

The countenance of the Spanish women is extremely sensible and full of vivacity. They are highly satisfied with a person who shews them marks of his affection, very desirous of being flattered and courted, always ingenuous, and but seldom timid. They express themselves with facility, and have a seducing volubility of speech; they are hasty, opinionated and passionate; but have a good heart, and easily yield to reason when it is possible to induce them to listen to it. They have a singular passion for dress, especially for jewels; and, without choice or moderation, cover their fingers with plain and diamond rings. The poor as well as rich never go from home without a *basquina*, or a great black mohair or silk petticoat, put over their other dress, which is frequently very rich. On this account they hasten to take off their petticoat as soon as they enter either their own house or that of a friend. The small-pox makes fewer ravages in Spain than in France; it is rare to see a woman there marked with it. The Spanish women in general have eyes so lively, expressive and intelligent, that had they no other charms they would still be thought handsome.

What travellers have related of the extreme care the Spanish ladies take to conceal their feet, is no longer observable; and a woman who shews you her foot is not always ready, as these travellers say, to grant you every favour in her power. The length of their petticoat is less an effect of coquetry than of decency; and the folds spoken of by father Lahat, which were in the middle of the petticoat, to lengthen it at pleasure, are now out of use. The proportion which the men have assigned, as the true standard for a foot of a woman, is more variable in Spain than elsewhere, on account of the nature and heat of the climate, and the early maturity of the Spanish women; but these are follies which exist in the brain of only a few Spaniards. A Spanish woman seldom gives you her hand to touch and kiss; an English or French woman is familiar with none but her friends; and these rules of decency are common to every nation.

The most general devotion among the Spaniards is that which they pay to the Virgin Mary; and this, as a just acknowledgment for all the favours she has conferred upon them.

It would be difficult to express the veneration they have for her, and the two places she has made to mankind, the rosary and the rosary. Few women go out of doors, walk, play or toy without a rosary in their hand. The men are never without one hung round their necks, in their comedies if the devil be chained,

it is with a rosary; and he then makes a dreadful howling, by which the good people are much edified.

Equally remarkable is their respect for the dead, apparitions, and sepulchres; the latter they strow over with flowers, and water with holy water. Each drop of holy water, says their priest, that is shed upon the tomb of the dead, extinguishes a part of the fire in purgatory. Who would not shed over them all the water in a river? The diligent young girl waters the grave of her father and brother; may she never sprinkle that of her lover!

The devout desire to benefit departed souls is universal in Spain. The people know the day a soul is to be taken out of purgatory; and you frequently see an advertisement against the doors of churches; *Hoy se saca anima*; to day a soul is delivered.

After the death of any person the masses are without end; however poor the relations may be they must deprive themselves of every thing for the repose of the soul of their departed friend. The masses a man appoints to be said for him after his death are privileged; his soul is preferred to his creditors. Philip V. ordered, by his will, all the priests of the place where he should die, to say mass the same day for the repose of his soul: besides which they were to celebrate during three days, before privileged altars, as many masses as possible; and, that he might not fail in his purpose, he farther commanded an hundred thousand masses to be said in his behalf, the surplus of as many as were necessary to conduct him to heaven, reversible to poor solitary souls, concerning whom no person bestowed a thought.

The blind respect the Spaniards have for priests is derived to them from the Goths. The monks, priests and bishops, were infallible in the eyes of that people; they became the only judges in civil as well as ecclesiastical matters. The inferior clergy were looked upon by the prelates as a band of slaves, and the same prejudice still exists in modern Spain. The pages, land and house stewards, and servants of a bishop, are ecclesiastics.

The Spaniards are so infatuated with monks, that Alphonso the Warrior, King of Arragon, left, by will, his states to the orders of the knights templars. The grandees of the kingdom paid no attention to this strange bequest; they, however, elected a monk for their sovereign, Don Ramiro, brother to the deceased monarch. The templars had the imprudence to claim this crown, and, by way of accommodation, received a gift of certain lands in the kingdom.