

last twenty-five years, of which Lima for a long time was the centre. The fate of Lower Peru being entirely dependent on it, and the fortress of Callao, the alternate possessors have stripped it and its inhabitants in every way in their power. It may with truth be designated a declining city.

The neglected walls and ruined tenements, the want of stir and life among the people, are sad evidences of this decay. The population is now said to be about forty-five thousand, although in former times it has been supposed to amount to as many as sixty-five or seventy thousand.

The aspect of the city, especially a bird's-eye view from the neighbouring hills, gives to the eye of the stranger the appearance of ruins. There are few buildings that have the look of durability, and no new ones have been put up for the last forty years. The plan of the city combines more advantages than any other that could have been adopted for the locality. The streets are at right angles, and all sufficiently broad. Those which run with the declivity of the ground, northwest and southeast, have water flowing through their middle. They have not, however, a very clean appearance; but this is certainly not to be imputed to the want of the facility of being made so. The uses to which these streams are put, and the numerous buzzards that frequent them, gives the stranger any other idea than that of cleanliness. The buzzards are protected by law, and may be seen fighting for their food in the gutters, regardless of passers; or sitting on the tops of the houses, thirty or forty in a row, watching for more food.

Great attention has been paid to laying out the Alameda, which is on the north side of the city. Its centre is ornamented with a number of fountains; its walks are well shaded on each side with trees; and the running water adds to its freshness: all unite to form a delightful promenade. In the cool of the evening it is much frequented, and its stone seats are occupied by numbers of citizens. This is the best place to get a view of the inhabitants; and notwithstanding their internal commotions, they appear fully to enjoy their cigarittas, which they are constantly smoking. The peculiar dress of the ladies is here seen to the best advantage, and, however fitted it may be to cover intrigue, is not, certainly, adapted to the display of beauty. A more awkward and absurd dress cannot well be conceived. It is by no means indicative of the wearer's rank, for frequently this disguise is ragged and tattered, and assumed under its most forbidding aspect to deceive, or carry on an intrigue, of which it is almost an effectual cloak.

I never could behold these dresses without considering them as an