

ees: the bells of all the churches ringing, and the ships in the harbour returning the firing in the town: so that altogether you may suppose the concert by no means a despicable one. First, after the soldiers, came the order of St. Francis, arranged in nearly the same manner as ourselves: then followed another division of the military, and the choristers of the cathedral: to them succeeded the order of St. James; and, thirdly, we came in. Between our rear and the advanced guard of the fourth community was borne on a very high altar, richly decorated, the Elements of the Eucharist, surrounded by a vast number of people of the first rank and quality; some of them bearing lighted wax candles, highly perfumed; others, incense; many, banners; and not a few, relics: the whole group flanked by soldiers on horseback, arrayed in their newest and best attire, firing alternately to the right and left; and wherever a cross was erected, which I believe was at the end of every street, the whole cavalcade halted to sing the appointed service.

After the Eucharist came another division of soldiers, and after them all the remaining religious of the town, while on either side of the street—for we took the middle—marched the nobility, men, women, and children, but, notwithstanding their numbers, all ranged in regular order, and observing a profound silence, except when they joined in the general choruses, and then blessed St. Dominick. What a din was there! Each division of the whole procession was attended by a band of music, which, halting at the crosses, played almost divinely; and sorry enough I was, when the depiction of the multitude, breaking forth in audible sounds, spoiled such excellent harmony.

The decorations of the houses surpassed in magnificence any thing I ever beheld in Europe on the like occasion. The streets are wide, and most of them in a straight line; the houses in general low, with here and there a very elegant church or public building, finished according to the rules of European architecture. Every habitation was hung either with tapestry or coloured cottons of various dyes, ornamented with feathers in a very ingenious manner; between which were suspended festoons of flowers, articles of plate, and even jewels, according to the riches of the owner. Across the streets, from side to side, were triumphal arches, composed of boughs of trees artfully interwoven; from which hung, as at the portico of the church, a great variety of living birds, all suspended in the most advantageous point of view, and some of them beyond description beautiful. Between the arches were set out a vast quantity of eatables; such as cakes, pies, fruits, &c., all disposed in a very agreeable manner; and I could not help finding a kind of pecu-

liar *English pleasure* at this part of the exhibition. Close to the houses, on each side of the streets, were likewise placed living animals—*young tigers, lions, wolves, dogs, and even monkeys* of a particular large species—secured so carefully as to prevent any possibility of their escaping, or hurting those that might come near them. From the windows were suspended baskets, very neatly wove, of a lovely green colour, containing every kind of seed or grain with which they mean to sow the land, that the Saviour of the World might bestow his benediction on them as he passes, which they think will undoubtedly procure them a plentiful harvest; and they are seldom, if ever, disappointed.

There is not a street through which the procession passes but is adorned in this splendid manner: for on this festival the riches of every individual are displayed to the greatest advantage possible, and with a peculiar degree of art; which must, I should think, occupy a considerable time in preparation.

In one of the streets leading to the great square I saw three of the largest peacocks I ever beheld: also pheasants of an extraordinary size and beauty, not much unlike peacocks in point of feather, but taller, with more slender legs; and in lieu of a long sweeping tail, small tufts of feathers, composed of dark brown, beautifully shaded with green and gold: but their eyes and plumage, in beauty and variety of colours, far surpassed any of the biped kind that had ever before met my inspection. They all appeared very tame; and, with several other large birds fastened in a similar way, were not in the least disturbed by the firing, the shouts of the multitude, or the trampling of the horses. The ground was all over strewn with herbs and flowers, so regularly disposed as to resemble, in many places, the most delicate Persian carpets. In fine, all the sweets of nature seemed collected in one spot, to honour the sacred festival: and a greater assemblage of people of all ranks, ages, and conditions, I never witnessed, even in the most populous city in Europe; nor so profound a silence and regularity, except when the pious responses were made.

The governor was dressed in a rich Spanish habit, tastily ornamented with gold, jewels, &c. He was surrounded by a numerous and very splendid retinue, as none but the sick are exempt from assistance at this ceremony.

When the procession reached the cathedral the air was almost rent by the multitude of voices; and we entered the edifice during a heavy discharge of artillery from the garrison and ships in the harbour, also volleys of musquetry from the soldiers in the streets. Here high mass was celebrated, and the sacrament administered; which