

belonging to the staple of Calais*, to any country whatever, repeating the voyage as often they pleased during the year; and duly paying the customs, &c. [*Fadera, V. xii, p. 471.*]

The Christian provinces of Spain, almost entirely united by the marriage of Ferdinand king of Aragon with Isabella queen of Castile, which took place in the year 1469, had for some time been in a very flourishing condition. About ten thousand people were employed in the manufactures of silk and wool in Toledo. In Catalonia, before the union of the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon (an event fatal to the commercial prosperity of that province) many of the towns were filled with industrious and skilful manufacturers in wool, cotton, flax, silk, leather, tin, copper, iron, steel, silver, &c. The ship-carpenters of Barcelona built vessels, not only for their own countrymen, but also for other nations. All these branches of industry, together with the produce of a fertile soil diligently cultivated, supplied the materials of an extensive commerce with every port of the Mediterranean sea, and also to Portugal, the west coast of France, Flanders, and England. [*Schott. Script. Hisp. V. ii, pp. 308, 844.—Capmany, Mem. hist. de Barcelona, passim †.*] But all the Christians of Spain were surpassed by the Saracens of Granada in the cultivation of their lands, the excellence of their manufactures, particularly those of silk, (which, as already observed, were in a flourishing condition in Almeria before any of the Christian states to the westward of Greece possessed a single silk-worm) the extent of their commerce, their riches and magnificence ‡. That kingdom was finally subdued in the beginning of January 1492 by Ferdinand, who by the treaty secured to the Saracens the free exercise of their religion with the use of their mosques, their own laws, and their property of every kind, including even their arms, except cannon. Ferdinand has generally obtained the character of a wise king: but, with submission to the wisdom of those who have given him that character, it may be observed, that he had now an opportunity, by a prudent and conciliatory treatment of his new subjects, to render his kingdom the first manufacturing and commercial country in Europe, and that his conduct was quite the reverse. Urged by bigotry and infatuation, he had already established the horrible tribunal of the inquisition, of itself sufficient to destroy all spirit of industry and enterprise; and, not satisfied with so great a sacrifice of the inherent rights of the human mind on the altar of superstition, he com-

* The king's compliance to the French merchants made him forget that tin was a principal article of the staple, and admit not only French-made woollen cloths, but even those of other countries imported by French merchants: and yet he is said to have understood, and acted upon, the principles of the art of navigation.

† For this and the preceding quotations from the important collection of records, published by

Don Antonio de Capmany, I have to acknowledge the kindness of Sir John Talbot Dillon in favouring me with the use of his copy, perhaps the only one in Great Britain: nor should I even have known of the work, but by his mention of it in his valuable History of Peter the Cruel.

‡ The magnificence of their buildings appears in the remains of them still existing.