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JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

ESSAY ON SPANISH LITERATURE.

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JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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AN
ESSAY
ON
Spanish Literature,

CONTAINING

*Its History, from the commencement of the Twelfth
Century, to the present time ;*

WITH AN

ACCOUNT OF THE BEST WRITERS,

In their several Departments,

AND SOME

CRITICAL REMARKS :

FOLLOWED BY

A History of the Spanish Drama,

AND
P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generalife

Specimens of some of the Writers of the different Ages.

CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

Donativo del Sr. Conde de
Romanón a la Biblioteca
de la Alhambra. 1809
JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

DEDICATED, BY PERMISSION,

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

THE DUKE OF SAN CARLOS,

AMBASSADOR FROM HIS CATHOLIC MAJESTY TO THE COURT

OF LONDON, &c. &c.

By A. ANAYA.

London :

Printed by George Smallfield, Hackney,

FOR BOOSEY AND SONS, BROAD STREET,
EXCHANGE,

1818.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

DON JOSÉ MIGUEL DE CARVAJAL
MANRIQUE DE LARA.

DUKE OF SAN CARLOS,

*Hereditary Postmaster-General for the Indies,
Grandeé of Spain of the First Class, &c., Knight
of the Golden Fleece, Grand Cross of the Orders
of Charles the Third and Isabel the Catholic,
and also of other Foreign Orders; Knight Com-
mander of the Order of Alcantara, Lieutenant-
General, Counsellor of State, Lord Steward,
Perpetual President of the Spanish Academy,
Member of other Academies, and Ambassador
from His Most Catholic Majesty to the Court of
London.*

MY LORD DUKE,

As the object of my Work is to contribute to the glory of Spanish Literature I naturally address myself to your Excellency, who, as one of the chief ornaments of an Institution founded for its support, is necessarily interested

in its honour. The unanimous accord of Europe, especially of Germany, a country which has just yielded its testimony to the literary acquirements and eminent qualifications that distinguish your Excellency, is a sufficient reason why I should refrain from expatiating upon talents already known and admired, while it exempts me from the accusation of flattery, an accusation always excited by Authors' praises, however unequal they may be to the merit which awakened them.

P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generali
 COLECCIÓN CULTURA
 I have the honour to be,

With the profoundest respect,

My Lord Duke,

Your Excellency's obliged

And very grateful Servant,

A. ANAYA,

London, March, 1818.



PREFACE.

A NEW Treatise on Spanish Literature may, probably, appear unnecessary at the present period, and in a country in which the subject has been, and continues daily to be, illustrated by learned writers, equally estimable for their judicious arrangement and knowledge of the matter discussed, and for that noble impartiality which is the characteristic of intelligent minds. But it is to be observed, that the productions above alluded to, and many of a similar nature published in Spain, are either confined to accounts of particular authors, or are not within the reach of all who take an interest in the question.

Circumstances having now restored to the Castilian language a part of its ancient reputation, and rendered it an object of the study and attention of foreigners, it has occurred to me that an Essay, which, by a brief detail, should direct the student to some of the authors who have written with the greatest purity in the ordinary departments of letters, would not

be wholly useless. But as I do not wish to restrict myself to a dry and uninteresting catalogue of names, I shall begin by giving an historical account of Spanish Literature from its infancy to our own times ; and then notice some of the works of those authors who were deservedly eminent in the sixteenth and following centuries, annexing various critical remarks.

In conclusion, I shall trace a sketch of the rise and progress of the dramatic art in Spain, which must be peculiarly interesting, as it is in that branch of literature that many of her greatest writers have excelled.

Having stated the object of this little Treatise, I may be permitted to say a few words respecting the mode in which it has been composed. In this respect I have followed the example of a celebrated French writer, who is said to have written one of his productions three several times, at each revision subtracting the superfluous expressions which had escaped his former scrutiny. May I flatter myself that I have succeeded in my endeavour to express with brevity and precision the information I have attempted to convey to the English student ?

AN
ESSAY.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF SPANISH LITERATURE, FROM THE FORMATION OF THE CASTILIAN LANGUAGE TO OUR OWN TIMES.

THE history of Spanish Literature may be divided into four epochs; the first extending from its origin in the twelfth century, till the commencement of the sixteenth, the golden age of Spain: the second, till the decline of letters: the third, till their restoration; and the fourth from that period till our own times.

FIRST EPOCH.

IN the beginning of the eighth century, the Moors invaded Spain.* Unable to resist the

* The motive that occasioned the irruption of the Arabs into Spain was as follows: Don Rodrigo, the last king of the Goths, violated Doña Florinda, the daughter of Count Julian, upon whom was unjustly bestowed the appellation of *La Cava*, an Arabic term, signifying a woman of bad character. The Count, who was then

torrent which was about to overwhelm them, those Spaniards who would not submit to the Saracen yoke, took refuge in the mountains of Asturias and Biscay; and amongst those rugged recesses, *Don Pelayo*, of the blood royal of the Goths, formed a new kingdom, which, successively extending itself and ramifying into others, deprived the enemies of Spain, portion by portion, of their conquests, until they were entirely expelled, after a residence of nearly eight centuries in that country. Masters of the largest and fairest part of the Peninsula, the Moors cultivated letters and the sciences with the most complete success, especially the Mathematics and Astronomy, as well as Medicine, Chemistry, and other branches of Natural History; nor did they neglect to found academies and colleges for the instruction of their youth.* The beauty of a climate

in Africa, prevailed upon the Africans to invade Spain. They passed the Straits, and having overcome king Don Rodrigo, who perished in the action, proceeded to augment their conquests. This subject, one of the most poetical that history affords, has been embellished by the pen of Mr. Southey.

* See Andres, *Origen, Progresos, &c. de toda la Literatura*, Tomo I. Cap. 9. and Tomo II. Cap. 11; Bailly, *Histoire de l'Astronomie Moderne*, Tome I. Lib. 8; and Murphy, *History of the Mahomedan Empire in Spain*.

always unclouded, but not sultry like that of Africa, the continual wars which the Moors maintained with the ancient inhabitants of the country for the purpose of extending and preserving their conquests, and the feasts and tournaments with which the monarchs of that warlike and gallant nation endeavoured to sustain the martial character of their subjects; all these circumstances inspired and encouraged that romantic spirit which distinguishes their poetry and other works of imagination.

Those remote times gave birth to the Castilian language, and with it to Spanish literature, which, from the example of the Arabs, the communication held by them with the Spaniards, and the emulation which was constantly excited, continued to advance with rapid strides towards perfection. Spain, indeed, at that period, was the centre of knowledge, and the school to which all who were desirous of instruction, repaired from every quarter of the globe.

The earliest literary productions which have reached our times are the Romances of the Cid, a species of popular ballads, wherein

Casiri mentions 1800 Arabic MSS. extant in the Library of the Escorial.

were celebrated the exploits of that hero,* and the poem on the same subject, composed in the twelfth century, by an author whose name is unknown.

These primitive compositions were followed by the poems of Gonzalo de Berceo, in the thirteenth century, and that of *Alexandro*, by Juan Lorenzo, which cannot be cited either as models of language, or of poetic diction, since they were composed when the Castilian tongue was in its infancy; but they, nevertheless, contain expressions replete with spirit and energy, simple and natural descriptions, and other passages of considerable beauty, for which they have been deservedly transmitted to posterity. But the writer who contributed most to the improvement of literature at this period, was king Don Alphonso or Alonso the Tenth. This learned monarch, who may be considered the father of the Castilian language, as Dante is of the Italian, not satisfied with promoting

* Rodrigo de Bivar, surnamed the Cid, which, in the Arabic language, signifies *Lord*, lived in the 11th century. He gained several signal victories over the Moors. The poem of the Cid has been translated into German and into English. The tragedy of Guillen de Castro, and the ballads upon the same subject, furnished Corneille with the materials for his Cid. Lord Holland has written an able dissertation on Guillen de Castro.

the study of his native tongue, encouraging translations of every species of writing from the Latin, Arabic and Chaldaic, and ordaining, after the example of his father Don Fernando, that all decrees and public acts should be written in Castilian, presided over the formation of various literary projects, and composed a considerable number of historical, mathematical, philosophical and poetical works, which immortalize his name, and have obtained for him the glorious appellation of the *Wise*. Amongst these projects the astronomical tables called, after his name, *Alphonsine*, deserve to be recorded; also the compilation of the code styled, *De las siete Partidas*, which, from its extraordinary merit, is the most glorious monument of that epoch.*

* Don Alonso the Wise was the author of *El Libro de las Armellas*, a work on Astronomy; *The General History of Spain*; that of *Ultramar*, or of the *Crusades*; *The Life of king Don Fernando*, his father; *El Tesoro*; *El Septenario*; *Los Fueros* (the laws) *de Valladolid*; *El Libro de las Querellas* (the Book of Complaints); *Las Cantigas* (the Canticles); and other productions noticed in the works of Don Nicolas Antonio, in those of Sarmiento, and of the Marquis of Mondejar. It is observable that in the Canticles the musical notes of Aretino are introduced, and also the five lines and keys invented subsequently. (See *Andres*, Tomo II. p. 55.) King Don Alonso was the first who introduced the paper of the Arabs made from flax.

The encouragement which this great monarch, with a munificence truly regal, afforded to his own subjects, and to the learned of other nations whom he attracted to his court, contributed above every other stimulus to the progress of the Language and Literature; which, during his reign and those of his immediate successors, derived new splendour from a considerable number of excellent productions. Amongst these, the most deserving of mention are the entertaining and moral fiction *El Conde Lucanor*, and other writings by Don Juan Manuel, grandson to king Don Fernando; the *Chronicles* and other original and translated works of Lopez de Ayala, who was born in 1332; and the ingenious poem by the *Archipreste de Hita*.*

Equally favourable with the reign of Don Alonso, to the progress of letters, was that of Don Juan, which commenced about the beginning of the fifteenth century. The example of this monarch, who delighted in courting the muses, the principal grandees of his court

* Juan Ruiz, Archipreste de Hita, a poet of the fourteenth century, was the first in Spain who attempted burlesque poetry. The subject of his poem is a curious contest between the Carnival and Lent.

treading in the footsteps of the sovereign; the academies and literary meetings held in the palaces of the king and of his nobles; the balls, assemblies and tournaments which, being given in honour of the fair sex, excited a general feeling of emulation; all these causes concurring constituted the court of this prince the centre of knowledge, and contributed no less to the progress of the language and literature than to the civilization of the people.

It would be foreign to my purpose to give a detailed account of all the Castilian writers who flourished in the reign of Don Juan the Second, but they are enumerated in the *Biblioteca Hispana Vetus*, by Don Nicolas Antonio, and the collection made by Don Thomas Sanchez; I shall content myself with naming the Marques de Villena,* who, in his *Gaya Ciencia* and other learned productions, reduced to precepts the art of versification; the Marques

* The Marquis of Villena, of the blood royal of Aragon, occupies one of the principal places among the authors of his time. His knowledge was so extensive that he was taken for a necromancer. His library was partly burnt in consequence of this belief. (See *Letters of Cibdadreal to Juan de Mena.*)

de Santillana,* Mena,† Macias,‡ Fernan Gomez,
de Cibdadreal,§ the Bachellor Alphonso de

* The Marquis of Santillana produced, among other works, a poem upon the Creation of the World, another upon a Naval Fight against the Genoese, a Collection of Proverbs in verse, many Sonnets, &c.

† Juan de Mena was the author of two poems, *El Laberinto*, and *La Coronacion*, both replete with noble and sublime imagery, and energetic expressions. The second of these poems was written in honour of the Marquis of Santillana.

‡ Macias, an amatory poet of this epoch, is even better known by his unfortunate fate than by his works. He was passionately in love with a young lady, who was obliged to bestow her hand upon another of rank and fortune superior to those of Macias. The two lovers still retained their attachment for each other, and the Marquis of Villena, whose dependant Macias was, judged it expedient to have him confined for some time, in the hope of curing him of his passion, but the jealous husband having found means to thrust his lance through the bars of the prison in which he was immured, pierced him through the heart whilst he was composing a poem expressive of his love. The poet expired like a hero of romance, with the name of his mistress trembling on his lips.

§ Fernan Gomez, known by the name of Cibdadreal, has left behind him 105 letters, very interesting, not merely on account of their merit as compositions, but because they contain the secret history of his time.

la Torre,* Fernan Perez de Guzman, Lord of Batres, and the historian Fernando del Pulgar.† These, with others, were the most splendid ornaments of this monarch's reign, whose court was compared by contemporary writers to that of Apollo.‡

* Alphonso de la Torre wrote a philosophical work, wherein, under the veil of allegory, he developed the principles of morality and politics for the benefit of the heir to the crown of Aragon. The title of his work is *Vision deleytable* (The Delightful Vision).

† Fernando del Pulgar, Secretary to Ferdinand and Isabella, was the author of an historical work, entitled *Claros Varones de Castilla*, (Renowned Men of Castille,) and likewise of several letters. Capmany, among other eulogiums upon Fernando del Pulgar, says: "It may be affirmed, that this author writes on serious subjects with more delicacy, and on important ones with more elegance, than any writer of his time." (*Teat. Crit.* Tomo I. p. 133.)

‡ Doña Isabel, wife to Don Fernando the Catholic, succeeded her father, Don Juan the Second. This great Queen, distinguished by her virtues, the share that she had in the conquest of Granada, and the discovery of America, was greatly instrumental in furthering the progress of the language and of letters. Capmany, in his *Teat. Critico de la Eloquencia Española*, Tomo I., has inserted two of this Queen's letters. See also Robertson's *Charles the Fifth*.

SECOND EPOCH.

THIS epoch redounds most to the glory of Spain, since, whilst her warriors were extending her victorious arms through various parts of Europe, and adding to her crown new dominions in America, her writers were enriching her literary stores with so many excellent works, that this has been deservedly entitled the Golden Age of Spain.

A mere enumeration of the writers of this period would suffice to display the richness of Spanish literature. The *Biblioteca Hispana Nora*, by D. Nicolas Antonio, one of the best works of this kind extant, enumerates 7365 native writers, without reckoning the Portuguese, who flourished within the space of 184 years, that is, from 1500 to 1684.*

As the list of productions which I shall

* Spanish as well as Italian literature possesses the merit of priority, which may be ascertained by comparing the Augustan age of Spain with that of most other modern nations. I leave the reader to make the reflections which are naturally suggested by this consideration.

introduce in the second part of this Essay, will comprehend the works that appeared during and subsequent to the sixteenth century, I shall confine the history of this epoch to an account of the formation and progress of the language, which then attained its highest degree of perfection.*

HISTORY OF THE FORMATION AND PROGRESS
OF THE SPANISH LANGUAGE.

It is not known to a certainty what language was spoken by the primitive inhabitants of Spain, although the strongest arguments have been adduced in favour of the Biscayan.† But whatever it might have been, it must unquestionably have remained incorrupt until the intercourse of the ancient Spaniards with the Celts, who came from Gaul, and gave the name of Celtiberia to a part of Spain, and

* Among the illustrious Spaniards of this epoch, Father Pedro Ponce, a Benedictine Monk, deserves a distinguished place, for his useful discovery of the art of teaching the deaf and dumb, which has rendered such important service to humanity. (See *Ambrosio de Morales* and *Valles*, cited by Feyjoo in his *Teatro Critico*, Tomo IV. Disc. xiv.)

† See the Preface to the Dictionary of Larramendi, and other works.

with the Carthagenians, who made themselves masters of a great portion of that country.*

This intercourse occasioned the introduction of foreign words, although few traces remain of those of Punic origin, either because they are entirely forgotten, or because the number derived from that source was but few. The Greeks, for the study of whose tongue there were schools in Spain, contributed more than the foregoing people to enrich the language.

Such are the vicissitudes which the primitive Spanish Idiom underwent, until, on account

* Tubal, the son of Japhet, was the first man who came into Spain; *Mariana Hist. de España*, Cap. 1. Aristotle says that the Phenicians were the first who arrived in the Straits of Cadiz. They obtained, by bartering oil which they brought with them, such a quantity of silver from the inhabitants of Tarteso, now called Tarifa, that, their ships being unable to contain it, they were obliged to manufacture it into anchors and other instruments for maritime use; *Mariana*, Lib. I. Cap. 15. The Carthagenians, attracted by the riches of Spain, proceeded thither, and seeing the difficulty of making themselves masters of the country by force, requested permission to erect magazines, temples and houses; that being granted, they availed themselves of it to build fortresses; by which means they ultimately succeeded in their design.

of the long residence of the Romans in the country, the Latin language, although not without some opposition, became generally used, and more than any other language aided the formation of the Castilian. The Spaniards then enriched the literature of their conquerors with many productions, amongst which are the Treatise on Geography, by Pomponius Mela, that on Agriculture, by Columela, the poems of Lucan, the two Senecas and Martial, the writings of Florus, Silius Italicus, and above all, the Institutes of Quinctilian, the restorer of literature.*

The tribes who came from the north of Europe, known by the general name of Goths, after having overthrown the Roman dominion, took possession of Spain, over which they ruled about three centuries, that is, from the

* The three Spanish Emperors who filled the Roman throne, greatly assisted the progress of literature. Trajan, whose virtues were so extraordinary that, at the inauguration of their emperors, the Roman people prayed the gods to bestow upon them the good fortune of Augustus and the benevolence of Trajan, was an enlightened protector of letters, and promoted the efforts of Quinctilian. Adrian was a philosopher and a poet. The age of Theodosius the Great is the golden age of ecclesiastical literature.

beginning of the fifth till the eighth. These people, although they could not effect the banishment of the Latin tongue, which then prevailed, not only injured its harmony by their peculiar accentuation, but also disfigured its beauty by the introduction of barbarous words and phrases.

The Goths were succeeded by the Arabs, who, from their long residence and intercourse with the inhabitants of the country, but more especially on account of the number of works with which they enriched literature, the object of Spanish study, introduced a considerable number of words, principally technical, relating to Algebra, Astronomy, and other favourite sciences of the Arabs. Cervantes affirms that all the Castilian words which begin with *al*, as *alguazil*, *almohada*, &c. are derived from the Arabic.

The union of so many languages gave birth, about the ninth century, to the Castilian, so termed from the Province of Castile, which was afterwards called Spanish, when it became the language of the Court and supreme tribunals of that monarchy.

This tongue, as I have already stated, sub-

sequently assumed a more regular form in the time of king Don Fernando, and still more in the reign of his son, Don Alonso the Wise, and continued progressively to improve during the following reigns, until it attained its highest perfection in the sixteenth century, the writers of which age gave it suavity, volume and other qualities, by which it is peculiarly characterized.*

* The pre-eminence which one language possesses over another may be attributed to two causes,—harmony and copiousness. The regular and well-ordered distribution of the accents in the Castilian language, which arises from the number of short,* acute and long words that it possesses, and from its free construction, which allows the writer to place the words as they sound best, and not absolutely according to the rules of grammar, occasion that cadence which charms and delights the ear. Its copiousness is such, that it possesses a sufficiency of words and phrases to express with equal propriety the sublime and awful truths of religion, and the soft and tender effusions of pastoral poetry; while its fitness for translation is proved by the versions of foreign works, which preserve in this language their characteristic energy and beauty of style, as the several translations from the Latin, that of Tacitus, and particularly that of Sallust, by his Serene Highness Don Gabriel, Infant of Spain. The Castilian language possesses augmentatives

* See my *Traité sur les Difficultés de la Poésie Espagnole et Italienne*.

These qualities, together with the ascendancy which the Spaniards obtained by their conquests and their literary productions, rendered it so universal at that period, that, as Cervantes and the learned author of *El Dialogo de las Lenguas* assert, there was not a man or woman in France or Italy who did not learn it. In fact, companies of Spanish Comedians used to go about to the theatres of Europe, representing their Comedies; and Sermons were preached in that language at Rome, in the presence and with the approbation of the Pope and the chief personages of that city.*

and diminutives like the Italian; is fertile in compound, frequentative and imitative verbs. It also abounds in proverbs; the collection made by Don Juan de Iriarte alone containing twenty-four thousand. Finally, I shall allege as a proof of the richness of this language, five Novels, which compose a large volume, each of them wanting a vowel, the first being without *a*, the second without *e*, &c. a curiosity that could not be so easily produced in other languages.

* The same statement is made by foreign writers. I shall only cite what is affirmed by the authors of *l'Année Littéraire*, in their judgment on the discourse of Mr. Rivaroles upon the general usage of the French language, viz. that the Italian and Spanish languages were formerly considered a part of French education, and till the time of Corneille, the literature of France was still Spanish,

I annex a curious calculation made by *El Padre Manuel Larramendi*, which attempts to prove, according to the opinion of its author, (an opinion, however, not confirmed by other learned writers,) the precise number of primitive words for which the Castilian language is indebted to each of the languages that have contributed to its formation. Words may be divided into radical and derivative; *amor*, for instance, is a radical word, and *amar*, *amante*, *amable*, and all those which are formed from it, are derivative ones. The Castilian language possesses, according to the first edition of the Dictionary of the Academy, 13,365 radical words, which are distributed in the following manner:—

(No. II. Jan. 31st, 1786.) Mr. Duclos enlarges upon Mr. Rivaroles. See *Mémoire sur l'Origine de la Langue Française*, pp. 175, 176. To this may be added, that Antonio Perez was appointed Master of Language to Henry the Fourth, King of France. See his letter to that monarch, in which he names several persons of high rank in France and England, who cultivated the Spanish language. (Capmany, *Teat. Crit.* Tomo I.) The departure of Fernando de Santiago was particularly regretted by Paul the Fifth. Toledo preached twenty-four years at Rome. See the praises pronounced upon the latter, as well as upon Alphonso Lobo, by Cardinal Borromée, Lib. 2 and 3, quoted by Ab. Andres.

Latin	5385
Gothic	14
Arabic	555
Greek	973
Persian	6
Chinese	1
Turkish	1
Castilian	3040
Hebrew	90
Lemosin	1
Of unknown derivation	2786
French	198
Italian	156
Onomatop	87
Indian	14
Biscaian	6
English	7
American	30
German	27
Flemish	1
Hungarian	2
	<hr/>
	13,380

By a trifling error, which, as Larramendi observes, is unavoidable in a calculation of this nature, there is a difference of 15 between the above estimate and the amount of 13,365, stated by that author, out of which number of words he pretends 1951 are derived from the Biscaian tongue.

THIRD EPOCH.

THE epoch in which the literary glory of a nation, after the united efforts of many ages, attains its highest point of elevation, is the precursor of its decline, since its writers of great genius finding every subject and style of writing exhausted, and disdaining to become imitators, take a different path from that which their predecessors followed, and thereby occasion material detriment to letters.

The depraved taste which in the beginning of the seventeenth century had begun to manifest itself in Spanish literature and poetry, continued its ravages until about the middle of the same century, when it finally accomplished the destruction of literary excellence. In place of the richness of idiom which caused the chief splendour of literature during the preceding epoch, were substituted the tinsel of false brilliancy, a puerile play upon words, antitheses, weak ideas, studied conceits, absurd metaphors, the vain pomp of erudition, and other miserable vanities of a similar nature,

with which some foreigners reproach the Spaniards, although at the period in question they were by no means peculiar to the writers of that nation. Various are the opinions with respect to the authors of this evil;* but I am inclined to adopt that of Capmany, who attributes it to the preachers, whose influence and ill example must necessarily have drawn in the rest of the literati.† This class, relinquishing the admirable school of Granada, Avila, and

* The anonymous author of *Declamacion contra los Abusos introducidos en el Castellano*, (Declamation against the Abuses introduced into the Castilian Language,) places amongst the number of those whose example occasioned the corruption of style, Saavedra, the author of *Las Empresas Politicas*, and Solis, the author of *La Conquista de Mexico*, on account of the short periods of the former, and the laboured style of the latter. 'But I am not of the same opinion, for the short periods of Saavedra, which would not be suitable to writings of another sort, are well adapted to maxims and aphorisms, such as his work contains. Saavedra deservedly occupies a distinguished place among the Spanish classical authors. Solis, it is true, has often tarnished his history by obscure passages, and some that evince a corrupt taste; but it was not Solis who introduced this taste, since it prevailed before his time; and, in spite of the spots that sometimes disfigure his work, he is justly esteemed one of the most elegant Spanish writers.

† *Teatro Critico*, Tomo V. p. 17.

others of the Augustan age of Spain, substituted in the place of that simplicity of style which sacred oratory requires, emblems and poetical figures, and embellished their conceptions, as the writer already quoted observes, with all that the sun shines upon, and the sea laves—plants, morning stars, rainbows, planets, north stars, horizons, &c. In fact, such was the bad taste which then prevailed in the pulpit in Spain, as well as in Italy, that Flechier derived great entertainment from the perusal of the discourses of these Italian and Spanish preachers, whom he used to term his buffoons.*

Such is the picture of this epoch, which could not be reformed to the principles of good taste by the example of some excellent writers who were enabled to preserve themselves free from the general corruption, the restoration of letters being reserved for the succeeding epoch, in which they recovered some portion of their primitive splendour.

* *Eloge Historique de Mons, Esprit Flechier.*

FOURTH EPOCH.

THIS epoch extends from the revival of letters to our own times. The literature of this epoch must be regarded under two very different aspects, the one as conducing to the glory of the nation, and the other as tending in no slight degree to its discredit. The Spaniards, previous to the age of Louis the Fourteenth of France, applied themselves rarely, or not at all, to the study of French literature; but after Philip the Fifth, a descendant of the Royal Family of France, was seated on the throne of Spain, the works of the French authors became generally read in the latter country. This circumstance, if, on the one hand it contributed to the improvement of the nation, by holding out the great writers who immortalized the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, as an example by which to learn how the flights of the imagination should be confined within the bounds of reason, was, nevertheless, productive on the other of one fatal consequence. By the translation of French books and periodical works, the language became impoverished, and

lost, its ancient brilliancy under the influence of a crowd of feeble translators and servile imitators, who substituted for its primitive diction, words possessing neither the force nor elegance of those used by the writers of the Augustan age of Spain, and phrases foreign to the Castilian tongue, by which means they reduced that noble language to an absurd and almost unintelligible jargon. Nor does the mischief rest here; for in our times the furor of writing and printing books, which reigns in other countries, to the material detriment of all valuable literature, has been introduced into Spain, and with it a load of silly and extravagant productions, that only serve to corrupt good taste, and to disseminate the puerile and futile opinions which are excited by their perusal.

But among such a multitude of illiterate authors and incompetent translators, Spain produced during this epoch, although in fewer numbers than in the sixteenth century, men who benefited literature by several works written with judgment and solidity, and exempt from that farrago of erudition which is one of the chief blemishes of the writers of the preceding epoch, and even of many of the contemporaries of Cervantes.

One of the first writers to whom, according to my view of the subject, the restoration of letters may be attributed, is Father Benedict Feyjoo, who was born in the year 1676, and whose works are replete with the soundest philosophy, and the most extensive learning. These works, treating of almost all the arts and sciences, whilst they confuted and rendered obsolete many of the erroneous and superstitious opinions which were then maintained, are also in the highest degree estimable for the excellence of their style. Don Ignacio de Luzan effected in poetry what Feyjoo had done in prose, pointing out in his excellent *Art of Poetry*, as well as in his other works, the path which must be pursued by those who aspire to the glory that good poets have attained, but from which path their predecessors had so widely deviated. For an account of many of the literary productions of this period, I refer the curious reader to the lists in the Second Part of this Essay, and more especially to the *Ensayo de una Biblioteca Española*, by Don Juan Sempere, which contains an account of about 150 of the best writers of the reign of Charles the Third.*

* As in the catalogue of authors I shall confine myself to works of history and polite literature, some mention

AN INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSES OF THE
PREJUDICE EXISTING AGAINST SPANISH
LITERATURE.

I have now traced an historical sketch of the progress of letters in Spain, from their

here of the writers who have written upon other subjects, though not all in the Castilian language, may not be uninteresting to such as are applying themselves to those studies.

Don Francisco Perez Bayer was one of the most learned antiquarians in Europe: his writings merit the eulogiums pronounced upon them by the English author Edward Clarke, who says, that he possesses universal knowledge; by the Abbé Barthelemi, Mamachi, and others. — Don Gregorio Mayans y Siscar, besides the Life of Cervantes, and many other pieces of biography, enriched jurisprudence and other subjects with several learned dissertations. Velasquez and Father Flores, wrote some elaborate treatises upon medals and antiquities. Campomanes, Moñino, Casafonda and Marina, treated upon subjects of jurisprudence with great sagacity. The mathematics, the art of war, and navigation, owe much of their splendour to Cerda, Tosca, Bail, Count de Gazola (mentioned with praise by Clarke); to Don Jorge Juan, one of the companions of La Condamine, whose works have been translated into all languages; and to Don Jose Mazarredo, a writer in general estimation. In addition to these literati, an important place in the history of this period is occupied by Dr. Andres

origin to our own times. Before I proceed to give a detailed account of the most celebrated writers, it will not be wholly useless, nor foreign to the subject, to examine briefly the causes of the prejudices subsisting in the minds of many against Spanish literature. It has been remarked, that the literature of Spain is a mine of wealth, which has been singularly productive, while it is scarcely known. This assertion will not appear exaggerated, if, to the 7365 writers who flourished within the space of 184 years, and whose numerous works are noticed by Don Nicholas Antonio, in his *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova*, already quoted, we add those with whom that author was unacquainted, and all who wrote during the preceding epoch, and the two subsequent ones. It is true, that the literary glory of a nation consists rather in the quality than in the number of its productions. But it is easy to imagine, that among such a long series of works,

Piquer, author of several medical works, of which honourable mention is made by M. Batres, and M. Fouquet; Dr. Gaspar Casal, who published *The Natural History of the Asturias*; Don Juan Ignacio Molina, whose work upon *The Natural History of Chili*, has been translated into French and German; and Don Antonio Ximeno, known in foreign countries by his *Essay upon Ancient and Modern Music*.

produced by a people whose genius and fertility of imagination are proverbial,* and who, during their golden age, held communication with the most cultivated nations, and particularly with enlightened Italy, there must have been many composed with sufficient ability to entitle Spain to a distinguished rank amongst those nations who have reflected most splendour upon literature. Nevertheless, if there have existed, particularly in later times, learned foreigners who have given a just account of Spanish writings, there have also been many others who have painted them in very different colours. The deplorable state of Spanish literature during the third epoch, is one of the principal causes of the bad opinion which many have entertained, and do

* These mental qualities of the Spaniards are admitted by foreigners, amongst whom I will cite *La Martinière, Grand Diction.*; *Art. Espagne, Moreri*; also, *Art. Espagne, Hermilly, Veyrac, &c.* But the proofs of their vivacity and acuteness must be sought for amongst illiterate and ignorant people, from whose lips issue spontaneously the witty and humourous sallies that are admired in Cervantes, Quevedo, Gracian, Isla, and other writers. Upon the genius of the Spaniards, and the influence of the climate, *Capmany's Teatro Crit. Tomo I.* and *Masdeu's Hist. Crit. de Esp. Tomo. I.* are worthy of perusal.

still entertain, respecting it; for they only regard it in this limited aspect, without considering the great writers whom Spain produced previous to the decline of letters, and the efforts which she made after their restoration. Moreover, when the motives ceased which rendered the study of the Castilian language general, it began to be wholly neglected, or to be studied only for commercial purposes, which do not require an intimate acquaintance with the literary treasures of a nation; Spanish books, which were before an object of extensive commerce, were no longer printed in foreign countries, or imported from Spain; and as students in that language made use of very few, and those almost always the same, this might have given rise to the prevalent opinion that the Spaniards possess few literary productions; or, according to the judgment of a celebrated writer,* that they have produced no more than one good work, which is Don Quixote.

The language and literature of Spain having been formed under peculiar circumstances, possess certain features which distinguish them from those of other nations. The peculiarities

* The author of *Lettres Persannes*.

hence arising, joined to the great difficulty of comprehending equivoques, jests and proverbs, with which the Spanish Comedies, Novels, and works of a similar nature abound; has occasioned many to condemn that which they could not understand, or which appeared different from what they were accustomed to admire. He who pays attention to these reflections, and considers the obstacles which Spain has encountered, arising both from her continual domestic and foreign wars, and from the considerable diminution in her population subsequent to the seventeenth century, will find that this nation has not been, as many believe, tardy in administering to the progress of human knowledge.

OBSERVATIONS UPON HISTORY, NOVELS AND
POETRY, AND A LIST OF THE AUTHORS
WHO HAVE WRITTEN WITH THE GREATEST
SUCCESS IN THESE DEPARTMENTS OF SPA-
NISH LITERATURE.

HISTORY.

THE number of the Spanish historians is pro-
digious. According to the testimony of a
French writer, Spain can enumerate more
historians, chronologists and geographers, than
any other nation in Europe, the number of
those alone who have treated on subjects re-
lating to their own nation amounting to more
than 500.*

The chief points to be attended to in such
productions are *veracity* and *style*. With

* *De Veyrac Hist. des Revolutions d'Espagne*, quoted
by d'Hermilly, p. 16.

respect to the first, it is true that the accounts of the primitive periods of Spanish history, equally with those of other countries, are involved in uncertain and fabulous relations; but the annals of less remote times are in general written with a veracity that does honour to the nation. The Spanish historical works are almost the only sources from whence information can be derived relative to the events that occurred during the conquest of the different nations of America, many of the most celebrated writers on this subject having been eye-witnesses of the facts which they describe. Moreover, the circumstance of their not having concealed or disguised those occurrences which reflected least honour upon their countrymen, is a sufficient proof of their veracity. The accuracy of many of these writers is allowed by Robertson, a very competent judge of the question, as well as by several other impartial authorities.*

With respect to style, which is the second labour of the historian, it should be serious

* Prevost *Hist. Générale des Voyages*, Tom. I. *Avertissement du Traducteur*; Robertson's *History of Charles the Fifth*, and *History of America*.

and dignified. Dignity of character is a qualification which has never been denied to the Spanish nation, and which being reflected in its writings, bestows upon them this most important requisite. Moreri says the Spanish historians have generally written with considerable elegance and great purity of style; an eulogium confirmed by Robertson and others.

I shall add to these observations upon history, a list of the writers who have adorned this branch of literature, merely premising what is equally applicable to the other branches, that I have confined myself to the writers of the sixteenth and following centuries, not because I consider those who preceded them as inferior in merit, but because having flourished at a period when the language had not attained its perfection, they cannot be recommended to the attention of the student. I would also remark, that, although I only mention some of those writers, I do not mean to insinuate that those whose names I have omitted are unworthy of regard, but a list of the whole would far exceed my limits, and I think I have mentioned a sufficient number for the instruction of students; persons, however, who desire more extensive information,

are referred to the works which I have quoted,
and shall quote in the course of this Essay. *

* I recommend to the attention of amateurs of the History of Spain, the *Historia Critica de España* of Don Juan Francisco de Masdeu, one of the most celebrated modern Spanish writers, who in our times has combated many superstitious opinions of former ages, and has bequeathed to posterity a work, comprising the results of deep and laborious research. I have much pleasure in rendering this homage to the learning and talents of Masdeu, to whom I am personally indebted for my predilection for literature.



P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y Generali
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

HISTORICAL WORKS.

[N. B. In this and other enumerations of the names of authors which will be found in the course of this work, I have placed most of them in the order wherein the first editions of their works appeared, as far as I have been able to trace them.]

Fr. Antonio de Guevara, *Vida de Julio Cesar, de Trajano, Adriano y de otros Emperadores Romanos.*

Florian de Ocampo, *Cronica General de España.*

Luis de Avila y Zuñiga, *Comentarios de las Guerras del Emperador Carlos V. en Alemania.*

Francisco Lopez de Gomara, *Historia general de las Indias—Descripcion de todas las Indias.*

Pedro de Alcocer, *Historia ó Descripcion de la Imperial Ciudad de Toledo—Historia de los Godos.*

Agustin de Zarate, *Historia del Descubrimiento y Conquista del Perú.*

Geronimo de Zurita, *Anales de la Corona del Reyno de Aragon y otros escritos.*

Bernal Diaz del Castillo, *La Historia verdadera de la Conquista de Nueva España*.*

Estevan de Garibay, *Compendio historial de las Cronicas de España*.

Luis del Marmol, *La Descripcion general de Africa—Historia de la Rebelion y Castigo de los Moriscos del Reyno de Granada*.

Ambrosio de Morales, *Continuacion de la Cronica General de España del Maestro Florian de Ocampo, y otras obras*.

P. Juan Gonzalez de Mendoza, *Historia de las cosas mas notables de la China*.

Geronimo de Blancas, *Comentarios de Aragon*.

Juan Castellanos, *Varones ilustres de India*.

Joseph de Acosta, *Historia natural y moral de las Indias*.

P. Juan de Mariana, *Historia general de España*.†

* I quote this author rather on account of the authenticity of his statements, than for the elegance of his style. See the opinion of Robertson, on Bernal Diaz del Castillo, in his *Hist. of America*, Vol. II. Note 1st.

† Various writers have published comments upon P. Mariana, one of the most learned historians of his time, whose work is well known to men of letters, both

Bernardino de Mendoza, *Comentario de lo sucedido en los Payses Baxos desde 1567, hasta 1577.*

D. Antonio de Fuenmayor, *Vida de Pio Quinto.*

Fr. Joseph de Siguenza, *Vida de S. Geronimo.*

Fr. Prudencio de Sandoval, *Vida y Hechos del Emperador Carlos V.—Historia del Rey Don Fernando el Magno, y otros.*

Inca Garcilaso, *Comentarios Reales del Perú—Historia de la Florida.*

Fr. Antonio de Yepes, *Historia de la Orden de S. Benito.*

D. Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, *Guerra de Granada.*

Gaspar Escolano, *Historia de Valencia.*

Martin de Roa, *Vida de Doña Sancha Carrillo—Santos de Cordoba, Sevilla y otras ciudades.*

Fr. Juan de Torquemada, *Monarquia Indiana.*

of his own and foreign countries. Amongst the number who have treated on Mariana's history, I should particularly distinguish the remarks of the Marques de Mondejar, a writer in high repute among the literati of his nation.

Jayme Bleda, *Chronologia de los Moros de España.*

Luis Cabrera de Cordoba, *Historia de Felipe II.—Tratado de Historia.*

D. Francisco de Moncada, *Expedicion de Catalanes y Aragoneses contra Turcos y Griegos.*

Antonio de Herrera, *Comentario de los Hechos de los Españoles, Franceses y Venecianos en Italia y de otras Republicas y Potentados desde 1281, hasta 1559—Historia general de Indias, y otras obras.*

D. Carlos Coloma, *Las Guerras de los Estados Baxos desde 1588, hasta 1599.—Las Obras de Cayo Cornelio Tacito.*

D. Lorenzo Vander Hammen, *Historia de Don Juan de Austria, y otras obras.*

D. Pablo de Espinosa, *Historia de Sevilla—Epitome de la Vida del Santo Rey Don Fernando.*

Bartolomé Leonardo de Argensola, *Continuacion de los Anales de Aragon de Geronimo Zurita—Conquista de las Molucas.*

Diego de Colmenares, *Historia de Segobia y Compendio de la Historia de Castilla.*

D. Diego de Saavedra Faxardo, *Corona Gotica.*

Alonso de Ovalle, *Historia del Reyno de Chile.*

D. Francisco de Quevedo, *Vida de Marco Bruto.*

D. Diego Ortiz de Zuñiga, *Anales Eclesiasticos y Seculares de Sevilla.*

Fr. Domingo Navarrete, *Tratados historicos, politicos, &c. de la China.*

Pedro de Abarca, *Los Reyes de Aragon en Anales historicos.*

D. Antonio de Solis, *Conquista de Mexico.*

Gumilla, *Historia del Rio Orinoco.*

Marques de S. Felipe, *Comentarios de la Guerra de España, é Hist. de Felipe V.*

Campomanes, *Historia de los Templarios.*

Don Eugenio Llaguno, *Cronicas.*

Don Antonio Capmany, *Memorias historicas sobre la Marina, Comercio y Artes de la antigua Ciudad de Barcelona.* *—*Questiones sobre varios Puntos de Historia.*

* "The various and interesting information which he so appositely brings forward, unites the History of Barcelona with that of almost all Europe, and renders it of great importance to all curious and erudite readers." Andres, *Origen, &c. de toda la Literatura.* Tomo VI. p. 209.

Malo De Luque, *Historia Politica de los Establecimientos Ultramarinos*.*

Don Ignacio Lopez de Ayala, *Historia de Gibraltar*.

Muñoz, *Historia del nuevo Mundo*.†

Salustio, *La Conjuracion de Catilina y la Guerra de Jugurta, por el Infante Don Gabriel, con notas y disertacion sobre el Alfabeto y Langua de los Fenicios y sus Colonias*.

* The Duke of Almodovar is the true author of this history, which, in the opinion of an impartial French writer, is superior to that of Raynal for judicious reflections, style and opinions. *Essai sur la Litterature Espagnole*, Paris, 1810.

† The merit of this work causes us to regret that it has not been continued.

OBSERVATIONS ON SPANISH NOVELS.

THE Spaniards have been much celebrated for the excellence of their novels. The most ancient productions of this nature in the modern languages are those of chivalry, which are generally thought to have been derived from the Arabs, and introduced into Europe through the medium of the Spaniards and Portuguese. The earliest and most celebrated of these books of chivalry seem to have been, first the one attributed to the famous Turpin, written, according to the opinion of the French writer Pedro de Marca, by a Spaniard* about the tenth century; secondly, Amadis de Gaula, and thirdly, Palmerin of England; the two last being in the judgment of Quadrio, the best of that species. These books full of enchantments, amours, duels, travels through desert spots, &c. were soon circulated in England, France and Italy, and were multiplied without

* Marca quoted by Masdeu, Tom. I. p. 193. See also Andres, Tom. II. Cap. xi. p. 80.

end, until the immortal Cervantes banished them from the realms of literature, by ridiculing in his *Don Quixote* the extravagance and absurdities with which they abound, and for which they were read with so much avidity.

These were succeeded by pastorals, of which I shall presently treat, and those tales termed *picarescas*, a natural and ingenious style of novel writing, which described the actions of life with great truth, not as they are exemplified by kings and nobles, but by the practice of vagabonds and men in the lowest ranks of society. Such are *El Lazarillo de Tormes*, of Don Diego de Mendoza; *Guzman de Alfarache*, *La Vida del gran Tacaño*, by Quevedo; *Alonso Mozo de muchos Amos*, or the Servant with many Masters, and several others. But the Life of *Guzman de Alfarache*, (the Spanish Rogue), written by Aleman, in the sixteenth century, deserves a particular mention among the novels of this nature, which have been imitated so successfully by Le Sage, in his *Gil Blas*, and by the English novelists Fielding and Smollet. The style of this work is excellent, while the incidents are original and interesting, and are arranged in the most judicious and natural manner.

The other species of Spanish novels are the pastoral romances, of which, although they are very generally dispersed through Spain and other countries, only two have been preserved, viz. the *Diana* of Jorge de Montemayor and the novel of the same name, by Gil Polo. The *Diana Enamorada* of Gil Polo, in the opinion of Cervantes, was as worthy of preservation as if it had been written by Apollo himself.* It does, indeed, contain a great variety of natural incidents, and is written both in verse and prose, in a very pleasing and elegant style.

To these fictions must be added, the most celebrated of all which I have yet spoken of, that is *Don Quixote de la Mancha*. The merits of this work are so well known that it is unnecessary to mention them here. Nevertheless, I will add, to what has been said upon the subject, that many of its beauties still remain to be discovered, since it must be supposed that the object of Cervantes was not merely to criticise books of chivalry, but that he also had in view the manners of his time, which he did not dare to describe more openly.

* *Don Quixote*, Part I. Cap. vi.

If we had the key to these secrets, the excellence of this work would be much more apparent. Cervantes likewise composed the *Novelas exemplares* (Moral Novels), two novels entitled *Galatea*, and *Los Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, also a poem called *El Viage al Parnaso*, (The Journey to Parnassus): but these latter productions are inferior in merit to his *Don Quixote* and *Novelas exemplares*. He also wrote several dramatic pieces, which are noticed in my account of the drama. The novels of Boccaccio and Cervantes are the best of this sort that were ever written; both contain descriptions of certain adventures and accidents in the lives of the authors; both are correct and faithful portraits of the manners of men in general, and those of the times in which they lived in particular; with this difference, that the novels of Cervantes do not dishonour their title of moral. Moreover, the style of Cervantes is exempt from the defects which Denina* and other critics have pointed out in the *Italian Novelist*. The English possess several good imitations of *Don Quixote*, but the best ever executed is the *Fray Gerundio*, or *Friar Gerund*, of *Father Isla*; in which the author's object is to ridicule bad preachers,

* Denina, *Vicende della Letteratura*. Cap. iv.

and to censure the abuses introduced into the pulpit. The lively and fruitful imagination of this witty writer, has thrown together in this novel so many different and entertaining incidents, and his erudition and critical knowledge enabled him to ridicule with so much pleasantry several ludicrous and absurd systems, that his work excites the admiration of foreigners equally with that of his own countrymen, and has been translated into the English and other languages.

El Diablo Cojuelo, (The Devil upon two Sticks), by Luis de Guevara, is another of these Spanish satirical novels; of this work I shall say nothing, as it is already well known from the imitation of Le Sage, the only person who appears to have caught the happy conception of Guevara.

NOVELS AND OTHER WORKS OF
IMAGINATION.

Hurtado de Mendoza, *El Lazarillo de Tormes*.

Jorge de Montemayor, *La Diana*.

Gaspar Gil Polo, *Diana enamorada*.

Juan de Timoneda, *El Patrañuelo y otras obras*.

Luis Galvez de Montalbo, *El Pastor de Filida*.

Agustin de Roxas, *Viage entretenido*.

Mateo Aleman, *Vida del Picaro Guzman de Alfarache*.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote de la Mancha* — *Novelas exemplares* — *La Galatea* — *Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*.

Francisco de Ubeda, *La Picara Justina*.

Christoval Suarez de Figueroa, *La Constante Amarilis*.

Alonso Fernandez de Avellaneda, *Segunda parte de Don Quixote de la Mancha*.

Vicente Espinel, *Vida del Escudero Marcos de Obregon*.

Vida de Estevanillo Gonzalez, Hombre de buen humor.

Alonso Salas Barbadillo, *El sutil Cordobes Pedro de Urdemalas.*

Geronimo de Alcalá Jañez, *Alonso Mozo de muchos Amos.*

Alonso del Castillo Solorzono, *Jornadas alegres, Tardes entretenidas y otras obras.*

Gonzalo de Cespedes, *Varia Fortuna del Soldado Pindaro.*

D. Francisco de Quevedo Villegas, *Los Sueños, Vida del Gran Tacaño y otras obras.*

Lucas Fernandez Piedrahita, *Guerras civiles de Granada.*

Gabriel Tellez, alias Tirso de Molina, *Deleytar aprovechando.*

Maria de Zayas, *Novelas amorosas y exemplares.*

Luis Velez de Guevara, *El Diablo Cojuelo, Novela de la otra Vida.*

Christoval Lozano, *Soledades de la Vida y Desengaños del Mundo, Novelas exemplares.*

Antonio Sanchez Tortoles, *El Entretenido, repartido en catorce noches de Invierno.*

P. Isla, *Historia del famoso Predicador Fray Gerundio.*

OBSERVATIONS ON ELOQUENCE.

THERE are two principal classes of eloquence, viz. forensic and sacred. It has been a matter of discussion among the learned what form of government is most favourable to letters; and although the question is difficult to decide, since we observe that great men in every branch of knowledge have flourished both in republics and monarchical governments; yet I am of opinion, that as eloquence requires a theatre to debate in and auditors to listen, republican or popular governments are best fitted to favour the progress of this art. It was before the multitude that Demosthenes displayed the force of his arguments in Athens; at one moment defending his cause against *Æschines*, in that celebrated harangue which is considered the masterpiece of Greek eloquence, and at another warning his countrymen of the ambitious views of Philip, who was endeavouring to subjugate Greece. In Rome, from the rostra, and in the senate Cicero unfolded the irresistible power of his eloquence either in favour of injured innocence,

or to free the subject provinces from oppression, or else to reproach Cataline with his odious attempts to enslave the republic.

The debates in the English parliament have elicited the talents of a Pitt, a Fox, a Burke, a Windham and a Sheridan, and are continually producing men, whose orations may be considered as models of eloquence.

France, although subject to a monarchical government, had a parliament in which many celebrated men displayed talent in the art of oratory; but, as Andres observes, their harangues never becoming enlivened or inflamed during the debate, as is the case under popular governments, were languid and inanimate, and could not reach that power of language which we admire in the ancients, and which the English promise to attain. The Spaniards having had few opportunities of speaking in public on civil and political subjects, have not produced many orators of note, whom otherwise they might have been expected to produce; when we reflect on the fertility of their imagination and their inclination to subjects, that require gravity and consideration.*

* The Council of Trent and other Congresses for similar purposes yield proofs of this assertion, since the

Sacred eloquence has arrived at a greater height in Spain, since, without having been influenced by the circumstances which in other countries favour the progress of this kind of oratory, she can boast of having given birth to men of extraordinary talents for pulpit eloquence. In those ages in which new sects arise, and in countries where a diversity of religious sentiments is tolerated, novel opinions are started in matters of theology, and the founders or followers of the new sects are involved in continual controversy with their opponents, for the purpose of supporting their own tenets and refuting those of the adverse party. But in countries where there is but one religion there is no room for controversy, and the orators have no other subjects to employ their talents upon than religious truths, and moral maxims, the exposition of which requires a simple style of oratory, as the characteristic of truth, whose light shines steadily without external aid. Another impediment that sacred eloquence has encountered in Spain has been

share which the President Covarrubias, Melchor Cano, and the learned Antonio Agustin, Archbishop of Tarragona, had in their discussions, is well known. The negotiations that were carried on during the time of Charles the Fifth and of other sovereigns, also testify the same.

the Latin language, since those theological writers who possessed the greatest genius, and might have enriched their native tongue, have composed many of their works in that language; and on this head Oliva, Father Luis de Leon and others, utter frequent complaints.

Among the sacred orators and religious writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we may distinguish Don Antonio de Guevara, preacher and historiographer to Charles the Fifth; Juan de Avila, styled the apostle of Andalusia and master by excellence; Father Luis de Granada, whose writings, among other qualities of elocution, display perspicuity, simplicity and propriety of style, sublimity of imagery, pathos and power of description, and other characteristics of a great orator. The Castilian language is much indebted to Fathers Avila and Granada, since, as has been observed by Capmany, the former created a mystical phraseology of forcible and sublime expressions, and the latter beautified it, gave it volume, fluency and dignity, without rendering it pompous or affected. Amongst other orators of the Augustan æra, I may cite Father Diego de Estella, preacher to Philip the Second; Father Pedro Malon de Chaide; Father Joseph de Sigüenza, another of Philip

the Second's preachers, whose severity he moderated by the efficacy and spirit of his discourses;* Father Juan Marquez and others, who live in vivid remembrance in the minds of men, and whose merit may be estimated by the works they have left behind them, on moral and religious subjects, as well as other productions written in the same spirit, to all of which I would refer every lover of the language, for models of style and specimens of the purest elocution.

To this list I may add the names of Boca-negra, Xaramillo, Bertran, Clement and Tavira, who, by their pastoral letters, their zeal and their example in the last century, restored correct taste to the pulpit, and destroyed the abuses that had been introduced to the great detriment of eloquence as well as of religion.

* Capmany.

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL WORKS.

Alonso Rodriguez, *Exercicios de Perfeccion.*

Santa Teresa de Jesus, *Camino de Perfeccion, Cartas con las notas de Palafox y otras obras.*

Fr. Luis de Granada, *Guia de Pecadores, Meditaciones y otras obras.*

Juan de Avila, *Las Obras.*

Fr. Luis de Leon, *La perfecta Casada.*

Pedro de Rivadeneyra, *Tratada de la Religion, Vida de los Santos y otras obras.*

Sanchez de las Brozas, *Doctrina del Estoico Filosofo Epicteta.*

Fr. Luis de la Puente, *Meditaciones y otras obras.*

Fr. Juan Marquez, *El Gobernador Cristiano.*

Christoval de Fonseca, *Sermones y otras obras.*

P. Juan Eusebio Nieremberg, *Las obras.*

D. Juan de Palafox, *Cartas Pastorales y otras obras.*

EPISTLES, WORKS OF CRITICISM,
MISCELLANIES.

Doña Maria Oliva Sabuco, *Nueva Filosofia de la Naturaleza del hombre y otras obras.**

Fr. Antonio de Guevara, *Epistolas familiares. Menosprecio de la Corte y Alabanza de la Aldea y otras obras.*

Francisco Cervantes de Salazar, *Las Obras.*

Lucas Gracian Dantisco, *El Galateo Español.*

Antonio Perez, *Cartas á diferentes Personas.*

D. Diego de Saavedra Faxardo, *Empresas politicas—Republica Literaria.*

D. Juan de Zabaleta, *Obras.*

Gracian, *El Criticon.*

Feijoo, *Cartas eruditas, Teatro Critico Universal.*

* To this celebrated female who flourished in the sixteenth century, the discovery of the nervous fluid is attributed.

Cadalso, *Cartas Marruecas, Los Eruditos á la Violeta y otras obras.**

Mayans, *Cartas Morales, Civiles, Literarias de varios Españoles recogidas por Don Gregorio Mayans.*

Asso, *Cartas eruditas de algunos Literatos Españoles, publicadas con el nombre de D. Melchor de Asagra.*

D. Pedro Rodriguez Campomanes, *Discurso sobre el Fomento de la Industria popular—Dis-*

* Don José Cadalso holds a distinguished rank amongst the authors of the reign of Charles the Third, for his writings have greatly contributed to maintain good taste and sound literature. His work entitled *los Eruditos á la Violeta*, is a course of all the sciences taught in a week, and his *Annals of Five Days* are a humorous censure of the frivolity and pedantry of our age. In his *Cartas Marruecas* he has pointed out the ridiculous nature of many abuses which he has contributed to destroy; this work both in design and execution is far superior to the *Persian Letters*, which, according to Denina, *Vicende della Letteratura*, Cap. ix. only please because men of free opinions are delighted to have it in their power to utter in the language of others, sentiments conformable to their mode of thinking. Cadalso after having enlightened his country by many erudite works, sacrificed his life in its cause at the siege of Gibraltar.

*curso sobre la Educacion popular de los Artesanos.**

D. Melchor de Jovellanos, *Ley Agraria y otras obras.*

P. Isla, *Cartas familiares—Rebusco de sus obras—Cartas de Juan de la Encina.*

* See the eulogium on this writer, by Robertson, *Hist. of America*, Vol. II. Note 97.



JUNTA DE ANDALUCIA

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GRAMMARS AND OTHER WORKS ON
THE SPANISH LANGUAGE.

Antonio de Nebrixa, *Gramatica Castellana.*

Ambrosio de Morales, *Discurso sobre la Lengua Castellana.*

Bartolomé Ximenez Paton, *Eloqüencia Española.*

Bernardo de Aldrete, *Origen de la Lengua Castellana.*

Sebastian de Covarrubias, *Tesoro de la Lengua Castellana.*

Gonzalo Correa, *Gramatica Trilingue.*

Anonimo, *Dialogo de las Lenguas.*

Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la Lengua Castellana*, 6 Tom.—*Compendio en un Tomo—Gramatica de la Lengua Castellana—Ortografia de la Lengua Castellana.*

Garces, *Fundamento del Vigor y Elegancia de la Lengua Castellana.*

Capmany, *Teatro Critico de la Eloqüencia Española—Filosofia de la Eloqüencia.*

Huerta, *Examen de la posibilidad de fixar la significacion de los Sinonimos de la Lengua Castellana.*

POETRY.

EVERY species of poetry or composition in verse, may be reduced to three classes, viz. lyric, epic and dramatic.

LYRIC POETRY.

The ancients gave the denomination of lyric poems to all compositions which could be sung with the accompaniment of the lyre. Spanish poetry possesses more metres or forms of verse than that of any other nation, since, in addition to its ancient Castilian versification,* it has admitted the major part of the forms used by the Italians. But the original Spanish metres † are so beautiful, and so well adapted

* An enumeration and explanation of the several metres used by the Spaniards, will be found at the end of this Essay.

† “ Although the English are remarkable for the number and variety of their ancient ballads, and retain perhaps a greater fondness for these old simple rhapsodies

to every species of composition, that notwithstanding the introduction of the Italian versification, they have been preserved until our times.

The Italian hendecasyllables, or verses of eleven syllables, were first introduced by Boscan, Garcilaso, Mendoza and others, who during the sixteenth century travelled into Italy. This novelty met with many opponents, the chief of whom was Castillejo, secretary to the Emperor Ferdinand, who, says Luzan, may be styled the prince of the poets that used the ancient versification; but notwithstanding this opposition, the Spanish Parnassus was considerably enriched by the adoption of these new forms of verse.

The number of poets who have adorned the muses of Spain since the commencement of the sixteenth century is so considerable,

of their ancestors than most other nations; they are not the only people who have distinguished themselves by compositions of this kind. The Spaniards have multitudes of them, and many of the highest merit; they call them romances. Most of them relate to their conflicts with the Moors, and display a spirit of gallantry peculiar to that romantic people."

Bishop Percy.

that, not to infringe on the limits which I have prescribed to myself in this Essay, I shall only notice the most celebrated.

Boscan, whom I have mentioned above, is the author of an *Imitation of Hero and Leander*, and of several other pieces. He was the friend of Garcilaso and of Mendoza.

Garcilaso de la Vega left only a small number of lyric poems, which have served as models to his successors. The most esteemed among these is the *Eclogue*, which begins thus: *El dulce lamentar de dos Pastores*, in which this elegant poet describes the lamentations of two shepherds. This piece has been translated into Italian, both by Mr. Conti and the Abbé Masdeu, and may rank with the very best eclogues. The other poetical productions of Garcilaso consist of some *Elegies*, together with some *Songs* and *Sonnets* in the taste of Petrarch.*

* Garcilaso, whom foreigners have styled the Spanish Petrarch, was mortally wounded whilst scaling a tower, and died at the age of 33.

There are two commentaries on his poems, one written by Fernando de Herrera, and the other by Sanchez de

Fernando de Herrera composed many *Odes* and other pieces, which obtained him the surname of divine, on account of the noble enthusiasm and species of inspiration with which he was animated, and which is visible in his verses, particularly in his *Ode* to Don John of Austria, and that upon the battle of *Lepanto*.

Don Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, author of the *History of the War in Granada*, and of the novel called *Lazarillo de Tormes*, composed, among other poems, some *Epistles* which will bear a comparison with those of Horace.

Father Luis de Leon, one of the most learned men of his time, not satisfied with having enriched Spanish poetry with several very beautiful productions, left behind him some models of translation in the *Songs of Solomon*, the *Book of Job*, many pieces of Horace, &c. &c. The style of his *Sacred Odes* is consistent with the majesty of the subject. One of his most beautiful pieces is the *Pro-*

las Brozas. Sanchez likewise wrote the *Life of Garcilaso*. Don Nicolas de Azara, the elegant translator of Middleton's *Life of Cicero*, has also illustrated Garcilaso.

phesy of the Tagus, which closely resembles Horace's *Prophecy of Nereus*, but is considered superior to the *Latin Ode* in poetical merit.

The Spanish poet describes the River Tagus raising his head above its waters, and beholding Don Rodrigo, the last of the Gothic kings with the beautiful Cava, abandoned to the delights of love; he menaces the king, and declares all the evils which await him with the invasion of the Moors. The ode in which Father Leon describes his eager desire to ascend to heaven, possesses no less merit. These two odes have been translated into Italian by the Abbé Masdeu.*

Francisco de la Torre. This author, whose origin is unknown, is one of those poets who, generally founding the subject of their verses on the most simple objects in nature, have had the ability to describe them with truth and elegance.

* Father Luis de Leon was thrown into prison for his translation of some of the sacred volume, at that time prohibited. Five years after he was set at liberty, he resumed the Professor's chair, and when his auditors expected to hear him utter complaints, he commenced his discourse as follows: "Hesterna die dicebam," (as I was saying yesterday,) an exordium that evinced his greatness of soul which his sufferings had not diminished.

The *Argensolas*. Besides some works in prose, as the *Conquest of the Moluccas*, the continuation of the *Annals of Zurita*, we are indebted to the brothers Leonardo and Bartolomé de Argensola, whom their countrymen have denominated the Spanish Horatii, for a considerable number of *Satires*, *Epistles* and others pieces, which have secured them a distinguished rank among the best poets of their nation.

Villegas, the Spanish Anacreon, had the art of adorning his amorous *Poems* with sentiments so delicate, with images so spirited and lively, with a style so tender, and a versification so harmonious, that, in the opinion of the Abbot Andres, he is far superior to all the modern Anacreons who have attempted that species of poetry.

An anonymous English writer of great elegance, has echoed this sentiment when speaking of the Sapphic verses of this poet, beginning *Dulce vecino de la verde selva*.

Don Luis de Gongora, endowed with an elevated and sublime imagination, and every other quality which constitutes a great poet, disdaining to follow the steps of his prede-

cessors, invented a new mode of writing, called *Culteranismo* (purism), which had many partisans in Spain. However, the whole of his works are not infected with this false taste, since there are many of his lyric effusions which are worthy to be placed by the side of the best productions of other poets.

Quevedo, (Don Francisco de,) in his numerous works in prose and verse, not only displayed great information, but shewed that his wit and humour were not inferior to his knowledge; but he suffered himself sometimes to be led away by a false taste, and too often preferred tinsel to gold. It is principally in his *Romances* and *Letrillas*, which last have been so well imitated by Don José de Iglesias, and in his *Sonnets*, that Quevedo displayed his ingenuity and talent for pastoral writing.*

* Quevedo was one of the most learned men of his time; he was thoroughly acquainted with the Hebrew and also with the languages of the classics, as is manifest from the translations that he published from the Greek and Latin. A perfect acquaintance with the Castilian language and the manners of the Spaniards, are requisite to comprehend the satirical works of this poet. Quevedo has been compared to Voltaire and Swift. If we con-

Other poets flourished before and subsequent to the authors I have named, who merit the attention of amateurs of the Castilian language; such are Acuña, Gutierre de Cetina, Pedro de Padilla, Cueva, Figueroa, Espinel, Luis Barahona de Soto, Jauregui (the elegant translator of Tasso's *Aminta*), the Prince of Esquilache and others, some of whom endeavoured to arrest the progress of the vitiated taste introduced by Gongora; but this glory was reserved for our own age. It is astonishing, indeed, to behold the Spanish genius, entranced for nearly a century, suddenly arising and exciting many learned men to restore to the poetry of their native country all the splendour which it appeared to have lost. The works of Luzan, particularly his *Art of Poetry*, and those of Cadalso, have been principally instrumental in re-establishing correct taste, and in bringing back the art of versification to its true principles.

The example of these authors has been followed by a great number of distinguished

sider merely his wit and general information, a comparison with the first appears just; but if we take into consideration his style and the subjects upon which he treated, he is better assimilated to Swift.

poets, amongst whom we may notice Melendez, (the Garcilaso of our days;)* Father Gonzalez † who indulging in the sweets of poetry amidst

* Don Juan de Melendez Valdés, has successfully cultivated different species of poetry. He is sublime in his *Odes upon the Divinity*, and upon moral and philosophical subjects, while he is pleasing and tender in his pastoral poems. *La gloria de las Artes, el deseo de gloria*, in which he describes the immortal chefs d'œuvres of Raphael, and of the most celebrated ancient and modern artists; his *Eclogue* in praise of a country life, which gained the prize of the Spanish Academy, are among the most excellent of his poems. Melendez has also composed a pastoral comedy, *Las bodas de Camacho el rico*.* His works are held in high estimation in foreign countries, especially in Italy, and also in France, where this author is lately deceased.

† Father M. Diego Gonzalez, a poet of great tenderness, no less interesting on account of the sensibility displayed in his verses than estimable for the purity of his diction, and for his soft and harmonious versification. His natural modesty is the cause that only a small number of his poems are extant, and these were preserved by the care of a friend, to whom he delivered them previous to his death, with an injunction to burn them, as he considered they were incompatible with his profession. One of his most esteemed pieces is the pointed sally entitled *El Murcielago*, (the Bat).

* See account of the Spanish drama.

the severer studies of his profession, has recalled la Torre to our remembrance; Iglesias, whose lively muse has painted with so much grace the vices of his age; * Iriarte, † Samaniego, ‡ ingenious fabulists; the two Moratins, who have enriched literature with a beautiful poem,

* The poems of Iglesias, full of attic salt, and written in the taste of the earlier Castilian poets, though sometimes rather licentious, are admired for the purity of their style, for the author being unacquainted both with the Italian and French languages, could not blend a foreign idiom with his native tongue, as others have done.

† Don Thomas de Iriarte has enriched literature with many excellent works, such as his poem on *Music*, and a translation of Horace's *Art of Poetry*, which deservedly obtained the approbation of Metastasio; and many fables in which he has adopted the novel expedient of putting literary precepts into the mouths of animals. These fables may be recommended to learners, both on account of their purity of style, and the phrases of familiar conversation with which they abound.

‡ The fables of Samaniego are written with great simplicity, those natural graces that arise out of the subject, and appertain to compositions of this sort being every where perceptible. But the chief merit of Samaniego's fables is, that they are generally within the comprehension of children, for whose instruction they were composed.

entitled *Las Naves de Cortes destruidas*, (The Ships of Cortes destroyed,) and the Modern Theatre, with many of its best pieces; Cienfuegos, whose poetical excellence occasions us to regret his premature death, Count Noroña, Arriaza,* Quintana and many others, whom the limits of this Essay will not allow me to name, and who have raised Spanish poetry to a level with that of other nations.

EPIC AND DIDACTIC POEMS.

The Spaniards possess several epic poems, of which the most distinguished are *La Araucana* of Ercilla; *Las Navas de Tolosa*; *El Bernardo* of Balbuena; *Las Lagrimas de Angelica*; *El Monserrate* of Virues, &c. The *Araucana*, of Ercilla, contains some very fine passages, among which is the speech of Colocolo, which Voltaire prefers to that of Nestor, in Homer. This poem is likewise estimable for the purity of its diction, and interesting as the author bore a part in the transactions

* Arriaza has been successful in many different styles. His poem on *Compassion* is translated into French and Italian. I recommend the perusal of his works to foreigners, for they are written with equal purity and taste.

he describes. His work may therefore be considered as an historical monument.

Of the *Bernardo*, of Balbuena, Andres observes, that if it were freed from some expressions and sentiments peculiar to the taste of that age, which however do not occur very frequently, it might be ranked among the best epic poems. It is, indeed, a poem of very extraordinary merit.

Of the poem entitled *Las Lagrimas de Angelica*, (The Tears of Angelica,) Luzan remarks, that had it been written anterior to the poem of Ariosto on that subject, he should have given it the preference; but whatever credit I may attach to Luzan's judgment, I doubt whether his opinion in this instance would be confirmed by other critics.

The Spaniards have likewise several didactic and burlesque poems: such are *El Arte nuevo*, *El Siglo de Oro*, by Lope de Vega; *La Selva militar y politica*, by Rebolledo, which contains the precepts of the Art of War and of Politics; the *Poem on Painting*, by Cespedes, which describes the rules and progress of the art from the most remote periods, with all the system and elegance that can be expected in a

work of this nature; the poem on *Music*, by Iriarte, which has been admired by all Europe, and translated both into English and Italian.

Of the burlesque poems, the most distinguished are the *Gatomachia*, of Lope de Vega, and the *Mosquea*, of Villaviciosa, the heroes of which are Cats and Flies. These singular poems contain many humorous incidents, and episodes at regular intervals in the arrangement of the story, written in a very fluent and harmonious style, and without taking into consideration their poetical merit, are remarkable for their purity of diction.

DRAMATIC POETRY.

This species of poetry reached its zenith in Spain and England at the same time, the most celebrated of the Castilian dramatists being contemporary with Shakespeare and Ben Jonson. The Spanish theatre has served as a model to that of other nations, and particularly to the French, whose early dramatic writers, not content with imitating the Spaniards generally, also borrowed from them the subjects of many of their pieces.*

* There are few French critics, even amongst those who have formed the least favourable judgment of Spanish literature, that deny this truth. See, besides others, l'Art. 65, for the month of June 1746, of *le Journal de Trévoux*, the Preface to the *Menteur* of Corneille, by Voltaire, &c. &c. The following are some of the pieces which the French have derived from the Spanish theatre: The famous tragedy of the *Cid*, is nothing more than an imitation of the *Cid* of Guillen de Castro; *Tristan* has taken his *Marianne* from the *Tetrarca de Jerusalem*; it is also affirmed that *Heraclius* is taken from Calderon. All the tragedies of the younger Corneille are translations or imitations of the Spanish. By the author's own avowal, *Le Menteur* is taken from *La verdad Sospechosa* by Alarcon; *El Desden con el Desden*, has furnished Moliere with the subject of his *Princesse d'Elide*. (V. Andres, Tom. II. Cap. xiv. pp. 312, 313.)

It appears from a very authentic document, that the performance of plays was in use during the thirteenth century, at which period, in consequence of the strenuous exertions of king Don Alphonso the Tenth, justly surnamed the Wise, the Spanish language and literature were rapidly advancing towards perfection. In the document I have just alluded to, viz. *El Codigo de las siete Partidas*, it is ordained that *juegos de escarnios*, by which must be meant short satirical pieces similar to our interludes, should not be represented in religious habits.* It would be a task equally difficult, unavailing and foreign to my purpose to attempt to trace the progress of the Spanish drama, in the interval between those remote times and the sixteenth century, the era in which this and other studies were advanced to their highest excellence. Without stopping, therefore, to inquire after the founders of the Spanish stage, I shall cite a few of the authors by whom it was adorned,

* Los clerigos e los otros omes non deuen fazer *juegos de escarnio* con habito de religion ; (and further on it is added,) qualquier que vestiere habitos de monges o de monja o de religioso (para fazer *escarnios* e *juegos con ellos*) deue ser echado de aquella villa o de aquel logar donde lo fiziere á açotes.

annexing a brief notice of Lope de Vega and Calderon, with some others who subsequently embellished it with all the grace and sublimity of which it was susceptible.

The first dramatic writer of note is Juan de la Encina, author of an *Arte de trovar*, or Art of Castilian poetry, a man of superior genius and learning, whose compositions well deserved the applauses of his contemporaries: and that these were bestowed in no small profusion, is evident from the fact of his plays having been represented in the palace of the Catholic kings.

The same brilliant career was pursued by Bartolomé de Torres Naharro, who, in the commencement of the sixteenth century, composed the *Propaladia*, a work which, in addition to other poems, contains eight comedies, divided into five *jornadas* or acts, extolled by the learned author of the *Dialogue of Languages*.* Torres Naharro was followed by Lope de Rueda, whom Cervantes styles a man

* This writer, speaking of Torres Naharro, observes, that he is pure, easy, jovial, full of humorous and familiar phrases, and that he has tolerably well preserved the unities of time and place, but has not kept up the decorum of the characters.

possessing great judgment, and a singular talent for representation; by another Naharro, distinct from the preceding; by Juan de la Cueva, author of fourteen pieces in four acts, and of a *Poética*, wherein he has explained the precepts of the art, and defended himself from the censures that were pronounced upon his writings; by Captain Virues,* who, according to the opinion of Lope de Vega, in *El Laurel de Apolo*, surpassed all his predecessors; and by other writers endowed with the most copious fancy, fertile in imagining, and judicious in conducting incidents; but who, notwithstanding all their talents and assiduity, did no more than raise the drama from its cradle, the glory of apparelling it in its richest and gayest robes, being reserved for the men who imparted lustre to the reign of

* Virues was the author of the poem named, *El Monserrate*, little known to foreigners, although highly deserving of their notice: he moreover composed several lyric poems which enrol his name amongst those of the best writers of his time; also five tragedies, entitled, *La Gran Semiramis*, *La Cruel Casandra*, *Atila Furioso*, *La Infelice Marcela* and *Elisa Dido*, which, although inferior to other productions of a similar nature, contain many beautiful passages, and are remarkable for the purity of their diction.

Philip the Second, and to those of his immediate successors.

It may not be uninteresting to form a brief comparison between the Greek and Spanish stages, in which it will be seen that the dramatic art attained its climax in both countries in consequence of a similar impulse, and by a similar medium. In Greece, Dithyrambics, the lascivious and satirical effusions that were sung at the feasts of Bacchus, together with the rude sayings and vulgar jesting of the vintagers; and in Spain, Eclogues, or the colloquies of shepherds,* suggested the idea of a regular drama. In the time of Susarion and Thespis, who amused the inhabitants of Attica with the embryos of comedy and tragedy, waggons and scaffolds served for a stage; the actors daubed their faces with a dye, or covered them with a linen mask. Æschylus and Sophocles, the successors of Thespis, were the first who recited their plays in

* Cervantes speaking of the comedies that were represented in the time of Lope de Rueda, says, "These comedies were conversations, like eclogues, between two or three shepherds and some shepherdess."

Prol. to his Comedies.

theatres, which were small and built of wood, with machinery and decorations suitable to the dignity of their art. The mask was perfected under their hands; the sound of trumpets, the roaring of thunder were then first heard, and the flashing of lightning for the first time displayed on the stage; the gods were seen to descend from the sky, the furies to dart from the infernal regions, and spirits to issue from their sepulchres.

The Athenians at length erected a theatre of stone, which, amongst other inconveniences, was without a roof, so that on a sudden shower of rain, the spectators were obliged to take shelter under the porticoes, or to seek refuge in the neighbouring buildings.

In Spain, before the days of Lope de Rueda and of the second Naharro, who flourished in the reign of Charles the Fifth, a platform fixed upon four benches served for a stage, and was garnished with an old blanket extended from one side to the other. The dresses consisted of some white skins, bordered with gilt leather. All the performers had false beards, until Naharro restricted this embellishment to the characters that required it. It appears that women did not tread the stage until a

very late period.* Naharro introduced single combats, duels and battles into his comedies; caused the clouds to descend from the sky, imitated the noise of thunder, and astonished the eyes of the spectators with lightning and other illusions which were till then unknown. There were afterwards established at Madrid two fixed and regular theatres, called *Corrales* or *Patios de Comedias*, (Play-courts, play-yards); the place that was chosen for this purpose being the court-yard of some large house, covered in with tiles, beneath which was a stage fixed upon supporters and moveable decorations, which were the property of some individual who let them out for hire, and took them away the moment the performance was concluded.

Such was the state of the drama, when " the prodigy of nature, the great Lope de Vega ap-

* I cannot ascertain the precise period at which they were introduced, but it appears from a stage direction in one of the plays of Cervantes, that it was before the time of that writer. (See *La Numancia de Cervantes*.) Phrynicus, a pupil of Thespis, first introduced a female part into the Greek theatre, but the Greeks would not suffer women to perform.

peared, who assumed the diadem of comedy and placed beneath his jurisdiction the players of his day."* He was aided and imitated in the noble enterprise of elevating and improving the Spanish theatre by several men of genius, whose names are enumerated by Cervantes,† and principally by Calderon de la Barca, Moreto, Roxas, Solis and others, of whom I shall give a brief account.

Cervantes.

Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, well known from his *Don Quixote*, composed several *entremeses*, interludes, and about twenty or thirty comedies, the titles of which are *El Trato de*

* These are the words of Cervantes in the *Prologue* to his comedies.

† Cervantes in the above-mentioned *Prologue*, eulogizes the labours of Doctor Ramon; the ingenious plots of the Licenciate Miguel Sanchez; the solidity of Doctor Mira de Mescua; the discretion of the Canon Tarrega; the harmony and suavity of Don Guillen de Castro; the wit of Aguilar; the comedies of Luis Velez de Guevara; those of D. Antonio de Galarza, and the amorous intrigues in those of Gaspar de Avila: but I know not if posterity has confirmed all the eulogiums of the author of *Don Quixote*.

Argel, La Numancia, La Gran Turquesca, La Batalla Naval, La Jerusalem, La Amaranta ó la del Mayo, El Bosque Amoroso, La Unica y la Bizarra Arsinda, La Confusa, El Gallardo Español, La Casa de los Zelos, Los Baños de Argel, El Rufian Dichoso, La Gran Sultana, El Laberinto de Amor, La Entretenida, Pedro de Urdemalas, &c. &c.*

Cervantes boasts that he was the first who embodied in a dramatic representation, the imaginations and secret workings of the soul,† and brought forward images of morality on the stage, as well as the first who reduced the

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* The eight last were written by Cervantes at a later period, and were printed at Madrid in the year 1615. *El Trato de Argel* and *Los Baños de Argel*, are interesting representations of the sufferings endured by the captives in that city, which the author himself had experienced during his captivity. *La Numancia* is founded on an historical fact, very honourable to the nation. The subject of *El Rufian Dichoso*, is similar to that of the first of Boccaccio's *Tales*.

† When Cervantes published this vaunt, he could not have borne in mind an allegorical comedy composed by the Marques de Villena, one of the ornaments of literature in the reign of Juan the Second.

number of *jornadas* or acts to three,* although this latter novelty is attributed to another person, by Lope de Vega, in the following lines :

Virues, that genius of deserved renown,
 Into three acts first comedy curtailed,
 Which crawled before on four like infants' feet.†

I shall here annex the judgments which some learned Spaniards have pronounced upon the comedies of Cervantes. Agreeably to what he himself tells us, they were not ill received by the public, since they ran their career, unchecked by hisses, hooting or disturbance; and without any showers of cucumbers or other missiles; but this is not proof sufficient that they possessed much merit. Don Gregorio de Mayans, a name well known in the *Commonwealth of Letters*, affirms that they are much superior to the earlier dramatic productions, with the exception of *La Celestina*. ‡

* See the *Prologue* to his comedies.

† *El Capitan Virues, insigne ingenio,
 Puso en tres actos la comedia que antes
 Andaba en quatro como pies de Niño.
 Arte Nuevo de hacer Comedias.*

‡ *Vida de Cervantes.* *La Celestina*, notwithstanding its bad moral, has been translated into several languages. The

Nasarre, author of the *Prologo* to the edition of 1749, and Don Ignacio de Luzan make a report not very favourable to them, with this difference, that the former endeavours to prove that Cervantes wrote them with the laudable design of ameliorating the art, by casting an air of ridicule over the abuses which then prevailed, in the same manner as he had exposed the absurdities that were read with such avidity in books of chivalry: whilst Luzan is of opinion that he only composed them to administer to his necessity, or else in consequence of the constant inclination he felt to rhyme.* To me it appears, that the opinion of Nasarre is entitled to considerable attention. Cervantes in the conversation which he supposes to have passed between a canon of Toledo, and the curate, Pedro Pérez,† which, according to the

author of the *Dialogue of Languages* says of it, that there is no book written in Castilian whose diction is more natural, more appropriate or more elegant, and Cervantes declares that this book would in his opinion be divine, if it better concealed its portion of humanity.

Libro en mi opinion divino, si escondera mas lo humano (Don Quixote).

* Luzan, *La Poética*, Lib. iii. Cap. 1.

† *Don Quixote*, Part I. Cap. 43.

above-named Mayans, is the happiest of all his writings, evinces his perfect acquaintance with the true principles of the art, and describes all the extravagances and absurdities which disgraced and disfigured it, suggesting at the same time the means of preventing or remedying them.* It is not, therefore, credible, that a man of Cervantes' taste and judgment, whose whole study was devoted to the instruction of his countrymen, should fall into the same faults which he censured with so

* Cervantes also enumerates the defects in the comedies of his time, in the following verses of his *Pedro de Urdemalas*.

Y veran que no acaba en casamiento
 Cosã comun, y vista cien mil veces,
 Ni que parió la Dama esta jornada
 Y en otra tiene el Niño ya sus barbas,
 Y venga de sus padres cierta injuria,
 Y al fin viene á ser rey de cierto reyno
 Que no hay cosmografia que lo muestre.

And 'twill be seen it ends not, as is wont,
 In that stale finish of a play—a marriage;
 Nor is the Lady put to bed this act,
 And, now, behold! the Child has got a beard on;
 And from his parents he endures some wrong,
 And at the last becomes a king of realms
 Which no cosmography has ever dealt of.