

THE PRADO.

MADRID, the capital of "all the Spains," stands on several low hills, on the wide extending plain of Castile. A small rivulet, the Mangaranes, flows past the city and falls into the city. Madrid is a superb but somewhat gloomy capital; the houses are high, well-built of good stone, and not defaced by smoke; the streets are well paved and have broad foot-paths. That which particularly attracts attention is the street of Alcalá, long, spacious, and bordered on each side by a row of princely houses. But far above all other places in Madrid ranks the Prado. This is the great promenade of Madrid. In Spanish comedies and in Spanish romances it is the chief scene of the story—the most fashionable quarter, the busiest and bravest locality, where Spanish grandees swagger, and Spanish beauties smile.

shadowed by trees, and both ornamented and refreshed by fountains. One is appropriated to vehicles, the other to foot-passengers. One of the most beautiful among the fountains is represented in our engraving. The art of the sculptor has been effectively exerted, and the graceful outline of the whole is well adapted to the place. The light falls brightly on the water as it is cast upwards in the air, and falls again in a shower of spray. The fountain is situated in close neighbourhood to the gate of the Alcalá, in a spot known as the Saloon, surrounded by some of the finest buildings and fairest gardens in all Madrid. The basin of the fountain is circular and richly ornamented, presenting a noble as well as elegant appearance. The figures at the base of the fountain are kneeling, supporting an armorial shield and crown.



FOUNTAIN ON THE PRADO, MADRID.

It is in the interior of the city, and begins at the convent of Atocha, a staid, sober-looking building, very dim and dreary, and continues at a right angle to the gate of the Alcalá. It is more than 2,120 yards in length. The spot has always attained a high celebrity, higher than Venetian Rialto or Parisian Boulevard, or our own Broadway, and has been tastefully adorned from time to time by the reigning monarchs of Spain. Charles III. planted it with trees, and decorated it with fountains and marble statues. Once it was a great place for duels, and many a don has fleshed his sword in that honourable quarter; but its near proximity to the court put an end to this sort of gallantry, and now, in the evening, the place is thronged with all the nobility, beauty and fashion of Madrid. Colour upon colour, crowd upon crowd, in one grand moving panorama, which no tongue can tell, no language can describe.

The Prado is divided into two grand avenues, both over-

It is supplied with salubrious water, filtered through beds of gravel and sand, from a distance of seven or eight leagues. And as it is one of the fairest, so it is one of the most thronged in the city. There the concourse is prodigious. The equipages are very brilliant, chiefly drawn by black mules ornamented with bells, whose ceaseless tinkling is by no means disagreeable. The ladies, in their mantillas of black and white, do not descend from their carriages, and as vehicle after vehicle rolls on its way, the scene is extremely animating. The water-sellers busily ply their trade, and their musical cry is incessantly heard. The scene which the Prado presents is unrivalled in the world. The stately trees, the well-cultivated gardens, the architectural beauty of the buildings, the marble statues, the graceful fountains, the gay groups, the tinkling bells, the murmur of light laughter, the tramp of feet, and the sound of the falling waters—all unite to present us with a picture such as Spain alone can give.