EUGENIO URROZ ERRIO

"The Vasco Country"

published in

SOL SILEN

La Historia de los Vascongados en el Oeste de los Estados Unidos.

New York

1917
Los Vascos del Oeste

Prendas que los adornan, sus costumbres señoras, y sobre todo, su estricta observancia de los principios de honradez, laboriosidad y lealtad, hacen que sean buscados con empeño, por las personas que son capaces de apreciar sus virtudes.

Esa admirable raza es la que tengo a orullo presentar en este libro. He tomado empeño en presentar en este libro a la mayoría de los vascos que pertenecen a la fraternidad de los hombres meritorios, entre los cuales hay quienes a costa de sacrificios, laboriosidad y buenos principios morales, están convirtiendo a los Estados del Oeste en el más grande de los emporios de América. Son los padres de niños que nuestra patria se enorgullecerá de contar en el número de sus mejores ciudadanos, y confío en que no está lejos el día en que el ser descendiente de vasco, sea un título a la consideración y estima del público en general, como sucede ya en la República Argentina.

Todo el trabajo y cuidado que se ha tenido para producir este libro sin tener en cuenta consideraciones pecuniarias, lo consideramos bien recompensado si logra transmitir la alta opinión en que tengo a ese maravilloso pueblo cuya historia encierra algunas de las páginas más espléndidas e interesantes del progreso humano.

Introduction

It would be impossible for me in the brief space allotted to give a complete history of the Basque people, so I confine myself to sketches from recognized authorities (Encyclopaedia Britannica) and to facts I have personally observed in the past 14 years.

"Arnauld De Oienart (1592-1668) Basque historian and poet, was born at Mauléon, and studied law at Bordeaux, where he took his degree in 1612. He practiced first in his native town, and after his marriage with Jeanne d'Erdoy, the heiress of a noble family of Saint-Palais, at the bar of the parlement of Navarre. He spent his leisure and his fortune in the search for documents bearing on the old Basque and Bearnese provinces; and the fruits of these studies in the archives of Bayonne, Toulouse, Pau, Perigord and other cities were embodied in fort-y-five MS. volumes, which were sent by his son Gabriel to Colbert, Twenty-three of these are in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris (Coll. Duchesne).

Oienart published in 1625 a Declaration historique de l'injuste usurpation et retenue de la Navarre par les Espagnols et a fragment of a Latin work on the same subject is included in Galland's Memories pour l'histoire de Navarre (1648). His most important work is Notitia utinamuius Vasconiae, tum Ibericae, tum Aquitaniae, qua propter silum, regionis et alia scita digna Navarre regnum coeterarumque: in iis insignum vetustate et dignitate familiarem... (Paris, 1653 and 1656) a description of Gascony and Navarre. His collection of over five hundred Basque proverbs, Asitizae edo Refrayæc, included in a volume of this poems Oten Gastarao Nervthivetan, printed in Paris in 1657, was supplemented by a second collection, Atsotizen Virrhenquina. The proverbs were edited by Fransénque Michel (Paris, 1847), and the supplement by P. Haristo (Bayonne, 1892) and by V. Stempf (Bordeaux, 1894)."

"On the origin of the Basques, the chief theories are:—(1) that they are descended from the tribes whom the Greeks and Latins called Iberi; (2) that they belong to some of the fairer Berber tribes ("Eurafican", Herve) and through the ancient Libyans, from a people depicted on the Egyptian monuments; (3) the Atlantida theory, that they belong to a lost Atlantic continent, whose inhabitants were represented by the Canaries of the Canary Islands, and by a fair race on the western coast of Africa; (4) that they are an indigenous race, who have never had any greater extension than their present quarters. "In customs, in institutions, in administration, in civil and political life there is no one thing that we can say is exclusively Basque; but their whole system marks them of from other people and especially from their neighbors."

"They inhabit the three Basque provinces—Biscay, Alava and Guipuzcoa—an in Navarre in Spain, and the arrondissement of Bayonne and Mauléon in France. The number of those who can be considered in any sense pure Basque is probably about 600,000 in Europe, with perhaps 100,000 emigrants in the Americas, chiefly in the region of La Plata in South America."

"The most marked features in the Basque character are an intense self-respect, a pride of race and an obstinate conservatism. Much has been written in ridicule of the claim of all Basques to be noble, but it was a fact both in the laws of Spain, in the fueros and in practice. Every Basque freeholder (veci-
no] child prove himself noble and thus eligible to any office. They are not a town race; a Basque village consists of a few houses; the population lives in scattered habitations. They do not fear solitude, and this makes them excellent emigrants and missionaries. They are splendid seamen, and were early renowned as whale fishermen in the Bay of Biscay. They were the first to establish the cod-fishery off the coast of Newfoundland. They took their full part in the colonization of America. Basque names abound in the older colonial families, and Basque newspapers have been published in Buenos Aires and Los Angeles, California. As soldiers they are splendid marchers; they retain the tenacity and power of endurance which the Romans remarked in the Iberians and Celtiberians. They are better in defence than in attack. The failure to take Bilbao was the turning point in both Carlist wars. In civil institutions and in the tenures of property the legal position of woman was very high. The eldest born whether boy or girl, inherited the ancestral property, and this not only among the higher classes but among the peasantry also. In the fueros an insult done to a woman, or in the presence of a woman, is punished more severely than a similar offence among men.

We often hear the Basque people criticized for coming to America, attaining a competency and then returning to Europe. Much can be said in their defence. They arrive in America, strangers in a strange land, language and customs unknown and by self-sacrifice and hard, conscientious work, in the ice blasts of winter and the burning sun of summer, through privations and dangers, save sufficient money to enter the business world in a humble way. Most of the Basques engage in sheep and cattle raising, their environments and characteristics. The attraction is particularly great to these lines of endeavor. With frugality and perseverance they finally are numbered among the wealthy men of the West. Very few return to Spain until they are worth from $25,000 to $150,000, and naturally when fortune has smiled upon them they long to return to their native land; perhaps to see an aged father or mother—to old and feeble—to cross the water; wife and children, and often too, a sweetheart, waits for them. On these trips some of them spend $5,000, many a great deal less. They seldom dispose of their interests, but place them in charge of some competent person and upon their return take up active business life. Ninety-eight per cent of them return to America. They learn to love the land of their adoption and are loyal, patriotic citizens. Wherever they establish their homes, that community is the better. They are intelligent, energetic and progressive people; they hold valuable landed estates and erect substantial business structures and homes that are a credit to their respective communities. Their children are robust, healthy, bright, and they are given every educational advantage. The slogan, "See America First" was brought about by the great influx of American people into the European countries each year; many of them going to Europe yearly and spending from $10,000 to $25,000, for a trip. And they have been born and reared in America.

The Basques have added materially to the development of the West. In their respective communities they are strong factors in all that tends to advance the interests of their adopted homes. Their patronage is eagerly sought by banking institutions and commercial houses in all lines of business. They buy the best, meet their obligations promptly and have unlimited credit in the commercial world. They have a high standard of honor—thousands of dollars changing hands yearly among them without a written contract. They are honest and trustworthy; staunch and loyal in all transactions of life.

The Western States are favored by the majority of the basques who come to this country, and they have become a very important factor in the industry of sheep and cattle raising, as employees as well as owners. Their sterling honesty makes them to be eagerly sought by everybody and many of them, starting in very humble positions become partners of their former employers. Their deeply religious nature makes them men of very good morals, who establish themselves and raise families that are an honor to any country. Their reticence, born sometimes of their lack of knowledge of the language, is one of their characteristic traits. The basques, used to live in small communities are naturally reluctant to seek the acquaintance of those they do not know or understand, but once you gain their friendship, their good traits, their simple habits, and above all their strict observance of the moral principles of honesty, truthfulness and loyalty, make them men eagerly sought by all the persons that are able to appreciate their virtues.

This admirable race it is my pride to present in this book. I have taken great pains to present the majority of the basques that belong to the fraternity of real men who through sacrifice, steady work, honesty and good moral principles are making of the Western States the greatest emporium of America. They are the fathers of children that our country will count with pride within the number of its best citizens, and I am confident that the day is not far off when for a man to be of basque stock will be a title to the consideration and esteem of the
public at large, like already happens in the Argentine Republic.

All the labor and pains taken to produce this book, regardless of all pecuniary expenses I will consider well repaid, if it succeeds in conveying the high opinion I entertain about the wonderful people whose history embodies some of the most interesting pages of human progress.
Después que desapareció la histórica Co-fradía de Arriaga, la Hermandad de Alaba se reunió en Juntas Generales de Hermandad dos veces al año, por el mes de Mayo en Vitoria, y por Noviembre en la villa o lugar que previamente se acordase en la junta de Vitoria. La presidencia de las Juntas correspondió al Diputado General, que en tiempo de guerra, era maestro de campo o jefe militar de Alaba. Pero en esas Juntas el presidente tampoco emitía voto.

Además de estas dos Juntas ordinarias, podrían celebrarse otras extraordinarias, pero para evitar su reunión ordenó el Fuero, que además de los dos comisarios que debían nombrarse en la junta de noviembre, se elegiesen en la misma cuatro Diputados de Hermandad, que unidos a los dos comisarios, entendiendas en los asuntos de la hermandad general durante el periodo anual de junta a junta de San Martín.

Antes de la Revolución Francesa también el Labourd y el Soule tuvieron sus instituciones particulares y privativas y en Bilzar de Ustaritz se reunían los maistre-abbés de los pueblos del Labourd. En esas Juntas se nombraba al Sindicato del país del Labourd, a quien se confiaban todos los asuntos financieros y administrativos del país. Este convocaba al Bilzar de Ustaritz cada vez que juzgara necesaria la reunión, este derecho era exclusivo del Sindicato que ni los oficiales del rey podían provocar estas reuniones, ni someter a ellas ninguna proposición. Las atribuciones de los Sindicatos de Labourd, que desde 1603 se sucedieron regularmente, se generalizaron de tal manera que la administración civil del país estaba en sus manos. El Bailió era el representante del Rey y tenía bajo sus órdenes a otros funcionarios reales. Su teniente general celebraba sus audiencias en Ustaritz, sentenciando en todos los asuntos civiles y criminales del país.

En Soule, había dos Síndicos, uno de los cuales era designado para la nobleza y ambos eran nombrados por los Estados de Bearn. Desde 1467 ya se sabe quienes gozaron ese poder.

Tales eran las verdaderamente democráticas instituciones vascas, que desaparecieron en el Labourd, en el Soule y en la Baja Navarra al empuje de la pseudodemocracia igualdad y libertad revolucionaria de Francia de fines del siglo XVIII y que en el siglo XIX bajo el peso de una ley, se hundieron en Navarra, Vizcaya, Alaba y Guipúzcoa, sometidas a la constitución española y a las leyes emanadas de la Monarquía.

The Vasco Country

The few details that the historians have concerning the history of the Iberian peninsula, are very closely centred around the Oriental section of the Cantabric coast.

The passionate ardor which the history of the Vasco country was discussed in this first period, is inconceivable, but it is also undoubted that no serious-minded man has been satisfied after those tedious discussions. All the fruits it has given, after constant and tireless study is a sad doubt. If we tried to gather all that has been written about the origin of the Basques, our history would take many volumes, which is not our purpose. It is on that account we leave aside the opinions gathered by Abartiaque, in his peculiar pamphlet “De l’origine des Basques”, and in this present case, the best course is to say that from very remote epoch of the pre-history of the regions called today Alaba, Biscaya, Guipúzcoa, Navarre, Labourd and Soule (Lubero), in the zones that surrounds Soule (Lubero), there existed a country in which dwelt the “Euskara Race”, whose origin has never been known and therefore never revealed to the world. Their language, the old and peculiar “Euskara” has been traced as far back as the stone age, into which comes the element “Aitz”, stone of the “Neolithic Age”.

ANCIENT HISTORY

The history of the Vasco Country dawned when the Romans learned of the more developed portions of the Vasco Country, and sent there their cohorts.

With the conquest of Gaul and moreover of primitive Aquitania, which is today the French Vasco Country, and with the annexation of the villages in the neighborhood of the “Eukaros” of Spain by the Romans, followed the occupation of the plain (lano) section of Alaba and of Navarre, which crossed the Roman boundary, and ran from Burdigola (Bordeaux) to Asturica (Astorga).

Many historians have tried to prove that the Roman conquest did not extend into the Vasco provinces, and that the Romans or the naturalized Romans left large trails of that time in the section called Vasconia in which the whole of Navarre was situated. Aside
from the completely romanized cities of Cala-
orra and Cascante, of old Vasconia, there
remains no doubt. Pamplona was also a Ro-
manized City where there were Roman Temples,
palaces, mosaic, and capitals of the Roman
era.

In the village of Lara, situated near Aragui-
and in other parts of Navarre, there have been
found relics belonging to the Romans or the people
of that part of the country, that had
been romanized.

Along the Roman line in the “Alarez” terri-
itory, there have also been things which have
led to believe that the early settlers were the
Romans.

With reference to Guipuzcoa, neither the
Andreeregia of Oyaisus, nor the coins found
and used in the commercial trade prove any-
thing and the foundation of Fuenterabia,
attributed to the Romans, and also Berme,
is far from being the truth. However, old
geographers mention these places as belong-
ing to an ancient language of Vasconia,
which probably refers to the present Oyarsun
and promontory of Higuen of Fuenterabia-
Plino, probably referring to the nearby woods
of Orzo. They also speak of “Vasconium
Saltus” or Vasco Forests.

Though all the relics do not show a real
domination, one can take it for granted how-
ever, that the Romans exercised an influence
in the territories of the Euskaro; a thing easy
to do though they never succeeded in per-
namently establishing their language in any
part of that country. It is for this reason that
the supposition that the Romans never en-
tered the territory of the Basque provinces, is
not accepted by the majority of modern histor-
ians, among whom we must mention the
name of the chronic of the Basque Provinces,
Mr. Carmelo Echegaray and the notable
historian from Navarre, Mr. Arturo Campion,
whitout meaning by this that the Romans
completely conquered the inhabitants of this
region, a happening that could not have passed
unnoticed nor without leaving any traces
whichever.

Towards the year 568 B. C. there took place
the first clash between the Romans and Aqui-
tanians, within whose boundaries dwelt the
Tarbelli or people of Lapurduum. Historians
say that the Aquitanians were vanquished by
Craso, a lieutenant of the Caesar, and that
they were annexed to Caesar’s Empire. Later
on, through the efforts of a magistrare named
Fabius, of Hisparren, the Caesars conceded
self-government to the Novempopulans, or
Neo Aquitania.

The primitive geography of the Basque
provinces, also, some of its history has given
rise to the most bitter controversies. Formerly
the object of all discussions was to determine
the situation of ancient Cantabria, in whose
domains some writers wanted to include the
territories of Alaba, Viscaya and Guipuzcoa.
But historical researches have shown those
writers to be mistaken, and it is now admitted
by all that the people inhabiting the actual
Basque country of Spain, in which is justly
included Navarre, were those calledantripoues,
caristos, vardulos and vascones. The Cantab-
ria of Roman times was situated in the lands
of Santander and Asturias; it was there that
the famous campaigns of August were waged
against the historical Cantabres.

The name that we basques apply to our-
sew is Euskalduna, which means, those
speaking Euskara. The Romans called us
Vascones. Very likely was an adaption of
the word Euskones.

(The Ancient Kingdom)

The crumbling Roman Empire, which
amazed the world with its crimes, vices and
degeneration, during its period of decay, ended
at the beginning of the Fifth Century A. D.
Its downfall was caused by the attacks of the
barbarous peoples of different races, the most
dangerous being the Suehians, Alanes, Sig-
lingian and Vandals. They crossed the Rhine
with visions of conquest, defeated the Franks,
entered the Roma Gallia (406 A. D.). From
there they went to Spain, which at that time
was being cut to pieces by those who aspired
to rule it. The alliance between the Romans
and Visigoths commanded by Alaricus and
Ataulfo, who undertook to subjugate the
Gallias, brought these peoples to the Pyrenees.
and after crossing these mountains by way of the
eastern part of the Narbanensis, they founded
the Gothic Empire.

The Visigoths tried to conquer Vasconia;
above all the latinized regions but the real
Vascovians of Navarre, did not submit to
their rule, but waged a sanguinary war on
them during the entire period of Gothic rule
in Spain. According to the very distinguished
historian Campion, the Basque peoples of
Jadorra, Aragon and the Ebro, from Tudela
to Miranda and even those further in changed
rulers (1) but the inhabitants of the mountains
of Biscay, Guipuzcoa and Navarre as well as
those of Labourd and the Sulette, never
submitted permanently to the Gothic rule, al-
though the Emperor Honorius ceded to
them all of Aquitania, from Touluse in France
to the Ocean. (2).

The Visigoth rule in France was so short
that after the battle of Vouille (507) when
Clovis vanquished Alaricus, the invaders took

Note.—Arana Golri and Campion call attention to
the fact that the latin root, “vas” was pronounced
“wos” formerly; from this it is easy to understand
the word Euskones or Vascones of the Romans, which
in modern times became Vascones.
refuge in the Narboensis province, and the Franks extended their conquests, according to Dubravat (1), down to the Pyrenees. But notwithstanding all this, according to the same historian, during all of the Sixth Century it is very difficult to find any accurate data about the Novempopularia, the real Basque country of France.

Regarding this, the historian Campion claims that the Basques gathered from the North and South of the Pyrenees, and allied themselves in 507 to conquer or perhaps reconquer the Aquitanian plains, their original home.

The damage done to the Basques by the campaign of the Franks, compelled them to seek the aid of the Dukes of Aquitania, and consequently in the year 660 A. D. the northern Basconians, proclaimed as patronic of Toulouse, Felix, who ruled Aquitania free from the Merovingian Monarchy. At this time there appears in his name the name of a youth Lupus, undoubtedly a member of the Ochoa family, who succeeded Felix in the Duchy of Aquitania and Vasconia. Both Duchies were united in the year 726, when the Duchy of Aquitania was added to the French Crown. Then there appears another mysterious Lupus II, who embodied the independence of the Basque territory.

In the year 778, Charlemagne visited the whole Basque country with the intention of fighting the Moors of Spain and also with the intention of conquering some territory. He entered in Pampeluna as a friend and Liberator, but took some pains to break the strength of a people that gave so much trouble to the Frankish Kings, since on his return to his country he was attacked and vanquished in the famous battle of Orreaga (Roncovesalles).

A short time afterwards, there was established the Kingdom of Aquitania in their neighborhood by Ludovico Pio, who succeeded in establishing his rule over the Vasconians. But the family of the Basque Duke Semen called Ximenos by the latins resisted him. Later on Jimeno sought refuge in Southern Vasconia in Spain, and the pedigrees of the royal families of Navarre; the Iñigo Jimenez Ariztia or Arista; that of the Garcia Jimenez start with a certain Jimeno whose family crossed the Pyrenees.

**KINGS OF NAVARRE**

To the dynasty pirenáic belong Iñigo Jimenez Ariztia called in old histories Euzco Semen who reigned from 824 to 852. Garcia I Jimenez of Ximenos, more properly Semen 852 to 860. Garcia II Euzco or Iñiguez, 860 to 882, who

conquered the lands and castles of the Moors in Aragon and Rioja, and expanded his domains further than Tudela and Nagera. Garcia III Sancho, 926 to 970, who took part with King Ramiro of Leon in the war against Abd-ar-Rahman el Nasser, Caliph of Cordova. He also took part in the troubles between the Castilians and Leonenses invasion of the lands of Fernandez Gonzalez, Count of Castilla and added to his crown the country of Aragon through his marriage with the Countess, Andre Goto Galindez, Sancho II Garcia Abarca, from 976 to 994, so called on account of the special kind of shoes he used. He crossed the Pyrenees to help his brother-in-law William of Gascony, when they were considered impassable on account of the snow. Garcia IV called "the Shaky", 994 to 999. Sancho III Garces Senior, 999 to 1035, who as a monarch held sway over a greater amount of territory than any other ruler of the Kingdoms that the Spanish Peninsula was divided into since the downfall of the Gothic Kings, whom all the other Kings of Spain count as one of their ancestors. When he died, his son "Garcia V Sancho from Nagera, 1035 to 1054, inherited the Kingdom of Pampeluna, that of Alaba comprising Biscay and Guipuzcoa, Nagera (La Rioja), the lands of Tarazona and Soria up to Garray, old Numance, the original Castilla and the Asturias of Laredo. Sancho IV Garces, from Parnal, 1054 to 1076. Sancho V Ramirez, King of Pampeluna and Aragon, 1074 to 1094. Pedro Sanchez, 1094 to 1104. Alfonso I Sanchez The Fighter, King of Pampeluna and Aragon, 1104 to 1134. Garcia Ramirez "The Restorer", 1134 to 1150, who reestablished the Kingdom of Navarre, left by the Fighter to the Templars in his will. Sancho VI Garces "The Wise", 1120 to 1144, who made solid the union of Alaba and Guipuzcoa, and settled again San Sebastian given to him by the royal meeting of Jaca, and who also founded in 1181 the city of Vitoria on the site called Gasteiz. Sancho VII Sanchez "The Strong", 1124 to 1234, last of the monarchs of the male virile and illustrious race of the Pyreneic Kings, during whose reign Guipuzcoa acquired the pennon and rights of the King of Castilla. He obtained from his brother-in-law Richard the Lion Hearted, King of England the cession of Lower Navarre which he held in fief as Duke of Aquitania. After the death of Sancho "The Strong" the throne of Navarre passed to the House of Champagne and Theobald I, a nephew of Sancho, succeeded to the throne 1234 to 1253. Theobald II, 1253 to 1270. Enrique I, 1272 to 1274 and then the Kings of the House of France Luis the Hutin, King of France and Navarre, 1365 to 1315. Juan and the Posthumous

1 Vid. Campon, Navarre y su vida historica. Las vascones y las francas.—Origen de la Monarquia Navarra.

2 Vid. Juargain.—La Vasconia.
In the XI Century after the battle of Arregorriaga against the invasion of King Alonso of Leon, the historians find the people of Biscay appointing to the first place in the Republic a certain Lopez Zuria, who was called Juan, Lord of the Biscayans. It is an avered fact that Biscay, was governed by chiefs-tains in the first half of the XI Century, and the one called Momi or Mamo, Count of Biscay, married in 920 Velazqueta a daughter of Sancho I Garcia, King of Pampeluna.

Jauregui, in his study of the origin of the Kingdoms and countries of Vasconia states that Ejeico Lopez called by other Iñigo Lopez was a descendant of the Vasconian Ejeico Semen Arizita, and was created Count of Biscay by Sancho the Great of Navarre in 1033, and appointed governor of Durango, a place that also had its own masters. He was succeeded by Lopez Ejeico, who was also Lord of Alaba, Guipuzcoa and Haro, a name that was transmitted to posterity. Diego Lope I de Haro entered the service of the King of Castilla. Diego Lope II de Haro, "The Good" Lord of Biscay and of Alaba from 1166 to 1214 and also according to Maza and Marichalar, Lord of Alaba from 1200 to 1211, took a prominent part in the battle of the Navas in 1212. Lope Diaz Haro, Lord of Biscay and Alaba, 1214 to 1236, heroically defended Biscay attacked by the Laras during the reign of King Henry I, Diego Lope III de Haro, Lord of Biscay and Alaba, 1236 to 1254. Lope Diaz III de Haro, 1254 to 1288. Diego Lope IV de Haro, died about 1295 without descendants. Diego Lope V de Haro, 1295 to 1308. Doña Maria, sister of Diego Lope IV married with Don Juan Prince of Castilla, Lord of Biscay in 1309 and Regent of the Kingdom of Castilla in 1314. Doña Maria II Dias de Haro, married to Don Juan Nuñez de Lara. Nuño de Lara, died while in childhood in 1352. Doña Juana de Lara married to Prince Tello, son of Alfonso XI of Castilla.

During this time of real political disturbances for Biscay, King Don Pedro of Castilla gave the Lordship of Biscay to the Prince of Wales but the Biscayans refused him as Lord. When the houses of Haro and Lara disappeared by lack of descendancy, the inheritance came to Doña Juana Manuel, wife of King Henry II of Castilla, who gave the Lordship of Biscay to her first son Prince Don Juan. From the time this Prince ascended to the throne of Castilla, the Kings of Castilla have been the Lords of Biscay "as an independant estate added to the crown".

In the midst that centuries have extended over the historic past of the Basque territory, the unanimous opinion of historians has found exclusively government or the so called "Sodality Fraternity" or Batzar of Arriaga in the lands of Alaba. However, the perspicacity of the Basque genealogist Jauregui has also found
in old documents Lords of Alaba, who came from the Vasconian family of the Eesco, who exerted the military government. In 1332 by a voluntary union, the Sodality of Arriaga, incorporated the territory of Alaba to the Kingdom of Castilla.

In none of the old chronicles have we been able to find special mention of Guipuzcoa or about its remote historic past. There have been expressed opinions and theories, good many of them without any basis whatever, which instead of helping to clear the history of this region serve only to make it more confused. Guipuzcoa united on a basis of equality with Navarre in 1200, was also united on the same basis with Castilla, and from that time the military history of Guipuzcoa forms a part of that of Castilla, because in the wars sustained by Castilla against other countries Guipuzcoa took part, and some times there was the sorrowful spectacle that the arms of brothers of the same race were employed against each other instead of being opened for a fraternal embrace.

LABOURD-SOULE

Towards the year 918 the primitive Vasconia in the times after the downfall of the Roman Empire was divided in many independent states. These were the small Kingdoms of Pamplona to which was added in 852 the Duchy of Navarre. The County of Alaba, under whose denomination were included Biscay and Guipuzcoa and the County of Vasconia, Cisterior created towards the year 830 by Pepin I, King of Aquitania in favor of Aznar Sancho, son of Sancho I, who was Duke of Vasconia, which comprised the greater part of Navempopulania and some lands of the present Navarre incorporated afterwards to the Kingdom of Navarre. Later on the country was converted into a Duchy and in the year 894 on the death of Duke Armand, Sancho III of Semien, called Menditarra, founded the hereditary Duchy of Gascogne, whose boundaries were the ocean, the counties of Bordeaux, Bazas and d'Arien, the Gasconie Tolousanie, the county of Comminges and the Kingdom of Navarre. This Duchy was divided afterwards into counties and vizcountrys, and within those appear that of Soule, the Lordship of Mixe and of Ostabert, that of Labourd, and the county of Baigorry, that from 1193 formed part of the community of ultraparts of the Kingdom of Navarre.

In the same year 1193 the Labourd united with the Duke of Aquitania, King of England, although it preserved its original autonomy. Also the vizcountry of Sorga (Zuberoa) was some times united with the Kingdom of Navarre and others with England.

The Kings of France from Charles VII ruled these regions succeeding the Kings of England, and the revolution of the end of the XVIII century united the Labour and the Soule with the Basque and the Lower Navarre, and formed in 1790 the department of the Basses Pyrenees of the French Republic.

BASQUE INSTITUTIONS, CORDES, JUNTAS AND BASQUE FUEROS

The original legislation of the Basque country was entirely based on precedents. In the various regions where political changes isolated the peoples of the same race, the power that united the members of each group slowly reasserted itself. From the Brotherhoods created against malefactors, were born in Guipuzcoa the celebrated Juntas Generales. These same reasons produced in Navarre, during the reign of Sancho the Strong, the "Juntas de los Hanzones de Obanos" which appointed the "sobrejuntero" a kind of commissioner whose appointment was submitted to the King for approval. These commissioners formed a Council of Estate that exerted, together with the council of old men, a power calculated to moderate the royal prerogatives. These famous Juntas were succeeded by the no less remarkable Cortes (Parliament). The Cortes of the year 1330 furnish the first authentic proof of the legislative powers entrusted to them. To the written laws of Navarre was given the name of "Fuego".

Navarre's Cortes were composed of the three classes, the Ecclesiastical, the Nobility, and the common people. The Nobility was represented by the titled gentry, who later also received military titles. The common class was represented by the procurators (solicitors) of the towns that were entitled to representation. The inhabitants who were not born in Navarre could not have a place in the Cortes. When the Kings of Castilla took possession of the throne of Navarre, the Cortes were convoked by the viceroy, representing the Monarch; but its debates never took place in the presence of a King or his representative. The Ecclesiastical representatives were the procurators of the Monarch; but its debates never took place in the presence of a King or his representative. The Ecclesiastical representatives had the honor of presiding and the sessions were secret. Before they discussed any new questions they made sure whether or not the King had complied with the claims previously made by preceding Cortes against violations of the "Fuegos". Then the permanent Diputacion of the Cortes was appointed as one of the guaranties "that the Kingdom of Navarre should keep its rights and fueros (privileges)" according to the formula of the oath exacted from the King".
The separate Kingdom of Lower Navarre united under the same crown with that of Bearn also assembled these Cortes under the name of Estates. In 1607, when Henry IV of the House of Bourbon was elected King of France, he declared that the sovereignty of Navarre and Bearn would remain independent from the crown of France and would continue to have a separate government. In Pau was established a council of Estate of Navarre, and in Paris where the King had his residence there was sent a Secretary of Estate of Navarre and Bearn. For that reason the French Kings signed "Roí de France et de la Navarre".

The "Juntas de Guernica" that took place under the universally famous oak tree in that town, were another of the original Basque institutions, exclusive of the Lordship of Biscay and took place every two year to regulate all matters pertaining to the Estate. The meetings were held in the month of July. The procurators from the towns of the level country of Biscay, where was found the tree, and those of the villages, towns and cities of the vicinity of Durango, and also those of the valley of Oroso used to go in solemn procession from Guernica to the site of the tree, pointed out by popular tradition, as the place for convening the Juntas Generales. They took seats on the masonry erected around the venerable oak. There they presented their credentials to the new president and then proceeded to the Hall of the Juntas where the procurators seated themselves without any order of precedence. The sessions were public and were presided by the Corregidor the representative of the Lord of Biscay, who did not have the right to vote. The deputies elected for the following term formed the General Diputacion of Biscay. They resided in Bilbao for during the two years that elapsed since the last meeting, they were in charge of the government of Biscay and the administration of justice for appeals against the orders of the Corregidor. To avoid convening the Juntas in extraordinary session, there was framed an ordinance in the beginning of the XVI Century, which ordered that the Juntas should appoint what was called a "General Regiment" of Biscay. This General Regiment consisted of twelve Regidors (Aldermen) the Corregidor or his lieutenant, two deputies, two secretaries of Juntas, two procurators, and two men of letters, meeting at Bilbao, disposed of all extraordinary cases occurring during the lapse of two years between the convening of the Juntas, but they had to give an account of their acts in the first sessions of the Juntas Generales.

Since the Lordship of Biscay was united with the Kingdom of Castilla in the Chancel-
city, which was declared the capital of Guipuz-
coal. In 1834 the capital was transferred to
San Sebastián.

The Lordship of Onate, which was within
the territory of Guipuzcoa, and which was
united to it in 1845, was an independent estate
under the Lords of Ladrón de Guevara,
Counts of Onate, and it also had its own
political organizations.

In Guipuzcoa, as well as in the other re-
gions of the Basque country the cities, towns,
villages, and universities had their own munici-
pal constitutions, which differed in many
ways. On account of the character of this
writing we cannot go further into the details
of the organization of the judiciary, economic
and military order of the Basque country.

In Alaba, before it was united with Castilla
on the basis that both were equal, there used
to meet in the field of Lacua, near the town of
Arriaga, the famous Brotherhood of Arriaga.
This Brotherhood consisted of Gentlemen
and Farmers as representatives appointed
by the others; there were also in this Brother-
hood the ladies of the principal families of
Alaba, the Bishop of Calahorra, and the other
important members of the clergy of the
province. The common Juntas took place on
the 24 of June of every year, after attending
mass an after a solemn procession in which
they carried the imagen of Our Lady of
Estibaliz. These Juntas appointed the four
Mayors that governed the country during the
following year.

After the disappearance of the Brotherhood
of Arriaga, the Brotherhood of Alafa meet in
Juntas Generales, twice a year; in the month
of May at Vitoria, and in the month of
November in the town previously agreed to at
the meeting in Vitoria. The Juntas were
presided by the Deputy General, who in war
times was the military commander of Alaba.
But in these Juntas the President did not have
the right to vote.

Besides these two ordinary Juntas, there
met others called Special Juntas, but to avoid
convening them often, the Fuero ordered that
there should be appointed in the November
Juntas four deputies besides the two commis-
ioners. The duties of these deputies were to take
charge of all business dealing with the Brother-
hood during the period that they did not meet.

Before the French revolution Labourd and
the Soule also had their particular institutions,
and in Bilzar de Ustaritz, there met the
Maires Abbas of the towns of Labourd. In
these Juntas they appointed the Syndic of
the country of Labourd. He was in charge of
all the financial and administrative matters
of the country. He convoked the Bilzar of
Ustaritz whenever he deemed it necessary, as
this was his exclusive privilege; and not even
the officers of the King could object. The
duties of the Syndics of Labourd who exerted
all their powers, uninterrupted from 1903
extended to such a degree that the civil ad-
ministration of the country was entirely in
their hands. The Bailiff was the representative
of the King and had other officers under his
orders. His general lieutenant fulfilled his
duties in Ustaritz, rendering judgements in all
civil and criminal matters in the country.

In Soule there were two “Syndics”. One
of them designated by the nobility, but both
of them appointed by the Estates of Bearn.
From 1497 it is well known who enjoyed that
power.

Such were the truly democratic Basque
institutions that disappeared in the Labourd
in the Soule and in Lower Navarre before
the impact of the so called democratic Liberty
and Equality of Revolutionary France at the
end of the XVIII Century; and that also
disappeared from Navarre, Biscaya, Alaba and
Guipuzcoa through a law that submitted them
to the Spanish constitution and the laws given
by the Spanish Parliament at Madrid.

The chieftains whose names are connected
with the establishment of Monarchy in the
Kingdom of the Pyrenees, started great up-
risings against the domination of Charles
Magnus, who was defeated by the Basques,
and with the help of the people of Beni For-
tun, of mixed Basque and mohammedan origin,
defeated him a second time at Roncesvalles.