

into Jerusalem. This consists of a large group of several figures: the Saviour followed by three of the Apostles, while some Hebrews throw their garments at his feet, and the whole is overshadowed by the feathering branches of a lofty palm. These figures are all grouped together upon a platform, carried by a number of men, to whom, indeed, it must be a real penance, transporting such a weight through the streets. This paso is followed by other Nazarenos; then comes the crucifix by Montañas, one of those triumphs of painted wooden sculpture, which makes one indeed experience a feeling of religious awe as this life-like representation of the Redeemer's sufferings, is borne aloft. But the object which alone could inspire sentiments of devotion passes — passes unheeded and unnoticed by the crowd, although it is that before which one would most willingly linger: a blaze of light appears in the distance, military music falls upon the ear, and the anxiety with which all eyes are turned towards the coming paso tells you that the last place, the post of honour in the procession, is reserved for Her who is the object of Seville's most especial veneration, the "Sin Pecado Concebida."

A canopy of purple velvet covers the figure of our Lady de Socorro; she is robed in a richly embroidered dress of black, and surrounded by silver vases filled with flowers, and candelabra blazing with lights. And what effect has all this upon the busy crowd who are passing through the streets? Are these sights suggestive of thoughts befitting the holy time devoted by the Church to the commemoration of our Redeemer's sufferings? Alas! the thronging multitudes are little occupied with such reflections; they are enjoying the *Carneval Divino*; they are criticising the dresses of the images—discussing their embroidery. "What a lovely pocket-handkerchief the Virgin has to-day!" exclaims one, for Spaniards never



say the Image of the Virgin, or of a Saint, they always speak of them as though they were realities. "What a charming head-dress!" says another; "how very becoming it is!" and a thousand similar remarks are called forth, and form the staple subject of conversation as the different processions pass along. The very Nazarenos themselves who accompany the pasos are not much more reverent. They generally carry a small basket filled with bon-bons, which they distribute to their friends as they pass through the streets. Sometimes they lag behind to light a cigar, for which purpose they are obliged to raise their masks.

This is all very sad, but unfortunately too true; and I think any one who has passed a Holy Week in Seville, and who understands the language, will allow that I have not exaggerated. And this is the purity of faith, which her preachers are always boasting she has preserved above all other nations! This is the devotion which now animates the land that produced an Isabella and a Mendoza—a Ximenez and a Talavera!

But we may turn from the scenes enacted in the streets, which must sadden the heart of every right-feeling or religious mind, be they Catholic or Protestant, and enter the glorious temple, where the services of the Holy Week are performed with much solemnity. But even here, many of them are treated as mere spectacles by the congregation, and the fuss and sensation at the rending of the veil show that people have assembled more to see what is going on than to pray. It does not, however, matter much; within this glorious pile there is always some corner to be found apart from the throng.

On Holy Thursday, when the Monumento is lighted up, the Cathedral presents a scene of religious ceremonial, unsurpassed—unequaled. This is a gigantic temple of



painted wood-work, and of Grecian architecture, adorned with statues, prepared for the reception of the Host, which is reserved for the mass on Good Friday. It is erected over the tomb of Ferdinand Columbus, and occupies a large portion of the space between the entrance and the Trascoro. It is put up every year at great expense, and for some time detracts considerably from the beauty of the cathedral, its architecture jarring with the Gothic edifice under whose roof it stands. But once lighted, the disagreeable effect it produced before is readily forgiven. It is indeed a magnificent scene, when the procession leaves the High Altar and moves towards the monumento, when the sounds of that glorious hymn, the "Pange lingua gloriosa," re-echo through the vaulted aisles, and the vast multitudes around kneel amid all the pomp and ceremonial which the Church of Rome knows so well how to display.

But I prefer it when all this is over—at night; when the Miserere is concluded, and the crowd have deserted the building. Then it is indeed sublime! That huge temple of light losing itself in the dark roof above, making the deep night which reigns in the vast cathedral even blacker still—the consecrated Host reposing in the centre within its silver custodia—all around so tranquil and so silent. No sound to disturb the holiness of the scene, a few kneeling worshippers who have lingered until they could continue their devotions undisturbed, in their black veils and folded cloaks, only adding to the mystery and solemnity of the hour.

The Miserere here is not by any means worthy of such a cathedral. They have an immense orchestra placed within the High Altar, and the voices are completely drowned by the instrumental accompaniment, bad in all cases, but most particularly so in this solemn service, which owes its greatest charm to the singing. Spaniards



seem to have an objection to the organ, on any particular ceremony always substituting an orchestra. This is much to be deplored, especially where they have organs of such power and sweetness as those at Seville. The devout conduct of the Spaniards in church has rendered it necessary the last few years to divide the cathedral during the performance of the Miserere, as it does not commence until after dark: the men are admitted upon one side, the women on the other. Such is the Holy Week in Seville, where religion is made a mere spectacle, and where gay throngs meet to enjoy themselves—one excuse answering as well as another. And the streets are as gay as thronging multitudes can make them, and all looks bright and joyous. The balconies are crowded with spectators, and the ceremonies of the Holy Week prove no bad speculation for those who have windows to let along the line of procession.

After the excitement of the *Semana Santa* has died away, people's thoughts are engrossed with the fair, the next grand event which serves to break the monotony of Seville life. This *Feria* always takes place in the middle of April. Sometimes it falls during Easter week, but the Sevillanos prefer its coming afterwards, as strangers are then induced to prolong their stay, and where there are so few opportunities of amusement, it is decidedly a pity they should both arrive together. Only of late years the fair has been held in Seville. It used formerly to be at Mairena, which was the great centre of attraction; but now Mairena is comparatively deserted. If people expect to see in an Andalusian fair any resemblance to an English one, they will be grievously disappointed. There are no shows to tempt you to look at wonderful giants, or still more miraculous dwarfs, no monstrosities of any sort are to be found here, no charming booths full of all kinds of pretty things, where



you may buy fairings for your friends, and gingerbread for yourself—no ; in Andalucia people indulge in less expensive amusements, chiefly in the most economical of all—walking about to see their friends and be seen themselves. The fact is, these are in reality cattle fairs, where horses and cows, sheep and pigs are brought for sale.

The Feria de Sevilla is held on a large open space outside the Puerta San Fernando, where in former days the victims of the Inquisition suffered. The view of the walls is very pretty from here, with the Giralda rising above them, and the pinnacles and buttresses of the cathedral surmounted by light and elegant iron crosses, which seem suspended in the air. The whole of this large open space at this festive season swarms with life. The Calle San Fernando, which leads to it, is almost the only long straight street in Seville. On this occasion it is covered with a canvas awning to shelter the passers-by from the burning rays of the sun, and is filled with booths for the sale of all descriptions of dulces and sweetmeats. Just outside the gate is a lottery for the benefit of one of the many charitable associations patronised by the Infanta, where all the rank and fashion of Seville seduce people into purchasing tickets which must prove prizes, and which inevitably turn out to be blanks.

Close along the walls is the fashionable promenade ; here, in the early morning and the cool of the evening, people may be seen parading up and down, and numbers of carriages appear that were never seen before. The crowd is so dense it is hardly possible to move ; but this suits the Spaniards, who follow each other backwards and forwards, laughing, talking, and are content. All the gay dresses that can be produced shine on this occasion, the most brilliant flowers are pressed into the service of



the jet-black hair, and the dressy white blonde mantilla replaces the ordinary black one.

Yet after all, the assemblage, in some respects, is very similar to what it would be in any other country. With the exception of the mantilla, all national costume has disappeared from among the upper classes. No dark eyes, speaking unutterable things, flash from under bandit-looking hats with the heavy cloak concealing the figure; no gay bespangled dresses among the ladies. All this is gone. Here and there may be seen some stray Maja, some girl celebrated for her beauty, who in order to attract more attention puts on this now neglected costume. It is a pretty pert-looking dress, but must be worn with a certain "gracia," which none but an Andaluza can ever hope to attain. This word is not to be translated; we have no equivalent for it in English, so it is no use seeking for it in the pages of the dictionary. It means a certain sort of indescribable piquancy, a sort of saucy grace, which must be seen to be understood.

As the Maja moves along she is saluted on every side with compliments and speeches of exaggerated praise, full, however, of poetic originality, which the men bestow on every woman whose dress, face or carriage has anything which pleases them. Such speeches here are no insult, on the contrary, they are a homage which men would almost think themselves rude if they neglected to pay. Numbers of chairs are placed about the promenade, where those who are fatigued with walking can rest and criticise the passing crowd; while many who dislike the trouble of returning to the town during the heat of the day, have tents pitched, where they breakfast, dine, and spend the day, keeping in fact open house during the fair.

We must, however, turn from the aristocratic portion of



the Feria, to the busy scene in which the people take the principal part, and where the peculiarities of Spanish costumes and Spanish manners still linger. This offers the greatest attraction to strangers. The eye rests first upon a long line of gipsy booths, each decorated with the red and yellow flag of Spain, where these strange people, decked out in all their finery, sit at the doors of the tents, making "buñuelos," a compound of flower and water, converted into a paste, and fried in oil. Eating these buñuelos at the fair of Seville, is as indispensable as whitebait at a Greenwich dinner, and every gipsy as you pass, enlarges on the superiority of her own, and invites you to go in and rest in her neatly-arranged tent.

They are all decked with pink and blue curtains, and clean little tables, where refreshments are to be had and fortunes told, although in this latter proceeding they do not seem to be as accomplished as their "dark" sisters in England. At night, these booths are lighted up, and thronged with dancers, who remain till a late hour. All around is a chaos of sounds of the most discordant nature, the chattering of the gipsies, the loud talking of the men who are buying and selling, disputing and bargaining, mingling with the multifarious noises proceeding from so many animals all congregated together. The choicest steeds from the renowned plains of Cordoba, fierce bulls from the flat grounds that border the Guadalquivir, troops of mules and of donkeys, of sheep and goats, are scattered about the fair in every direction. The din and whirl is beyond description: it is not with the voice alone that men converse, their hands are as eloquent as their tongues, and their flashing eyes and vehement gesticulations form altogether a scene of confusion, such as in our cool northern lands can hardly be imagined.

Now and then the scene is varied by the arrival of a Majo, or dandy, very gaily dressed, with his lady-love









FERIA, SEVILLE.

Dalmeida, Brof. lith.



on the horse behind him; the steed brightly caparisoned, with its striped red and yellow mantas and hanging fringe. The Majo himself, in his embroidered jacket, covered with gold and silver buttons, his two pocket handkerchiefs, which are quite indispensable, peeping out of his pocket on either side, and his embroidered gaiters most curiously worked in leather. The crowd make way for a calesa, which resembles the antiquated vehicles still in use at Naples, painted in all the most gaudy colours imaginable; the man sitting on the shafts to drive, with difficulty forcing his carriage through the throng, who are warned of his arrival by the jingling of the horse's bells. Amid all this congregated mass of human beings, talking, laughing, quarrelling, and singing, gipsies try to allure people into buying horses which have been made up and arranged for the occasion, while in other places they endeavour quietly to appropriate some stray goat or tempting pig, which disappears as if by magic from among its comrades, while its owner looks in vain for the active cunning culprit.

Numbers of foreigners may be seen forcing their way through the crowd, endeavouring to see everything that is going on: specimens of every nation; the grave and steady German; the light-hearted Frenchman, determined to be amused, entering into everything, utterly regardless what amusement he affords to others so long as he is amused himself; and last of all, abound our own countrymen, their independent style of dress rendering them visible at any distance, and the cry of "Inglés, Inglés!" always greets them as they pass along, as surely as though they bore the word imprinted on their wide-awakes and shooting coats, their identity being rendered even more unmistakable when they seek to shelter it under the guise of the "sombbrero calañés" and the "calesera Andaluz." And what different shades of character! with what varied



feelings are they gazing on the animated scene around! Here are a party of officers from Gibraltar, who have rushed over to "do" Seville, and the fair, and the Holy Week, and the bull-fights, all in the same breath. There stands another individual, cold and wrapt in his own English formality, looking on solemnly, and wondering how people can be amused with such nonsense; while another putting aside all this grandeur, mixes himself in everything, thinks it all capital fun, and sits down to help the Gitanas in making their *buñuelos*. Then come some Americans, pitying people for finding so much novelty in a Spanish fair, assuring them if they would only to come to the States they would find something worth seeing.

English ladies, too, were there in abundance, walking up and down amongst their dark rivals, some studying every feature of the scene, and trying to stamp its varied episodes on the pages of their drawing-books. Laughing urchins, their eyes sparkling with mischief, were disputing for the honour of sitting as models; some one appointing himself as guard of honour, and preventing others inconveniencing the sketcher, quite forgetting he was himself the most intrusive of them all. One Englishwoman, more sentimental than the rest, scarcely heeded the busy scene, so occupied was she in bringing to her mind the dreadful fires of the Inquisition, and vainly striving to ascertain the identical spot where the victims were sacrificed. A young enthusiast, too, was there, one who was drinking deep of the Castalian spring; but he was out of his element in this bewildering crowd; he sought seclusion and retirement in the poetic realms of Granada, and when we met him again, he was dwelling in the courts of the Alhambra, seeking for what he himself called, "the ungraspable."

The fair lasts three days, and among its principal