

Crowds of peasantry flock into the town from the neighbourhood around; all appear in their gayest dress; the balconies are bright with snowy mantillas and sparkling fans; music and the report of fireworks fill the air, when at noon on Corpus Eve the festivities commence in the square by the civil authorities delivering it up to the clergy. From this hour to the following morning the square is crowded—all through the day and night the people parade round and round. In the evening it is brilliantly lighted, and bands of music keep incessantly playing; the sides of the Plaza are lined with chairs and couches where the ladies come down, in full dress, and see and are seen to equal advantage. The immense concourse of people, however, makes it rather disagreeable, although a Spanish crowd is the most amiable and accommodating on the face of the earth—the *Puerta de las Orejas* notwithstanding. The *Pescaderia* or Fish-market, leading out of the Plaza, picturesque at all times, from the long projecting wooden gallery which runs its entire length, is on this eve an immense “curiosity shop” of the most singular description. The stalls are no longer covered with the finny tribe, but with toys, trinkets, pictures, &c.; and each stall is fitted up as a shrine, brilliantly lighted, with its altar and crucifix and pious pictures, where the people may pray or purchase as they feel inclined.

The procession on the following day offers little attraction to those who have had the good fortune to witness this ceremony in any of the great cities of Italy or Germany. The present poverty of the church and clergy here, preventing any great display on their part; the absence of the monastic orders, and there being no court or great authorities to make necessary a large attendance of the military; render it comparatively a

very quiet affair. The only peculiar feature it presented were a number of little children, who preceded the Custodia in which the Host was carried, dressed as angels with gold and silver wings, and altogether "got up" in the most fantastic manner ; the poor little things being hardly able to walk under the weight of their finery. The procession looks very well from the balconies of the Zacatin, which is covered with an awning for the occasion ; and the crowds of gaily dressed people, and the bright hangings from the windows, give it that air and charm of joyous festivity which can alone be found in Italy and Spain, where all seem so thoroughly bent on enjoying themselves on fête days.

After the procession is concluded, the people prepare to adjourn to the bull-ring—a strange mode of celebrating a religious feast ; but then, it is in Spain, and one here soon ceases to be surprised at incongruities. The Plaza de Toros is small, and cannot boast of very good corridas. The sports are opened by a peculiar ceremony, that of inaugurating the games by prayer ! When the *cuadrilla* enters, they proceed as usual to offer their respects to the presiding authorities, and then turning round, they march across the Plaza to a shrine at the other side, before which they all uncover themselves, and kneeling down, begin to pray. This is the only Plaza in Spain, I believe, where such an extraordinary exhibition occurs in the arena. The bull-fight is followed by a crowded performance at the theatre ; and the day winds up with fireworks on the Carrera.

The churches in Granada offer but little to arrest the attention of the traveller ; one of the most interesting is that of San Geronimo, from its being the burial-place of the great Captain, Gonzalo de

Cordoba. The magnificent convent to which it was formerly attached, has been converted into cavalry barracks, and the church itself is almost deserted: the tomb of Gonzalo is in front of the high altar, and a simple slab of white marble let into the pavement, with a latin inscription, marks the site. This church was shamefully treated by the French, who destroyed the tower in order to turn its materials to account for the bridge of Sebastiani in the salon or Alameda, the remains of Gonzalo were torn from their resting-place, and his sword which formerly hung over the retablo disappeared. But the final work of destruction was reserved for a Spanish mob, who, when the popular fury was directed against the convents, broke into the building in 1836, destroyed everything in the church, again violating the sepulchre of one of their greatest heroes, and scattering his ashes to the winds. That the hands of the foreigner should commit such atrocities, and thus avenge centuries afterwards the defeats that their countrymen had sustained at the hands of the great Captain, seems hardly credible; but that Spaniards themselves should have followed such an example, and insulted the ashes of the man who had shed such lustre upon their name, is one of those sad facts which show how difficult it is to arrest the career of a revolutionary mob. The church and convent of San Geronimo were commenced by the Catholic sovereigns, and afterwards completed by Gonzalo's widow, who begged to be allowed to have the church as a burial-place for her family, which was conceded to her by Charles V.

Not far from the San Geronimo is the convent hospital of the San Juan de Dios, a princely edifice, which owes its foundation to one whose life was a constant sacrifice to the cause of humanity. A poor

soldier repenting of the sins of his past life devoted himself to relieving the wants of the suffering poor around him, and gave them an asylum in his house ; while he sought support and assistance from his wealthier brethren in the holy work in which he was engaged. A small shrine near the Puerta Elvira, according to tradition, marks the spot where he used to sell devotional books to increase his scanty funds. He contrived to enlist the sympathies of a few others like himself, who consecrated their lives to the object he had in view, and he now commenced carrying out the design he had long formed of founding a hospital. Large funds now came in to second his intentions, but death carried him off in 1550, and it was reserved for his successor, Ortega, to complete the sumptuous building which now immortalises his name. He was canonised as San Juan de Dios. The order which he founded, and which was placed under the rule of the Augustines, rapidly increased, and at the time of the abolition of the monastic orders in 1836, they numbered above sixty hospitals in Castile and Andalusia, besides many others which they had founded in the vast colonies that belonged to Spain.

In the general destruction of religious property, the monks of the order of San Juan de Dios were of course involved ; but the possessions of this the first hospital founded in Spain were left untouched, and it is still devoted to the purpose to which it was dedicated, under the superintendence of the Sisters of Charity. The cloister or patio is magnificent, adorned with frescoes representing events in the life of the saint, with descriptions in verse ; the lower portion of the walls covered with azulejos, with the simple inscription constantly recurring, "He who erected this implores you to commend him to God." *El que costeó esta obra pide le*

*encomienden à Dios.* The church is profusely decorated with marbles and gilding, displaying a lavish expenditure, without much taste. The words inscribed over the principal entrance are those, with which its illustrious founder begged alms of the passers by; "Do good unto yourselves." The remains of San Juan de Dios repose in a massive urn behind the high altar.

A short distance outside the town, is all that remains of the once splendid convent of the Carthusian friars. Austere in their rules, the Carthusian monasteries, nevertheless, displayed a wealth and magnificence which left them almost unrivalled; and the ruins of those which existed in Spain are among the finest of the ecclesiastical monuments. Seventeen or eighteen were founded in different parts of the country, the first in Catalonia in 1163. The Cartuja of Granada has now nearly disappeared; its magnificent cloisters have been pulled down, its large orchards parcelled out, and sold to different individuals, and some portion of the original building is arranged as a villa and inhabited by a private family. The church with the small adjoining cloister was about to share the same fate, but it has been fortunately spared, and converted into a sort of parish church, which secures its preservation. A flight of steps leads to a platform in front, which commands a charming view over the vega. A statue of San Bruno adorns the façade. A small cloister attached to it still remains, covered with paintings by one of the lay brethren, named Sanchez Cotan; they represent the tortures to which the Carthusians were exposed in England by our Henry VIII. In the refectory is a large cross, painted by the same, and so admirably done, that even the birds try to alight upon it, fancying it to be made of wood—a delusion which the Spaniards consider the triumph of

art. The church itself is very much overladen with ornament ; the sacristy is very handsome, and ornamented with the richest marbles ; the doors and presses intended for the priests' vestments are all most exquisitely worked in tortoiseshell, ivory and mother-of-pearl, inlaid in ebony, and lined with cedar : it contains but little in the way of pictures. A small Conception on copper, attributed to Murillo, and a companion to it, said to be by Cano, are in the sacristy. The church is now most carefully kept, and mass said there every Sunday for the benefit of the rural population in the neighbourhood.

Many are the curious old houses in the Albaycin, which still bear traces of their Moorish origin. The palaces of the Moorish chieftains are now the wretched habitations of the poorest inhabitants of Granada, and squalling ragged children people the patios, which once glittered with armed warriors ; the population is gradually diminishing, and within the last few years many of the houses in this quarter have been pulled down, their owners finding the ground more profitable when converted into gardens. Beyond the Alcazaba, runs the exterior line of walls skirting the city and cresting the hill up to the hermitage of San Miguel el Alto, where they turn and dip down into the valley of the Darro. These walls were built with a portion of the ransom of the warlike Bishop of Jaen, who was taken prisoner in a foray in the reign of Ismail, the father of Muley Hacen ; the bishop paid heavy sums, but died in captivity, before the full amount of his ransom was forthcoming.

The view from the platform of San Miguel is very extensive, and from its being so elevated, you look down on the Alhambra, and obtain a very good idea of the line of walls which surrounded the city.

The whole of this hill, sloping down to the valley of the Darro, is covered with the prickly pear ; and peering among their thick clumsy leaves may be seen the entrances to caves, hollowed out of the mountain side, and chiefly inhabited by gipsies. The hill swarms with living beings, who crawl out of the most extraordinary holes when you least expect them, as their habitations are most effectually concealed by the thick masses of the cactus and the aloe. These habitations have the double advantage of being cool in summer and warm in winter, and if one may judge from the crowds of children who swarm around, there is not much danger of their population diminishing.

The ride through the valley of the Darro is very pretty. About a league up the river are the large buildings formerly inhabited by the disciples of Loyola, who showed no less judgment than good taste in selecting so secluded a situation, far from the noise and distraction of the city. At times the bed of the stream is enlivened by the presence of a few miserable looking gold-diggers, whose rewards are by no means commensurate with their perseverance. The dark brown sand when washed, produces a few sparkling grains, sufficient to prove the claims of the river to be called the Golden Darro, and to repay the labours of the poor by a few reals' worth in the course of the day. The mania for gold has latterly extended itself to this out-of-the-way place, and several people have been speculating, and companies formed, but all with small success ; the produce not being sufficient to repay the cost of the machinery, &c. Formerly it seems to have been more abundant, and Charles V. upon his arrival at Granada was presented with a crown made of the gold of the Darro. The bed of the river has worn itself a channel through a

romantic glen spanned by one or two picturesque bridges ; its rocky sides in some places approaching close to each other covered with the most luxurious ivy. On St. Peter's day all the world flock here to enjoy themselves, and throng the bed of the river, walking about laughing and talking, apparently all the amusement the Spaniards care for. On their fêtes they do not indulge in games of any sort ; a song to the guitar, or a dance, is the only variety that breaks the routine of their simple amusements.

There are some few fête days in which the people throng to particular places ; St. Peter's is one of them. On St. John's Eve all the world assemble on the Alameda of the Xenil, about ten or twelve at night, and walk up and down until two or three in the morning. The lower orders all sally forth on this occasion, and as the clock strikes twelve the young girls consider it necessary to wash their faces in some neighbouring fountain, in order to secure themselves a husband during the ensuing year. Woe be to those who have no friendly stream near in which to perform their ablutions while the fatal hour is striking. A bath at the same hour is likewise considered to bring good fortune to the children, but the rising generation are not satisfied with anything short of entire immersion ; the large circular basin of the fountain at the head of the Alameda presents a curious scene, as they plunge in, one after the other, and swimming about, or climbing up the fountain, turn the water in showers on the bystanders.

The lower orders here are much more addicted to drinking than the inhabitants of other portions of Andalusia ; but beyond the usual cases of stabbing, there does not seem to be much crime among the people. These offences are frightfully numerous,



the *narvaja* or long knife being drawn on the slightest provocation and most effectually deciding every quarrel. Jealousy and revenge often lead to these homicides, but they as often are the termination of some dispute on the respective merits of *toreros*, or any other equally trivial subject, which may lead to a difference of opinion. Crimes of this description are generally punished with but two or three years confinement in one of the *Presidios*, where the men are employed in various works, some light enough, such as watering the roads, &c. In the *Alhambra* they appear to lead rather a pleasant life of it than otherwise; the best behaved are employed as guards in the walks. One day, when we were going up, we missed a young man who was in charge of the centre walk, and who had been imprisoned for two or three years for having stabbed and dangerously wounded a cousin of his own upon some slight provocation. On asking where he was, we were told he had been killed the night before. It seems that on occasion of some fête day, his mother had asked of the governor permission for him to come down and spend it in the town, which request was granted on account of his uniform good conduct; but in the evening, his cousin attacked and mortally wounded him, thus revenging the attempt which had formerly been made on his own life. Hardly a night passes in *Granada* without some case of stabbing, and on fête days an additional number swells the list. The punishment for offences, here, varies so much, according as interest or money can be brought to bear in behalf of the criminal, that it is hard to say how justice takes its course. Once in prison after arrest there are so many facilities of escape from punishment, that in the case of any determined criminals, such as *banditti*, &c., whom

the government are really anxious should be punished, the guards generally receive orders to shoot them before bringing them into the town, and when they arrive, the people are coolly informed they were shot because they attempted to escape.

The soldiers who act here as police are a very fine body ; they are all picked men, who really do their duty, rather an uncommon thing in Spain ; and have proved a most efficient force. They were organised by Narvaez, and wear a uniform resembling the old French dress, with a cocked hat in Napoleon style.

At night the towns are guarded by watchmen, who rather disturb the sleep of those unaccustomed to them by the loud tone in which they announce the hour, "Ave Maria purissima, las once y sereno," the hour being always followed by a declaration of the state of the weather ; and as it is more generally fine than otherwise, they are called Serenos, from that being, with few exceptions, the concluding word of their watch-cry. The Serenos and Guardia Civil are common to all Spanish towns ; but one class of men more peculiar to Granada, we must not pass unnoticed, viz., the Aguadors, who abound in this water-loving town.

There are two or three springs from which these men take the water to sell it in the squares and streets ; one is the Algibes, or reservoirs I have already noticed, in the Alhambra ; and another favourite fountain is the Avellanos, in the valley of the Darro, a shady spot embowered in a perfect forest of hazel, whence it takes its name. Here, at all hours of the day, the Aguadors may be seen filling their jars ; some carrying it about on their backs in tin vessels set in cork-bark, which is found to act as a refrigerator ; others, possessing a four-footed beast to relieve them of their burdens, load