

CHAP. V.

Revenue continued.—Licence of Cockpits.—Indian Tributes.—Subaltern Branches.—Disbursements, and general Expenses.

LICENCE OF COCKPITS.—This branch of the revenue is hired out by the government, and the licence is separately set up at auction for the respective provinces. Its nature and regulations are so well known, that they do not require a particular description; the general obligations of the contractors being the same as those in New Spain. Perhaps the only difference observed in this public exhibition in the Philippine Islands, consists in its greater simplicity, owing to its being frequented only by the natives, the whites who are present at this kind of diversion, being very few, or indeed none.

The cockpits are open two days in the week, and the renters of them receive half a rial from every person who enters, besides the extra price they charge those who occupy the best seats, the owners of the fighting cocks, for the spurs, stalls for the sale of *buyo*, refreshments, &c. Notwithstanding all this, and although cock-fighting is so general and favourite an amusement among

these people, that the cock may justly be considered as the distinctive emblem of the Philippine Indian, the annual proceeds of this branch are inconsiderable; although it must be acknowledged that it has greatly increased since the year 1780, when it appears the licence was let at auction for no more than 14,000 dollars, owing no doubt to the exclusive privilege of the contractors not having been extended to the provinces, as was afterwards gradually done.

The total sum paid to government by the renters of this branch, according to the auction returns in 1810, amounted to 40,141 dollars, in the following order.

Province of Tondo	18,501
----- Cavite	2,225
----- La Laguna	2,005
----- La Pampanga	3,000
----- Bulacan	6,900
----- Batangas	2,000
----- Pangasinan	1,200
----- Bataan	1,050
----- Iloilo	1,600
----- Ilocos	600
----- Tayabas	400
----- Zebu	360
----- Albay	300
Dollars	40,141 *

* It is singular that the produce of this branch of revenue

The causes to which the increase is chiefly to be attributed, that has taken place within the last 25 or 30 years, have already been pointed out, and for this reason it would appear that, by adopting the same plan with regard to the fourteen remaining provinces, of which this captaincy general is composed, hitherto free from the imposition of this tax, an augmentation might be expected, proportionate to the population, their circumstances, and the greater or less taste for cock-fights prevailing among the respective inhabitants. At the commencement, no doubt, the rentals would be low, and of course the prices at which the licences were let out, would be equally so; but the experience and profits derivable from this kind of enterprises, would not fail soon to excite the competition of contractors, and in this way add to the revenue of the government. This is so obvious, that I cannot help suspecting attempts have, at some period or other, been made to introduce the establishment of this privilege, in some of the provinces above alluded to; at the same time I

in the Philippine Islands, is nearly equal to that of New Spain, a country containing more than double the inhabitants, the entries at the treasury there being calculated at 45,000 dollars. This proves the greater partiality for this species of diversion.

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am persuaded that, owing to the affair not having been viewed in its proper light, seeking on the contrary to obtain an immediate and disproportionate result, the authorities have been too soon disheartened, and given up the project without a fair trial. All towns and districts murmur, and at first object to taxes, however light they may be; but, at length, if they are not excessive, the people become reconciled to them. The one here proposed is neither of this character, nor can it be deemed odious on account of its novelty. The Indians are well aware that their brethren in the other provinces are subject to it, and that in this nothing more is done than rendering the system uniform. I therefore see no reason why the establishment of this branch of revenue should not be extended to all the points of the islands, at the commencement, let it produce what it may, since constancy and time will bring things to the same general level.

INDIAN TRIBUTES.—The too great condescension and mistaken humanity of the government on the one hand, and the fraud and selfishness of the provincial sub-delegates or collectors, on the other, have concurred to change a contribution, the most simple, into one of the most complicated branches of public administration. The first cause has been owing to a too general

acquiescence to receive the amount of tributes in the produce peculiar to each province, instead of money; and the second, because as the above officers are the persons intrusted with the collection, whenever the sale has held out to them any advantage, they have been in the habit of appropriating the several articles to themselves, without allowing any benefit to the treasury. If the prospective sales of the produce appear unfavourable, it is then forwarded on to the king's stores in Manilla, surcharged with freights, exposed to many risks, and the value greatly diminished by waste and many other causes. No order or regularity being thus observed in this respect, and the sale of the produce transmitted to the king's stores being regulated by the greater or lesser abundance in the general market, and a considerable stock besides left remaining, from one year to another, and eventually spoiled, it is almost impossible to form any exact estimate of this branch. If to these complicated matters we add the radical vices arising out of the infidelity of the heads of clans, the difficulty of ascertaining the defects of the returns made out by them, the variations annually occurring in the number of those exempted either through age or other legal motives, and above all, the frequently inevitable tardiness with which the district magistrates send in their

respective accounts, it will be readily acknowledged, that no department requires more zeal in its administration, and no one is more susceptible of all kinds of frauds, or attended with more difficulties.

In this state of uncertainty, with regard to this particular branch, I have guided myself by the last general return of tributes, made out in the accountant-general's office, on the best and most recent data, and calculating indistinctly the whole value in money, I have deemed it proper afterwards to make a moderate deduction, on account of the differences above stated, and arising out of the collection of the tributes in kind, the expences of conveyance, shipwrecks, averages, and other causes already enumerated. That a complete view may be had of this subject, reference may also be made to the statement contained in Table, N°. IX.

In conformity to this calculation, the total proceeds of this branch of revenue amount to 506,215 dollars, from which sum are deducted, in the primitive stages of the accounts, the amount of ecclesiastical stipends, the pay of the troops under the immediate orders of the chief district magistrates in their quality of war-captains, together with all other extraordinary expences incurred in the provinces by orders of the government, the remainder being afterwards

forwarded to the king's treasury*. It ought, however, to be observed, that the above aggregate sum is more or less liable to deficiencies, according to the greater or lesser degree of punctuality on the part of the sub-collectors in making up their accounts, and the solidity of

* Humboldt rates the gross proceeds of the capitation-tax in New Spain, at 1,300,000 dollars, leaving 899,521 dollars nett amount, after deducting the expences belonging to this branch. In 1746, this did not exceed 650,000 dollars, a consoling proof that the Indian population has increased, and civilization been extended. The following are the official returns of the Indians of Peru and amount of tributes paid by them; and will serve to form a comparison between three of the most interesting portions of the transmarine dominions of Spain.

Indian men	314,863
Indian women	304,327
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Total subject to tribute	619,190
Exempt from infirmity, &c.....	173,615
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Total Indians in Peru	792,805
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Amount of tributes received in 1795	885,586 dollars.
Received from the hospital,	25,852
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	911,438
Deduct expences, pensions, &c.....	374,052
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Nett amount	537,386 dollars.
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The collection of this rate in Peru is managed by a Board, consisting of a president and five commissioners.—*Tr.*

their respective sureties ; the failures of this kind experienced by the revenue being so frequent, that, according to the returns of the accountant-general, those which occurred between the years 1762 and 1809, were no less than 215,765 dollars, notwithstanding the great precautions at all times taken to prevent such considerable injuries, by every means compatible with the precarious tenure of property, possessed by both principals and sureties in this country. All the above circumstances being therefore taken into due consideration, and the ordinary and extraordinary discounts made from the total amount of tributes, the real sum remaining, or the nett annual proceeds of the above branch, have usually not been rated at more than 190 or 200,000 dollars; a sum respectively extremely small, and which possibly might be doubled, without the necessity of recurring to any other measure than a standing order for the collecting of the tributes in money, as by this means the variety of expences and complications above enumerated, would be avoided, and the king's revenue no longer exposed to any other deficiencies than those arising out of the insolvency of the sub-collectors and their sureties, or casual risks, and the trifling charges paid for the conveyance of the money. If in opposition to this it should be alleged, that it would be advisable to except some of the pro-

vinces from this general rule, owing to the advantage the government might derive from certain tributes being paid in kind, I do not hesitate to answer, that I see no reason whatever why this should be done, because, if, for example, any quantity of rigging or sail-cloth is annually required, it would be easy to obtain it either by early contracts, or by laying in the articles at the current market price. Indeed, all supplies which do not rest on this footing, would be to defraud the Indian of the fruits of his industry, and in the final result this would be the same as requiring of him double or triple tribute, contrary to the spirit of the law, and which unfortunately is too frequently the case, under the existing system.

Considering this affair in another point of view, it would be easy for me to demonstrate, if it were necessary, the mistaken idea that the Indian is benefited by receiving in kind the amount of the tribute he has to pay, at the low prices marked in the tariff used as a standard, by shewing the extortions and brokerage, if I may so term it, to which the practice gives rise on the part of the district collectors. It will, however, suffice to call the attention of my readers to the smallness of the sum, constituting the ordinary tribute, when reduced to money, in order for them to be convinced that it would

be superfluous, as well as hazardous, to attempt to point out means by which this branch might be rendered more productive to the state, and at the same time less burdensome to the contributors, more particularly when the rate assessed does not exceed 10 rials per year, a sum so small, that generally speaking, no family can be found unable to hoard it up, if they have any inclination so to do.

The prevailing error, however, in this respect, I am confident arises out of a principle very different from the one to which it is usually attributed. The tributary Indian is, in fact, disposed to pay the quota assigned to him into the hands of the chief of his clan, in money, in preference to kind; because, independent of the small value at which the articles in kind are rated in the tariff, he is then exposed to no expences, as he now is for the conveyance of his produce and effects; nor is he liable to so many accidents. But as the chief of each clan has to deliver in his 40 or 50 tributes to the head magistrate, who is answerable for those of the whole province, it is natural for him to endeavour to make his corresponding payments in some equivalent affording him a profit; at the same time the provincial magistrate, speculating on a larger scale, on the produce arising out of his jurisdiction, seeks to obtain from the government a

profitable commutation in kind for that which the original contributor would have preferred paying in money. In order the better to attain his purpose, he asserts, as a pretext, the impossibility of collecting in the tribute under another form, alleging, moreover, the relief the Indian derives from this mode, whereas, if only duly examined, such a pretence is founded on the avarice, rather than the humanity of the magistrate.

Leaving to one side the defects attributable to the present mode of collection, and considering the tribute as it is in itself, the attentive observer must confess, that in no part of our Indies is this more moderate; and indeed, it is evident that the laws generally relating to the natives of these islands, seem to distinguish them with a decided predilection above those of the various sections of America*.

* The rate of the capitation tax is not uniform in all the divisions of Spanish America, nor indeed, in all the provinces of the same viceroyalty. In 1601, Humboldt says, the Indian paid 32 rials tribute, and 4 rials king's service; in all about 23 francs. It was afterwards reduced, and at present is about 11 francs; but besides the Indian pays parochial rates, viz. 10 francs for a baptism, 20 for a certificate of marriage, and 32 for burial expenses. To the above 62 francs levied by the church, about 25 or 30 more, of voluntary offerings, are to be added. These are the rates of New Spain.—Tn.

The tribute, in its origin, was only 8 rials per family; but the necessity of providing for the increased expences of the government, gave rise to this rate being afterwards raised to 10. The cast of the Sangley Mestizos pay double tribute, and the Sangleyes contribute at the rate of 6 dollars per head. Besides this, all pay a yearly sum, applicable to the funds belonging to the community, and the above two casts pay 3 rials more, as a church rate, and under the name of the Sanctuary, the whole being in the following form.

Entire Indian Tribute.	M. of Mestizos.	Sangleyes.
8 Rials, original tribute.	16 Rials.	6 Dollars each.
1½ Rials, for expences of troops.	3	
½ Rial of tythes.	1	
10 Rials, amount of tribute.	20 Rials.	6 Dollars.
1 Id. community funds.	1 Id.	6 Rials.
3 Id. sanctuary rate.	3 Id.	
14 Rials, total annual disbursement.	24 Rials.	6 Dols. 6 Rials.

The males commence paying tribute at twenty years of age and the females at twenty-five, if before they have not entered the matrimonial state, and in both the obligation ceases at the age of sixty. The chiefs of clans, or *cabezas de barangai* and their eldest sons, or in default of children, the person adopted in their stead,

that is, an entire tribute and a half, are exempt from this tax, as a remuneration for the trouble and responsibility they may have in collecting in the 40 or 50 tributes, of which their respective clans are composed. Besides these there are various other classes of exempted persons, such as soldiers who have served a certain number of years, those who have distinguished themselves in any particular manner in the improvement of industry or agriculture, and others who have received special certificates, on just and equitable grounds. On summing up the total number of exempted persons, on an average in the whole of the provinces, they will be found in the proportion of 50 to every 1000 entire tributes.

o The capitation-tax of the Sangleyes has usually been attended with so many difficulties in its collection, owing to the facilities with which they absent or secrete themselves, and the many stratagems this cunning and artful race employ to elude the vigilance of the commissioners, that the government has at length found itself compelled to let out this branch, as was done in 1800, when it was disposed of in the name of one of them for the moderate sum of 30,000 dollars; notwithstanding it is a generally received opinion, that the number of this description of Chinese, constantly residing in the islands, is above 7000, which, at the rate of 6 dollars per

head, would raise this proportion of the tax as high as 42,000 dollars.

The Community funds belonging to each town, have, in conformity to the regulations under which they are administered, a special, or I might say, local application ; but collected together into one stock, as is now the case, and directly administered by the government, they produce a more general utility. The head town of the province A, for example, requires to rebuild the public prison or town-hall, and its own private funds are not sufficient to defray the expences of the work in question. In this case, therefore, the government gives orders for the other dependent towns to make up the deficiency by taking their proportions from the respective coffers, as all have an equal interest in the proposed object being carried into effect. The king's officers, in consequence thereof, draw the corresponding sums from these funds, the whole of which are under their immediate superintendence. And in order that the surplus of this stock may not stand still, but obtain every possible increase in a country where the premium given for money is excessive, when let out at a maritime risk, it is ordered that some part shall be appropriated in this way, and on the same terms as those observed by the administrators of the charity funds belonging to the Mercy

establishment, and the third order of St. Francis, which is another of the great advantages of assembling this class of property.

In consequence of this judicious regulation, and the success with which this measure has hitherto been attended, the Community fund has gone on increasing in such a way that, notwithstanding the sums drawn from it for the purpose of constructing causeways, bridges, and other municipal objects, at the commencement of 1810, the stock in hand amounted to no less than 200,000 dollars; and it is natural to suppose when the outstanding premiums due shall have been paid in, a considerable augmentation will take place. This branch, although not exactly comprehended in those which constitute the revenue of the government, has so obvious an analogy with that of tributes, that I have not deemed it any essential deviation from the order and method I have hitherto observed in this work, to introduce it in this place, as in itself it did not deserve to be classed under a distinct head.

Notwithstanding the truth of what has been said with regard to the moderate rate of the tribute imposed on the Indian of the Philippine Islands, it would be extremely desirable if he could be altogether exonerated from a charge which he bears with great repugnance, by

some other substitute being adopted, indirectly producing an equivalent compensation. In the first place, because the just motives of complaint would cease, caused not only by the tribute, but also the manner of its collection; and an end would then be put to those intrigues and extortions the district magistrates commit, under the title of zealous collectors of the king's revenue, and the power of a multitude of subaltern tyrants, comprehended under the denomination of chiefs of Indian clans, would then also fall to the ground; a power which, if now employed for the purpose of oppressing and trampling on the liberties of inferiors, might some day or other be converted into an instrument, dangerous and subversive of our preponderance in the country. In the second place, if, among all civilized nations a capitation tax is in itself odious, it must incontestably be much more so among those whose unlettered state, far from allowing them to know that the social order requires a certain class of sacrifices for its better preservation, makes them attribute exactions of this kind to an abuse of superiority. Hence are they led to consider these restraints as the symbols of their own slavery and degradation, as in fact the natives in these islands have ample reasons for doing, when the legal exemption of the whites is considered, without any other apparent

reason than the difference of colour. Independent of this, the substitute above alluded to would be extremely expedient, inasmuch as it would greatly simplify the plan of administration, the accountant's department would be freed from the most painful part of its labours, and the district magistrates and sub-collectors would not so frequently be entangled in their accounts, and exposed to expensive and interminable law-suits, as now so often happens.

The difficulty, however, of finding out this compensation or substitute is matter of some consideration. On the one hand, if it was attempted to distribute the proceeds arising out of the tributes on other branches, such as tobacco, country wine, *bonga*, and custom house, it would, at first sight, appear possible, through the medium of an almost invisible augmentation in the respective sale prices and in the king's duties, that this important object might easily be attained; but, on the other, it might be apprehended that the additional value put on the articles above-mentioned, would produce in their consumption a diminution equal to the difference in prices, in which case no advantage would be gained. The practicability of the operation, in my opinion, depends on the proportion in which the means of obtaining the articles in question respectively stand with the probability of their being con-

sumed. I will explain myself. If, for example, the annual stock of tobacco laid in should be insufficient to meet the wants of the consumers, as constantly occurs, it is clear that this article, when monopolized, will bear a small augmentation of price, not only without any inconvenience or risk, but with the moral certainty of obtaining a positive increase of revenue, the necessary effect of the total consumption of the tobacco laid in and sold. But as this does not happen with the branch of country wines, of which the stock usually exceeds the demand, and as the *bonga* also is not susceptible of this improvement, owing to the small place it occupies among the other resources of the revenue, no other means are left than to add to the duties of export on silver, and of import on foreign merchandise, a per centage equivalent to the deficiency not laid on tobacco, unless it should be deemed more advisable to levy a sumptuary contribution on coaches, horses and servants, and especially on all kinds of edifices and houses built of stone and mortar, situated both within and without the capital.

However this may be, whatever the king loses in revenue by the abolition of the Indian tributes, no doubt, could be made up by an appeal to other ways and means. It is well known that many of the Indian tribes refuse to become sub-

jects of the crown and object to enter into general society, on account of the odious idea they have formed of paying tribute ; or, as they understand it, the obligation of giving something for nothing, notwithstanding those who voluntarily submit themselves to our laws, are exempt from tribute, and this charge falls only on their descendants. But of this they must either be ignorant, or they regret depriving their posterity of that independence in which they themselves have been brought up, and thus transmit to them slavery as an inheritance. As soon, therefore, as a general exemption of this kind, without distinction of casts, should be made public, the Indians would quit their fastnesses and secluded places, and satisfied with the security offered to them, would be seen coming down to the plains in search of the conveniences of civilized life, and all gradually would be reduced to Christianity. Hence the increase of productions and their consumption, as well as the extension of agriculture, industry, and internal commerce. The diminution of smuggling tobacco would soon follow, progress would be made in the knowledge of the mines and natural riches of the country, and finally, greater facilities would present themselves in gradually carrying into effect its entire conquest and civilization.

Advantages of such great and extraordinary importance deserve to be seriously weighed, and to this valuable department of public administration the early attention of those in authority ought to be called. Let due enquiries be made, and soon shall we discover the substantial benefits which would be derived to the treasury from the adoption of this measure, as popular as it is just, and also conformable to the enlightened and liberal spirit of the times. In support of the preceding arguments, it ought further to be observed, that when all the branches constituting the king's revenue are well organized, brought to their most productive state, and the public debt contracted under unforeseen exigencies paid off, as long as present circumstances do not vary, an annual surplus of revenue, equal to more than 500,000 dollars, will be left; and as the proceeds of the particular branch of tributes do not amount to this sum, it is evident their abolition may take place, not only without any derangement or onerous consequences to the administration, but even without any deficiency being experienced, or any necessity to recur to the treasury of New Spain for extraordinary aid. These reasons acquire still greater force when it is remembered that, as things now are, all the branches of public revenue are in a progressively improving condition, and as the whole

are still susceptible of a much more productive organization, the annual surplus of receipts will rapidly become greater, and consequently also, the necessity will diminish of continuing to burden this portion of his Majesty's dominions with contributions, in order to meet the expenses of their defence and preservation.

Finally, well convinced of the advantageous results which, in every sense, would emanate from the revision and reforms proposed, I abstain from offering, in support of my arguments, a variety of other reflections which occur to me, not to be too diffuse on this subject; trusting that the hints I have already thrown out will be more than sufficient to excite an interest and promote a thorough and impartial investigation of concerns, highly important to the future welfare and security of this colony.

SUBALTERN BRANCHES.—Besides the six preceding branches which constitute the chief mass of the public revenue in these islands, there are several smaller ones of less consideration and amount; some having a direct application to the general expences of the local government, and the others, intended as remittances to Spain; a distinction of little import and scarcely deserving of notice, since the object of the present sketch is to convey information on a large scale respecting the King's revenue in these islands.

As some of them, however, yield proceeds more regular than others, I have classed together the receipts of the Pope's Bulls, or *Bulas de Cruzada*, playing-cards, tythes, stamps and gunpowder, under the head of Subaltern Branches, referring, with regard to the rest, to the general statement already quoted and found in Table, N°. VI.

In conformity to the returns with which I have been favoured from the public offices, these five branches produced, in the year 1809, 45,090 dollars, 3 rials, in the following proportions.

	Sales.	Expenses.	Nett Proceeds.
Pope's bulls	15,360 6	4422 2	10,938 4
Playing cards	11,539 1	932 5	10,606 4
Tythes - -	12,493 0	- - - -	12,493 0
Stamps - -	4,467 4	321 4	4,146 0
Gunpowder -	7,307 5	401 1	6,906 3
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Dollars	51,168 1	6077 6	45,090 3
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The scanty proceeds of the tythes will naturally appear remarkable; but it ought to be remembered that, besides their ordinary tribute, the natives pay half a rial under this denomination, without any distinction of persons, or any reference whatever to their respective means, the

total amount of which is already added to the tributes, and for this reason not repeated in this place. In addition also no tythes are levied, except on lands belonging to Spaniards, churches, regular clergy, ecclesiastical corporations, &c. and even then the articles of rice, wheat, pulse, indigo and sugar, are alone liable. The above branches are all in charge of administrators, and from this plan it certainly would be advisable to separate the tythes and farm them out at public auction, as was proposed by the king's officers of the treasury, in their report on this, as well as other points, concerning the revenue, and dated 24th October, 1792. From the nett proceeds of the gunpowder the expences of its manufacture, confided to the commandant of artillery, ought seemingly to be deducted; but, as they cannot be ascertained with any degree of certainty, and as besides they are comprehended in the general expences of that department, a separate deduction may be dispensed with.

DISBURSEMENTS AND GENERAL EXPENCES.

—In order to form a correct idea of the annual amount of the expenditure incurred by the administration and defence of the Philippine Islands, it is not necessary in this place to distinguish each item, separately; or to enumerate them with their respective sums or particular denominations, as will be found stated in Table,

N°. X. Some general observations on this subject ought, nevertheless, to be made, with a view to point out the reforms of which this important department of the public revenue is susceptible.

In the part relating to the interior administration or government, ample room is certainly left for that kind of economy arising out of the adoption of a general system, little complicated; but it is besides indispensably necessary that, at the same time the work is simplified and useless hands dismissed, the salaries of those who remain should be proportionably increased, in order to stimulate them in the due performance of their duties. It might also be found advisable to create a small number of officers of a superior order, who would be enabled to co-operate in the collection of the king's revenue, and the encouragement of agriculture, commerce and navigation, in their respective departments. The additional charges in this respect cannot be of any great consequence; although, in reality, by the receipts increasing through the impulse of an administrative order more perfect, and the expences being always the same, the main object, so anxiously sought for in another way, would be thus attained.

The reverse, however, happens with regard to the expences of defence, as I have called them, the better to distinguish them from those purely

relating to the interior police or administration. Every sacrifice, most assuredly, ought to appear small, when the object is to preserve a country from falling into the hands of an enemy, and hence it ought not to excite surprise, if, during the course of the last fifteen years, several millions of dollars have been expended in the Philippines, in order to shield them from so dreadful a misfortune. But the late memorable revolution in the Peninsula has given rise to so great a change in our political relations, and it is so extremely improbable that these islands will be again exposed to the same danger and alarm, that the government may now, without any apparent risk, dispense with a considerable part of the preparations of defence, at one time deemed indispensably necessary. A colony that has no other strong place to garrison than its capital, and on the loyalty of whose inhabitants there are sufficient motives to rely, ought, in my opinion, to be considered as adequately provided against all ordinary occurrences in time of peace, with the 4000 regulars, more or less, of all arms, the usual military establishment. In case any suspicions should arise of an early rupture with the only power whose forces can inspire the governors of these islands with any kind of apprehensions, means will not be wanting to an active and provident minister, of giving proper ad-

vice, so as to allow sufficient time for the assembling of the battalions of provincial militia and all the other necessary preparations of defence, before the enemy is in an attitude to effect an invasion of a country so far distant from his own possessions on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel. Consequently, by disbanding the corps of provincial infantry, cavalry and artillery, which continue uselessly to be kept on foot, an annual saving of from 220 to 250,000 dollars would take place, an amount too great to be expended, unless imperiously called for by the evident dread of a premeditated attack from an hostile quarter.

The navy is another of the departments in which reforms may be introduced, of no small moment to the treasury. Of course, by the government, merely dispensing with the policy of keeping in readiness two large ships to convey to Acapulco the cargoes, for which the Manilla merchants enjoy an annual licence, and leaving to the latter the full liberty of following up their speculations on their own account and risk, in vessels of their own, individually or with joint stock, a saving would result in favour of the crown equal to 140 or 150,000 dollars per annum, and without preventing the receipt in Acapulco of the customary duties of 160 or 166,000 dollars, corresponding to the said licences. This

will evidently be the case, because as long as the large disposable funds of the charitable institutions are employed in maritime risks, and the private property of others is besides added to them; the amount of the operations undertaken by the merchants of the Philippines to New Spain, when divested of all restraint, will always exceed 500,000 dollars per annum. Nor is there now any further occasion for the government to continue granting this species of gratuitous tutelage to a body of men possessed of ample means to manage their own affairs, and who demand the same degree of freedom, and only seek a protection similar to that enjoyed by their fellow-countrymen in other parts of the king's dominions.

In case the above reform should be adopted, it might be deemed requisite for government to undertake the payment of some part of the charges under the existing order of things, defrayed out of the freights to which the merchandise shipped in the Acapulco traders is liable; because, calculating this freight at the usual rate of 200 dollars for each three bales, or the amount of one ticket, out of the one thousand constituting the entire cargo, and of which one half, or 100,000 dollars, more or less, is appropriated to the ecclesiastical chapter, municipality, officers of the regular army (excluding captains and the other higher ranks) and the widows of

Spaniards, who in this case would be losers, independent of the remaining 100,000 dollars, or 500 tickets distributed among the 200 persons having a right to ship to Acapulco, it would, at first sight, appear reasonable for the treasury, to indemnify the above description of persons by a compensation, equivalent to the privation they experience through the new arrangements of the government. But as the practice of abuses constitutes no law, and what is given through favour is different to that which is required by justice, there are no reasons whatever why the treasury should be bound to support the widows of private persons, from the mere circumstance of their deceased husbands having been Spaniards; more particularly if it is considered that, far from having acquired any special merit during their lifetime, most of them voluntarily left their native country for the purpose of increasing their fortunes, and others were banished from it, owing to their bad conduct. Neither can it be said that the municipality have a legal right, in the case before stated, to receive any equivalent for the value of their respective annual tickets, which, when disposed of, usually amount to about 20,000 dollars; in the first place, because it is well known that the eleven aldermens' seats, of which that body is composed, seats which can either be sold or resigned, originally did not cost as much as 50,000 dollars, and clearly the

principal invested is out of all kind of proportion with the enormous premium or income claimed. In the second place, although the above municipal situations were originally purchased with a view to obtain some advantages, these formerly were very different to what they are at present, when the great increase of shippers to Acapulco, or in more plain terms, of purchasers of tickets competing to obtain them, has given to these permits a value more than triple to that they possessed thirty years ago.

In order, therefore, to do away with all motives of doubt and dispute, as well as for many other reasons of public utility, the best plan, in my opinion, would be, to return to each alderman his money, and the present municipal constitution being dissolved, the number of members might be reduced to four, with their corresponding registrar, and like the two ordinary *alcaldes*, elected every year without any other reward than the honour of presiding over and representing their fellow-citizens*. Under this supposi-

* The defective system here complained of, is now remedied by the reestablishment of the Constitution. By the 310th and following articles of the latter it is ordained, that every town containing 1000 souls, shall have a municipality, and the law is to determine the number of members, according to the population. The members are to be elected by the towns and perpetual seats abolished. The month of December is the period

tion, the only classes entitled to a compensation, strictly speaking, would be the ecclesiastical chapter and the subaltern officers, whose respective pay and appointments are not in fact sufficient for the decency and expences of their rank in society. Of course it would then be necessary to grant them more adequate allowances, but, according to reasonable calculations, the sum total annually required would not exceed 30,000 dollars; consequently, the reform projected with regard to the Acapulco ships, would still eventually produce to the treasury a saving of from 60 to 70,000 dollars in the first year of its adoption, and of 110 to 120,000 in every succeeding one.

It is, on the other hand, undeniable that, if the royal navy and cruising vessels, or those belonging to the islands and under the immediate orders of the captain-general, were united into one department, and placed under one head, considerable economy would ensue, and all motives of discord and emulation be moreover

fixed for the elections, in which the residents have a vote, and the members and their officers elected, commence their functions on the succeeding 1st of January, in each year. The alcalde or mayor, is to be changed every year, and the regidores, or aldermen, in the proportion of one half also every year, and to have a seat they must be thirty-five years of age.—Tn.

removed. Such would be the case, if the change was attended with no other circumstances than the consèquent diminution of commanders, subaltern officers, and clerks; but it would be also proper to unite the arsenals, and adopt a more general uniformity in the operations and dependences of this part of the public service. It is equally certain that, during peaceful times, the two schooners and sixty gun-boats, constituting the number of the above-mentioned cruising vessels, would be in great measure useless; whilst in case of a rupture, they are not sufficient to protect the trade of these islands from the attacks of an enemy, notwithstanding they now cost the government considerable sums in repairs, &c. in order to keep them fit for service. The government ought therefore to guard against this waste of public money, without, however, neglecting the defence of the islands, objects which, in my opinion, might easily be reconciled. Intelligent persons have judged, that by reducing the naval forces to two frigates, two schooners, and about a dozen of gun-boats, the essential wants of the colony would be duly answered, in ordinary times; and some of the vessels might then be destined to pursue hydrographical labours in the Archipelago, which unfortunately are in a most backward state, whilst others could be sent on their

periodical cruises against the Moors. By this means, at least, the navy department would be greatly simplified, and cease to be uselessly burdensome to the government. With regard to the superfluous gun-boats, it would be expedient to distribute them gratuitously among the marine provinces and Bisayas Islands, on the only condition of their being always kept fit for service; as, in one sense, the great expences of maintaining them would be thus saved by the treasury; and, in another, the inhabitants of those portions of the coast would be in possession of means sufficiently powerful to repel the aggressions of the Moors, who commit great ravages on their settlements. Finally, if besides the reforms of which the army and navy are susceptible, it is considered that the public works, such as prisons, schools, bridges and causeways, so expensive in other countries, in the Philippines are constructed by the natives on the most reasonable terms, out of the community funds; that there is no necessity to build fortifications, and maintain numerous garrisons; that the clergy, to whose zeal and powerful influence the preservation of these islands is chiefly due, do not cost the treasury annually above 200,000 dollars, and that the geographical situation of the colony in great measure shields it from the attacks of external enemies, it will readily be confessed,

that a wise and firm government might undertake, without the dread of having to encounter any very great obstacles, an administrative system, in a general point of view, infinitely more economical than the one hitherto followed; might be able to extirpate numerous abuses, and by calling forth the resources of the country, gradually raise it to a flourishing condition, and cause it hereafter to contribute largely to the other wants of the crown. Hence was it that the distinguished voyager, La Peyrouse (Chap. 15), contemplating these islands with a political eye, did not hesitate to affirm, "that a powerful nation, possessed of no other colonies than the Philippines, that should succeed in establishing there a form of government best adapted to their advantageous circumstances, would justly disregard all the other European establishments in Africa and America."