

R-3717

TOWN SEND, Joseph
Viaje por España. Comarca
de los Vélez.

guished from grafs ; at a lower level becomes long and rampant. The vines begin to shoot, the lark is warbling in the air, and throughout a wide-extended valley the crops every where promise an abundant harvest.

At the distance of *a league* from *Vertientes*, or, according to the expreffion of my guide, of *a league as long as Lent*, is *Chirivél*, a village containing a hundred and fifty houfes, which, with fourteen others, including all the adjacent country, and one third of the tithe, is the property of the Dutchefs of Alba. Here they have neither beef nor mutton ; goats flesh fells for ten quartos, or $2\frac{1}{6}$ pence a pound of fixteen ounces ; and bread for two quartos and a half, or $\frac{4}{8}$ of a penny.

From hence we defcend three leagues in the wide channel of a torrent, fhut in by high hills and rugged rocks of fchift, all the way to *Velez el Rubio*, where the country again opens on the view, and the vale expands.

This town is faid to contain three thoufand families, with one folitary convent, and a beautiful church, built by the Dutchefs

Dutchefs

Dutchefs of Alba, to whom the town and the adjacent lands belong.

The *Posada* makes a magnificent appearance, and, for a Spanish inn, may be called commodious; but, considering the expence the Dutchefs has been at for the advantage of the public, more attention should have been paid to the comfort of genteeler travellers. The rooms, destined for their reception, are of a good size, and communicate by means of a spacious gallery. But the whole of the ground floor is abandoned to the carriers, and consists of a small kitchen, with a vast repository, designed at once for the lading of their mules, for their entertainment, and for their dormitory. Here their noise and riot, resounding through the house by means of the long gallery, is intolerable; and, as the kitchen is open, they are constantly crowding round the hearth to procure their suppers, leaving the mistress of the *posada* no *leisure* to pay attention to any guests beside themselves.

The town is commanded by a castle formerly strong, now going to decay.

They have no beef. Mutton is sold for

twelve quartos a pound, ($3\frac{5}{8}$ pence), goats flesh for ten, bread for four.

From Velez you pass over an open and a fertile plain, till you reach the confines, and from the kingdom of Granada enter Murcia. Here the prospect changes; and, instead of a level country productive of grain, and not destitute of fruit trees, you meet with nothing but hills, barren, wild, and desolate, the resort of wolves, and covered chiefly with the esparto rush.

To guard this pass, a castle, called *Xixena*, formerly a place of strength, was erected on the summit of a craggy rock, and its ruins still preserve a respectable appearance. The rock is schist.

As we drew nigh to *Lorca*, we overtook numerous droves of asses, loaded with pine-wood, cleft for the service of the hearth; and observed the Tamarisk, with the Nerium Oleander in great abundance.

Here the soil is white, and the gypsum rock appears.

After having passed three days in these elevated regions, constantly in sight of snow, and exposed to the severity of the winter's cold, the sudden transition to the