

varieties of tone, then in favor. Some of them, like "Santa Teresa," are religious. Others are historical, like "Mary Stuart." Others are taken from the old national traditions, like "The Siege of Zamora," which is on the same subject with the second part of Guillen de Castro's "Cid," but much less poetical. Others are * 425 *zarzuelas*, or dramas chiefly sung, of which the best specimen by Diamante is his "Alpheus and Arethusa," prepared with an amusing *loa* in honor of the Constable of Castile. There are more in the style of the *capa y espada* than in any other. But none of them has any marked merit. The one that has attracted most attention, out of Spain, is "The Son honoring his Father"; a play on the quarrel of the Cid with Count Lozano, which, from a mistake of Voltaire, was long thought to have been the model of Corneille's "Cid," while in fact the reverse is true, since Diamante's play was produced above twenty years after the great French tragedy, and is deeply indebted to it.²¹ Like most of the dramatists of his time, Diamante was a follower of Calderon, and inclined to the more romantic side of his character and school; and, like so many Spanish poets of all times, he finished his career in unnoticed obscurity. Of the precise period of his death no notice has been found, but it was probably near the end of the century.

Passing over such writers of plays as Monteser, Ge-

²¹ The "Cid" of Corneille dates from 1636, and Diamante's "Honrador de su Padre" is found earliest in the eleventh volume of the *Comedias Escogidas*, licensed 1658. Indeed, it may well be doubted whether Diamante was a writer for the stage so early as 1636; for I find no play of his printed before 1657. Another play on the subject of the Cid, partly imitated from this one of Dia-

mante, and with a similar title, — "Honrador de sus Hijos," — is found in the *Comedias Escogidas*, Tom. XXIII., 1662. Its author is Francisco Polo, of whom I know only that he wrote this drama, whose merit is very small, and whose subject is the marriage of the daughters of the Cid with the Counts of Carrion, and their subsequent ill-treatment by their husbands, etc.

ronymo de Cuellar, and not a few others, who flourished in the latter half of the seventeenth century, we come to a pleasant comedy entitled "The Punishment of Avarice," written by Juan de la Hoz, a native of Madrid, who was made a knight of Santiago in 1653, and Regidor of Burgos in 1657, after which he rose to good offices about the court, and was living there as late as 1709. How many plays he wrote, we are not told; but the only one now remembered is "The Punishment of Avarice." It is founded on the third tale of María de Zayas, which bears the same name, and from which its general outline and all the principal incidents are taken.²² But the miser's character is * 426 much more fully and poetically drawn in the drama than it is in the story. Indeed, the play is one of the best specimens of character-drawing on the Spanish stage, and may, in many respects, bear a comparison with the "Aulularia" of Plautus, and the "Avare" of Molière.

The sketch of the miser by one of his acquaintance in the first act, ending with "He it was who first weakened water," is excellent; and, even to the last scene, where he goes to a conjurer to recover his lost money, the character is consistently maintained and well developed.²³ He is a miser throughout, and, what is more,

²² Huerta, who reprints the "Castigo de la Miseria" in the first volume of his "Teatro Español," expresses a doubt as to who is the inventor of the story, Hoz or María de Zayas. But there is no question about the matter. The "Novelas" were printed at Zaragoza, 1637, 4to, and their *Aprobacion* is dated in 1635. See, also, Baena's "Hijos de Madrid," Tom. III. p. 271. In the *Prólogo* to Candamo's plays, (Madrid, Tom. I., 1722,) Hoz is said to have written the third act of Candamo's "San Bernardo," left unfinished at its author's death in 1704, and Schack

found an autograph play by him dated in 1708. If this were the case, Hoz must have lived to a good old age.

²³ The first of these scenes is taken, in a good degree, from the "Novelas," ed. 1637, p. 86; but the scene with the astrologer is wholly the poet's own, and parts of it are worthy of Ben Jonson. It should be added, however, that the third act of the play is technically superfluous, as the action really ends with the second. But we could not afford to part with it, so full is it of spirit and humor. The tale of María de Zayas is plundered after his fashion — that is,

he is a Spanish miser. The moral is better in the prose tale, as the *intrigante*, who cheats him into a marriage with herself, is there made a victim of her crimes no less than he is; while in the drama she profits by them, and comes off with success at last,— a strange perversion of the original story, for which it is not easy to give a good reason. But in poetical merit there is no comparison between the two.

Juan de Matos Fragoso, a Portuguese, who lived in Madrid at the same time with Diamante and Hoz, and died in 1692, enjoyed quite as much reputation with the public as they did, though he often writes in the very bad taste of the age. But he never printed more than one volume of his dramas, so that they are now to be sought chiefly in separate pamphlets, and in collections made for other purposes than the claims of the individual authors found in them. Those which are most known are his "Mistaken Experiment," * 427 founded on * the "Impertinent Curiosity" of the first part of Don Quixote; his "Fortune through Contempt," a better-managed dramatic fiction; and his "Wise Man in Retirement and Peasant by his own Fireside," which is commonly accounted the best of his works.²⁴

"The Captive Redeemer," however, in which he was assisted by another well-known author of his time, Sebastian de Villaviciosa, is on many accounts more interesting and attractive. It is, he says, a true story.

mutilated and abridged — by Scarron, in his "Chatiment de l'Avarice"; — Nouvelles Tragicomiques, Paris, 1752, 12mo, Tom. I. pp. 165-205.

²⁴ This play, it should be noted, is much indebted to Lope's "Villano en su Rincon"; and it may be well also to add, that the "Desprecio Agradecido," the second play in Parte XXV. of Lope's

Comedias, Caragoça, 1647, is published in Vol. XXXIX. of the Comedias Escogidas as the work of Matos, and from that copied first into Garcia Suelto's collection, and then into Ochoa's. Matos Fragoso must have been a writer for the stage fifty-nine years at least, for Schack found a MS. of one of his plays dated 1634 (Nachträge, p. 92).

It is certainly a heart-rending one, founded on an incident not uncommon during the barbarous wars carried on between the Christians in Spain and the Moors in Africa, — relics of the fierce hatreds of a thousand years.²⁵ A Spanish lady is carried into captivity by a marauding party, who land on the coast for plunder, and instantly escape with their prey. Her lover, in despair, follows her, and the drama consists of their adventures till both are found and released. Mingled with this sad story, there is a sort of underplot, which gives its name to the piece, and is very characteristic of the state of the theatre and the demands of the public, or at least of the Church. A large bronze statue of the Saviour is discovered to be in the hands of the infidels. The captive Christians immediately offer the money, sent as the price of their own freedom, to rescue it from such sacrilege; and, at last, the Moors agree to give it up for its weight in gold; but when the value of the thirty pieces of silver, originally paid for the person of the Saviour himself, has been counted into one scale, it * is found to * 428 outweigh the massive statue in the other, and enough is still left to purchase the freedom of the captives, who, in offering their ransoms, had in fact, as they supposed, offered their own lives. With this triumphant miracle the piece ends. Like the other dramas of Fragoso, it is written in a great variety of

²⁵ I have already noticed plays of Lope and Cervantes that set forth the cruel condition of Christian Spaniards in Algiers, and must hereafter notice the great influence this state of things had on Spanish romantic fiction. But it should be remembered here, that many dramas were founded on it, besides those I have had occasion to mention. One of the most striking is by Moreto, which has some points of re-

semblance to the one spoken of in the text. It is called "El Azote de su Patria," (Comedias Escogidas, Tom. XXXIV., 1670,) and is filled with the cruelties of a Valencian renegade, who seems to have been an historical personage. The popular ballads bear testimony to the same state of things. Duran, Romancero General, Tom. I. pp. xiv and 136-150.

measures, which are managed with skill, and are full of sweetness.²⁶

The last of the good writers for the Spanish stage with its old attributes is Antonio de Solís, the historian of Mexico. He was born on the 18th of July, 1610, in Alcalá de Henares, and completed his studies at the University of Salamanca, where, when only seventeen years old, he wrote a drama. Five years later he had given to the theatre his "Gitanilla," or "The Little Gypsy Girl," founded on the story of Cervantes, or rather on a play of Montalvan borrowed from that story; — a graceful fiction, which has been constantly reproduced, in one shape or another, ever since it first appeared from the hand of the great master. "One Fool makes a Hundred" — a pleasant *figuron* play of Solís, which was soon afterwards acted before the court — has less merit, and is somewhat indebted to the "Don Diego" of Moreto. But, on the other hand, his "Love à la Mode," which is all his own, is among the good plays of the Spanish stage, and furnished materials for one of the best of Thomas Corneille's.

In 1642, Solís prepared, for a festival at Pamplona, — on occasion of the birth of a son to the Viceroy of Navarre, whom Solís was then serving as secretary, — a dramatic * entertainment on the story

²⁶ In the *Comedias Escogidas*, there are at least twenty-five plays written wholly or in part by Matos, the earliest of which is in Tom. V., 1653. From the conclusion of his "Pocos bastan si son Buenos," (Tom. XXXIV., 1670,) and, indeed, from the local descriptions in other parts of it, there can be no doubt that Matos Fragoso was at one time in Italy, and very little that this drama was written at Naples, and acted before the Spanish Viceroy there. One volume of the plays of Matos Fragoso, called the first, was printed at Madrid, 1658, 4to. Other separate plays are in Suelto's collection, but not, I think,

the best of them. Villaviciosa wrote a part of "Solo el Piadoso es mi Hijo," of "El Letrado del Cielo," of "El Redentor Cautivo," etc. The apologue of the barber, in the second act of the last, is, I think, taken from one of Leyba's plays; but I have it not now by me to refer to, and such things were too common at the time on a much larger scale to deserve notice, except as incidental illustrations of a well-known state of literary morals in Spain. Fragoso's life is in Barbosa, Tom. II. pp. 695-697. I have eighteen of his plays in separate pamphlets, besides those in the *Comedias Escogidas*.

of Orpheus and Eurydice, in which the tone of the Spanish national theatre is fantastically confounded with the genius of the old Grecian mythology, even more than was common in similar cases; but the whole ends, quite contrary to all poetical tradition, by the rescue of Eurydice from the infernal regions, and an intimation that a second part would follow, whose conclusion would be tragical; — a promise which, like so many others of the same sort in Spanish literature, was never fulfilled.

As his reputation increased, Solís was made one of the royal secretaries, and, while acting in this capacity, wrote an allegorical drama, partly resembling a morality of the elder period, and partly a modern masque, in honor of the birth of one of the princes, which was acted in the palace of the Buen Retiro. The title of this wild, but not unpoetical opera is "Triumphs of Love and Fortune"; and Diana and Endymion, Psyche and Venus, Happiness and Adversity, are among its dramatic personages; though a tone of honor and gallantry is as consistently maintained in it, as if its scene were laid at Madrid, and its characters taken from the audience that witnessed the performance. It is the more curious, however, from the circumstance, that the *loa*, the *entremeses*, and the *saynete*, with which it was originally accompanied, are still attached to it, all written by Solís himself.²⁷

In this way he continued, during the greater part of his life, one of the favored writers for the private theatre of the king and the public theatres of the capital; the dramas he produced being almost uniformly marked

²⁷ The "Triunfos de Amor y Fortuna" appeared as early as 1660, in Tom. XIII. of the *Comedias Escogidas*. "Un Bobo hace ciento" is one of the

"Three Spanish Plays" whose translation is attributed to Lord Holland. *Ante*, p. 393, note 5.

by a skilful complication of their plots, which were not always original; by a somewhat broad humor; and by a purity of style and harmony of versification very rare in his time. But at last, like many other Spanish poets, he began to think such occupations sinful; and, after much deliberation, he resolved on a life of religious retirement, and submitted to the tonsure.

* 430 From this time he * renounced the theatre. He even refused to write *autos sacramentales*, when he was applied to, in the hope that he might be willing to become a successor to the fame and fortunes of his great master; and, giving up his mind to devout meditation and historical studies, seems to have lived contentedly, though in seclusion and poverty, till his death, which happened in 1686. A volume of his minor poems, published afterwards, which are in all the forms then fashionable, has little value, except in a few short dramatic entertainments, several of which are characteristic and amusing.²⁸

Later than Solís, but still partly his contemporary, was Francisco Banzas Candamo. He was a gentleman of ancient family, and was born in 1662, in Asturias,—that true soil of the old Spanish cavaliers. His education was careful, if not wise; and he was early sent to court, where he received, first a pension, and afterwards several important offices in the financial administra-

²⁸ The "Varias Poesías" of Solís were edited by Juan de Goyeneche, who prefixed to them an ill-written life of their author, and published them at Madrid, 1692 (4to); but there are also editions of 1716 and 1732. His Comedias were first printed in Madrid, 1681, as Tom. XLVII. of the Comedias Escogidas. The "Gitanilla," of which I have said that it has been occasionally reproduced from Cervantes, is to be found in the "Spanish Gypsy" of Rowley and Middleton; in the "Preciosa," a pleasant German play by P. A. Wolff;

and in Victor Hugo's "Notre Dame de Paris"; besides which certain resemblances to it in the "Spanish Student" of Professor Longfellow are noticed by the author. Tobin, the author of the "Honey Moon," who was a lover of Spanish literature, made an analysis of this play of Solís, intending to adapt it to the English stage. But he died young in 1804, and left this, like other literary projects, only in outline. See his Memoirs by Miss Benger, 8vo, London, 1820, pp. 107, 171,—a graceful tribute of woman's love.

tion, whose duties, it is said, he fulfilled with good faith and efficiency. But at last the favor of the court deserted him; and he died in 1704, under circumstances of so much wretchedness, that he was buried at the charge of a religious society in the place to which he had been sent in disgrace.

His plays, or rather two volumes of them, were printed in 1722; but in relation to his other poems, a large mass of which he left to the Duke of Alva, we only know, that, long after their author's death, a bundle of them was sold for a few pence, and that an inconsiderable collection of such of them as could be picked up from different sources * was * 431 printed in a small volume in 1729.²⁹ Of his plays, those which he most valued are on historical subjects,³⁰ such as "The Recovery of Breda" and "For his King and his Lady"; but the most successful was, no doubt, his "Esclavo en Grillos de Oro." He wrote for the theatre, however, in other forms, and several of his dramas are curious, from the circumstance that they are tricked out with the *loas* and *entremeses* which served originally to render them more attractive to the multitude. Nearly all his plots are ingenious, and, though involved, are more regular in their structure than was

²⁹ Candamo's plays, entitled "Poesías Cómicas, Obras Póstumas," were printed at Madrid, in 1722, in 2 vols., 4to. His miscellaneous poems, "Poesías Lyricas," were published in Madrid, in 18mo, but without a date on the title-page, while the Dedication is of 1729, the *Licencias* of 1720, and the *Fe de Erratas*, which ought to be the latest of all, is of 1710. This, however, is a specimen of the confusion of such matters in Spanish books; a confusion which, in the present instance, is carried into the contents of the volume itself, the whole of which is entitled "Poesías Lyricas," though it contains idyls, epistles, ballads, and part of *three cantos* of

an epic on the expedition of Charles V. against Tunis; *nine cantos* having been among the papers left by its author to the Duke of Alva. The life of Candamo, prefixed to the whole, is very poorly written. Huerta (Teatro, Parte III. Tom. I. p. 196) says he himself bought a large mass of Candamo's poetry, including *six cantos* of this epic, for two rials; no doubt, a part of the manuscripts left to the Duke. He puts Candamo's death, 8th of September, 1709. The date in the text is from the poor Life prefixed to his Obras Liricas, and is, I think, right.

³⁰ He boasts of them in the opening of his "Cesar Africano."

common at the time. But his style is swollen and presumptuous, and there is, notwithstanding their ingenuity, a want of life and movement in most of his plays that prevented them from being effective on the stage.

Candamo, however, should be noted as having given a decisive impulse to a form of the drama which was known before his time, and which served at last to introduce the genuine opera; I mean the *zarzuela*, which took its name from that of one of the royal residences near Madrid, where they were first represented with great splendor for the amusement of Philip the Fourth, by command of his brother * 432 Ferdinand.³¹ They are, in fact, plays * of various kinds, — shorter or longer; *entremeses* or full-length comedies; — often in the nature of vaudevilles, but all in the national tone, and yet all accompanied with music.

The first attempt to introduce dramatic performances with music was made, as we have seen, about 1630, by Lope de Vega, whose eclogue "Selva sin Amor," wholly sung, was played before the court, with a showy apparatus of scenery prepared by Cosmo Lotti, an Italian architect, and "was a thing," says the poet, "new in

³¹ Ferdinand was the gay and gallant Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo who commanded the armies of Spain in Flanders and presided in her councils there. He died in 1641. (Stirling's Artists of Spain, Vol. II. p. 529.) He loved the theatre as his brother did, and in these lenten entertainments sought to please him. At first, only airs were introduced into the play, but gradually the whole was sung. (Ponz, Viage de España, Madrid, 12mo, Tom. VI., 1782, p. 152. Signorelli, Storia dei Teatri, Napoli, 1813, 8vo, Tom. IX. p. 194.) One of these *zarzuelas*, in which the portions that were sung are distinguished from the rest, is to be

found in the "Ocios de Ignacio Alvarez Pellicer de Toledo," s. l. 1685, 4to, p. 26. Its tendency to approach the Italian opera is apparent in its subject, which is "The Vengeance of Diana," as well as in the treatment of the story, in the theatrical machinery, etc.; but it has no poetical merit. A small volume, by Andreas Dávila y Heredia, (Valencia, 1676, 12mo,) called "Comedia sin Música," is intended to ridicule the beginnings of the opera in Spain; but it is a prose satire, of little consequence in any respect. (See Chaps. XXIII. note 1, XXIV. note 38.) Nor are two or three other of his trifles any better.

Spain." Short pieces followed soon afterward, *entremeses*, that were sung in place of the ballads between the acts of the plays, and of which Benavente was the most successful composer before 1645, when his works were first published. But the earliest of the full-length plays that was ever sung was Calderon's "Púrpura de la Rosa," which was produced before the court in 1660, on occasion of the marriage of Louis the Fourteenth with the Infanta Maria Theresa, — a compliment to the distinguished personages of France who had come to Spain in honor of that great solemnity, and whom it was thought no more than gallant to amuse with something like the operas of Quinault and Lulli, which were then the most admired entertainments at the court of France.

From this time, as was natural, there was a tendency to introduce singing on the Spanish stage, both in full-length comedies and in farces of all kinds; as may easily be observed in Matos Fragoso, in Solís, and in most of the other writers contemporary with the latter part of Calderon's career. At last, under the management of Diamante and Candamo, a separate modification of the drama grew up, the subjects for which were generally taken from ancient mythology, like those of the "Circe" and "Arethusa"; and when they were not so taken, as in Diamante's * "Birth * 433 of Christ," they were still treated in a manner much like that observed in the treatment of their fabulous predecessors.

From this form of the drama to that of the proper Italian opera was but a step, and one the more easily taken, as, from the period when the Bourbon family succeeded the Austrian on the throne, the national characteristics heretofore demanded in whatever ap-