in Mind, that I have been obliged to pass over several Things superficially enough, though they highly deserved, and really required, to be more critically considered: Some out of a Diffidence of my own Judgment, where Judgment was required; many more for want of Knowledge, as I very freely confess, and the necessary Books to instruct me.

You will discover these Particulars but too readily, and therefore I will wave the uncomfortable

fortable Trouble of pointing them out to you. You will pardon them too, I am sure; for I know your Candour to be equal to your Discernment. What I have done, was enjoined by you, and performed for your Satisfaction, and it is now submitted to your Censure, by,

S I R,

Your, &c.

A P P E N D I X,

C O N T A I N I N G

Several PARTICULARS omitted in the preceding Letters.

IT cannot be very surprizing to any, that a Person, little practised in writing, should, in digesting so large a Heap of Materials as the foregoing Letters are taken from, have misplaced some Things, and omitted others, and even made some Mistakes: To rectify and supply these is my present Purpose, and I hope to be able to do it in a Way that will not put the Reader on regretting that they were not incorporated into the Body of the Work.

I promised * to say somewhat of the domestick Fowls of this Island, but find I omitted doing it in the Place where I intended to treat of them.

Turkeys are plenty enough, and very good: They were sold, while I was quartered at *Alaior*, for about three Shillings and Sixpence apiece.

A good

* Letter XII.

A good Goose was worth one Shilling and Three-pence, and a Duck, full grown, Ten-pence, or a Shilling; these are exceeding good, and are quickly fatted.

A Chicken usually costs Five-pence, a grown Fowl Seven-pence, a good Pullet Ten-pence.

The Fowls have black Feathers, for the most Part, and their Skins are of a dark Hue; but their Flesh is very white, juicy, and delicate.

When a Fleet of Ships lies in *Port-Mahon*, the Price of Fowls rises with the Demand, and is sometimes more than double that I have mentioned above; but they are no sooner gone, than the Markets return to the old Standard again, or pretty near it.

I find I have also omitted the Mention of a red Oyster, which is frequently brought up with the other Kind. The *Spaniards* eat it as a Dainty, and we do not grudge it them.

I have already said, * that the Cotton-Shrub thrives well here: I have tried it, and found it to do so; yet the *Minorquins* will not be prevailed upon to propagate it. The more industrious Inhabitants of the Island of *Malta* increase and cultivate it with such Diligence, that they export fifteen thousand *Quintals* of Cotton-Wool every Year, besides what is consumed in their Home-Manufactures.

In the Close of the same Letter † I take Notice of the Quantities of Annise-Seed,
R 3
and

* Letter X.

† Letter X.

and Cummin-Seed, yearly exported by the *Maltese*, which I am well assured do not fall short of twelve hundred *Quintals* of the former, and of the latter, three thousand five hundred *Quintals*.

The Quantity of Wheat yearly raised in the Island of *Minorca*, as I have already said, * is Fifty-three thousand five hundred and one *Quarteras*; and I think it is equal in Goodness to any they import from *Sicily*, or the other Markets they resort to, for what they want above their own Produce.

The Grains are large and hard, and the Flour exceeding white. I weighed eight Grains of the *Minorca* Wheat, and found them to be equal to five Grains *Troy-Weight*. This I did in the Year 1740, as I find in a Memorandum which I made at the same Time.

Dr. *Plott* says †, the *Staffordshire* Farmers have a Rule, that the colder any Country is, the thicker will the Husk of any Sort of Grain be, as if, says he, Nature designed to fence it against the Severity of the Clime.

It follows from hence, that the hotter the Country is, the thinner will the Husk be; and it is observed, that the Wheat of the Growth of this Island yields more Flour, and less Bran, than either the *English*, or the *French* Wheat does; I mean the *French* Wheat of the more northerly Provinces: for about
Marseilles,

* Letter X.

† Hist. of *Staffordshire*, C. vi. Sect. 10.

Marseilles, and indeed throughout all *Languedoc* and *Provence*, the Climate differs very little from that of the *Balearick* Islands, in whose Neighbourhood they lie.

The Eastern Method of treading out the Corn, is still in Use among the *Minorquins*. *Homer* has described it, exactly, in the 20th *Iliad* :

*As with autumnal Harvests cover'd o'er,
And thick bestrown, lies Ceres' sacred Floor,
When round and round, with never-weary'd
Pain,
The trampling Steers beat out th' unnumber'd
Grain.*

Mr. P O P E.

Most of the Farmers about the Island have Hand-Mills in their Houses, consisting of two round Stones, of about two Feet Diameter ; these they place on the Floor, and the good Woman, sitting down, feeds the Mill with one Hand, and with the other turns the upper Stone merrily about ; all the while chearing her Labour with a Song.

These Mills are well known in *Devonshire*, and several other Parts of *England*, under the Name of *Querns*.

But the great Towns are provided with Wind-Mills, each having six Vanes, or Wings, which are secured against the sudden Flurries and Squalls, so frequent here, by a Number

of Ropes and Lines disposed artfully enough for that Purpose.

In the Character I have given of the *Minorquins*, I have laid a good deal of Strefs on their Sloth; and I have often thought, that the Genius of the *Roman-Catholick* Religion was in itself an Enemy to Industry.

The Multitude of *Faineants*, that are maintained by the People, in a voluptuous Indolence, set a dangerous Example to the Inhabitants of any Country.

The great Number of Holy-Days which they are obliged to observe, indispose them to Labour; and the Diversions which are so laudable on those Festivals, though it is sinful to exercise an honest Calling, for the Support of a poor Family, make the Returns to Business irksome, and the Workman careless and lazy.

On the other Hand, the Trade and Manufactures of a Protestant Country, are carried on with Briskness and Alacrity. The People have but few Holy-Days, and are not very strict in the Observation of them. The Sabbath is almost their only Day of Rest; at all other Times, they think it no Dishonour to God, to mind their Business, that they may be enabled to feed and cloath his Creatures.

It was a Maxim among the *Jews*, that he who taught not his Son a Trade, taught him to be a Thief. It is certain, that a Man who is unprovided of the Means of getting his Bread by honest Labour, lies open to every Temptation

tation that offers itself, of applying the Property of his Neighbour to his own Use.

It is equally true, that a Tradesman, who idles away his Time, and plays himself into Poverty and Distress, is in little better Circumstances than the idle Fellow, who has learned no Trade at all.

And thus the *Roman-Catholick* Religion disposes its Professors to Idleness, and consequently to Indigence; and it is well known, that there are more poor People, in Proportion, in the *Popish* Countries, than in those where the *Reformed* Religion prevails.

In describing the Wells of the Island I did not think of a Circumstance, which I have since recollected. The Masons, as they work down, cut small Channels, or Groves, on two Sides of the Square Well, near an Angle, to admit a Man's Foot, and favour his descending and ascending, not only while the Work is in Hand, but at all Times after, when there is Occasion to clear, or repair it.

The *Minorquins* have a Custom, that when a Murder has been committed in the Country, they set up a Cross in the Place; and to their Shame, we see a great Number of these Crosses, as we ramble about the Island.

But if this horrid Crime has been perpetrated within Doors, the House is forthwith pulled down, and the Foundation sowed with Salt.

This Custom is of great Antiquity; not only the Habitations of particular Offenders against
the

the Laws, were treated in this manner, but whole Cities were beat down, and sowed with Salt *.

The greatest Malefactors of this Country formerly escaped the Punishment due to their Crimes, by flying to the Churches for Protection; and we see the *Altare Privilegiatum* in most of them to this Day; though our Governors make no Scruple of withdrawing them at present from their Sanctuary, which is agreeable to the old Law; *If a Man come presumptuously upon his Neighbour, to slay him with Guile; thou shalt take him from mine Altar, that he may die †.*

If the Natives of *Minorca* were heretofore hurried by their Jealousy into Acts of Cruelty and Violence, it is but just to declare, that since they have been better acquainted with the *English*, they have relaxed a good deal of their antient Severity to their Wives, and live in good Understanding with us.

They are generally sober, in which they are not followed by our Soldiers, nor indeed by our Sailors, when we have a Squadron of Men of War in the Harbour.

When a *Spaniard* broaches a Butt of Wine, he has two Soldiers sent him by the Commanding-Officer, to see that no Disorders are committed in the *Bota-fresca* House, and a green Bush is hung out at the Door, as was formerly

* *Judges ix.* 45.

† *Exod. xxi.* 14.

formerly the Practice in *England*; whence the Proverb, *Good Wine needs no Bush*.

Hither the Soldiers repair, to regale themselves, and such of the Seamen as are on Shore at the Time, do the same. In these Temples of *Bacchus*, no Bounds are set to their Debauches, and such a Quantity of Wine is daily swallowed down, as would stagger Credulity itself to be told of it.

Yet I speak it from Authority, that on *Christmas Day*, 1741, there were drunk out, by the Soldiers and Sailors, at *St. Philip's*, at these Houses, no less than Eight hundred and Sixty-four Gallons of Wine. But it is to be observed, that a Squadron of Men of War lay in the Harbour at that Time; and two Regiments of Men were quartered in the Castle and in the Town.

A singular Custom of these Islanders occurs to my Memory. All the Sea-faring Men, that have Wives, concert with them, and with their Friends, before they enter on their Voyage, some Signal that they intend shall distinguish their Bark at her Return.

As soon as the Vessel with the well-known Signal draws near the Shore, the Friends attend the Lady, with the News of her Husband's Return, and then hasten to the Port, to welcome their Friends, and accompany him to his House.

He finds his Spouse sitting at the Door, or occupied in her domestick Duties, who takes
no

no manner of Notice of him. Here the Friends take their Leave, and the Mariner enters his Dwelling, and is soon followed by his Wife, and then the Door is shut. This is all that appears of the Ceremony.

There is great Reason to think that this Custom had its Foundation in the Jealousy of the *Minorquins*.

The Caresses of a young Couple, on their first Interview, after a tedious Separation, might occasion some libidinous Emotions in a People strongly addicted to Venery; all which are prevented by this reserved Behaviour. Besides, the Fair-one has Time to put Things in Order for the Reception of her Spouse; whereas, if she were surprized, it might be attended with very disagreeable Consequences.

In the Time of the Carnival, when there is Dancing at half the Houses in Town, it is common with us to join in their Diversion; and we are ever treated with the utmost Courtesy and Distinction. We are seated in the upper Part of the Room, presented with Wine and Sweetmeats, and the Woman of the House takes us out to dance.

On our Part, we never fail to behave to them, especially the Women, with the nicest Decorum, a Conduct highly necessary to all who would avoid giving Offence to the Delicacy of the *Minorquins*.

I have made frequent Mention in the foregoing Sheets of the great Road that leads
from

from *St. Philip's Castle*, the whole Length of the Island, to *Cuidadella*.

When Colonel *Kane* was appointed Lieutenant-Governor of *Minorca*, under the Duke of *Argyll*, which was in the Year 1712, that Gentleman first conceived the Design of making a new Road, the old one being scarcely passable.

In 1713 he begun to put his Project in Execution, and happily finished it in the Year 1715.

The greatest Part of this Road is above thirty Feet wide. It is in general conducted in a direct Line, except where it was necessary to coast about the large Hills, to keep as near a Level as was possible.

The sharp Rock was cut even, the Ascents made easy and regular, hollow Places were filled up, and Bridges built over Morasses and Gullies, where the Land-Floods required a Passage to be kept open for them.

When the Regiments are relieved, which generally happens in *April* or *May*, every Year, they take two Days to march to *Cuidadella*, either from *Mabon*, or from *St. Philip's Castle*; halting a Night at *Mercadal*.

Notwithstanding the Goodness of the new Road, I think there is but one Cart in the Island; and surely a few would be very useful for the Transportation of Merchandise, and other bulky Wares, from the inland Places to the Sea-port Towns, which is at present done
by

by loading them on the Backs of Mules and Affes. But several of our Officers have *French* or *Italian* Post-Chaises; a Piece of State, which the *Spaniards* have not yet thought proper to imitate.

I have already said, * that the Island of *Minorca* contains One hundred and fifty-one thousand and forty square Acres; and that the Number of the native Inhabitants is Twenty-seven thousand Souls; so that there are five Acres and an half to every Head.

The Rent of all the Lands has been computed at Forty-three thousand, five hundred and ninety-six *Livres*, which make, in *Sterling* Money, Six thousand, five hundred, and thirty-nine Pounds, and eight Shillings.

To this must be added that Part of the Rent which is paid in Kind, amounting to Seven thousand and twenty-one *Quarteras* of Wheat, and One hundred and four of Barley, worth together about Two thousand, six hundred Pounds *Sterling*.

These two Sums, added together, make Nine thousand, one hundred and thirty-nine Pounds *Sterling*, the annual Value of all the Lands in the Island of *Minorca*. If these Lands were to be sold at fifteen Years Purchase, and sure they are not worth more, One hundred and thirty-seven thousand, and eighty-five Pounds would pay for them, including

* Letter I.

cluding the Woods with which they are covered in many Places.

About thirty Years ago a Computation was made of the Number of Houses in the Island; and it stood thus :

In the <i>Termino</i> of <i>Mabon</i> - - - - -	402
----- <i>Alaior</i> - - - - -	716
----- <i>Mercadal</i> - - - - -	1081
----- <i>Ciudadella</i> - - - - -	890
In all - - - - -	3089

These Numbers have been increased, in some Degree, in all the *Terminos*, since this Computation was made by Order of Governor *Kane* ; but in none so considerably as in the *Termino* of *Mabon*, where it is thought there are now not fewer than eight hundred or a thousand Houses.

The *Minerquins* do not lie on Feather Beds, but on hard Mattresses, and indeed these are more proper for the Climate, for which Reason we also use them.

Their Bedsteads are much higher than ours, that they may the better come to sweep under them, to keep as free as possible from Buggs and Fleas, which abound here beyond Imagination.

The Ladies make no Scruple to imitate the *French* Fashion, of enlivening a fallow Complexion with Paint; though this is far from being an universal Practice among them.

They are in general very sparing in their Diet, and few of them, except such as have
been

been every way debauched, drink Wine, or Strong-Waters. The most abandoned of the Sex are banished to the worst Parts of the Island, and sometimes out of it.

As to the Men, their Temperance is, in all Probability, no more than the Consequence of their Poverty, as their Poverty is visibly the Consequence of their Sloth; for we have Opportunities now and then of observing, that when they are with us, they eat heartily of the best that is laid before them, and drink freely of every Kind of Liquor that is offered them.

The *Minorquins* call the East-Wind *Levante*, and the West *Ponente*; the South they call *Vent de Barbaria*, as the *Romans* called the West-South-West Wind *Africus*, from the Country from whence it blew.

When the Wind blows from the Mountains of *Majorca*, which are covered with Snow for a good Part of the Winter, we are glad to come near a Fire; and the Cold is certainly the more sensible to an *English* Constitution, after our Bodies have been softened, and made tender by the great Heats in Summer. The Northerly Winds are more violent and piercing even than these; and while they blow we lay on our Wood very freely, and regale ourselves within Doors.

There was a good deal of Snow fell here in *January*, 1741, but it melted as fast as it fell. It never lies here; and Ice is so great a Rarity, that many old People of the Natives have

have never seen any. I saw a little in a Wood near *Alaior*, in *February*, 1741, which was soon gone again.

The Summer Nights are so excessive hot, that we can scarcely bear a Sheet over us; and we are obliged to keep our Windows shut, for the Night Air is very dangerous at that Season. There is a gentle Breeze an Hour or two before and after Noon, that tempers the Air, so as to make it tolerable.

I think the *Minorquins* are greater Bigots than their Neighbours on the Continent.

They entertain the highest Veneration for the Saints; and the holy Virgin is not addressed by them with greater Reverence than they pay to St *Anthony of Padua*, and several others.

The Case was much the same in *England*, before the Reformation, as Bishop *Burnet* informs us; for at *Christ's* Altar, in the Cathedral Church of *Canterbury*, there was offered in one Year no more than Three Pounds, Two Shillings and Six Pence; at that of the Virgin Sixty-three Pounds, Five Shillings and Six Pence; whilst St *Thomas à Becket* had the full Sum of Eight hundred and Thirty-two Pounds offered at his Altar.

The Difference lies only in the different Circumstances, as to the Wealth of the two Countries; for it is beyond a Doubt, that the Faith and Zeal of the *Minorquins* continue to

S

this

this Day at as high a Pitch as that of our Fore-Fathers could ever be raised to.

I have treated at large, in my second Letter, of the Method of Building in Use among these People; to which I have only to add in this Place, that in preparing the Cantoon-Stone, the Mason cuts a Notch in the upper and lower Sides, and in both the Ends, of every Stone, that the Guysh may enter, and form a Cord, as it were, of the Bigness of one's Finger, to bind all together.

The Arches of their Doors are strongly built, the *Vouffoirs*, or Arch-Stones, being of the Length of two Feet in some Places; and those a Don's Gate at *Ciudadella*, which I measured, were five Feet long, all hewed so as to converge to the Center.

I have mentioned * the Graves that have been cut in the Rock without the Walls of *Ciudadella*; and these I have examined, with a view of satisfying myself, whether the Race of Men, that lived many Ages before us, were of a larger Stature, than those with which the World is at present peopled.

The Result of my Searches here was no way favourable to the Opinion of certain
Philosophers,

* Letter VII.

Philosophers, who fancied the human Body to be constantly degenerating in Size, and likely to end at last in a Race of Pigmies.

These Graves are no longer than is necessary for the present Generation, few of them extending to six Feet, and none exceeding that; but the far greater Part fall under five Feet eight Inches.

I have seen the Charnel-House at *Hythe*, in *Kent*, where are the Bones of a great Number of *Danes*, that were slain, in a Battle, near that Place, upwards of Six hundred Years ago, as I remember; and I could not find one Bone that I could think ever belonged to a Man of six Feet high.

That there have been Men of extraordinary Stature in all Ages, is doubted by none; but that the general Size of Men was ever much above what it is at present, is not at all probable, at least it does not seem so to me.

The *Minorquins* have some tall Men among them; one I measured at *Ciudadella* in the Year 1738, was full six Feet five Inches high. I the better remember this, having ventured a small Wager that he did not exceed me in Height; but he proved to be above an Inch taller. Their common Standard is what is called the middle Size.

They are slender, erect, and well made; but not so broad in the Shoulders, nor so

260 *A P P E N D I X.*

well-limbed, as the Inhabitants of colder Countries are observed to be.

I have among my Papers a Minute, by which it appears that the Entrance of *Makon* Harbour by an exact Measurement, is ninety Fathoms wide, at the narrowest Place.

*The Copy of a LETTER from an
Officer at MINORCA, to his Friend
in LONDON.*

DEAR SIR,

THE Preparations which the *French* are making at *Toulon*, for an Expedition to be undertaken for the Conquest of this Island, are no Secret : Nor were they intended to be kept from the Knowledge of the World ; since they have been at as much Pains to render them publick, as they were accustomed to take for the Concealment of their Designs. When the first Reports of these Preparations reached us, we were in some Measure alarmed, as many Things, which though they were of no great Consequence, yet were necessary to enable us to make a proper Defence, were to be immediately set about ; and we were in some Concern lest the Enemy might be upon us before we were fully prepared for their Reception : But as their Proceedings are drawn out to such a Length, they have given us perfect Leisure to put every Thing here into such a Posture, as leaves us no Apprehensions on their Account ; and our Spirits are so good, our Garrison so hearty, and our Supplies so ample, that if our Works do not defend us, and we
our

our Works, until we can be relieved by strong Hand, we deserve to be buried in their Ruins.

But, to deal plainly with you, my old Friend, I do not think the *French* are one Jot more sincere in their Declarations at this Time, than they have constantly been on all other Occasions: Their real Design, in all the Pother they have affected to make about us, I think no other, at the Bottom, than an Artifice to divide our Naval Force, and weaken our Fleet in those Stations where they do not like they should continue, to be a Check to their ambitious Views, and a formidable Barrier between them and His Majesty's *British* and *American* Dominions.

I am further of Opinion, that if they were even landed on the Island, not one Man of a hundred of the Natives would join them; and this for many good Reasons. When General *Stanhope* reduced the Garrison of *St Philip's* Castle to capitulate, in 1708, all the Inhabitants agreed to submit themselves to King *Charles III.* But it is to be considered, that this Prince had a strong Party among them, was esteemed by them as the equitable Successor to the *Spanish* Crown, and was opposed by *Philip*, claiming under what they thought a forged Title, and supported by the Arms of *France.* The Case is far otherwise now; the *French* are far from having a Party here to espouse their Cause. The very Turn
and

and Genius of the two Nations, tend to keep them at Variance; nor has there ever been a real Cordiality between them: Besides, as the Island was ceded to *Great-Britain* by the Treaty of *Utrecht*, and has remained quietly in our Possession for more than forty Years; they have had so much Experience of the Lenity of our Government; have been made so easy in their Religion; and in every other Particular, the Terms of their Capitulation have been so punctually complied with; and they have found so certain Redress of whatever Grievances they complained of, by their Agents at the *British* Court; and are so vastly enriched by the immense Sums that have been sent into their Country, for the Payment of the Troops, and for the Works that have been erected at *St Philip's*, that I am confident there are few or none of them, but would look upon it as the greatest Misfortune that could befall them, to exchange their present happy State, for the servile, sordid Condition of *French* Subjects.

These People have a great Measure of Sagacity, and as of late they have enjoyed a Proportion of Trade, by no Means despicable, many of them have had Opportunities of observing the Oppressions under which their Neighbours all round them groan, from the arbitrary Tyranny of their Government. These Considerations, together with the Protection of our Flag against the Corsairs of *Barbary*,

Barbary, (an Advantage no other People in these Parts enjoy) have highly endeared us to them, notwithstanding the Difference in Religion, in which too they enjoy the same Freedom, in all Respects, as when they were subject to the Crown of *Spain*.

Thus have I given you my Opinion, together with the Reasons upon which it is grounded; from all which I conclude, that either the *French* have no real Purpose of making a Descent upon the Island, but that their View is to divide our Fleet; or that if they should attempt us at this Time, they would be sorely repulled, without effecting any Thing material, and retire shamefully, leaving the greatest Part of their Army behind them. Whoever is well enough acquainted with the Subject, to be able to compare the Disposition of the Natives, and the Strength of this Island, as they were in 1708, with what they are at this Day, will, I am confident, subscribe to my Opinion in every Particular; and to such I leave it (and there are many such now in *London*) to satisfy those that are utter Strangers to both.

I am ever,

MINORCA,
27 Feb. 1756.

DEAR SIR,

Your, &c.

F I N I S.

