

peared on the Spanish stage had ceased to enjoy the favor of the court and the higher classes. As early as 1705, therefore, something like an Italian opera was established at Madrid, where, with occasional intervals of suspension and neglect, it has ever since maintained a doubtful existence, and where, of course, the old *zarzuelas* and their kindred musical farces have been more and more discountenanced, until, in their original forms at least, they have ceased to be heard.<sup>32</sup>

Another of the poets who lived at this time and wrote dramas that mark the decline of the Spanish theatre is Antonio de Zamora, who has sometimes been said to have been originally an actor; who was afterwards in the office of the Indies and in the royal household; and whose dramatic career begins before the year 1700, though he did not die till after 1722, and probably had his principal success in the reign of Philip the Fifth, before whom his plays were occasionally performed in the Buen Retiro, as late as 1744.

Two volumes of his dramas were collected and published, with a solemn dedication and consecration of them to their author's memory, on the ground of rendering unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's. They are only seventeen in number, each longer than \* 434 had been common on \* the Spanish stage in its best days, and, in general, very heavy. Those that are on religious subjects sink into farce, with the

<sup>32</sup> See "Selva sin Amor," with its Preface, printed by Lope de Vega at the end of his "Laurel de Apo'o," Madrid, 1630, 4to; — Benavente, *Jocoseria*, 1645, and Valladolid, 1653, 12mo, where such pieces are called *entremeses cantados*; — Calderon's *Púrpura de la Rosa*; — Luzan *Poética*, Lib. III. c. 1; — Diamante's *Labyrintho de Creta*, printed as early as 1667, in the *Comedias Escogidas*, Tom. XXVII.; — Parra,

*El Teatro Español*, Poema Lírico, s. l. 1802, 8vo, *notas*, p. 295; — C. Pellicer, *Origen del Teatro*, Tom. I. p. 268; — and Stefano Artega, *Teatro Musicale Italiano*, Bologna, 8vo, Tom. I., 1785, p. 241. The last is an excellent book, written by one of the Jesuits driven from Spain by Charles III., and who died at Paris in 1799. The second edition (Venezia) is the amplest and best.

exception of "Judas Iscariot," which is too full of wild horrors to permit it to be amusing. The best of the whole number is, probably, the one entitled "All Debts must be paid at Last," which is an alteration of Tirso de Molina's "Don Juan," skilfully made; — a remarkable drama, in which the tread of the marble statue is heard with more solemn effect than it is in any other of the many plays on the same subject.

But notwithstanding the merit of this and two or three others, especially the "Hechizado por Fuerza," it must be admitted that Zamora's plays — of which above forty are extant, and of which many were acted at the court with applause — are very wearisome. They are crowded with long directions to the actors, and imply the use of much imperfect machinery; both of them unwelcome symptoms of a declining dramatic literature. Still, Zamora writes with facility, and shows that, under favorable circumstances, he might have trodden with more success in the footsteps of Calderon, whom he plainly took for his model. But he came too late, and, while striving to imitate the old masters, fell into their faults and extravagances, without giving token of the fresh spirit and marvellous invention in which their peculiar power resides.<sup>33</sup>

Others followed the same direction with even less success, like Pedro Francisco Lanini, Antonio Martínez, Pedro de Rosete, and Francisco de Villegas;<sup>34</sup> but the person who continued longest in the paths opened by Lope and Calderon was Joseph de Cañi-

<sup>33</sup> *Comedias de Antonio de Zamora*, Madrid, 1744, 2 tom., 4to. The royal authority to print the plays gives also a right to print the lyrical works, but I think they never appeared. His life is in Baena, Tom. I. p. 177, and notices of him in L. F. Moratin, *Obras*, ed. Acad., Tom. II., Prólogo, pp. v–viii.

<sup>34</sup> These and many others, now en-

tirely forgotten, are found in the old collection of *Comedias Escogidas*, published between 1652 and 1704; e. g. of Lanini, nine plays; of Martínez, eighteen; and of Rosete and Villegas, eleven each. I am not aware that any one of them deserves to be rescued from the oblivion in which they are all sunk.

zares, a poet of Madrid, born in 1676, who began to write for the stage when he was only fourteen years old, — who was known as one of its most \* 435 \* favored authors for above forty years, pushing his success far into the eighteenth century, — and who died in 1750. His plays are nearly all in the old forms.<sup>35</sup> A few of those on historical subjects are not without interest, such as “The Tales of the Great Captain,” “Charles the Fifth at Tunis,” and “The Suit of Fernando Cortés.” The best of his efforts in this class is, however, “El Picarillo en España,” on the adventures of a sort of Faulconbridge, Frederic de Bracamonte, who claimed that his father had been unjustly deprived of the Canaries, which he had held for John II., as if he were himself their king. But Cañizares, on the whole, had most success in plays founded on character-drawing, introduced a little be-

<sup>35</sup> Two volumes of the plays of Cañizares were collected, but more can still be found separate, and many are lost. In Moratin's list, the titles of above seventy are brought together. Notices of his life are in Baena, Tom. III. p. 69, and in Huerta, Teatro, Parte I. Tom. II. p. 347.

Cañizares was, at one time, a soldier, like so many others of his cultivated and accomplished countrymen; for Spaniards, from the time of Alfonso el Sabio to that of Charles IV., have, it should always be remembered, united, to a degree elsewhere unknown, the practical earnestness that belongs to the lives of statesmen and soldiers with the grace and glory of letters. Garcilasso de la Vega, sacrificed in the south of France, Lope de Vega, fighting in the Armada, Cervantes at Lepanto, Ercilla in the Andes, Calderon in Catalonia, Mendoza at the Council of Trent, Quevedo at Naples, and a hundred others, vouch for this singular union in a way not to be mistaken or overlooked. They account, too, I think, for many of the imperfections of Spanish literature, and for the frequent failure of its authors to

finish what they had begun; for even many of those who had not grave duties to interrupt or break off their literary aspirations had their thoughts occupied and distracted with other purposes in life, to which they had been trained as to their main duties, rather than to anything letters could offer. The religious element, too, with its severe demands and cruel intolerance, should come into any fair estimate of the difficulties encountered by men of elegant culture and tastes in Spain, with the diversion it necessarily pressed upon their inclinations and lives. Luis de Leon, Virues, Juan de Avila, Zurita, Morales, and numberless more, are cases in point, if the whole national character were not in fact a consistent exhibition of it. So that it seems to me much more remarkable that Spanish literature became what we now find it to have been, than that some of its departments had so little success, and that so many individuals failed to accomplish what they had begun. It shows a great force of genius in the Spanish people, I think, that they got on at all and made a literature.

fore his time by Moreto and Roxas, and commonly called, as we have noticed, “Comedias de Figuron.” His happiest specimens in this class are “The Famous Kitchen-Wench,” taken from the story of Cervantes, “The Mountaineer at Court,” and “Dómine Lucas,” where he drew from the life about him, and selected his subjects from the poor, presumptuous, decayed nobility, with which the court of Madrid was then infested.<sup>36</sup>

Still, with this partial success as a poet, and with a popularity that made him of consequence to the actors, Cañizares shows more distinctly than any of his predecessors or contemporaries the marks of a declining drama. As we turn over the seventy or eighty plays he has left us, we are constantly reminded of the towers and temples of the South of Europe, which, during the Middle Ages, \* were built \* 436 from fragments of the nobler edifices that had preceded them, proving at once the magnificence of the age in which the original structures were reared, and the decay of that of which such relics and fragments were the chief glory. The plots, intrigues, and situations in the dramas of Cañizares are generally taken from Lope, Calderon, Moreto, Matos Fragoso, and his other distinguished predecessors, to whom, not

<sup>36</sup> The “Dómine Lucas” of Cañizares has no resemblance to the lively play with the same title by Lope de Vega, in the seventeenth volume of his Comedias, 1621, which, he says in the Dedication, is founded on fact, and which was reprinted in Madrid, 1841, 8vo, with a Preface, attacking, not only Cañizares, but several of the author's contemporaries, in a most truculent manner. The “Dómine Lucas” of Cañizares, however, is worth reading, particularly in an edition where it is accompanied by its two *entremeses*, improperly called *saynetes*; — the whole newly arranged for representation in

the Buen Retiro, on occasion of the marriage of the Infanta María Luisa with the Archduke Peter Leopold, in 1765.

The “Dómine Lucas,” which attacks awkward slovenly men of letters making high pretensions, has given a nickname to the whole class it ridicules. “Asi se vió en Roma llamar *Trasones* a todos los valadrones; — *Tartufos* en Francia á todos los hipócritas; — y acá en España en viendo algun estudianton estrafalario le apellidamos, *Domine Lucas*.” Reflexiones sobre la Leccion critica, ec., por J. P. Forner, Madrid, 1786, p. 43.

without the warrant of many examples on the Spanish stage, he resorted as to rich and ancient monuments, which could still yield to the demands of his age materials such as the age itself could no longer furnish from its own resources.<sup>37</sup>

It would be easy to add the names of not a few other writers for the Spanish stage who were contemporary with Cañizares, and, like him, shared in the common decline of the national drama, or contributed to it. Such were Juan de Vera y Villaroel, Inez de la Cruz, Antonio Tellez de Azevedo, and others yet less distinguished while they lived, and long ago forgotten. But writers like these had no real influence on the character of the theatre to which they attached themselves. This, in its proper outlines, always remained as it was left by Lope de Vega and Calderon, who, by a remarkable concurrence of circumstances, maintained, as far as it was in secular hands, an almost unquestioned control over it, while they lived, and, at their death, had impressed upon it a character which it never lost, till it ceased to exist altogether.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> The habit of using too freely the works of their predecessors was common on the Spanish stage from an early period. Cervantes says, in 1617, (*Persiles*, Lib. III. c. 2.) that some companies kept poets expressly to new-vamp old plays; and so many had done it before him, that Cañizares seems to have escaped censure, though nobody, certainly, had gone so far.

Don Ramon Mesonero Romanos has continued the work he began on the school of Lope de Vega (see *ante*, Chap.

XXI., note 25) by publishing in Rivadeneyra's *Biblioteca* (Tom. XLVII. and XLIX., 1858, 1859) two more volumes of it, coming down to Cañizares. The plays, amounting to above sixty, are, as might be expected from the period, of very unequal merit. But we are glad to have them. The literary notices and alphabetical lists that open each volume are, also, valuable for their facts, but ill-written and showing little judgment or taste.

<sup>38</sup> See Appendix (F).

## \* CHAPTER XXVI.

\* 437

CHARACTER OF THE SPANISH DRAMA.—THE AUTOR, OR MANAGER.—THE WRITERS FOR THE STAGE.—THE ACTORS, THEIR NUMBER, SUCCESS, AND CONDITION.—PERFORMANCES BY DAYLIGHT.—THE STAGE.—THE COURTYARD, MOSQUETOS, GRADAS, CAZUELA, AND APOSENTOS.—THE AUDIENCES.—PLAY-BILLS, AND TITLES OF PLAYS.—REPRESENTATIONS, BALLADS, LOAS, JORNADAS, EXTREMESES, SAYNETES, AND DANCES.—BALLADS DANCED AND SUNG.—XACARAS, ZARABANDAS, AND ALEMANAS.—POPULAR CHARACTER OF THE WHOLE.—GREAT NUMBER OF WRITERS AND PLAYS.

THE most prominent, if not the most important, characteristic of the Spanish drama, at the period of its widest success, was its nationality. In all its various forms, including the religious plays, and in all its manifold subsidiary attractions, down to the recitation of old ballads and the exhibition of popular dances, it addressed itself more to the whole people of the country which produced it than any other theatre of modern times. The Church, as we have seen, occasionally interfered, and endeavored to silence or to restrict it. But the drama was too deeply seated in the general favor to be much modified, even by a power that overshadowed nearly everything else in the state; and during the whole of the seventeenth century,—the century which immediately followed the severe legislation of Philip the Second and his attempts to control the character of the stage,—the Spanish drama was really in the hands of the mass of the people, and its writers and actors were such as the popular will required them to be.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mariana, in his treatise "*De Spectaculis*," Cap. VII., (*Tractatus Septem, Coloniae Agrippinae*, 1609, folio,) earnestly insists that actors of the low and gross character he gives to them should not be permitted to perform in the