

of any other country, to religious subjects; and the natural beauties of her land, the glorious buildings which crowd her cities, the picturesque appearance of the inhabitants and their dwellings, have found no one to transfer all their varied features to the canvas. It is indeed true that a devotion to nature seems most innate in the lands where she is less lavish of her gifts. It is, perhaps, that she is so glorious in these southern climes that none can dare to imitate her.

One of the first places, which travellers generally visit after they have seen the cathedral, and the principal paintings in Seville, is the Alcázar or Palace. Originally built by the Moorish conquerors of Seville, it was here that the young Abdelasis, the governor of Andalusia, gave his hand to the widow of Roderick, and expiated with his life the folly of seeking to make himself an independent sovereign. But the present palace has little to do with its original founders. Although of Arabic architecture, it was raised under the superintendence of the Christians, and bears a stamp different from the Alhambra. More massive and solid in its proportions, it cannot boast of the exquisite elegance and miniature beauty of the palace of Granada, and however much it may charm upon a first arrival in Andalusia, it looks coarse and unfinished to any one who is well acquainted with the fairy courts of the Alhambra. The Alcázar was built by Pedro the Cruel, who, passionately fond of everything Moorish, sent for the first architects of Granada to come and adorn the palace in his favourite Seville.

It has been added to by almost every Spanish sovereign, who at some period or another of his life resided here. The patio is very fine, and surrounded by beautiful azulejos. The Hall of the Ambassadors opens out of it, and is the finest room in the Alcázar; the ceiling is magnificent, as fresh as though the gilding had been put



on but yesterday, but it is very much disfigured by a row of portraits of the Spanish kings, which were placed there by Philip II., covering and disfiguring the beautiful arabesque ornaments. There is a pretty patio, called De las Muñecas, which is being completely restored, in fact, made all new; but as in the Alhambra, these repairs go on slowly, and seem as interminable as most Spanish things. Some of the rooms are entirely spoilt by modern restoration, others, by the alterations of former monarchs. On the upper floor there is a charming little chapel of azulejo work, built by Isabella, and from one of the centre rooms, there is a fine view of the Giralda, which makes a perfect picture, seen as if through a frame formed by the lovely horse-shoe arches and delicate pillars supporting them. A fine suite of rooms faces the gardens, but spoiled by fire-places—things which were never dreamt of by Moorish architects. These walls could tell many a tale of horror, for here many of the most cold-blooded murders of Pedro the Cruel were committed, more particularly that of his brother the Master of Santiago, which has been the theme of many a poet.

The gardens of the Alcázar are as splendid as orange-trees and water can make them under such a sun and sky; protected from every breeze, they are broiling in the mid-day heat, when even at Christmas one is glad to seek the refreshing shade of the orange-trees. There is a charming pavilion, all of azulejos, of the time of Charles V., where are seats cool and tempting, and it is a pleasure merely to sit and do nothing in such a climate; a happiness to live and enjoy existence. In winter the orange-trees are laden with their golden fruit, and in spring the air is impregnated with the perfume of their blossoms.

There are, however, but few flowers, the climate of Seville renders it difficult to cultivate them owing to the



intense heat and dryness of the summer months ; but still, there is no doubt, if they cared for them and understood their cultivation, they might make a terrestrial Paradise of these gardens, more particularly with the abundance of water which they can command. As it is, they owe their great charm to the orange and lemon trees, the fruit of which is not picked till January. I have seen most lovely flowers here at Christmas, but they were as rare as they were lovely. A high wall, ornamented with rough stonework, skirts these gardens ; there is a walk along the top, and seats at the end, where many a pleasant hour may be spent in the months of April and May, luxuriating in the coolness of the evening air and inhaling the perfume of the snowy blossoms below.

The Alcázar is close to the cathedral ; a small but pretty walk, with trees, occupying the space between. Close by stands the Lonja, or Exchange, its grand and simple form pointing at once to Herrera as the architect, the same who raised the massive fabric of the Escorial. The Lonja was built in order to afford some place for merchants to meet and transact business, when the wealth of the New World was flowing into the port of Seville. Not having any specified building, it seems they resorted to the cathedral, where, as an old Spanish author says, they were obliged to go and hear the news, and talk over mercantile affairs, "de manera que para lo de Dios y para lo del mundo, parece que es un hombre obligado á venir á esta Iglesia una vez al dia."\* The worthy archbishop took up the matter very seriously, and persuaded Philip II. to put an end to such scandal. The merchants were accordingly desired to raise a building, and the design was entrusted to Juan de Herrera ; it was completed in 1598.

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\* "So that for the things of God, and for those of the world, it seems that a man is obliged to come to this cathedral once a day."



The Lonja, as it now stands, is an emblem of the actual condition of Spain; its halls deserted, not a sign of life about it. It has a very fine patio, paved with marble. A polished marble staircase leads to a superb gallery, running round three sides of the building, full of the records of Spain's past greatness. Here are ranged on shelves, the archives of the New World from the time of its discovery. But the gallery is deserted, the blue and brown paper parcels, ticketed and numbered, look cold and voiceless, and no one seems to think of studying their records. There are some curious documents relating to Cervantes, and his application to the government for some situation in America, which was refused him. They set forth all the sufferings of his life, his wars and captivity in Algiers; but a deaf ear was turned to his petition, and he remained in Spain, to write *Don Quixote*, and immortalize his name. Many of these interesting manuscripts used formerly to be shown to strangers, but the glass-cases which enclose them will not open any more, thanks to the exploits of one of our own countrywomen, who managed one day to abstract a page from this valuable collection as a gentle souvenir of Cervantes.

It is impossible to find words sufficiently strong to reprehend such conduct as this—conduct in which our own countrypeople are very fond of indulging. It makes one blush to hear, when abroad, that such a thing is no longer exhibited, because some English persons carried off a piece of it. Although we may find fault with Spaniards for not prizing their relics of antiquity sufficiently, we carry reverence for them to a dangerous pitch. It is in fact a perfect mania with John Bull, who never seems to value anything unless he can obtain some of it. The greater the quantity of stolen goods produced on a return from the Continent, the greater the satisfaction.



The act of looking at things seems to afford but little pleasure, unless some portion can be carried away as a souvenir. Nothing is safe from the hands of some travellers. They will stop at no petty pilfering, in order to display a motley catalogue of things, comprising perhaps a corner of an Egyptian hieroglyphic, a finger of some Grecian statue, mosaics from the dome of St. Peter's, an arabesque from the Alhambra, a piece of silk cut off some historic banner, a leaf from an illuminated manuscript, or even a piece of the curtains which draped the couch of some great man.

The collection of manuscripts in the Lonja is very interesting from its connection with the New World; but the library bequeathed to the cathedral by Ferdinand Columbus brings the discoverer yet more forcibly to mind. Here are preserved some books said to have belonged to Columbus himself, with many marginal notes in his own handwriting. There are several editions of valuable works, and some beautifully illuminated Bibles and Missals: any one who wishes may obtain permission to go and read in this library. Above the book-cases, the walls are lined with likenesses of distinguished Sevillanos, and others who have figured in Spanish history. At one end is a picture of St. Ferdinand by Murillo, and at the other a large painting of Christopher Columbus, by a modern French artist, presented to the Dean and Chapter by Louis Philippe. Amongst the more modern appears a portrait of Cardinal Wiseman, of whom the Sevillanos are very proud, from his being a native of their town.

The most notable object in the library is, perhaps, the sword of Fernan Gonzalez, which, according to some verses inscribed, seems to have been brought to Seville by Garcia Perez de Vargas. How it came here does not appear to be known exactly, unless, as its old guardian



suggests, it was buried with Garcia Perez, and dug up when the old mosque was destroyed to make way for the present cathedral.

The Columbina, as this library is called, is placed in a long gallery leading from the Orange Court, to the left, as you enter by the Puerta del Perdon. Nearly opposite is the Archbishop's Palace, a building erected in the beginning of the last century, without anything to recommend it. Soult resided in it during his stay in Seville. The staircase, they say, was commenced on a scale of great magnificence by the then archbishop, who spent money upon it which was intended for charitable purposes. A jester, however, caused him to suspend his work by reproaching him with a bitter speech: "Stones were once turned into bread to feed the poor, but your grace is doing something more wonderful, for you are turning bread into stone."

From the Lonja it is not far to the Paseo. You leave the town by the Puerta de Jeres, on which an inscription sums up the history of Seville, in a few words, from Hercules to the sainted monarch. The huge fabric of the tobacco manufactory rises to the left, while in front a broad walk leads past a tasteless palace, formerly the naval college of San Telmo, now the residence of the Infanta Luisa Fernanda. The Duke and Duchess of Montpensier have taken up their residence in Seville, and the Infanta keeps up almost regal state. They live very quietly and retired; seldom receiving at the palace, their entertainments extending at the most to one or two formal concerts during the winter season. The Duke passes his time looking after his property and superintending the improvements going on in the palace and its grounds. The Infanta is very amiable and charitable, but reserved and fond of etiquette. She is quite the Queen at Seville, and her sister could not be



treated with more state than she is, when she attends any ceremony that may happen to be going on at the cathedral, or elsewhere.

The building where they now reside was erected towards the latter end of the seventeenth century, and its façade is a very characteristic specimen of the decline of Spanish taste in architecture, being what is commonly called Churrigueresque, from Churriguera. The portal is an extravaganza of bad taste, and the whole building has been rendered still more hideous by the bright-red colour with which it is now painted, the Doric pilasters standing out in white contrast; the whole is enclosed by iron rails, richly gilt in French style. The naval students have been expelled, and the palace is now magnificently furnished, although it displays more richness than good taste; the rooms are too overloaded with ornament, and very heavy. The situation is charming, close to the edge of the Guadalquivir, and facing the public promenade. The gardens cover a large extent of ground; they are planted with orange-trees, and radiant with tropical flowers. Great expense has been incurred in making artificial mounds, lakes, summer-houses, aviaries, grottos, and rustic temples. The gardens are only now being laid out, so, as yet, they can scarcely be seen to advantage.

The Duke enclosed a good deal of ground along the paseo, but the Ayuntamiento would not allow of his walling it, on account of disfiguring the public walk. It is accordingly surrounded by iron railings, supported by large whitewashed piers. The walk is charming, and deserves its name of Las Delicias, with the gardens of San Telmo on one side, and the river flowing on the other; one or two graceful palms on the opposite bank giving an Eastern colouring to the landscape. Part of it is planted with oranges and lemons. It is the fashionable



resort in winter; here people come to take the sun, "tomar el sol," as the Spaniards say; here its effects are felt with much force, and even in winter it is sometimes disagreeably hot in the middle of the day. On the promenade the beau-monde of Seville exhibit their bright-coloured dresses; and here, and at the theatre, are the only two places where a stranger has any opportunity of seeing the Sevillanos. Fans are rapidly giving way to parasols, but bonnets do not seem to be coming into fashion as rapidly here as at Madrid and elsewhere: they are still few enough to attract attention, and contribute to set off the beauty of the mantilla by the contrast.

Sometimes, on Sundays and on fête days, a military band plays, and a greater crowd than usual assembles. Strangers are always struck with the very dressy appearance of the promenaders, they wear such showy pink and blue silk dresses, while the gay ribbons in the hair, and the black lace veil thrown over the head, make them appear as though they were ready for some full-dress party. Still those who adhere to the old costume, and dress in black, appear to much greater advantage, the sombre hue suiting best with the mantilla. The Sevillanos must, however, be excused for their gay toilettes of a morning, for as there is not any society here, it is the only opportunity they have of indulging in a display of dress. Brilliant colours, too, harmonise better with the intense sunlight and clearness of the atmosphere, than they would under our own dull, cloudy sky.

Not the least characteristic portion of the scene are the refresco-stands, or painted wooden sheds, which are dotted along the banks of the river, where water is vended, and milk of almonds, and various kinds of refreshing beverages. These stands are to be seen every-



where in Seville, at the corners of the streets, in the plazas, and wherever people most do congregate. They were generally painted green, and often very tastefully and showily decorated. Large jars of water are placed behind, and in front vases filled with gold and silver fish, interspersed with piles of oranges, and bunches of roses and other flowers.

The most conspicuous object on the river-side is the Torre del Oro, a large tower, whose origin is lost in obscurity, everybody entertaining their own opinion about it, and the honour of having erected it has been attributed both to Romans and Mahometans. Its name is singular, deriving its origin, some say, from having been the place where Pedro the Cruel preserved his treasures. It was formerly connected with the Alcázar, but those walls have long since been pulled down, and it now stands quite isolated on the shores of the Guadalquivir.

But the great pride of the Sevillanos is the new iron bridge, which connects it with Triana, and has replaced the old bridge of boats, which since the days of the Romans afforded the only means of communication. It was completed last year under a French engineer, and is rather a handsome structure; the worthy people here think it very odd that travellers should have such bad taste as not to select it for sketching, instead of all those odd old things in the streets, which they are so fond of—it is so much prettier.

Triana is a large suburb on the opposite bank of the river, with some good houses in it; but a great proportion is inhabited by gipsies, to the number of two or three thousand, who have here their head-quarters. Some of the old half-ruined places in which they live, are most delightfully picturesque, at least, if an unlimited amount of dirt and tumble-down walls can entitle a thing to that appellation. But they are, in truth, very bits for a painter,



with the vines climbing about them; and the dark sons and daughters of the East huddled together in wild-looking groups, sitting about in the courts. The men, with their thin long hair, dark brown complexion, snowy teeth, and thick lips, proclaiming at once their Oriental origin. The wild melancholy look of the women, with their jet-black eyes, their coarse raven hair carelessly tied up behind, decked with the brightest flowers and any tawdry jewelled combs or pins that can be scraped together, the "abandon" of their figures—all speaking of the East. The coarse finery with which they love to clothe themselves, the common cotton dresses with deep full flounces, the china crape shawl thrown over their shoulders, always of the gaudiest hue, contrast with their olive-coloured skins, which sun and dirt both assist in darkening. They are a strange, mysterious race. Although settled down here in towns, and obliged, outwardly at least, to conform to the dominant religion of the land, they bear unchanged their own distinctive characteristics, and stand as much apart from Spaniards as though they belonged to another country.

Taught from their earliest infancy to steal and cheat, they indulge in every sort of petty theft during the remainder of their lives, the only disgrace attendant upon the deed being its discovery. They will beg from and humbug you with the most overpowering speeches; but while they are praising you, they may only be awaiting their opportunity to filch, and for this their extraordinary cunning adapts them admirably. They never rob by violence; they only take their neighbours' goods by stealth, quietly and furtively. And yet, in their own domestic relations, they have virtues which might adorn a higher station; the devotion of the women to their husbands and children is unbounded, and many a tale is told of the manner in which they show their attachment.





GIPSIERS DANCING THE VITO.

Dickinson Peck's Ill.