

volving the passion of love, and especially all * 366 the plays of * Lope de Vega. This irritable state of things continued till 1649. But nothing of consequence followed. The regulations that were made were not executed in the spirit in which they were conceived. Many plays were announced and acted as religious which had no claim whatever to the title; and others, religious in their external framework, were filled up with an intriguing love-plot, as free as anything in the secular drama had been. Indeed, there can be no doubt that the attempts thus made to constrain the theatre were successfully opposed or evaded, especially by private representations in the houses of the nobility;⁴³ and that, when these attempts were given up, the drama, with all its old attributes and attractions, broke forth with a greater extravagance of popularity than ever;⁴⁴ — a fact apparent from the crowd of dramatists that became famous, and from the circumstance that so many of the clergy, like Tarrega, Mira de Mescua, Montalvan, Tirso de Molina, and Calderon, to say nothing of Lope de Vega, who

⁴³ These representations in private houses had long been common. Bisbe y Vidal (Tratado, 1618, c. 18) speaks of them as familiar in Barcelona, and treats them, in his otherwise severe attack on the theatre, with a gentleness that shows he recognized their influence.

⁴⁴ It is not easy to make out how much the theatre was really interfered with during these four or five years; but the dramatic writers seem to have felt themselves constrained in their course, more or less, for a part of that time, if not the whole of it. The accounts are to be found in Casiano Pellicer, Origen, etc., de la Comedia, Tom. I. pp. 216–222, and Tom. II. p. 135; — a work important, but ill digested. Conde, the historian, once told me that its materials were furnished chiefly by the author's father, the learned editor of Don Quixote, and that the son did not know how to put them together.

A few hints and facts on the subject of the secular drama of this period may also be found in Ulloa y Pereira's defence of it, written apparently to meet the troubles of 1644–1650, but not published until 1659, 4to. He contends that there was never any serious purpose to break up the theatre, and that even Philip II. meant only to regulate, not to suppress it. (p. 343.) Don Luis Crespé de Borja, Bishop of Orihuela and ambassador of Philip IV. at Rome, who had previously favored the theatre, made, in Lent, 1646, an attack on it in a sermon, which, when published three years afterwards, excited a considerable sensation, and was answered by Andres de Avila y Heredia, el Señor de la Garena, and sustained by Padre Ignacio Camargo. But nothing of this sort much hindered or helped the progress of the drama in Spain.

was particularly exact in his duties as a priest, were all successful writers for the stage.⁴⁵

* Of the religious plays of Calderon, one of * 367 the most remarkable is "The Purgatory of Saint Patrick." It is founded on the little volume by Montalvan, already referred to, in which the old traditions of an entrance into Purgatory from a cave in an island off the coast of Ireland, or in Ireland itself, are united to the fictitious history of Ludovico Enio, a Spaniard, who, except that he is converted by Saint Patrick and "makes a good ending," is no better than another Don Juan.⁴⁶ The strange play in which these are principal figures opens with a shipwreck. Saint Patrick and the godless Enio drift ashore and find themselves in Ireland, — the sinner being saved from drowning by the vigorous exertions of the saint. The king of the country, who immediately appears on the stage, is an atheist, furious against Christianity; and after an exhibition, which is not without poetry, of the horrors of savage heathendom, Saint Patrick is sent as a slave into the interior of the island, to work for this brutal master.

⁴⁵ The clergy writing loose and immoral plays is only one exemplification of the unsound state of society so often set forth in Madame d'Aulnoy's Travels in Spain, in 1679–80; — a curious and amusing book, which sometimes throws a strong light on the nature of the religious spirit that so frequently surprises us in Spanish literature. Thus, when she is giving an account of the constant use made of the rosary or chaplet of beads, — a well-known passion in Spain, connected, perhaps, with the Mohammedan origin of the rosary, of which the Christian rosary was made a rival, — she says, "They are going over their beads constantly when they are in the streets, and in conversation; when they are playing *ombre*, making love, telling lies, or talking scandal. In short, they are forever muttering over their chaplets; and even in the most ceremonious society it goes on just

the same; how devoutly you may guess. But custom is very potent in this country." Ed. 1693, Tom. II. p. 124.

⁴⁶ The "Vida y Purgatorio del Glorioso San Patricio," (1627,) of which I have a copy, (Madrid, 1739, 18mo,) was long a popular book of devotion, both in Spanish and in French. That Calderon used it is obvious throughout his play. Wright, however, in his pleasant work on St. Patrick's Purgatory, (London, 1844, 12mo, pp. 156–159,) supposes that the French book of devotion was made up chiefly from Calderon's play; whereas they resemble each other only because both were taken from the Spanish prose work of Montalvan. See *ante*, p. 314. Enio, under different names, is known to the old monkish accounts of St. Patrick, from the twelfth century; but it is Montalvan and Calderon who have made him the personage we now recognize.

The first act ends with his arrival at his destination, where, in the open fields, after a fervent prayer, he is comforted by an angel, and warned of the will of Heaven, that he should convert his oppressors.

Before the second act opens, three years elapse, during which Saint Patrick has visited Rome and been regularly commissioned for his great work in Ireland, where he now appears, ready to undertake it. He immediately performs miracles of all kinds, and, among the rest, raises the dead before the audience; but still the old heathen king refuses to be converted, unless the very Purgatory, Hell, and Paradise preached * 368 to him are made sure to the *senses of some well-known witness. This, therefore, is divinely vouchsafed to the intercession of Saint Patrick. A communication with the unseen world is opened through a dark and frightful cave. Enio, the godless Spaniard, already converted by an alarming vision, enters it and witnesses its dread secrets; after which he returns, and effects the conversion of the king and court by a long description of what he had seen. This, however, is the only catastrophe to the play.

Besides its religious story, the Purgatory of Saint Patrick has a love-plot, such as might become the most secular drama, and a *gracioso* as rude and free-spoken as the rudest of his class.⁴⁷ But the whole was intended to produce what was then regarded as a religious effect; and there is no reason to suppose that it failed of its purpose. There is, however, much

⁴⁷ When Enio determines to adventure into the cave of Purgatory, he gravely urges his servant, who is the *gracioso* of the piece, to go with him; to which the servant replies, —

I never heard before that any man
Took lackey with him when he went to hell!
No, — to my native village will I haste,
Where I can live in something like content;

Or, if the matter must to goblins come,
I think my wife will prove enough of one
For my purgation.

Comedias, 1760, Tom. II. p. 264.

There is, however, a good deal that is solemn in this wild drama. Enio, when he goes to the infernal world, talks, in the spirit of Dante himself, of

Treading on the very ghosts of men.

in it that would be unseemly under any system of faith; some wearying metaphysics; and two speeches of Enio's, each above three hundred lines long, — the first an account of his shameful life before his conversion, and the last a narrative of all he had witnessed in the cave, absurdly citing for its truth fourteen or fifteen obscure monkish authorities, all of which belong to a period subsequent to his own.⁴⁸ Such as it is, however, the Purgatory of Saint Patrick is commonly ranked among the best religious plays of the Spanish theatre in the seventeenth century.

It is, indeed, on many accounts, less offensive than the more famous drama, "Devotion to the Cross," printed in 1635, which is founded on the adventures of a man who, though his life is a tissue of gross and atrocious crimes, is yet made an object of the especial favor of God, because he shows a uniform external * reverence for whatever has the form of a * 369 cross; and who, dying in a ruffian brawl, as a robber, is yet, in consequence of this devotion to the cross, miraculously restored to life, that he may confess his sins, be absolved, and then be transported directly to heaven. The whole seems to be absolutely an invention of Calderon, and, from the fervent poetical tone of some of its devotional passages, it has always been a favorite in Spain, and, what is yet more remarkable, has found ardent admirers in Protestant Christendom.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ See chapters 4 and 6 of Montalvan's "Patricio."

⁴⁹ It is beautifully translated by A. W. Schlegel, — the first play in his collection of 1803, — preserving rigorously the measures and manner of the original, and following its *asonantes* as well as its rhymes. All the translations of Schlegel from the Spanish theatre are worth reading. The amplest edition of them is the one in two vols., 12mo, Leipzig, 1845, containing fragments of

the "Cabellos de Absalon" and "Las Amazonas" of Calderon, and of the "Numancia" of Cervantes. A drama of Tirso de Molina, "El Condenado por Desconfiado," goes still more profoundly into the peculiar religious faith of the age, and may well be compared with the "Devocion de la Cruz," which it preceded in time, and perhaps surpasses in poetical merit. It represents a reverend hermit, Paulo, as losing the favor of God, simply from want of trust in

"The Wonder-working Magician," founded on the story of Saint Cyprian, — the same legend on which Milman has founded his "Martyr of Antioch," — is, however, more attractive than either of the dramas just mentioned, and, like "El Joseph de las Mugerres," reminds us of Goethe's "Faust." It opens — after one of those gorgeous descriptions of natural scenery in which Calderon loves to indulge — with an account by Cyprian, still unconverted, of his retirement, on a day devoted to the service of Jupiter, from the bustle and confusion of the city of Antioch, in order to spend the time in inquiries concerning the existence of One Supreme Deity. As he seems likely to arrive at conclusions not far from the truth, Satan, to whom such a result would be particularly unwelcome, breaks in upon his studies, and, in the dress of a fine gentleman, announces himself to be a man of learning, who has accidentally lost his way. In imitation of a fashion not rare among scholars at European universities in the poet's time, this personage offers to hold a dispute with Cyprian on any subject whatever. Cyprian naturally chooses the one that then troubled his thoughts; * 370 * and after a long, logical discussion, according to the discipline of the schools, obtains a clear victory, — though not without feeling enough of his adversary's power and genius to express a sincere admiration for both. The evil spirit, however, though defeated, is not discouraged, and goes away, determined to try the power of temptation.

it; while Enrico, a robber and assassin, obtains that favor by an exercise of faith and trust at the last moment of a life which had been filled with the most revolting crimes. Satan complains, I think, very justly of this state of the case in a play of Malaspina, (*La Fuerza de la Verdad*, *Jorn. I.*,) where he says,

that the rebellious angels were thrust down to perdition for a single offence without any power to regain, by penitence, their lost places in heaven, while man, though he make a god of his sins, can, at last, recover the Divine favor by a sigh or a few tears.

For this purpose he brings upon the stage Lelius, son of the governor of Antioch, and Florus, — both friends of Cyprian, — who come to fight a duel, near the place of his present retirement, concerning a fair lady named Justina, against whose gentle innocence the Spirit of all Evil is particularly incensed. Cyprian interferes; the parties refer their quarrel to him; he visits Justina, who is secretly a Christian, and supposes herself to be the daughter of a Christian priest; but, unhappily, Cyprian, instead of executing his commission, falls desperately in love with her; while, in order to make out the running parody on the principal action, common in Spanish plays, the two lackeys of Cyprian are both found to be in love with Justina's maid.

Now, of course, begins the complication of a truly Spanish intrigue, for which all that precedes it is only a preparation. That same night Lelius and Florus, the two original rivals for the love of Justina, who favors neither of them, come separately before her window to offer her a serenade, and while there, Satan deceives them both into a confident belief that the lady is disgracefully attached to some other person; for he himself, in the guise of a gallant, descends from her balcony, before their eyes, by a rope-ladder, and, having reached the bottom, sinks into the ground between the two. As they did not see each other till after his disappearance, though both had seen him, each takes the other to be this favored rival, and a duel ensues on the spot. Cyprian again opportunely interferes, but, having understood nothing of the vision or the rope-ladder, is astonished to find that both renounce Justina as no longer worthy their regard. And thus ends the first act.

In the two other acts, Satan is still a busy, bustling personage. He appears in different forms; first, * 371 as if * just escaped from shipwreck; and afterwards, as a fashionable gallant; but uniformly for mischief. The Christians, meantime, through his influence, are persecuted. Cyprian's love grows desperate; and he sells his soul to the Spirit of Evil for the possession of Justina. The temptation of the fair Christian maiden is then carried on in all possible ways; especially in a beautiful lyrical allegory, where all things about her—the birds, the flowers, the balmy air—are made to solicit her to love with gentle and winning voices. But in every way the temptation fails. Satan's utmost power is defied and defeated by the mere spirit of innocence. Cyprian, too, yields, and becomes a Christian, and with Justina is immediately brought before the governor, already exasperated by discovering that his own son is a lover of the fair convert. Both are ordered to instant execution; the buffoon servants make many poor jests on the occasion; and the piece ends by the appearance on a dragon of Satan himself, who is compelled to confess the power of the Supreme Deity, which in the first scenes he had denied, and to proclaim, amidst thunder and earthquakes, that Cyprian and Justina are already enjoying the happiness won by their glorious martyrdom.⁵⁰

Few pieces contain more that is characteristic of the old Spanish stage than this one; and fewer still show so plainly how the civil restraints laid on the theatre

⁵⁰ An interesting, but somewhat too metaphysical, discussion of this play, with prefatory remarks on the general merits of Calderon, by Karl Rosenkranz, appeared at Leipzig in 1829, (12mo,) entitled, "Ueber Calderon's Tragödie

vom wunderthätigen Magus." Beautiful translations of some scenes from it were first published in Shelley's Posthumous Poems, London, 8vo, 1824, pp. 362-392.

were evaded, and the Church was conciliated, while the popular audiences lost nothing of the forbidden amusement to which they had been long accustomed from the secular drama.⁵¹ Of such plays Calderon wrote fifteen, if we include * in the number * 372 his "Aurora in Copacobana," which is on the conquest and conversion of the Indians in Peru;⁵² and his "Origin, Loss, and Recovery of the Virgin of the

⁵¹ How completely a light, worldly tone was taken in these plays may be seen in the following words of the Madonna, when she personally gives St. Ildefonso a rich vestment, — the *chasuble*, — in which he is to say mass: —

Receive this robe, that, at my holy feast,
Thou mayst be seen as such a gallant should be.
My taste must be consulted in thy dress,
Like that of any other famous lady.

Comedias, 1760, Tom. VI. p. 113.

The lightness of tone in this passage is the more remarkable, because the miracle alluded to in it is the crowning glory of the great cathedral of Toledo, on which volumes have been written, and on which Murillo has painted one of his greatest and most solemn pictures, while a little earlier, Fray Juan Sanchez Cotan received, as he claimed, the honor of a sitting from the Madonna herself, when he was engaged in representing the same miraculous scene. Stirling's Artists, 1848, Vol. I. p. 439, Vol. II. p. 915.

Figuerola (Pasagero, 1617, ff. 104-106) says, with much truth, in the midst of his severe remarks on the drama of his time, that the *comedias de santos* were so constructed, that the first act contained the youth of the saint, with his follies and love-adventures; the second, his conversion and subsequent life; and the third his miracles and death; but that they often had loose and immoral stories to render them attractive. They were, however, of all varieties; and it is curious, in such a collection of dramas as the one in forty-eight volumes, extending over the period from 1652 to 1704, to mark in how many ways the theatre endeavored to conciliate the Church; some of the plays being filled entirely with saints, demons, angels, and allegorical personages, and deserving the character

given to the "Fenix de España," (Tom. XLIII., 1678,) of being sermons in the shape of plays; while others are mere intriguing comedies, with an angel or a saint put in to consecrate their immoralities, like "La Defensora de la Reyna de Ungria," by Fernando de Zarate, in Tom. XXIX., 1668.

In other countries of Christendom besides those in which the Church of Rome bears sway, this sort of irreverence in relation to things divine has more or less shown itself among persons accounting themselves religious. The Puritans of England in the days of Cromwell, from their belief in the constant interference of Providence about their affairs, sometimes addressed supplications to God in a spirit not more truly devout than that shown by the Spaniards in their *autos* and their *comedias de santos*. Both felt themselves to be peculiarly regarded of Heaven, and entitled to make the most peremptory claims on the Divine favor and the most free allusions to what they deemed holy. But no people ever felt themselves to be so absolutely soldiers of the cross as the Spaniards did, from the time of their Moorish wars; no people ever trusted so constantly to the recurrence of miracles in the affairs of their daily life; and therefore no people ever talked of divine things as of matters in their nature so familiar and commonplace. Traces of this state of feeling and character are to be found in Spanish literature on all sides. See Calderon's *auto* "No ay instante sin milagro."

⁵² The remarks of Malsburg on this play are well worth reading. They are in the Preface to his translations from Calderon, Leipzig, 1821, Vol. IV. He cites passages on the subject of the play from the Inca Garcilasso to illustrate it.

Reliquary," — a strange collection of legends, extending over above four centuries, full of the spirit of the old ballads, and relating to an image of the Madonna still devoutly worshipped in the great cathedral at Toledo.

* CHAPTER XXIII.

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CALDERON, CONTINUED. — HIS SECULAR PLAYS. — DIFFICULTY OF CLASSIFYING THEM. — THEIR PRINCIPAL INTEREST. — NATURE OF THEIR PLOTS. — LOVE SURVIVES LIFE. — PHYSICIAN OF HIS OWN HONOR. — PAINTER OF HIS OWN DISHONOR. — NO MONSTER LIKE JEALOUSY. — FIRM-HEARTED PRINCE.

PASSING from the religious plays of Calderon to the secular, we at once encounter an embarrassment which we have already felt in other cases, — that of dividing them all into distinct and appropriate classes. It is even difficult to determine, in every instance, whether the piece we are considering belongs to one of the religious subdivisions of his dramas or not; since the "Wonder-working Magician," for instance, is hardly less an intriguing play than "First of all my Lady"; and "Aurora in Copacobana" is as full of spiritual personages and miracles, as if it were not, in the main, a love-story. But, even after setting this difficulty aside, as we have done, by examining separately all the dramas of Calderon that can, in any way, be accounted religious, it is not possible to make a definite classification of the remainder.

Some of them, such as "Nothing like Silence," are absolutely intriguing comedies, and belong strictly to the school of the *capa y espada*; others, like "A Friend Loving and Loyal," are purely heroic, both in their structure and their tone; and a few others, such as "Love survives Life," and "The Physician of his own Honor," belong to the most terrible inspirations of genuine tragedy. Twice, in a different direction, we