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## WEEKLY ALMANACK.

NOVEMBER—1808.	Sun Rises & Sets.		High Water.	
	H.	M.	H.	M.
21 MONDAY,	7	28	5	1 54
22 TUESDAY,	7	29	5	2 32
23 WEDNESDAY,	7	30	5	3 16
24 THURSDAY,	7	31	5	4 3
25 FRIDAY,	7	32	5	5 8
26 SATURDAY,	7	33	5	6 16
27 SUNDAY,	7	34	5	7 5

First Quarter, 24th Day, 6h. 42m. Evening.

Interesting particulars concerning Spain, and the character of its Inhabitants.

The important political events which are at this moment drawing upon Spain the attention of the world, will, we presume, render the following particulars relative to that country, and its inhabitants acceptable to the majority of our readers:—

Spain is situated between the 36th and 44th degrees of north latitude, and between 3 degrees of east and 9 degrees of west longitude from London. The greatest length from west to east is about 600 miles, and the breadth from north to south upwards of 500; thus forming, if we include Portugal, almost a compact square, surrounded on all sides by the sea except where the Pyrenean chain forms a grand natural barrier against France. Spain contains about 143,000 square miles, and thirteen millions of inhabitants.

Bougoing has observed that the divisions of Spain received in maps and books of geography, are little known in practice. The three provinces of Biscay, Navarre as a kingdom, and the Aullurias as a principality, form a state apart, which neither admit custom houses nor intendants, or scarcely any appearance of fiscal government. These provinces are of very unequal extent, those of Castile being the kingdom of Galicia, the provinces of Burgos, Leon, Zamora, Salamanca, Estremadura, Palencia, Valladolid, Segovia, Avila, Toro, Toledo, Mancha, Murcia Guadalaxara, Cuenca, Soria, Madrid, and Andalusia, which comprises four provinces decorated with the title of kingdoms, which they bore under the Moors, namely, Seville, Cordova, Jaen, and Granada. The four provinces of the crown of Arragon are, the kingdom of Arragon, the kingdom of Valencia, the principality of Catalonia, and the kingdom of Majorca.

The climate of Spain has been deservedly praised as equal, if not superior to that of any other country in Europe; but in the southern provinces, the heat is insalubrious and malignant fevers sometimes sweep off great numbers.—The chains of mountains which intersect the country at different intervals, contribute to temper the climate, and supply cooling breezes. In the south the sea breeze agreeably diversifies the heat of the summer, and in the northern provinces the severity of the winter is allayed by the proximity of the ocean, which generally supplies gales that are rather humid than frosty.

The face of the country, though it exhibits a great number of unproductive tracts, is in general delightful abounding in fragrant pasturage, vine-yards and groves of orange-trees, and the hills and wastes, themselves being clothed with wild thyme, rosemary, and lavender. Its principal productions are,—wool so highly esteemed for the excellence of its quality, silk, oil, wine, and fruits. The sugar cane thrives in this country and it might supply all Europe with saffron; sumach, an useful article in the preparation of morocco leather, abounds in the mountains of Granada; the mastic, the palm, the cedar, the cork tree, and even cotton and pepper grow in many parts; the superb American aloe, which is in England one of the most magnificent ornaments of our gardens, grows here without cultivation, and forms whole hedges. The rivers and streams of Spain are numerous, and the chains of mountains give a grand variety to the prospect of the country.

The revenues of the crown amount to five millions and a half sterling; but it is calculated that not above one million sterling enters the coffers of the King. The finances are badly regulated, and the public debt prodigious.

In 1794, the military establishment of Spain consisted of 114,000 men; but at present it is thought not to exceed 80,000, a great portion of whom have been drawn by Bonaparte out of the country. Of late years Spain has paid great attention to her navy, which has however been crippled in the recent warfare with Britain: the ships of the line can now scarcely be computed at more than fifty.

The Spanish Monarchy, previous to the recent revolution, was in every sense absolute. The power of the aristocracy has of late years been greatly abridged, chiefly by the influence of the royal favorite the Prince of Peace. In pursuance of the same system, the Cortes, or supreme councils, which possessed an authority greater than the Parliament of England, have been for some time abolished.

The Privy Council, which prepares business and arranges papers for the Junta, or Council of State, is composed of a number of nobles and grandees, nominated by the King.

The Junta itself, a sort of Cabinet Council, consists of the first Secretary of State, and three or four other Ministers, who directed every thing to the will of the King, or latterly of the favourite.

The only religion tolerated in Spain is the Roman Catholic. In ecclesiastical matters the King is supreme; he nominates all Archbishops and Bishops. He taxes the revenues of the clergy, and no papal bull can be published without his approbation.

There is no doubt but climate has an influence over the various characteristic dispositions of nations; but, to deduce from this alone the origin of serious and melancholy constitutions, is an error demonstrated by facts, which every individual is at liberty to verify. The climate of England is damp and foggy; this is the cause of that spleen and taciturnity which prevail in the English nation, according to the opinion of the French; but the climate of Spain and Turkey is light, the sky serene, and the sun always resplendent; nevertheless, the Turks and the Spaniards are silent, dull, and thoughtful. The climate of Sweden and of Petersburg is cold, foggy, and damp, yet the Swedes and Russians are as lively as the French.

It is well ascertained that high degrees of civilization far from facilitating the expectation and display of great characters, tend only to restrain them within the bounds of established custom. The passions are masked by forms, and by those deceitful manners which are qualified by the denomination of politeness and *bon ton*. The inhabitants of the country, or mountains particularly, whose manners are harsh and rusticated, have more openness and sincerity of disposition. In cities, the great springs of the soul lose their elasticity, and at length have neither play nor strength.

But to return to the Spaniards. What nation in the known world has a more ardent imagination, a more acute and penetrating wit? What people are more fiery, more enthusiastic, and more constant in their undertakings? No obstacle can discourage them; if any offer, they behold them coolly, and surmount them by dint of patience. The fortresses of San Fernando, commonly called Figueras, was overlooked by three mountains, two of which were within gun-shot, and the third within reach of Bombs. Had Figueras belonged to the French, or any other nation, they doubtless would have decided that it was best to fortify these three mountains, and thus prevent the approach of an enemy to the fortresses. The Spaniards thought it more simple to lower the mountains; two are already reduced below the fire of the place, and they are at work in levelling down the third. The government thought proper to dig a port at Tarragona, a city in Catalonia. Tarragona is situated in the centre of a bay that forms a semi-circle; steep rocks line the shore all along, and they decided to drive the sea further off; a mine was sprung in consequence of that decision, and a rock being thereby detached and thrown forward, they formed a jetty about six thousand feet in length, under which shelter their men of war have already passed the winter in safety. It is intended to gain about four hundred yards more, and by the constant labour of seven hundred galley slaves, a work will be completed which alone would establish the glory of the age. But Tarragona is in Spain, and the Spaniard who constantly aims at what is useful, labours without ostentation, and cares but little for the vapor called vanity. He does not publish wonders, as nations have done before they were undertaken; their utility alone distinguishes them after they are completed. It is reckoned that three feet a day are conquered from the sea by the exertions of these seven hundred galley slaves.

It is deserving of remark in the Spanish character, that a nation which carries passion to a degree of phrenzy, is in its intercourse with the sex, most open-hearted and sincere.—The Spaniard possesses a brave and manly spirit; he speaks to his Prince with respect, but likewise with a freedom that belongs to the proper dignity of man; a dignity of which he is fully conscious, and which foreigners confound with pride.

The Spaniard is proud; but his pride does not incline him to insolence and arrogance; he does not express much, but he is sincere in what he does express; he makes no show of politeness, but his benevolence proceeds from the heart; he is compassionate and kind, and displays no ostentation in his mode of doing good.

The Spaniards are thought to be grave: but gravity is the mark of nations and persons who think, and preserve their own dignity; and gravity does not exclude gaiety.—Whoever has seen them dance the *sandango* and *valero*, must have inferred that they are not always grave. To talk is the result of imperious necessity among the French; it is an error of vanity and good manners; to be silent is reckoned a sign of pride and stupidity. The success of man in society is calculated according to the quantity of words which he utters. In a quarter of an hour a Frenchman, a Parisian particularly, must, if he wishes to acquire the reputation of a clever fellow, review all the news of the day, from politics down to fashions, explain the systems of cabinets, foretell their consequences, criticize the new productions, give the best account of an engagement if in time of war, but above all he must not fail to mention Mademoiselle

Rolandeau's song, and the tragic merits of Mademoiselle Georges or Duchefnois; thus qualified he may be deemed an accomplished and a sensible man! The flegmatic Spaniard calculates and speaks deliberately; he follows without vivacity the plan which he has formed, but he follows it steadily, and finishes what the Frenchman but begins. The Spaniard does not always perform great things, but he never undertakes useless ones. Silent by disposition, concentrating his ideas, he acquires the greater neatness of thought and propriety of expression. It requires four French sentences to convey an idea which the Spaniard will express in one. It might be asserted that a Spaniard has thought more in one year than a Frenchman during his whole life.

It has been generally said that the Spaniards are lazy; but on what is this assertion founded? On the little activity observed among the Castilians. Go into Galicia, and there you will learn that 60,000 Gallicians yearly quit their province and spread as far as Andalusia. They set out in May, and return in September, some brings back from four to five pounds sterling. Thirty thousand likewise go yearly into Portugal, to labour in the harvest and vintage; they also bring back the earnings of their labour. Their country is enriched with their industrious periodical emigrations. Visit Biscay, Navarre, Arragon, Catalonia, Valencia, Andalusia, and in general the mountainous provinces in Spain, with all those contiguous to the sea, and then charge their active and industrious inhabitants with idleness if you can. The native of Castile is indolent, his national character is *otium cum dignitate*; but Castile is but one among many; it ought not to be taken for the whole, when you wish to be a fair and impartial judge.—The aboriginal Spaniard is active and apt to labour and industry. We confess that the Spaniard who descends from the Visigoths has not that ardour and aptitude which distinguishes the native Spaniard. The Castilian is lazy, it is true, but his indolence and laziness proceed rather from his partiality to ancient customs; a ridiculous partiality indeed, since it proves prejudicial to society. From an immemorial lapse of time, the most arduous labours, those of agriculture are, in Castile, allotted to that sex which nature has destined to alleviate the moral and physical pains of man; you see women in the fields ploughing and sowing the ground, while the men wrapped up in their cloaks, are basking in the sun in public places (*lo mando el sol*); and this is their only occupation.

To encourage women in the practice of these agricultural labours, the ancient Castilians instituted a distribution of prizes. They thus, out of pride, recompensed that diligence which encouraged their indolence and sloth. This festival is abolished, but the Castilians are still lazy.

The celebrated author of the *Cartas Merucias*, Colonel Don Joseph de Cadahalso, in a critique on his own countrymen, says, "There are a great many of them who rise late, take their chocolate very hot, and drink cold water afterwards; dress, go to market, purchase a couple of chickens; hear mass, return to the market-place; walk about for a short time, enquire the chat news, return home, dine very slowly, take their afternoon nap (*siesta*), rise again, walk in the fields, return home, take refreshments, go into company, play, return at night, say their prayers, sup, and go to bed."

But what country has not its loungers, such as those who at Paris frequent the Thuilleries, the Champs Elysees, the Palais Royal; in London New-Bond-street, St. James's-street, Piccadilly, &c. &c. whose chief morning occupation is a consultation with the boot-maker, or taylor, and whose evening employment is, at Paris, the play house, *Frescati*, and La Roulette; in London, the tavern, the theatres, houses of ill fame, or gaming clubs. Of those three modes of idling time away, the Spanish mode is the least pernicious; but who would think of judging the English or the French from these particular instances? There are in every country persons who consume their days in futile occupations, and kill time in every way they possibly can.

The Spaniards is said to be ignorant; we think it has been pretty well ascertained that Spain has produced her list of learned persons in various branches. As to the lower classes you very seldom meet with an individual of the meanest extraction, but who knows how to read or write; and we doubt much whether among persons selected throughout all Spain, an instance of such marked ignorance as that exhibited by a Deputy to the French Legislative Assembly; who, in one of his enthusiastic fits on the means of prosperity which France possessed independent of her colonies, exclaimed with an emphasis, "Have we not the *Orleans sugar*?" Had this exquisite Legislator spoken in Spain, he might have said, with more reason, "Have we not the *Malaga sugar*?" Three fourths, perhaps, of the persons who read this account are ignorant that on the continent of Europe, on the southern coast of Andalusia, in short, at Velez Malaga, the sugar canes prosper, and yield as good and as fine sugar as those of Jamaica or of St. Domingo.

We have said that the Spaniard's characteristic features were as strongly marked as those of Englishmen; we mentioned, for example, the attachment which he has preserved