

amusements, it is needless to say, are the bull-fights, the "corridas" where the Andalucians are to be seen in all their glory. Here they reign supreme; within these precincts everything bows to the will of the sovereign people; within its sanguinary area they reign undisturbed. Governments rule with a rod of iron, but on the threshold of the bull-ring their authority ceases, and here indeed may be found that freedom of which they are always boasting. "Spaniards are all equal in the sight of the law," is the first watchword of that constitution which is at this very moment trembling for its existence, and the foreigner who obtained his first opinion of the country from a "corrida," would be inclined to subscribe to the truth of the proposition. The fact is, the freedom which exists within the bull-ring, is exactly in an inverse proportion to that which reigns without. The more absolute the government, the more it suits them to humour the people; and so long as the naughty wayward child will not meddle with politics, but pay its taxes and hold its tongue, there cannot possibly be any objection to its amusing itself in the manner most agreeable to its fancy.

It may be regretted that there should be so much brutality in bull-fights, for as a spectacle they are beautiful, and the skill and address exhibited by the actors deserving of the highest meed of praise. What can be more animated than the Plaza before the performances begin?—the huge amphitheatre crowded with thousands of people in their gay costumes, the sparkling sun-light, the bright azure sky above, the clash of military music, the noise of the eager multitude, all combine to present a most attractive and engrossing scene. When the "cuadrilla" enters in procession and the "picadores" take up their position, and the active "chulos," in their brilliant dresses, disperse themselves over the arena, with their many-coloured "capas"

fluttering in the air, it is impossible not to feel the excitement of the moment, as the gates are thrown open at the sound of a trumpet, and the wild brute, the hero of the scene, rushes into the midst. But, how soon the aspect changes! Who but a Spaniard can look without horror and disgust at the barbarities to which the wretched horses are subjected? Torn and mangled, ridden till strength is exhausted, or left to die there, their bodies strewn around in every stage of expiring nature—it is too horrible! Many close their eyes, it is true, to these details, and ladies' fans are in requisition to shut out the more tragic incidents; but they inevitably occur, and are now inseparable from the proceedings of the day. Time was when the "picador" rode a splendid steed, and exercised all his skill to save him; and therefore the number of horses killed during the "corrida" was a sure criterion of the ferocity of the bulls, and consequent excitement of the sport. This doubtless led to the present practice of selecting the most worthless horses, which, instead of any effort being made to save them, are deliberately sacrificed to lend a fictitious appearance of fierceness to the bulls. The relief felt by the spectator is indescribable, when the varying changes of the drama put an end to the cruelties inflicted on the horses, and the "matador" enters alone and unaided, with nothing but his sword and crimson flag, his skill and nerve, to meet the maddened beast in the closing struggle. No one can fail to admire the grace and perfect self-possession displayed by a first-rate "espada," the firm yet elastic step, the ready hand, the cool eye, with which he plays with his terrible foe, and dares him to the attack, till the final moment, when mid-way in his maddened rush, he is checked by the cunning lounge, and drops lifeless at the feet of his assailant.

When one reflects on the customs and manners of the

country, of the feeling of cruelty which seems almost naturally to pervade the lower orders in every land, one can hardly be surprised at the admiration which the Spaniards entertain for a pastime in which there is so much to strike the imagination and so much address exhibited. In this country there is no society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, and people are never lectured about the wickedness of torturing them. From earliest childhood they are taken to see this favourite amusement of all classes, and are thus accustomed to witness the cruel features of the scene before the mind is sufficiently matured to enable them to reason on the subject; in fact, it grows with their growth, and they cannot comprehend its atrocity. Even the Infanta, when she goes, always takes her children. People, however, must not fancy that there is but one opinion in Spain with regard to bull-fights. Many Spaniards among the upper classes condemn them as loudly as we could do; and even in the lower orders I have heard several declare they did not approve of them.

A great change must take place in many ways before bull-fights will cease to become the favourite amusement of Spaniards. With the exception of Madrid, they are not, however, by any means of frequent occurrence, not more than three or four great ones taking place during the year. The celebrated espada, Montes, the prince of toreros, whose grace and elegance were unsurpassed, died about a twelvemonth ago. He left two representatives, who disputed the palm of superiority—Arjona and Redondo, better known by the names of Cúchares and Chiclanero. Some favoured one, some the other; the gentlemen generally asserting the superiority of the former, while the ladies took the latter under their especial patronage, his personal appearance being more prepossessing than that of his rival. But the contest

is now at an end ; the recent death of Chiclanero, who died of consumption at Madrid during the last spring, has left Cúchares the sole champion of the arena. He generally resides at Seville, of which place he is a native ; he has realised a considerable fortune, and has the reputation of being a very kind-hearted and charitable man.

The Plaza de Toros at Seville is one of the largest in Spain ; as usual, it remains unfinished, but the vacancy thus left admits a view of the Giralda, which adds very much to the beauty of the spectacle.

Although the neighbourhood of Seville does not present the same attractions as the mountain scenery round Granada, many pretty rides may be taken through its olive-covered plains ; more particularly along the low ridge of hills which rise in front of it, on the right bank of the Guadalquivir. The church of the ruined convent of San Juan de Alfarache crowns one of these hills, and is conspicuous from every quarter. In front, there is a platform which commands an enchanting view of Seville, with its snowy houses, its towers, its churches, its cathedral, and Giralda. The remains of the walls of a former fortress may be traced along the edge of the cliff, beneath which winds the river, covered with graceful sails.

This is a favourite place of resort on Sundays and fête days, when the people come and dance on the platform. The Guadalquivir is crowded with boats, and the music of the guitar and castanets, with the wild seguidillas re-echo along its waters. I cannot call them crystal, for the classic Betis is as muddy a river as one could well have the pleasure of seeing. It winds about in most fantastic turns ; and although San Juan is only a short walk straight across the fields by Triana, the long sweep taken by the river makes it appear a considerable

distance to those who go by water. This convent belonged to the Franciscans, who first established themselves in 1398 in the buildings which were afterwards occupied by the Carthusians in Santa Maria de las Cuevas. Its courts are now deserted, and an old man keeps the key of the church, where service is sometimes performed. There is a retablo very much overloaded with ornaments, but containing some tolerable pictures; there is likewise a miraculous baptismal font, which used to replenish itself every year on Holy Saturday.

A fine wide road leads along the plain behind Triana to the village of Santi Ponce and the remains of Italica; or one may vary the ride by keeping to the high ground, and passing Castilleja de la Cuesta. An inscription over the door of a small house in this village marks the dwelling where Hernan Cortes died, the conqueror of Mexico, and one of the many victims of Spain's ingratitude. Little now remains of Italica: a small and ruined amphitheatre still proves that it was once a Roman city, but the birth-place of Trajan is now little better than a quarry which supplies materials for adjacent buildings. This is the only use that Spaniards make of ruins. The stones are cut and fashioned ready at hand, and they may as well be turned to account. They serve to erect other edifices, which, in their turn, may be employed as quarries by future generations.

The neighbouring convent of San Isidoro del Campo was partly erected with the stones from Italica, and now it stands a mere ruin likewise. Half fortress, half convent; it bears witness to the former magnificence of the Guzmans, and commands a charming view of the surrounding country. It was founded by Guzman el Bueno, one of the great heroes of Spanish history, on the spot where the bones of St. Isidore, the learned Bishop of Seville, had been discovered. It was

endowed with large possessions and territorial jurisdiction, and belonged to the Jeronymites. It wears now a sad aspect of desolation ; and nothing can be more melancholy than its lonely cloisters, all covered with a damp mossy hue.

The church consists of two naves ; in the principal one, which was erected by Guzman, he and his wife lie interred on either side of the high altar.

Here lies the intrepid chieftain, who, with more than Spartan fortitude, saw his son murdered before his face rather than surrender the fortress of Tarifa, which he had assisted his sovereign in rescuing from the Moors. He served his country well, and at last fell in a skirmish near Gaucin in the year 1309. His son and daughter-in-law are buried in the adjoining chapel. The retablo is by Montanes, and contains a beautiful statue of St. Jerome by this celebrated sculptor.

Returning to Triana, you pass the Carthusian monastery of Santa Maria de las Cuevas, once renowned for its wealth, now converted into a porcelain manufactory under the management of an Englishman. The beautifully carved wood-work of the choir has been transferred to the Museum ; a small portion, however, still remains in a chapel which Mr. Pickman keeps consecrated to its original purpose. The large church is converted into a workshop, and men are now busy manufacturing porcelain within its precincts. The gardens, which are very extensive, are filled with orange-trees ; and in one corner those English are buried who happen to die in Seville, for here the Protestants have no cemetery of their own, and none but those who profess the established religion of the land can be interred within the burial-grounds.

The corporation of Seville have lately had a new cemetery laid out on the northern side of the town, ostensibly for the greater benefit of the inhabitants who

were subjected in summer to the wind blowing all the malaria from the old cemetery over the town. In reality, however, a desire to be agreeable in higher quarters has had some small share in the extreme interest shown in this instance for the public health; the Infanta and the Duke not approving of the close vicinity of the old cemetery to the gardens of the Palace.

The old walls of Seville are in some parts very well preserved, and some of the square towers still look imposing. Some portions are picturesque enough, more particularly near the Caños de Carmona: an aqueduct by which water is conveyed from Alcalá de Guadaira to the city. This town lies on the high road to Madrid, about two leagues from Seville, and a charming excursion may be made to it. Alcalá is almost entirely inhabited by bakers, the bread consumed in Seville being made there. The greatest care is bestowed upon the preparation of the corn, and the kneading of it; and certainly their labour is not in vain, for Spanish bread is first-rate, very white and close.

Alcalá boasts of the remains of one of the largest Moorish castles in Andalusia. It is a picturesque ruin, a delightful place for a pic-nic: such shady grass-grown courts, such fine old walls to scramble among, such views to repay those who have enterprise enough to ascend its towers! The Guadaira flows along the base of the hill on which it stands, while the Giralda towering in the distance, marks the site of Seville.

There are many pleasant rides over the plains which surround Seville, and what with the excursions in the neighbourhood, and the many interesting things enclosed within its walls, a winter may be very agreeably spent by those who do not care about society, for in that respect, as I have before mentioned, Seville offers nothing to tempt the traveller. But it has its charms: its lovely

houses, and its fine climate make it a very liveable place, and its vicinity to Cadiz renders it easy of access.

There is hardly any winter here; a bright sun and an unclouded sky cheer one even at Christmas. February is generally the worst season, wet and cold and uncomfortable, but it does not last long, and the climate is infinitely preferable to that of Malaga. It is certainly much damper, and more rain falls than at Malaga, although even here the wet days are few. But it is free from the dry, cold winds and insupportable dust which render the latter so disagreeable; there is a far greater softness and mildness in the air, and its lovely walks along the banks of the river are always charming. But the winter and spring are the enjoyable months; in summer the heat is insupportable. Even in the month of May the streets become like furnaces; and then all who can leave the town, take refuge on the coast, and emigrate to catch the sea breezes at San Lucar and Cadiz; and those who are obliged to remain during the summer months, descend to the ground-floor, and live under the shade of the awning, amid the fountains and the flowers of their patios, where they shut themselves up all day long, only going out when the night is far advanced to enjoy the cool air.

Seville is rather expensive for a Spanish town, but still, living here is moderate enough, and there is not anything to tempt people to spend their money, except on the actual necessities of life. The narrow streets and bad pavement render it almost a penance to go out in a carriage, and the bad roads in the neighbourhood deter one from driving in the country. Horses, however, are easily had, and excellent ones too, spirited yet gentle, as Andalusian horses generally are. There is little to invite one in the shops; unlike the numerous temptations offered to the traveller in every Italian town, here it is almost impossible

to procure any object which might serve even as a souvenir of the place.

It is surprising that Seville is not more resorted to than it is. There is no doubt that the difficulty of procuring furnished apartments is a great drawback to strangers, more particularly to invalids. There are some few medical men who have fair reputations for skill, and a considerable improvement has undoubtedly been made on the old Spanish ideas of medical science, when bleeding was considered the infallible remedy for every disease that mortal man is heir to. Some of the rising school have been educated in Paris; and invalids may place far more confidence in them, and feel far more security than the generally received accounts of Spanish doctors would lead them to imagine. It is, however, very difficult to divest oneself of old prejudices, and people have so long been accustomed to hear of the low state of the medical profession in Spain, that they forget its members can improve as well as other people. The system they adopt, likewise tends to discourage English visitors, and inspire them with a want of confidence; for accustomed as they are to the strong medicines and violent remedies employed at home, they are too apt to look with great distrust, nay, almost with contempt, on prescriptions which are principally composed of decoctions of mallow, violets, "caldo blanco," and such like innocent remedies, which prove, however, very efficacious in this hot climate. It would, perhaps, be as well for foreigners to remember, that in these southern lands the medical men of the country are far more likely to understand what treatment may be suitable for incidental complaints, than those who are alike strangers to the climate, the air, and, in fact, every local peculiarity.

Notwithstanding the absence of society, and other drawbacks, no one can reside for any time in Seville

without retaining pleasant recollections of many happy and agreeable hours spent beneath its azure sky, during its bright sunny winter months. Its streets and houses have a joyous look, and no one can fail to like its kind and light-hearted people, who, in spite of many faults, have charms which are peculiarly their own.

There is constant communication between Seville and Cadiz, by means of steamers, which go backwards and forwards almost every day. The fares are high, but people here have not yet learned to understand that low fares increase the numbers of passengers. The view of Seville from the river is very pretty, but once past San Juan de Alfarache and the orange groves opposite to it, nothing can be more uninteresting or tiresome, than the whole course of the Guadalquivir to the sea. Flat plains, almost level with the water's edge, are alone to be seen, where huge droves of cattle roam about undisturbed, and where the effect of the mirage is repeated at every turn of the river, while flights of wild fowl hover above. Water is raised from it at the few villages along its banks, much in the same way as from the Nile, by means of a pole with a bucket at one end. There is nothing to relieve the monotony until the vast pine forests of San Lucar de Barrameda offer some slight variety. Here, at a short distance from San Lucar, at a place called Bonanza, the steamers stop to land those passengers who prefer crossing overland to Cadiz. It is sometimes very rough going over the bar, and many avail themselves of this mode of avoiding the sea portion of the trip.

San Lucar is a great resort for the inhabitants of Seville in summer, and the Infanta is now building a palace there. Crossing the bar, you come out into the open sea. On your left stands the white church of N. S. de Regla, on the promontory of Chipiona.

This sanctuary belonged formerly to the Augustines, and contains a miraculous image of the Virgin, held in much veneration by sailors. Soon, the white houses of the sea-girt city rise from the surface of the ocean, protected from its stormy rage by walls, against which the surge breaks in sheets of foam, and the tall masts of the shipping give signs of life and commerce.

Cadiz may be seen in a few hours: it affords little of interest; and though in point of fact the most ancient, it appears the most modern of Spanish towns. The streets are narrow, but kept in excellent order; the houses very high, with flat roofs, and lofty miradores, whence many a lovely view may be obtained of the bay, the distant mountains, and the blue waters of the Atlantic dotted with tiny sails. The town, from its position, is naturally very limited in its extent: it stands upon a peninsula connected with the main land by a long and narrow causeway, over which the sea dashes in stormy weather. It is fortified as well upon the land as the sea side, and its walls look formidable enough, however neglected and ineffective they may be in reality. Cadiz is a kind of prison on a large scale, for, except by sea, there is but one way out of the town, leading along the narrow strip of land just mentioned, where the cemeteries are placed. Here, there is one for the English, very prettily laid out. There are some fine squares. The Alameda lies along the walls, overlooking the sea and bay, and here, for want of a larger space, the inhabitants have to walk. Cadiz is badly supplied with water, and what they have is collected from the roofs of the houses during the wet season, and preserved in tanks. The streets are lighted with gas, rather a novelty in Spain.

There is a very pretty theatre, and a great deal more society here than at Seville, even in winter, and in summer