

the great walk: a lofty church, and some public buildings, give this street an air of grandeur not common in a Spanish city. Most of the small houses are Moorish built, or coarse imitations of that manner, the modern masons decorating their walls with uncouth copies of Saracenic mosaics. I believe there is scarce a house in Granada that has not over its door, in large red characters, the words, *Ave Maria purissima sin pecado concebida*; which is the *cri de guerre* of the Franciscan friars, who are the heads of the party that maintain the conception of the Virgin Mary to have been performed without her participating of the stain of original sin. This is a favourite tenet in Spain, strengthened and confirmed by the institution of the new order of knighthood of Carlos Tercero, by the vows of the ancient military orders, and by the oath administered to all candidates for degrees. At their reception they swear to defend, by word and deed, the doctrine of the immaculate conception. The Dominicans are the grand antagonists of the Conceptionists.

The market-place is spacious, but its buildings are horridly ugly. They are Moorish, and from top to bottom seem to be nothing but rows of large windows, divided by narrow brick pilasters. The shambles are a building apart, and clean enough. All meat bought in them must be weighed before a sitting committee of magistrates, before the buyer is suffered to carry home his purchase. One of our servants was yesterday hurried to jail, through ignorance

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of this regulation. An alguazil, coming up behind him, seized on his catering basket: this abrupt mode of proceeding was repulsed by a violent blow on the chaps with a shoulder of mutton, which brought the Spaniard to the ground. Our hero was marching off triumphant, when the pride of victory getting the better of his prudence, he suffered himself to be surprized by a detachment of alguazils, who lodged him in prison, till our banker waited upon the magistrates, and procured his discharge.

The outsidés of the churches are painted in a theatrical taste, and their insides set off with a profusion of marbles, brought from the neighbouring mountains: the dark green, from the Sierra Nevada, is the most valuable. Tables of an extraordinary size have been lately cut of that marble, for the infant Don Lewis; but as the roads have been since quite destroyed by the torrents, the future carriage of such large blocks from the mountain will be attended with great expence and trouble. There are also many handsome brown marbles and alabasters, diversified with an infinite number of shades and tints. One whole street of artificers is employed in making little boxes, bracelets, necklaces, and other knick-knacks, of such materials, which they retail cheap enough. It is usual in gentlemen's houses to frame fine specimens of marble, and hang them up in the apartments by way of ornament.

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The cathedral, which, in point of architecture, stands very high in the opinion of the Granadines, is an assemblage of three churches. The first is a clumsy parish-church; the second, a large chapel, erected by Ferdinand V. at that unfortunate æra of the arts, when all the lightness and beautiful caprice of the Saracenic taste was laid aside, to make room for an unwieldy, preposterous mode of building, and a few years before the magnificence, elegance, and purity of Grecian architecture came again to be understood, relished, and copied. Both within and without, this chapel is incumbered with the weight of its own ill-proportioned ornaments. Ferdinand and Isabella repose before the altar, under a large marble monument full of figures and grotesques, in a pretty good style; which proves what a surprizing revolution the arts had undergone since the time of building the chapel. The two catholic monarchs lie by the side of each other; and adjoining, on a similar tomb, are stretched out the effigies of Philip the Fair, of Austria, their son-in-law, and of Joan their daughter, his wife. Over the great door is the emblem of the united monarchies, a bundle of arrows tied together, and clutched in the talons of a single-headed eagle.

From the chapel you pass into the main church, begun in the reign of Charles V. but not yet quite finished. It has the advantage of receiving abundance of light in every part; but the architect, who has essayed every

order of architecture both on the outside and inside of the church, has combined and disposed them in so heavy and confused a manner, that they produce none of that grand effect which results from the well-proportioned parts of one *whole*, when placed in perfect harmony with each other; such as fills the eye with one great object, and affords the senses a repose and satisfaction, undisturbed by the irregular predominance of any of the component members. Here they have carried the extravagance of fancy to such a pitch, that at one altar they have turned a set of twisted columns of beautiful marble topsy-turvy, and placed the smaller end on the base: the uncouthness of the appearance corresponds with the absurdity of the idea. The high altar is insulated, after the Roman fashion, under a very lofty dome, which would be entitled to the admiration of connoisseurs, had they taken less pains to load the arches, and the angles of the cupola, with statues, pictures, and festoons. The area round its basis, with the fine iron railing, and marble pavement, makes a great shew. I observed no very good paintings over any of the altars; but read an order, hung up in one of the iles, which thunders out the pain of the greater excommunication against all such as walk here for their pleasure, or converse with women in any of the chapels. Lest this anathema should not restrain the idle and the amorous, the spiritual court has added to it a fine of four ducats for each offence.

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The church of St. John of God is richly ornamented, and so are many others in Granada; but I saw none that did much credit to their architects, few of whom seem to have comprehended or admired the principles upon which Verrugete proceeded in building the new palace in the Alhambra.

The amphitheatre for bull-feasts is built with stone, and passes for one of the best in Spain.

The court of chancery sits in a new building, of a disagreeable style, heavy and disjointed. There are some medallions, and pillars of fine marble, in the main front. This court of judicature (of which species there is but another in the kingdom, established at Valladolid) comprehends within its jurisdiction more than half Spain, extending to the very neighbourhood of Madrid. Appeals lie to it from all the audiences and lower courts, and from it to the council of Castille only. Before the condemnation has been ratified here, no inferior judge is authorized to execute the sentence of death upon a criminal, under the pain of forfeiting five hundred maravedis, a sum so trifling, according to the present value of money, that it is not likely to deter a resolute officer of justice from punishing an offender without delay.

This tribunal draws a swarm of lawyers to the place, who absorb its riches, and are the only people that live with any degree of luxury or affluence. They soon consume the little wealth a farmer or tradesman may have

scraped together, by involving him in some law-suit or other, out of which he cannot extricate himself, as long as he has a farthing left to pay his attorney with. This, and many other kinds of oppression, have reduced Granada to a state of great poverty and despondency. Commerce is very feebly carried on, without encouragement or protection; the crops of the fertile Vega diminish annually; population gradually decreases. The city does not contain more than fifty thousand inhabitants, of which number about eighteen thousand only are useful working hands; the surplus is made up of lawyers, clergymen, children, and beggars. There are not less than a thousand sturdy, able-bodied rascals, that live by alms and conventual donations. We this morning saw a whole regiment of them drawing off in great order from the gate of the Carthusians, where they had been to receive a luncheon of bread and a platter of porridge apiece. Many of them afterwards adjourned to a shop, where several persons were playing publicly at dice.

The play-house differs in some respects from those we have seen in other parts of the kingdom: the men occupy all the ground-floor, and the women sit very high up, in a crazy kind of gallery. The fire of the flints and steels was so quick among the men, who were all preparing to smoke, or smoking, that it looked like soldiers going through their exercise. They gave us one day a strange farce, which it was impossible to make any thing of; it

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was all metamorphosis, a continual change of cloaths and character; at last out came a Capuchin friar, mounted on an ass, who, after many grimaces and buffooneries, coupled the other actors in the bands of holy wedlock.

L E T T E R XXV.

Granada, January 1, 1776.

YESTERDAY morning we took a stroll behind the Alhambra, passing below the *Puerta de 'los siete fuelos*, which was formerly the great entrance. This gate has been long blocked up, and the seven stories of vaults, from which it derived its name, filled with rubbish. A little farther on, the wall turns to the north-east, where the towers are very high. Part of the hill, which is a strong-cemented gravel, has been cut through, to make a dry ditch before them. A single arch crosses it, and conveys into the palace a copious supply of water. The path down this solitary, gloomy hollow, is rugged, and broken by the waste waters. About the middle is a very low postern, through which the court passed, when it chose to retire to the spring palace, which stands on a hill to the right.

Nearer

Nearer the Dauro, the water has burst all its conduits, and broken the gravel-bank into a tremendous precipice. Here we descended into the charming vale of Dauro, where we remarked the remnants of a Moorish bridge and tower, that appear to have supported a gallery of communication between the Alhambra and Albaycin. The view from the little green bank near the river, tho' a confined one, is unspeakably beautiful; at the bottom, where the cathedral and other steeples rise in a group, in the narrow reach, the little stream winds its way into the heart of the city. To the south, the fine verdant slopes are crowned with the turrets of the Alhambra, the hanging woods and gardens of the Generaliph, and the banks of the Sierra del Sol: on the north, are the Albaycin, innumerable gardens and orchards, and caverns full of inhabitants. We found our mules waiting for us here, and proceeded up the river, a very pleasant ride, between villas and convents, romantically situated, mills and water-falls, gardens, and plantations of fruit-trees, and thickets of filberts. We turned off to the southward, by the ruins of a small aqueduct, and came back over the mountain, on the top of which is a long ridge of stones, said to be the remains of the ancient Illiberia. It has more the appearance of a park-wall, or line of circumvallation. On the point that overlooks the Alhambra, stood formerly the fort of the Sun, or Saint Helena, under which run three canals, cut in the rock, one above the
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other, which serve to convey water to the city, from the mountains, springs, and the river. Some large reservoirs, of Moorish, or perhaps more ancient origin, still subsist below, in perfect preservation. The water of the largest is very limpid, and it was never known to be dry. Historians relate a very singular proof of the abundance of its springs and supplies, though none can be discerned to boil up in the basin. When D. John of Austria marched a body of troops of five thousand men into the Alpuxaras mountains, against the Moriscos, at the hottest season of the year, he halted at this reservoir, to allow them time to quench their burning thirst. They drank and wasted as much of its water as they chose, yet there could not be perceived the least diminution in the original quantity contained in the pond. We stopped at the Generaliph, which was the residence of the sultan in April and May: it now belongs to the Conde de Campotejar, a Genoese nobleman, of the name of Grimaldi, descended in the female line from the royal family of Granada. The remains of the building are scarce worth looking at; for the noblest halls, and best finished work, are almost entirely demolished. The things yet existing, that claim attention, are the following: the double hedge of royal myrtle, above fifteen feet high; a row of cypresses of prodigious height and bulk—the servant pointed out a little recess behind them, where the sultana was accused of having committed adultery with Abencerrage;—great abundance



abundance of water running through all the little courts, but the grand jet d'eaus are no longer kept in repair.

This day, being the anniversary of the surrender of Granada to Ferdinand and Isabella, was observed as a great festival, and day of rejoicing. Two or three feeble cracks from the cannon of the palace announced the feast to the populace, who flocked to the hill to pay their annual visit to the Moorish palace, which is this day open to all comers that can pay an acknowledgment to the governor's servant. He accounts to his master for these perquisites, which in some years amount to five hundred pezzettas. The present alcalde, or governor, resides in a small corner of the palace, where the emperor had made his chapel, and from a little window superintends the business, counting the heads that pass the threshold, and calculating the sum they may have taxed themselves at. He lives quite retired in his castle, and employs his many leisure hours, not in profound speculations or learned researches, but in emptying as many bottles of wine as the only arm he has left (for he has lost one) has steadiness to pour into his glass.

We entered the Alhambra with the crowd, and took a last farewell of that charming spot, where we have passed many delicious hours every day during our stay in Granada.

LETTER

L E T T E R XXVI.

Antequera, January 8, 1776.

THE second day of this new year, we set out from Granada, by the way of the Vega, in which we saw neither vines nor mulberry-trees, but all arable lands, which, near the city, let at about a *doblon* the fanega for the upper grounds, and in the low, well-watered parts, at a *doblon de à ocho*: some spots, that are proper for growing water-melons, run up to near six *doblons* a year. The fanega contains 31,700 square feet. Copiousness of water fertilizes these plains; but in rainy weather the roads are not passable. We came for dinner to the Soto de Roma, where we had already paid a visit. This was originally a hunting-seat for Charles V. since occasionally inhabited by his successors, and now granted for life to Lieutenant-general Richard Wall, late prime minister of Spain. It was quite in ruins when he came to live here: he has rebuilt part of it, cleaned it, and fitted up the house with elegant English furniture, in the style of one of our villas. The waters of four rivers meet here, and cause frequent inundations in winter. In summer the air is very un-

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wholesome,

wholesome, as the woods and ditches at that season abound with reptiles and vermin of all sorts. The forest round it contains about four thousand acres, and was reserved to the crown by Ferdinand the Catholic, when he divided the conquered country among his followers. Elm, poplar, and some oak, are the kind of trees that grow here in any quantity: they are cut down for repairs of the estate, and for the service of the royal arsenals. Mr. Wall has drained most of the woods, opened pleasant drives throughout, filled up the naked spots with plantations of useful timber trees, and thinned the old quarters with great judgment. This is almost the only place in Spain where pheasants thrive and multiply. In the beginning of spring, at the end of autumn, and during the winter months, this is a very agreeable rural habitation. Mr. Wall resides at the Soto from October to May; he then goes to Aranjuez, to attend the court for a month; after which he comes for the summer to the city of Granada. The king has given up to him all the revenues arising from these demesnes, and they are laid out in improving and beautifying the place, which Mr. Wall seems to understand perfectly well. He has every thing within himself: his own flocks, herds, and poultry, supply his table with meat provisions; the woods furnish it with game, the rivers with fish, and the kitchen-garden with every