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* CHAPTER XIX.

QUEVEDO.—HIS LIFE, PUBLIC SERVICE, AND PERSECUTIONS.—HIS WORKS, PUBLISHED AND UNPUBLISHED.—HIS POETRY.—THE BACHILLER FRANCISCO DE LA TORRE.—HIS PROSE WORKS, RELIGIOUS AND DIDACTIC.—HIS PAUL THE SHARPER, PROSE SATIRES, AND VISIONS.—HIS CHARACTER.

FRANCISCO GOMEZ DE QUEVEDO Y VILLEGAS, the contemporary of both Lope de Vega and Cervantes, was born at Madrid, in 1580.¹ His family came from that mountainous region at the northwest, to which, like other Spaniards, he was well pleased to trace his origin;² but his father held an office of some dignity at the court of Philip the Second, which led to

¹ A diffuse life of Quevedo was published at Madrid, in 1663, by Don Pablo Antonio de Tarsia, a Neapolitan, and is inserted in the tenth volume of the edition of Quevedo's Works, by Sancha, Madrid, 1791-1794, 11 tom., 8vo. A shorter, and, on the whole, a more satisfactory, life of him is to be found in Baena, Hijos de Madrid, Tom. II. pp. 137-154; but the best is the one prefixed to the collection of Quevedo's Works, the first and second volumes of which are in the Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, (Tom. XXIII., 1852, and Tom. XLVIII., 1859,) and edited with extraordinary knowledge of whatever relates to its subject, by Don Aureliano Fernandez Guerra y Orbe. It is only to be regretted that this work has not yet (1859) been continued, but I trust it will be. No Spanish author will better reward care and diligence in explanatory notes than Quevedo, and none needs them more. I must be permitted to add, that I do not accept all Don Aureliano's conclusions, such, for instance, as that Quevedo in *all* he wrote, even in his Sueños, had a *political* purpose in view. See pp. x, xv, and xxxi.

² In his "Grandes Anales de Quince Dias," speaking of the powerful President Acevedo, he says: "I was unwelcome to him, because, coming myself from the mountains, I never flattered the ambition he had to make himself out to be above men to whom we, in our own homes, acknowledge no superiors." Obras, Tom. XI. p. 63.

An anecdote will show how much was thought of this mountain spirit of honor, which was supposed to descend from the days of Pelayo, when the mountain country alone kept its loyalty and faith. After Philip IV. had entered Pamplona, 23d April, 1646, he called to him the Marquis of Carpio, who bore the sword of state, and sheathed it with his own royal hands, because, as he declared, in that kingdom it was not needed: "thus," says the contemporary account, "giving those about him to understand that all the men of Navarre were faithful and loyal." Relacion embiada de Pamplona de la Entrada que hizo su Magestad en aquella Ciudad. Sevilla, 1646, 4to, pp. 4.

his residence * in the capital at the period of * 275 his son's birth;—a circumstance which was no doubt favorable to the development of the young man's talents. But whatever were his opportunities, we know that, when he was fifteen years old, he was graduated in theology at the University of Alcalá, where he not only made himself master of such of the ancient and modern languages as would be most useful to him, but extended his studies into the civil and canon law, mathematics, medicine, politics, and other still more various branches of knowledge, showing that he was thus early possessed with the ambition of becoming a universal scholar. His accumulations, in fact, were vast, as the learning scattered through his works plainly proves, and bear witness, not less to his extreme industry than to his extraordinary natural endowments.

On his return to Madrid, he seems to have been associated both with the distinguished scholars and with the fashionable cavaliers of the time; and an adventure, in which, as a man of honor, he found himself accidentally involved, had wellnigh proved fatal to his better aspirations. A woman of respectable appearance, while at her devotions in one of the parish churches of Madrid, during Holy Week, was grossly insulted in his presence. He defended her, though both parties were quite unknown to him. A duel followed on the spot; and, at its conclusion, it was found he had killed a person of rank. He fled, of course, and, taking refuge in Sicily, was invited to the splendid court then held there by the Duke of Ossuna, viceroy of Philip the Third, and was soon afterwards employed in important affairs of state,—sometimes, as we are told by his nephew, in such

as required personal courage and involved danger to his life.³

* 276 * At the conclusion of the Duke of Ossuna's administration of Sicily, Quevedo was sent, in 1615, to Madrid, as a sort of plenipotentiary to confirm to the crown all past grants of revenue from the island, and to offer still further subsidies. So welcome a messenger was not ungraciously received. His former offence was overlooked; a pension of four hundred ducats was given him; and he returned, in great honor, to the Duke, his patron, who was already transferred to the more important and agreeable vicerealty of Naples.

Quevedo now became minister of finance at Naples, and fulfilled the duties of his place so skilfully and honestly, that, without increasing the burdens of the people, he added to the revenues of the state. An important negotiation with Rome was also intrusted to his management; and in 1617 he was again in Madrid, and stood before the king with such favor, that he was made a knight of the Order of Santiago. On his return to Naples, or at least during the nine years he was absent from Spain, he made treaties with Venice and Savoy, as well as with the Pope, and was almost constantly occupied in difficult and delicate affairs connected with the administration of the Duke of Ossuna.

But in 1620 all this was changed. The Duke fell

³ I think his life was in greater danger somewhat later, — at Venice in 1618, — when, by means of his perfect Venetian accent, he escaped, in the disguise of a beggar, from the officers of justice, who pursued him as one involved in the conspiracy which St. Real, Lafosse, and Otway have rendered classical, but which is so wild and ro-

mantic that its reality has sometimes been doubted. He was subsequently burnt in effigy, after the fashion of the Inquisition, by order of the Venetian Senate, but he was not, I think, guilty of the particular offence they imputed to him; a matter, no doubt, of small consequence in their eyes.

from power, and those who had been his ministers shared his fate. Quevedo was exiled to his patrimonial estate of Torre de Juan Abad, where and elsewhere he endured an imprisonment or detention of two years and a half; and then was released without trial and without having had any definite offence laid to his charge. He was, however, cured of all desire for public honors or royal favor. He refused the place of Secretary of State, and that of Ambassador to Genoa, both of which were offered him, accepting the merely titular rank of Secretary to the King. He, in fact, was now determined to give himself to letters; and did so for the rest of his life. But though he never took office, he occasionally mingled in the political discussions of his time, as may be seen in his "Tira la Piedra," which is on the debasement of the coin (already sternly rebuked by * Mariana); in his * 277 "Memorial de St. Iago," which cost him an exile of several months in 1628; and in his letter to Louis the Thirteenth on the war of 1635. Others of his minor works show that such interests always tempted him.

In 1634 he was married; but his wife soon died, and left him to contend alone with the troubles of life that still pursued him. In 1639 some satirical verses were placed under the king's napkin at dinner-time; and, without proper inquiry, they were attributed to Quevedo. In consequence of this he was seized, late at night, with great suddenness and secrecy, in the palace of the Duke of Medina-Coeli, and thrown into rigorous confinement in the royal convent of San Márcos de Leon. There, in a damp and unwholesome cell, his health was soon broken down by diseases from which he never recovered; and the little that remained to him of his property was wasted

away till he was obliged to depend on charity for support. With all these cruelties the unprincipled favorite of the time, the Count Duke Olivares, seems to have been connected; and the anger they naturally excited in the mind of Quevedo may well account for two papers against that minister which have generally been attributed to him, and which are full of personal severity and bitterness.⁴ A heart-rending letter, too, which, when he had been nearly two years in prison, he wrote to Olivares, should be taken into the account, in which he in vain appeals to his persecutor's sense of justice, telling him, in his despair, "No clemency can add many years to my life; no rigor can take many away."⁵ At last, the hour of the favorite's disgrace arrived; and, amidst the jubilee of Madrid, he was driven into exile. The release of Quevedo followed as a matter * of course, since it was already admitted that another had written the verses⁶ for which he had been punished by nearly four years of the most unjust suffering.⁷

⁴ The first is the very curious paper entitled "Caida de su Privanza y Muerte del Conde Duque de Olivares," in the *Seminario Erudito* (Madrid, 1787, 4to, Tom. III.); and the other is "Memorial de Don F. Quevedo contra el Conde Duque de Olivares," in the same collection, Tom. XV.

⁵ This letter, often reprinted, is in *Mayans y Siscar*, "Cartas Morales," etc., Valencia, 1773, 12mo, Tom. I. p. 151. Another letter to his friend Adan de la Parra, giving an account of his mode of life during his confinement, shows that he was extremely industrious. Indeed, industry was his main resource a large part of the time he was in San Márcos de Leon. *Seminario Erudito*, Tom. I. p. 65.

⁶ Sedano, *Parnaso Español*, Tom. IV. p. xxxi.

⁷ In his Dedication of his Life of St. Paul to the President of Castile, we have this extraordinary account of his arrest and imprisonment:—

"I was seized in a manner so rigorous at eleven o'clock on the night of the 7th of December, and hurried away, in my old age, so unprovided, that the officer who made the arrest gave me a baize cloak and two shirts, by way of alms, and one of the alguazils gave me some woollen stockings. I was imprisoned four years,—two of them as if I were a wild beast, shut up alone, without human intercourse, and where I should have died of hunger and destitution if the charity of my Lord the Duke of Medina-Coeli had not been in place of a sure and full patrimony to me down to the present day. From this cruel chain of linked calamities, the justice and mercy of his Majesty released me by means of a petition given to him by your Excellency, to whom I referred my cause, in the whole course of which no complaint was ever made against me, nor any confession asked of me, neither after my release was any judicial paper found in relation to it." *Obras*,

But justice came too late. Quevedo remained, indeed, a little time at Madrid, among his friends, endeavoring to recover some of his lost property; but failing in this, and unable to subsist in the capital, he retired to the mountains from which his race had descended. His infirmities, however, accompanied him wherever he went; his spirits sunk under his trials and sorrows; and he died, wearied out with life, in 1645.⁸

Quevedo sought success, as a man of letters, in a great number of departments,—from theology and metaphysics down to stories of vulgar life and Gypsy ballads. But many of his manuscripts were taken from him when his papers were twice seized by the government, and many others seem to have been accidentally lost in the course of a life full of change and adventure. From these and other causes, his friend Antonio de Tarsia tells us that the greater part of his works could not be published; and we know that many are still to be found in his own handwriting both in the National Library of Madrid, and in other collections, public and private.⁹ * Those * 279 already printed fill eleven considerable volumes, eight of prose and three of poetry; leaving us probably little to regret concerning the fate of the rest, unless, perhaps, it be the loss of his dramas, of which two are said to have been represented with applause at Madrid, during his lifetime.¹⁰

Tom. VI. p. 8. His confinement extended from December 7, 1639, to early in June, 1643.

⁸ His nephew, in a Preface to the second volume of his uncle's Poems, (published at Madrid, 1670, 4to,) says that Quevedo died of two imposthumes on his chest, which were formed during his last imprisonment.

The portrait of Quevedo, wearing a huge pair of spectacles, which is well engraved for the fourth volume of Se-

dano's *Parnaso Español*, is by Velazquez, and is strongly marked with the character we attribute to the author of the *Visions*. Stirling's *Artists of Spain*, 1848, Vol. II. p. 635.

⁹ *Obras*, Tom. X. p. 45, and N. Antonio, *Bib. Nova*, Tom. I. p. 463. A considerable amount of his miscellaneous works may be found in the *Seminario Erudito*, Tom. I., III., VI., and XV.

¹⁰ Besides these dramas, whose names

Of his poetry, so far as we know, he himself published nothing with his name, except such as occurs in his poor translations from Epictetus and Phocylides; but in the tasteful and curious collection of his friend Pedro de Espinosa, called "Flowers of Illustrious Poets," printed when Quevedo was only twenty-five years old, a few of his minor poems are to be found. This was probably his first appearance as an author; and it is worthy of notice, that, taken together, these few poems announce much of his future poetical character, and that two or three of them, like the one beginning,

A wight of might
Is Don Money, the knight,"¹¹

are among his happy efforts. But though he himself published scarcely any of them, the amount of his verses found after his death is represented to have been very great; much greater, we are assured, than could be discovered among his papers a few years later,¹² — probably because, just before he died, "he denounced," as we are told, "all his works to the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition, in order that the parts less becoming a modest reserve might be reduced, as they were, to just measure by serious and prudent reflection."¹³

are unknown to us, he wrote, in conjunction with Ant. Hurtado de Mendoza, and at the command of the Count Duke Olivares, who afterwards treated him so cruelly, a play called "Quien mas mente, medra mas," — *He that lies most, will rise most*, — for the gorgeous entertainment that prodigal minister gave to Philip IV. on St. John's eve, 1631. See the account of it in the notice of Lope de Vega, *ante*, p. 212, and *post*, Chapter XXI., note. There were ten "entremeses" and ten "bayles" among his dramas, some of which were published by his nephew in the "Tres Ultimas Musas" in 1670, and some in

the "Entremeses Nuevos, 1643"; but I think there are others still in manuscript.

¹¹ Poderoso cavallero
Es Don Dinero, etc.,

is in Pedro Espinosa, "Flores de Poetas Ilustres," Madrid, 1605, 4to, f. 18.

¹² "Not the twentieth part was saved of the verses which many persons knew to have been extant at the time of his death, and which, during our constant intercourse, I had countless times held in my hands," says Gonzalez de Salas, in the Preface to the first part of Quevedo's Poems, 1648.

¹³ Preface to Tom. VII. of Obras.

* Such of his poetry as was easily found was, * 280 however, published; — the first part by his learned friend Gonzalez de Salas, in 1648, and the rest, in a most careless and crude manner, by his nephew, Pedro Alderete, in 1670, under the conceited title of "The Spanish Parnassus, divided into its Two Summits, with the Nine Castilian Muses." The collection itself is very miscellaneous, and it is not always easy to determine why the particular pieces of which it is composed were assigned rather to the protection of one Muse than of another. In general, they are short. Sonnets and ballads are far more numerous than anything else; though *canciones*, odes, elegies, epistles, satires of all kinds, idyls, *quintillas*, and *redondillas* are in great abundance. There are, besides, four *entremeses* of little value, and the fragment of a poem on the subject of Orlando Furioso, intended to be in the manner of Berni, but running too much into caricature.

The longest of the nine divisions is that which passes under the name and authority of Thalia, the goddess who presided over rustic wit, as well as over comedy. Indeed, the more prominent characteristics of the whole collection are a broad, grotesque humor, and a satire sometimes marked with imitations of the ancients, especially of Juvenal and Persius, but oftener overrun with puns, and crowded with conceits and allusions, not easily understood at the time they first appeared, and now quite unintelligible.¹⁴ His bur-

His request on his death-bed, that nearly all his works, printed or manuscript, might be suppressed, is triumphantly recorded in the Index Expurgatorius of 1667, p. 425. Some of them are, no doubt, foul with an indecency which will never permit them to be printed, or, at least, never ought to permit it.

¹⁴ "Los equívocos y las a'usiones suyas," says his editor in 1648, "son tan frequentes y multiplicados, aquellos y estas, así en un solo verso y aun en una palabra, que es bien infalible que mucho número sin advertirse se haya de perder." Obras, Tom. VII., Elogios, etc.

lesque sonnets, in imitation of the Italian poems of that class, are the best in the language, and have a bitterness rarely found in company with so much wit. Some of his lighter ballads, too, are to be placed in the very first rank, and fifteen that he wrote in the wild dialect of the Gypsies have ever since been the delight of the lower classes of his countrymen, and are still, or were lately, to be heard among * 281 their * other popular poetry, sung to the guitars of the peasants and the soldiery throughout Spain.¹⁵ In regular satire he has generally followed the path trodden by Juvenal; and, in the instances of his complaint "Against the Existing Manners of the Castilians," and "The Dangers of Marriage," has proved himself a bold and successful disciple.¹⁶ Some of his amatory poems, and some of those on religious subjects, especially when they are in a melancholy tone, are full of beauty and tenderness;¹⁷ and once or twice, when most didactic, he is no less powerful than grave and lofty.¹⁸

His chief fault — besides the indecency of some of his poetry, and the obscurity and extravagance that pervade yet more of it — is the use of words and phrases that are low and essentially unpoetical. This, so far as we can now judge, was the result partly of haste and carelessness, and partly of a false theory. He sought for strength, and he became affected and

¹⁵ They are at the end of the seventh volume of the *Obras*, and also in Hidalgo, "Romances de Germania" (Madrid, 1779, 12mo, pp. 226–295). Of the lighter ballads in good Castilian, we may notice, especially, "Padre Adan, no lloréis duelos," (Tom. VIII. p. 187,) and "Dijo á la rana el mosquito," Tom. VII. p. 514.

¹⁶ *Obras*, Tom. VII. pp. 192–200, and VIII. pp. 533–550. The last is

somewhat coarse, though not so bad as its model in this respect.

¹⁷ See the *cancion* (Tom. VII. p. 323) beginning, "Pues quita al año Primavera el ceño"; also some of the poems in the "Erato" to the lady he calls "Fili," who seems to have been more loved by him than any other.

¹⁸ Particularly in "The Dream," (Tom. IX. p. 296,) and in the "Hymn to the Stars," p. 338.

rué. But we should not judge him too severely. He wrote a great deal, and with extraordinary facility, but refused to print; professing his intention to correct and prepare his poems for the press when he should have more leisure and a less anxious mind. That time, however, never came. We should, therefore, rather wonder that we find in his works so many passages of the purest and most brilliant wit and poetry, than complain that they are scattered through so very large a mass of what is idle, unsatisfactory, and sometimes unintelligible.

Once, and once only, Quevedo published a small volume of poetry, which has been supposed to be his own, though not originally appearing as such. The occasion was worthy of his genius, and his success was equal to * the occasion. For some * 282 time, Spanish literature had been overrun with a species of affectation resembling the euphuism that prevailed in England a little earlier. It passed under the name of *cultismo*, or the polite style; and when we come to speak of its more distinguished votaries, we shall have occasion fully to explain its characteristic extravagances. At present, it is enough to say, that, in Quevedo's time, this fashionable fanaticism was at the height of its folly; and that, perceiving its absurdity, he launched against it the shafts of his unsparing ridicule, in several shorter pieces of poetry, as well as in a trifle called "A Compass for the Polite to steer by," and in a prose satire called "A Catechism of Phrases to teach Ladies how to talk Latinized Spanish."¹⁹

But finding the disease deeply fixed in the national

¹⁹ There are several poems about *cultismo*, *Obras*, Tom. VIII., pp. 82, etc. The "Aguja de Navegar Cultos" is in Tom. I. p. 443; and immediately fol-

lowing it is the Catechism, whose whimsical title I have abridged somewhat freely.

taste, and models of a purer style of poetry wanting to resist it, he printed, in 1631,—the same year in which, for the same purpose, he published a collection of the poetry of Luis de Leon,—a small volume which he announced as “Poems by the Bachiller Francisco de la Torre,”—a person of whom he professed, in his Preface, to know nothing, except that he had accidentally found his manuscripts in the hands of a bookseller, with the Approbation of Alonso de Ercilla attached to them; and that he supposed him to be the ancient Spanish poet referred to by Boscan nearly a hundred years before. But this little volume is a work of no small consequence. It contains sonnets, odes, *canciones*, elegies, and eclogues; many of them written with antique grace and simplicity, and all in a style of thought easy and natural, and in a versification of great exactness and harmony. It is, in short, one of the best volumes of miscellaneous poems in the Spanish language.²⁰

* 283 *No suspicion seems to have been whispered, either at the moment of their first publication, or for a long time afterwards, that these poems were the productions of any other than the unknown personage of the sixteenth century whose name appeared on their title-page. In 1753, however, a second edition of them was published by Velazquez, the author of the “Essay on Spanish Poetry,” claiming them to be entirely

²⁰ Perhaps there is a little too much of the imitation of Petrarch and of the Italians in the Poems of the Bachiller de la Torre; but they are, I think, not only graceful and beautiful, but generally full of the national tone, and of a tender spirit, connected with a sincere love of nature and natural scenery. I would instance the ode, “Alexis que contraria,” in the edition of Velazquez, (p. 17,) and the truly Horatian ode

(p. 44) beginning, “O tres y quatro veces venturosa,” with the description of the dawn of day, and the sonnet to Spring (p. 12). The first eclogue, too, and all the *endechas*, which are in the most flowing Adonian verse, should not be overlooked. Sometimes he has unrhymed lyrics, in the ancient measures, not always successful, but seldom without beauty.

the work of Quevedo;²¹—a claim which has been frequently noticed since, some critics admitting and some denying it, but none, in any instance, fairly discussing the grounds on which it is placed by Velazquez, or settling their validity.²²

The question, no doubt, is among the more curious of those that involve literary authorship; but it can hardly be brought to an absolute decision. The argument, that the poems thus published by Quevedo are really the work of an unknown Bachiller de la Torre, is founded, first, on the alleged approbation of them by Ercilla,²³ which, though referred to by Valdivielso, as well as by Quevedo, has never been printed; and, secondly, on the fact, that, in their general tone, they are unlike the recognized poetry of Quevedo, being all in a severely simple and * pure style, * 284 whereas he himself not infrequently runs into the affected style he undoubtedly intended by this work to counteract and condemn.

On the other hand, it may be alleged, that the pretended Bachiller de la Torre is clearly not the Bachiller de la Torre referred to by Boscan and Quevedo, who

²¹ “Poesías que publicó D. Francisco de Quevedo Villegas, Cavallero del Orden de Santiago, Señor de la Torre de Juan Abad, con el nombre del Bachiller Francisco de la Torre. Añádese en esta segunda edición un Discurso, en que se descubre ser el verdadero autor el mismo D. Francisco de Quevedo, por D. Luis Joseph Velazquez,” etc. Madrid, 1753, 4to.

²² Quintana denies it in the Preface to his *Poesías Castellanas*” (Madrid, 1807, 12mo, Tom. I. p. xxxix). So does Fernandez, (or Estala for him,) in his Collection of “*Poesías Castellanas*” (Madrid, 1808, 12mo, Tom. IV. p. 40); and, what is of more significance, so does Wolf, in the *Jahrbücher der Literatur*, Wien, 1835, Tom. LXIX. p. 189. On the other side are Alvarez y Baena,

in his *Life of Quevedo*; Sedano, in his “*Parnaso Español*”; Luzan, in his “*Poética*”; Montiano, in an *Aprobacion*; and Bousterwek, in his *History*. Martinez de la Rosa and Faber seem unable to decide. But none of them gives any reasons. I have in the text, and in the subsequent notes, stated the case as fully as seems needful, and have no doubt that Quevedo was the author; or that he knew and concealed the author; or if he really found the manuscript in the way he describes, that he altered and prepared the poetry in it so as to fit it to his especial purpose.

²³ We know, concerning the conclusion of Ercilla’s life, only that he died as early as 1595; thirty-six years before the publication of the Bachelor, and when Quevedo was only fifteen years old.

lived in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, and whose rude verses are found in the old Cancioneros from 1511 to 1573;²⁴ that, on the contrary, the forms of the poems published by Quevedo, their tone, their thoughts, their imitations of Petrarch and of the ancients, their versification, and their language, — except a few antiquated words which could easily have been inserted, — all belong to his own age; that among Quevedo's recognized poems are some, at least, which prove he was capable of writing any one among those attributed to the Bachiller de la Torre; and finally, that the name of the Bachiller Francisco de la Torre is merely an ingenious disguise of his own, since he was himself a Bachelor at Alcalá, had been baptized Francisco, and was the owner of Torre de la Abad, in which he sometimes resided, and which was twice the place of his exile.²⁵

There is, therefore, no doubt, a mystery about the whole matter which will probably never be cleared up; and we can now come to only one of three conclusions: — either that the poems in question were found by him, as he says they were, in which case he must have altered them materially, so that they could serve the object he avowed in publishing them; or that they are the work of some contemporary and friend * 285 of Quevedo, whose name * he knew and con-

²⁴ It is even doubtful who this Bachiller de la Torre of Boscan was. Velazquez (Pref., v) thinks it was probably Alonso de la Torre, author of the "Vision Deleytable," (circa 1461,) of which we have spoken (Vol. I. p. 377); and Alvarez y Baena (Hijos de Madrid, Tom. IV. p. 169) thinks it may perhaps have been Pedro Diaz de la Torre, who died in 1504, one of the counselors of Ferdinand and Isabella. But, in either case, the name does not correspond with that of Quevedo's Bachiller Francisco de la Torre, any better than the style, thoughts, and forms of

the few poems which may be found in the Cancionero of 1573, at ff. 124-127, etc., do with those published by Quevedo. Gayangos (Spanish translation of this History, Tom. II. p. 560) says there are, in the Cancionero of Estuñiga, poems by a Fernando de la Torre, and that he lived in the time of John II., i. e. before 1454. But, as Gayangos adds truly, this does not, *en lo mas minimo*, help to clear up the question.

²⁵ He was exiled there in 1628, for six months, as well as imprisoned there in 1620. Obras, Tom. X. p. 88.

cealed; or that they were selected by himself out of the great mass of his own unpublished manuscripts, choosing such as would be least likely to betray their origin, and most likely, by their exact finish and good taste, to rebuke the folly of the affected and fashionable poetry of his time. But whoever may be their author, one thing is certain, — they are not unworthy the genius of any poet belonging to the brilliant age in which they appeared.²⁶

Quevedo's principal works, however, — those on which his reputation mainly rests, both at home and abroad, — are in prose. The more grave will hardly come under our cognizance. They consist of a treatise on the Providence of God, including an essay on the Immortality of the Soul; a treatise addressed to Philip the Fourth, singularly called "God's Politics and Christ's Government," in which he endeavors to collect a complete body of political philosophy from the example of the Saviour;²⁷ treatises on a Holy Life and on the Militant Life of a Christian; and biographies of Saint Paul and Saint Thomas of Villanueva. These, with translations of Epictetus and the false Phocylides, of Anacreon, of Seneca,

²⁶ It is among the suspicious circumstances accompanying the first publication of the Bachiller de la Torre's works, that one of the two persons who give the required *Aprobaciones* is Vander Hammen, who played the same sort of trick upon the public of which Quevedo is accused; a vision he wrote being, to this day, printed as Quevedo's own, in Quevedo's works. The other person who gives an *Aprobacion* to the Bachiller de la Torre is Valdivielso, a critic of the seventeenth century, whose name often occurs in this play; whose authority on such points is small; and who does not say that he ever saw the manuscript or the Approbation of Erquilla. See, for Vander Hammen, *post*, p. 291.

²⁷ His "Politica de Dios" was begun during his first imprisonment, and the first edition — or rather what was subsequently enlarged into the First Book — of it was published in 1626, with a dedication dated from his prison, 25th April, 1621, to the Count Olivares, who became afterwards his cruel persecutor. This dedication, however, was superseded by one to the King, prefixed to the completed treatise, and found among Quevedo's papers after his death. I have a copy of the very curious edition first above referred to, which, with several other of his works, was published at Zaragoza, probably, I think, because the censorship of the press was a little less severe in Aragon than it was in Castile.