

Montegil. Lastly, the Sierra Nevada, or Snowy Mountains, that commence between the sources of the Xucar, Gaudiana, and Guadalquivir, and extend into Andalusia. These last are here extremely steep and bare, mostly schistose, and often coated with limestone. They have white quartz in considerable veins; and valuable dark green, and a profusion of other marbles. The N.E. part of the Sierra Morena is of considerable height, and rather resembles table-land than a ridge of hills. The seasons are very different on the two sides of this range. In Andalusia, the vines are all in leaf, and the fruit is set, when, on the N. side, hardly a leaf is to be seen, or a bud to be found in the vineyards. There are here a few remains of former forests, which might have existed when Cervantes made these parts the scene of the exploits of his hero; and a variety of flowering shrubs, particularly the rock-rose, or gum cistus, from which manna is procured, and sumach. In this chain are vertical beds of argillaceous schist, and beds of grained quartz, with entire hills of pudding stone, and some porphyry, and the finest jasper. It is the richest in minerals of any in the kingdom; and has veins of gold and silver. The quicksilver mines at Almaden have been worked for nearly 3,000 years, and furnished the vermilion sent to ancient Rome. They produce annually 2,000,000 lbs. of quicksilver. (Bowles, *Historia Natural de España*, p. 12; *A Year in Spain* by a Young American, i. 199.) The Castilian mountains are composed of gneiss granite, which often terminates in peaks of great height; schist, limestone, sandstone, breccia, quartz, marble, gypsum, &c. The Guadarama mountains, about 20 m. N.W. Madrid, are bleak, dreary and barren near their summits, which, in many places, are covered with nearly perpetual snow, indicating that they must be 8,000 or 9,000 ft. above the level of the sea; the limit of perpetual snow in these latitudes being about 9,900 ft. The height of Moncayo, the highest mountain in Castile, is estimated at 9,600 ft. The rock, being partly decomposed, forms a light soil that produces the *juniper europæus*, *Daphne mezereum*, *matricaria suavia*, *genista*, thyme, and a great many other aromatic herbs. The cistus tribes abound at every level on the granite mountains, not covered with snow; pines appear on the summits; the noble oak and the elm near their bases. (Townsend, ii. 106.) The scenery is often of the wildest description; the mountains full of deep cuts and ravines, mostly the beds of winter torrents; aged and stunted pines hang upon their edges, and are strewn upon the brown acclivities around; and bare rocks frequently project over the passes, and force them to the very edge of undefended precipices. (Inglish, i. 355.) The quality of the soil is various; in some parts a blackish or brown nitrous clay, which is extremely fertile; in others, light and stony, and little productive. New Castile is in great part clayey, and covered with ratchil. Besides the minerals mentioned above, the Castiles produce calamine, ochre, bole armeniac, fine emery, rock crystal, salt, many curious stones and fossil shells, hot and cold saline springs; and in the mountains are many remarkable caverns, that contain beautiful stalactites, in a variety of fantastic forms. Near Molina is the hill of La Platilla, which has a remarkable mine of copper, in masses of white quartz. Though the ore is near the surface, the hill is covered with plants. Townsend had no doubt that there is tin near Daroca. (i. 218, 219, 303; ii. 106; Miñano, *Diccionario Geográfico*, ii. 467, *et seq.*; Dillon's *Travels through Spain*, p. 110, 112, 115, 196, 202, 205-207, 237, 239; Antillon, *Géographie d'Espagne*, p. 8-14.)

The climate of the Castiles is in general healthy;

that of Old Castile is rather cold and moist. In new Castile it is excessively dry; but rendered healthy by the purity of the prevailing winds, and the great elevation of the country; but this altitude sometimes exposes it to strong dry winds, which, not meeting with the thick woods by which they were formerly tempered, are found very unpleasant, and at times even dangerous, at Madrid, in winter, by producing pulmonary complaints. The height of the plateau of Castile reduces the mean temperature to 59 Fahr., while on the coasts of Spain it is from 65° to 75°. The ordinary extremes of temperature, in Madrid, are 90° Fahr. in summer, and 32° in winter; but the thermometer often rises to above 100°, and falls below 14°.

Products.—The principal product of the Castiles is corn, some of which they export to Valencia, Andalusia, and Estremadura. No other province of Spain has wines so strong, and yet so sweet, though but little exported, or known abroad. The most celebrated is that of the Val de Peñas, or 'Valley of Stones,' in La Mancha. It is a dry, strong, red wine of the Burgundy species, and is said to be so plentiful and cheap that a bottle may be had in the country for 1½d. It is drunk by the better classes all over the Castiles; but in the greatest perfection in its native district, on account of the taint given it by the skins in which it is carried to a distance. The Castiles produce also pulse, and some fruit and oil. Hemp, flax, madder and saffron are partially cultivated. Garden stuffs are not abundant. On the mountains and in the pastures considerable numbers of black cattle, sheep, and mules are raised; but the increase of the latter has almost annihilated the race of good horses in the Castiles. There are fallow deer, wild boars, wolves, hares, peacocks, and all kinds of poultry and small game in abundance. The larger game has decreased through the breaking up of the land near the royal seats during the absence of Ferdinand VII. Bears are seen in some parts, and lynxes are not uncommon in the high mountains. Not only the fallow land, but the cultivated fields in New Castile, are full of two species of broom (*genista sphaerocarpa* and *monosperma*), and the *Daphne gnidium*. They grow to nearly six feet in height, and have a great effect on the prospect. These plants, with the *asphodelus ramosus*, and several other bulbous plants that abound in the pasture fields, give a peculiar character to the landscape of Spain. There is a want of trees, which is partly attributable to the flat and unsheltered nature of the plains, and the dryness of the climate, but chiefly to a prejudice against them, entertained from time immemorial; the peasantry thinking that they are good for nothing, unless it be to attract and shelter vermin. They dislike them so much that they destroy those planted by government along the high roads. It is believed that the want of trees to attract humidity has promoted that drought which, next to bad government, is the curse of the Castiles. From the Douro to the Tagus there is not a stream ankle deep, except when swollen by floods. Agriculture is in the most backward state: the consequence of a comparatively thin population, having little interest in the soil, which is monopolised by the clergy and nobility. Irrigation, which in such a country is indispensable, is but very little practised, and even manuring is all but neglected: and thus, while three-fourths of the country remain fallow, the rest produces only poor crops of grain or potatoes. The great distance between the towns, the badness of the roads, and still more the insecurity of life and property, which prevents

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