

been the key of Peru. Whichever party had it in possession, were considered as the possessors of the country. It is now converted to a better use, viz.: that of a custom-house, and is nearly dismantled. Only five of its beautiful guns remain, out of one hundred and forty-five, which it is said to have mounted. During our visit there the Chilian troops had possession of the country, which they had held since the battle of Yungai. Most of the buildings are undergoing repairs since the late contest.

It is said that the fortress is to be demolished, and thus the peace of Callao will in a great measure be secured.

The principal street of Callao runs parallel with the bay. There are a few tolerably well-built two-story houses on the main street, which is paved. These houses are built of adobes, and have flat roofs, which is no inconvenience here, in consequence of the absence of heavy rains. The interior of the houses is of the commonest kind of work. The partition walls are built of cane, closely laced together. The houses of the common people are of one story, and about ten feet high; some of them have a grated window, but most of them only a doorway and one room. Others are seen that hardly deserve the name of houses, being nothing more than mud walls, with holes covered with a mat, and the same overhead.

The outskirts of Callao deserve mentioning only for their excessive filth; and were it not for the fine climate it would be the hot-bed of pestilence. One feels glad to escape from this neighbourhood.

The donations to the clergy or priests, at two small chapels, are collected on Saturdays from the inhabitants. On the evening of the same day, the devotees of the church, headed by the priest, carry a small portable altar through the streets, decorated with much tinsel, and various-coloured glass lamps, on which is a rude painting of the Virgin. As they walk, they chaunt their prayers.

The market, though there is nothing else remarkable about it, exhibits many of the peculiar customs of the country. It is held in a square of about one and a half acres. The stands for selling meat are placed indiscriminately, or without order. Beef is sold for from four to six cents the pound, is cut in the direction of its fibre, and looks filthy. It is killed on the commons, and the hide, head, and horns are left for the buzzards and dogs. The rest is brought to market, on the backs of donkeys. Chickens are cut up to suit purchasers. Fish and vegetables are abundant, and of good kinds, and good fruit may be had if bespoken. In this case it is brought from Lima. Every thing confirms, on landing, the truth of the geographical adage, "In Peru it never rains." It appears every where dusty and parched up.