

LADY DAY IN SPAIN.

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For the Carmelite Review.

THE feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel is past: that day so dear, to all Spanish hearts, the feast most anxiously awaited by all the children of "Nuestra Señora."

Who can traverse

Spain, or penetrate into France and Italy, and forget "Nuestra Señora del Carmen?" The very streets of the towns remind us of her, the squares of the cities recall her to our memory; the churches and the hospitals, the ancient hospice and the tiny sanctuary, proclaim in tones unmistakable, the time-honored name of Our Lady of Carmel.

Yes, this feast has passed, but not without fond remembrance of the usual splendors of its last celebration, and of the happiness that then swept with a storm of joy her countless sodalities, as they took up their positions in the marshalled ranks of her processions, to wend their way to some of her favored shrines, there to honor their Immaculate mother in hymns of praise and peans of gratitude.

But, with the passing away of even this most popular of feasts, has devotion to our loving mother been satiated?

No, no, there still remains one more feast which claims a prominence not accorded to any other. It is known throughout the Peninsula as the feast of "Our Lady of the Harvest"—the "Lady Day" of the Celt and the Saxon,—the glorious 15th of August, when Holy Church celebrates the assumption of the "Royal Daughter of David"—the day when the "Mystic Rose" no longer embellished this vale of tears, but was transplanted to flourish in the virgin soil of the "New Jerusalem."

This is the day of Our Lady by excellence, the feast of all the countless shrines which dot, like the stars of the firmament, the beautiful landscape of the peninsula, from the banks of the Duro to the Delta of the Elbro, from the Spanish Brighton—San Sebastian—to Gibraltar. These public foun-

tains of mercy are to be met with everywhere, so that grace is ever open, gratuitous and overflowing within their hallowed precincts.

As it is in Spain to-day, so it had been, in days gone by, and still continues, although in a smaller degree, at the Holy Wells—at Croagh Patrick—the "Reek" of western Connaught—at St. Patrick's Purgatory amidst the black waters of Lough Derg, and at the "Lourdes" of Holy Ireland, miraculous Knock. This was before the bitter days of famine and pestilence and the emigrant ship had scattered the devoted children of our heavenly mother, these children of faith who carried with them to foreign lands, the prolific seed of a warm devotion to Mary. Deep, deep in the innermost recesses of their hearts, they kept the memory of each past Lady Day. Therefore, between the exiled children of Erin, and the children of the land of "Maria Santissima" there is and always has been one grand characteristic in common, unequalled loyalty to Mary, and an unflinching faith in her protection and patronage. No circumstances of time or place, no change of prosperity or adversity could weaken in these, her chosen children, their fidelity to the Immaculate Queen.

At no season of the year is the belief in Mary's powerful intercession so patent, at none of the usual feasts in her honor does the faith of her children assume such proportions, nor their gratitude such an extent, as on Lady Day. It is the feast of the harvest. On this day the devotion to our sinless mother, thrills through us like new life, and renders us more thankful for the mysterious magnificence of those countless gifts, temporal and spiritual of our loving Father, of which through, Mary's sweet intercession, we have, during the past year, been made the recipients. On this day, heaven and earth, as it were, are united in a mystic golden link. Nature has just rewarded the humble toiler of the fields with her choicest gifts—heaven has the drops of sweat pearly down from the brow of labor. Nature revels with delight in her loveliness, and the toiler participates in her joy, and rejoices in her welcomed fecundity. The trees are bending beneath their burden of rich luxuriant fruit, the products of the soil are no less