

beautiful indeed, as it returned, surrounded with such an immense number of lights. "Maria Zantissima e la Zangustias," as the Granadinos call the Virgin, is the one name invoked, upon every occasion, by all the lower orders: on her they call for assistance in every emergency; in her name the beggar supplicates for charity; and even still she is supposed to vouchsafe at times a miraculous compliance with their prayers. One or two persons who were nearly drowned last year, during an overflowing of the Darro, ascribed their escape to her assistance; for having called upon her in their last extremity, they were instantly landed in safety on the bank. The image is reported to have arrived here in some supernatural manner from Toledo, and has been an object of veneration ever since the days of Philip II.

The walk between the trees in front of the Church is the promenade chiefly resorted to by the upper classes, particularly in summer, when they appear only after dark; and the beautiful Alameda of the Genil is considered damp and unwholesome after sunset. The latter was formerly the bed of the stream, which meandered at will over a wide sandy course, until, during the occupation of the French, the river was walled into a proper channel, the banks on each side were elevated, and the present delicious walks laid out and planted. For this splendid promenade Granada is indebted to Sebastiani, and also for the handsome bridge which he built at the upper end of it. Gradual improvements since then by the Ayuntamiento have rendered it what it now is, one of the loveliest Alamedas in Spain. Avenues of lofty elms unite their branches above, like a gothic roof, in a foliage so dense, that even at mid-day they afford the most refreshing shade; gardens on each side, all through the early summer,

present one sheet of roses ; while later in the year, pink and white oleanders continue the charm of the scene. Several fountains give additional coolness to the air, but they are more remarkable for their size and the abundance of water they pour forth, than for taste or elegance of design.

Beyond the bridge, a short distance up the valley of the Genil, are the ruins of a small hermitage, from which can be seen one of the most beautiful views in the neighbourhood of Granada, and from which the city assumes an entirely new aspect. This is peculiarly the view for sunset : it would be impossible to do justice on canvas to the rich colouring of the landscape ; even the very soil around is of a crimson so intense, that any approach to it in painting would appear an exaggeration. The valley of the Genil is even still more fertile than that of the Darro ; and being much more open it offers a larger space for cultivation. It is studded with villages and carmenes, almost hidden in the verdure which surrounds them ; and the river, which rises in the loftiest range of the Sierra, and is fed from the melting snows, supplies a never failing source of fertility.

A little above the Alameda, and within the town, is a singular relic of one of the many royal residences which adorned Granada in the days of the Moors. It is now called the *Cuarto Real*, and belongs to a branch of the house of Pulgar. It is nearly surrounded by a large *huerta*, or orchard, and formed part of the possessions given by the Catholic sovereigns to Torquemada, for the adjoining convent of San Domingo which he founded. A bower of the most splendid laurel trees leads to the house. Planted on each side of a broad walk, they intertwine their branches at a great height overhead, and form a green vault, whose

thick foliage effectually shuts out the sunbeams, and offers a deliciously cool promenade even in the hottest days of summer. At the end of this bower is a gallery supported by arches and columns in the style of the Alhambra, with a large fountain in the centre. From this a magnificent horse-shoe arch opens into a lofty square room, with alcoves at the sides, and in front one of the graceful Moorish windows whose arches are supported by a centre column. The walls are richly decorated with Arabic inscriptions, and the usual lace-like ornaments in stucco; but here again sad havoc has been committed with whitewash, which has filled up the crevices, and quite deprived the edges of their delicate finish. Subterranean apartments have lately been discovered under the large hall; and it is supposed that a secret passage communicates from them to the Alhambra. The family who reside there have occasionally evening receptions; and nothing can be imagined more fairy-like than the appearance, at night, of this exquisite portico and hall, when brilliantly lighted up, and seen thus from the further end of the beautiful laurel walk, across the sparkling water of the fountains.

One of the first pilgrimages made by the generality of travellers in Granada, is to the Royal Chapel, where are deposited the bodies of Ferdinand and Isabella. Those sovereigns, whose whole energies were devoted to the acquisition of this important city, found their last resting-place within its walls; but the chapel erected to receive their remains is, in point of architectural beauty, quite unworthy of being their sepulchre. A splendid *reja*, one of those magnificent iron screens so distinctively an ornament of Spanish churches, protects the royal monument from the approach of the people, except during the celebration of service. A bier

of the purest Carrara marble, richly sculptured, its sides covered with religious designs and heraldic blazon, supports the effigies of Ferdinand and Isabella, reclining as in sleep. The figures are the size of life, and admirably executed. Beside them, but much loftier and more imposing, is erected the tomb of their daughter Juana, and her husband Philip the Fair. This unseemly occupation of the principal place, upon a site that should be sacred to the conquerors of Granada, considerably mars the general effect ; and, however much we may allow for filial affection, we can never excuse the bad taste of Charles V., who erected both the monuments, thus seeking to raise the memory of his imbecile parents above that of their illustrious predecessors. Who the artists were, who executed them, is not known with certainty. By some they are ascribed to Felipe de Vigarny ; by others to Italian artists. Beneath, is a vault containing the coffins of the four sovereigns and the little prince Miguel. It is small, and devoid of the slightest ornament ; and on square slabs in the centre and at the sides are laid the coffins, plain, ironbound, and blackened with age.

The most curious object in the Royal Chapel is the lofty retablo, containing bas-reliefs representing some of the scenes of the Conquest, and supposed to have been done by contemporary artists. These retablos are a kind of architectural elevation in wood, richly covered, which rise behind the altars, and ornamented with paintings in panel, or more commonly with painted wooden sculpture—a branch of art peculiar to the Peninsula. The bas-reliefs alluded to give rough representations of the delivery of the keys to Ferdinand and Isabella, and of the Baptism of the Moors, the women in the latter appearing in the same costume as worn by the women of Tetuan in the present day.

These carvings have likewise been attributed to Vigarny, or, as he is more generally called, Felipe de Borgoña, but they hardly appear worthy of his chisel. Vigarny died at Toledo in 1543, having, in conjunction with Berruguete, executed the sculpture in the choir of that cathedral. In the sacristy are preserved some interesting relics of the Catholic sovereigns ; the sword of Ferdinand ; a royal banner of embroidered silk ; a crown and sceptre of Isabella, silver gilt ; a highly finished picture in enamel, said to have been used by the queen as a portable altar-piece ; together with her own missal richly illuminated, and which she herself contributed to adorn. A handsome gothic doorway, which has escaped the whitewash which so unsparingly covers both the Chapel Royal and the Cathedral, leads into the latter edifice.

This building was commenced in 1529, under the direction of Diego de Siloe. The exterior is heavy, in the Græco-Romano style, and devoid of all architectural beauty. Like most other cathedrals it is still unfinished, the second tower having never been completed. Built upon the site of the ancient mosque, it bears over the principal entrance the appropriate inscription of "Ave Maria," words which in Granada are fraught with a peculiar interest, for they commemorate the bold exploit of Fernan del Pulgar, referred to in a previous chapter. Its form is an oblong square, save at the eastern end, which is circular. As usual, it is disfigured by a choir in the centre, upon each side of which is an organ painted in white and gold. The roof is supported by massive Corinthian columns ; and the pavement is laid in very handsome grey and white marble. The columns follow the outline of the church, and sweep in a semicircle round the high altar, which stands under a lofty dome. All around

the altar is one mass of gilding, adorned with several fine paintings by Alonso Cano, who contributed greatly to the embellishment of this cathedral, of which he was one of the minor canons. Cano was both a sculptor and a painter, and was one of the last of the great artists of Spain who distinguished themselves in both these branches. After having passed through several adventures and mishaps, and amongst others been accused of the murder of his wife, and put to the torture, his right hand on account of his profession being exempted from the infliction—he was at length appointed one of the canons of this cathedral, and took possession of his stall in 1652. He executed many paintings and other works to adorn the cathedral; and a beautiful little image of the Virgin, which he carved and painted, stands on the lectern in the choir. This style of carving in wood, and painting the figures so as to complete the illusion to the eye, is an art which was carried to great perfection in Spain, and had among its followers some of the greatest of her artists. In no country has the veneration for images been carried to such an excess as in the Peninsula. It would seem to have been so, from the earliest times; for the Council of Illiberis, held in the beginning of the fourth century within two leagues of Granada, condemned and strictly prohibited the excessive use of images in the churches. Every province, nay almost every city, has its miraculous shrine; and images of Our Lady and of the saints have been multiplied to satisfy the enthusiasm of devotees. The more they resembled life in minute detail, the more they satisfied the desires of a crowd of ignorant worshippers, who, without any soul for the loftier conceptions of art, only sought a life-like and startling reality. To gratify this taste, figure after figure was fashioned, and all the dresses and

accessories painted with the greatest care and minutiae; and in many instances the artist executed nothing but the head and arms, the figure itself being clothed in sumptuous dresses and adorned with jewels, with which the generosity of pious devotees loved to deck the image of their favourite saint. But such representations, far from elevating the thoughts, or aiding the soul in religious contemplation, only tended to vulgarise the worship they were meant to assist; and the painted dolls which now disfigure the Spanish churches, and the low grade of religious faith which they indicate, clearly show how dangerous it is to familiarise too much to the mind objects which should ever be treated with a mysterious awe. That sculpture, in its truest sense, may be an art available for the furtherance of religion, I do not question. A marble figure of the Saviour on the Cross may bring more vividly to the imagination of the Christian the sufferings of his Redeemer, if the eye be not pained by too close a resemblance to familiar objects; but when the same event is represented coloured with all the painful realities of life, or rather of death, the ghastly colour of dying agony—the blood streaming from the wounds—it creates in the mind nothing but feelings of horror. There is no doubt, but that the master minds of Montañes and Torrigiano have given an ideal beauty to the creations of their chisel; but it is dangerous ground, and treads too closely upon the common-place. The generality have no more art or poetry about them than wax-work figures badly executed, and whose defects are exaggerated by the most tawdry and grotesque costume. Cano's own dying words are no inapt illustration of these remarks. His love of art was strong to the last; and when the priest, who watched his final moments, extended to

him a coarsely carved crucifix to kiss, he repelled it from him with disgust, exclaiming—"Provoke me not with that wretched thing; let me have a simple cross, for with that I can reverence Christ in faith—I can worship him as he is in himself, and as I contemplate him in my own mind."

Seven large pictures by Cano adorn the semicircular portion round the high altar; but they are too distant to be seen well. Except these and two or three others, there are no remarkable paintings in the cathedral. Some of the altars are adorned with marble pictures, in which clouds and landscape are sculptured—most extraordinary performances certainly, but producing a very heavy and unpleasing effect. A large statue of St. James, the patron Saint of Spain, by Pedro de Mena, a pupil of Alonso Cano, occupies the retablo of his chapel; and here also is preserved a copy of a Virgin and Child, said to have been painted by St. Luke, which was given, with the golden rose, to Isabella by Innocent VIII.

Adjoining the cathedral is the *Sagrario* or parish church; from which a side passage leads into the Royal Chapel. In this passage is the chapel given to Pulgar by the Catholic Sovereigns as his burial-place. It stands on the site of the door of the great Mosque, where he affixed the Ave Maria. A marble slab on the floor in front of the altar marks his tomb, and bears an inscription commemorative of his taking possession of the building while the city was yet in the hands of the Moors. An old picture forms the altar-piece, in the centre a Holy Family, and on one side a warrior holding a lighted torch. On the altar itself is a shield in mosaic, with the motto "Ave Maria." The state in which this chapel is at present speaks badly for the respect which the family entertain for



the memory of their ancestor. Neglected and uncared for, it is now used as a lumber-room for the Sagrario, and is so filled up with old tables, lanterns, and all sorts of rubbish, that it is hardly possible to get into it. It is indeed disgraceful, to see it turned to such "vile uses," and reflects little credit on the good taste of his descendants.

Near the cathedral, after passing the archbishop's palace, a large though somewhat dilapidated residence, is the Alcaiceria or silk bazaar. The former bazaar was a very curious relic of the Moorish times, but in 1843 it was entirely destroyed by fire. One has been since rebuilt, and presents a very fair imitation of Arabian architecture: but the daily declining trade of Granada has left most of the shops untenanted. The Alcaiceria opens into the Zacatin, an old Moorish street where the principal shops are situated. It is very narrow and picturesque, but is rapidly losing its eastern character; glass fronts being substituted for the open window, where in the olden style the goods were laid out for sale. The Zacatin leads from the Plaza Nueva to the Bibarambla, so famed in Moorish story as the scene of all the tournaments and feats of prowess on which the ladies looked down from latticed balconies around. It is now called the Plaza de la Constitucion, a name by which of late years the principal squares in the Spanish towns have been designated—doubtless to commemorate, in Spanish fashion, a victory that yet remains to be achieved. This square has lost nearly all trace of antiquity, the old houses on the north side having been all pulled down, and a row of prim, modern-looking buildings substituted in their place. An old house belonging to the Ayuntamiento, built in the reign of Philip II., has some quaint-looking *miradores*; and at one corner of

the square is a Moorish gateway, better known to the people as the *Puerta de las Orejas* (of the ears). It derives its name from an atrocity committed during a disturbance which occurred on the proclamation of Philip IV., when at a grand fête some scaffolding having given way, many persons were killed, and among them several women. In the confusion which ensued, some of the mob began stealing the ornaments from the bodies of the dead ; and, at length, proceeded so far, for the greater expedition, as to tear the earrings from their ears. It has likewise been called *de los Cuchillos*, from the police hanging over it the forbidden knives taken from the people—a suitable name enough, considering that a neighbouring gateway is called *de las Cucharas* (of the spoons). The *Bibarambla* is still the scene of all public ceremonies, and appears decked out in peculiar style on the feast of Corpus Christi, when it becomes the fashionable promenade. On this day the raised platform, which then fills up the centre, is ornamented with a temple of some unknown order, and flowers and fountains, which are all exhibited on this occasion only. Round the Plaza a covered colonnade is erected of painted canvas, which serves to protect the procession from the heat of the sun, and is adorned with paintings and rhymes of the most grotesque description. How painfully at variance these latter are with the sanctity of the ceremony, which they are placed there to honour, no one who has not seen them can imagine. Caricatures of the broadest description, doggerel verses on the common topics of the day, coarse lampoons, odes and rhymes to the Holy Sacrament, all in most unseemly juxtaposition, cover the pillars, and convey to the stranger a melancholy, but alas ! too true, an impression of the state of religion of the country. It is an animated scene.