

While he, the injured, neither sleeps,
Nor tastes the needful food,
Nor from the ground dares lift his eyes,
Nor moves a step abroad,
Nor friends in friendly converse meets,
But hides in shame his face ;
His very breath, he thinks, offends,
Charged with insult and disgrace.¹⁵

* 130 * In this state of his father's feelings, Roderic, a mere stripling, determines to avenge the insult by challenging Count Lozano, then the most dangerous knight and the first nobleman in the kingdom. The result is the death of his proud and injurious enemy ; but the daughter of the fallen Count, the fair Ximena, demands vengeance of the king, and the whole is adjusted, after the rude fashion of those times, by a marriage between the parties, which necessarily ends the feud.

The ballads, thus far, relate only to the early youth of the Cid in the reign of Ferdinand the Great, and constitute a separate series, that gave to Guillen de Castro, and after him to Corneille, the best materials for their respective tragedies on this part of the Cid's story. But, at the death of Ferdinand, his kingdom was divided, according to his will, among his four children ; and then we have another series of ballads on the part taken by the Cid in the wars almost neces-

¹⁵ The earliest place in which I have seen this ballad — evidently very old in its *matériel* — is "Flor de Romanes," Novena Parte, 1597, f. 133.

Cuydando Diego Laynez
En la mengua de su casa,
Fidalga, rica y antigua,
Antes de Nuño y Abarea ;
Y viendo que le fallecen
Fuercas para la vengança,
Porque por sus luengos años,
Por si no puede tomalla,
Y que el de Orgaz se pasea
Seguro y libre en la plaça,
Sinque nadie se lo impida,
Loçano en nombre y en gala,
Non puede dormir de noche,
Nin gustar de las viandas,

Nin alçar del suelo los ojos,
Nin osa salir de su casa,
Nin hablar con sus amigos,
Antes les niega la fable,
Temiendo no les ofenda
El aliento de su infamia.

The pun on the name of Count *Lozano* (Haughty or Proud) is of course not translated.

It will be observed that no mention is made here of the *blow* to the Cid's father, which constitutes the insult of Count Lozano in Guillen de Castro and Corneille. Indeed, I think the *blow* does not occur in any old ballad or chronicle.

sarily produced by such a division, and in the siege of Zamora, which fell to the share of Queen Urraca, and was assailed by her brother, Sancho the Brave. In one of these ballads, the Cid, sent by Sancho to summon the city, is thus reproached and taunted by Urraca, who is represented to be standing on one of its towers, and answering him as he addressed her from below : —

Away ! away ! proud Roderic !
Castilian proud, away !
Bethink thee of that olden time,
That happy, honored day,
When, at Saint James's holy shrine,
Thy knighthood first was won ;
When Ferdinand, my royal sire,
Confessed thee for a son.
* He gave thee then thy knightly arms,
My mother gave thy steed ;
Thy spurs were buckled by these hands,
That thou no grace might'st need.
And had not chance forbid the vow,
I thought with thee to wed ;
But Count Lozano's daughter fair
Thy happy bride was led.
With her came wealth, an ample store,
But power was mine, and state ;
Broad lands are good, and have their grace,
But he that reigns is great.
Thy wife is well ; thy match was wise ;
Yet, Roderic ! at thy side
A vassal's daughter sits by thee,
And not a royal bride !¹⁶

* 131

¹⁶ This is a very old, as well as a very spirited ballad. It occurs first in print in 1555 ; but "Durandarte, Durandarte," found as early as 1511, is an obvious imitation of it, so that it was probably old and famous at that time. In the oldest copy now known it reads thus, but was afterwards changed. I omit the last lines, which seem to be an addition : —

A fuera, a fuera, Rodrigo,
El soberbio Castellano !
Acordarte te debria
De aquel tiempo ya pasado,
Quando fuiste caballero
En el altar de Santiago ;
Quando el Rey fue tu padrino,

Tu Rodrigo el ahijado.
Mi padre te dio las armas,
Mi madre te dio el caballo,
Yo te calze las espuelas,
Porque fuesses mas honrado,
Que pensé casar contigo.
No lo quiso mi pecado ;
Casaste con Ximena Gomez,
Hija del Conde Locano.
Con ella uviste dineros ;
Conmigo uvieras estado.
Bien casaste, Rodrigo,
Muy mejor fueras casado ;
Dexaste hija de Rey,
Por tomar la de su vasallo.

This was one of the most popular of the old ballads. It is often alluded to by the writers of the best age of Spanish literature ; for example, by Cervan-

Alfonso the Sixth succeeded on the death of Sancho, who perished miserably by treason before the walls of Zamora; but the Cid quarrelled with his new master, and was exiled. At this moment begins the old poem already mentioned; but even here and afterwards the ballads form a more continuous account of his life, carrying us, often with great minuteness of detail, through his conquest of Valencia, his restoration to the king's favor, his triumph over the Counts of Carrion, his old age, death, and burial, and giving us, when taken together, what Müller the historian and Herder the philosopher consider, in its main circumstances, a trustworthy history, but what can hardly * 132 * be more than a poetical version of traditions current at the different times when its different portions were composed.

Indeed, in the earlier part of the period when historical ballads were written, their subjects seem rather to have been chosen among the traditional heroes of the country, than among the known and ascertained events in its annals. Much fiction, of course, was mingled with whatever related to such personages by the willing credulity of patriotism, and portions of the ballads about them are incredible to any modern faith; so that we can hardly fail to agree with the good sense of the canon in *Don Quixote*, when he says, "There is no doubt there was such a man as the Cid and such a man as Bernardo del Carpio, but much doubt whether they achieved what is imputed to them;"¹⁷ while, at

tes, in "*Persiles y Sigismunda*" (Lib. III. c. 21), and it was used by Guillen de Castro in his play on the Cid.

¹⁷ "En lo que hubo Cid, no hay duda, ni menos Bernardo del Carpio; pero de que hicieron las hazañas que dicen, creo que hay muy grande." (Parte I. c. 49.) This, indeed, is the

good sense of the matter, — a point in which Cervantes rarely fails, — and it forms a strong contrast to the extravagant faith of those who, on the one side, consider the ballads good historical documents, as Müller and Herder are disposed to do, and the sturdy incredulity of Masdeu, on the other, who

the same time, we must admit there is not a little truth in the shrewd intimation of Sancho, that, after all, the old ballads are too old to tell lies. At least, some of them are so.

At a later period all sorts of subjects were introduced into the ballads; ancient subjects as well as modern, sacred as well as profane. Even the Greek and Roman fables were laid under contribution, as if they were historically true; but more ballads are connected with Spanish history than with any other, and, in general, they are better. The most striking peculiarity of the whole mass is, perhaps, to be found in the degree in which it expresses the national character. Loyalty is constantly prominent. The Lord of Buitrago sacrifices his own life to save that of his sovereign.¹⁸ The Cid sends rich spoils from his conquests in Valencia to the ungrateful * king who * 133 had driven him thither as an exile.¹⁹ Bernardo del Carpio bows in submission to the uncle who basely and brutally outrages his filial affections;²⁰ and when, driven to despair, he rebels, the ballads and the chronicles absolutely forsake him. In short, this and the

denies that there ever was a Cid. There is a ballad in Escobar's *Romancero* beginning "Quantos dicen mal del Cid," maintaining the genuineness of the Cid's adventures; but it is, I think, later than the date of the *Don Quixote*.

¹⁸ See the fine ballad beginning "Si el caballo vos han muerto," which first appears in the "*Flor de Romances*," Octava Parte (Alcalá, 1597, f. 129). It is boldly translated by Lockhart. The battle was that of Aljubarotta, 1385.

¹⁹ I refer to the ballad in the "*Romancero del Cid*" beginning "Llego Alvar Fañez a Burgos," with the *letrilla* following it, — "El vasallo desleale." This trait in the Cid's character is noticed by Diego Ximenez Ayllon, in his poem on that hero, 1579, where, having spoken of his being treated by the king

with harshness, — "Tratado de su Rey con aspereza," — the poet adds: —

Jamas le dio lugar su virtud alta
Que en su lealtad viniese alguna falta
Canto I.

²⁰ On one of the occasions when Bernardo had been most foully and falsely treated by the king, he says: —

Señor, Rey sois, y haredes
A vuestro querer y guisa.

A king you are and you must do,
In your own way, what pleases you.

And on another similar occasion, in another ballad, he says to the king, —

De servir no os dejaré
Mientras que tengo la vida.

Nor shall I fail to serve your Grace
While life within me keeps its place.

other strong traits of the national character are constantly appearing in the old historical ballads, and constitute a chief part of the peculiar charm that invests them.

Ballads on Moorish Subjects.—The Moorish ballads form a brilliant and large class by themselves, but none of them are as old as the earliest historical ballads. Indeed, their very subjects intimate their later origin. Few can be found alluding to known events or to personages that occur before the period immediately preceding the fall of Granada; and even in these few the proofs of a more recent and Christian character are abundant. The truth appears to be that, after the final overthrow of the Moorish power, when the conquerors for the first time came into full possession of whatever was most luxurious in the civilization of their enemies, the tempting subjects their situation suggested were at once seized upon by the spirit of their popular poetry. The sweet South, with its gorgeous and effeminate refinement; the foreign, yet not absolutely stranger manners of its people; its magnificent and fantastic architecture; the stories of the warlike achievements and disasters at Baza, at Ronda, and at Alhama, with the romantic adventures and fierce feuds of the Zegrís and Abencerrages, the Gomeles, and the Aliatares,—all took strong hold of * 134 the Spanish imagination, and made of * Granada, its rich plain and snow-capped mountains, that fairy land which the elder and sterner ballad poetry of the North had failed to create. From this time, therefore, we find a new class of subjects, such as the loves of Gazul and Abindarraez, with games and tournaments in the Bivarrambla, and tales of Arabian nights in the Generalife; in short, whatever was matter of

Moorish tradition or manners, or might by the popular imagination be deemed such, was wrought into Spanish ballad poetry, until the very excess became ridiculous, and the ballads themselves laughed at one another for deserting their own proper subjects, and becoming, as it were, renegades to nationality and patriotism.²¹

The period when this style of poetry came into favor was the century that elapsed after the fall of Granada; the same in which all classes of the ballads were first written down and printed. The early collections give full proof of this. Those of 1511 and 1550 contain only a few Moorish ballads, while that of 1593 contains above two hundred. But, though their subjects involve known occurrences, they are hardly ever really historical; as, for instance, the well-known ballad on the tournament in Toledo, which is supposed to have happened before the year 1085, while its names belong to the period immediately * pre- * 135 ceding the fall of Granada; and the ballad of King Belchite, which, like many others, has a subject

²¹ In the humorous ballad, "Tanta Zayda y Adalifa" (first printed, Flor de Romances, Quinta Parte, Burgos, 1594, 18mo, f. 158), we have the following:—

Renegaron de su ley
Los Romancistas de España,
Y ofrecieron a Mahoma
Las primicias de sus galas.
Dexaron los graves hechos
De su vencedora patria,
Y mendigan de la agena
Invenciones y patrañas.

Like renegades to Christian faith,
These ballad-mongers vain
Have given to Mahound himself
The offerings due to Spain;
And left the record of brave deeds,
Done by their sires of old,
To beg abroad, in heathen lands,
For fictions poor and cold.

Góngora, too, attacked them in an amusing ballad,—"A mis Señores poetas,"—and they were defended in another, beginning, "Porque, Señores poetas."

I do not intend by this to imply that a considerable number of the ballads on Moorish subjects, and especially those on the wars of Granada, are not of popular origin, and sometimes nearly contemporary in their dates with the events they record. Undoubtedly there are such; so there are others relating to what is called the Moorish rebellion in the time of Philip II., and to the cruel expulsion of the Moorish race in the time of Philip III. They will be found scattered among the large collection in Duran's Romancero, Tom. II. 1851, pp. 103-142, and 162-192. Many of them, however, are by known authors. Those of more popular origin will generally be best found in Wolf's Primavera, 1856, Tom. I. pp. 234-325. Even here, however, all are not such. But, wherever they may be sought, the best of them, with very few exceptions, come originally from Hita's Guerras de Granada.

much
imagined
drawn

purely imaginary. Indeed, a romantic character is the prevalent one in the ballads of this class, and gives them much of their interest; a fact well illustrated by that beginning, "The star of Venus rises now," which is one of the best and most consistent in the "Romancero General," and yet, by its allusions to Venus and to Rodamonte, and its mistake in supposing a Moor to have been Alcayde of Seville a century after Seville had become a Christian city, shows that there was in its composition no serious thought of anything but poetical effect.²²

These, with some of the ballads on the famous Gazul, occur in the popular story of the "Wars of Granada," where they are treated as if contemporary with the facts they record, and are beautiful specimens of the poetry which the Spanish imagination delighted to connect with that most glorious event in the national history.²³ Others can be found, in a similar tone, on the stories, partly or wholly fabulous, of Muça, Xarifé, Lisaro, and Tarfé; while yet others, in greater number, belong to the treasons and rivalries, the plots and adventures, of the more famous Zegrís and Abencerrages, which, so far as they are founded in fact, show how internal dissensions, no less than external disasters, prepared the way for the final overthrow of the Moorish empire. Some of them were probably written in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella; many more in the time of Charles the Fifth; the most brilliant, but not the best, somewhat later.

Ballads on Manners and Private Life.—But the ballad poetry of Spain was not confined to heroic subjects

²² "Ocho á ocho, diez á diez," and "Sale la estrella de Venus," two of the ballads here referred to, are in the Romancero of 1593. Of the last there is a good translation in an excellent article

on Spanish Poetry in the *Edinburgh Review*, Vol. XXXIX. p. 419.

²³ Among the fine ballads on Gazul are: "Por la plaza de San Juan," and "Estando toda la corte."

drawn from romance or history, or to subjects depending on Moorish traditions and manners; and therefore, though these are the three largest classes into which it is divided, there is yet a fourth, which may be called miscellaneous, and which is of no little moment.

For, in truth, the poetical * feelings even of the * 136 lower portions of the Spanish people were spread out over more subjects than we should anticipate; and their genius, which, from the first, had a charter as free as the wind, has thus left us a vast number of records, that prove at least the variety of the popular perceptions, and the quickness and tenderness of the popular sensibility. Many of the miscellaneous ballads thus produced — perhaps most of them — are effusions of love: but many are pastoral; many are burlesque, satirical, and *picaresque*; many are called *Letras* or *Letrillas*, which are merely poems that are sung; many are lyrical in their tone, if not in their form; and many are descriptive of the manners and amusements of the people at large. But one characteristic runs through the whole of them. They are true representations of Spanish life. Some of those first printed have already been referred to; but there is a considerable class marked by an attractive simplicity of thought and expression, united to a sort of mischievous shrewdness, that should be particularly noticed. No such popular poetry exists in any other language. A number of these ballads occur in the peculiarly valuable Sixth Part of the Romancero, that appeared in 1594, and was gathered by Pedro Flores, as he himself tells us, in part at least, from the memories of the common people.²⁴ They remind us

²⁴ For example, "Que es de mi contento," "Plega á Dios que si yo creo," "Aquella morena," "Madre, un caval- lero," "Mal ayan mis ojos," "Niña, que vives," etc.

not unfrequently of the lighter poetry of the Arch-priest of Hita in the middle of the fourteenth century, and may, probably, be traced back in their tone and spirit to a yet earlier period. Indeed, they are quite a prominent and charming part of all the earliest Roman-ceros, not a few of them being as simple, and yet as shrewd and humorous, as the following, in which an elder sister is represented lecturing a younger one, on first noticing in her the symptoms of love: —

Her sister Miguela
Once chid little Jane,
But the words that she spoke
Gave a great deal of pain.

* 137

* "You went yesterday playing,
A child like the rest ;
And now you come out,
More than other girls dressed.

"You take pleasure in sighs,
In sad music delight ;
With the dawning you rise,
Yet sit up half the night.

"When you take up your work,
You look absent and stare,
And gaze on your sampler,
But miss the stitch there.

"You're in love, people say,
Your actions all show it ;—
New ways we shall have,
When Mother shall know it.

"She'll nail up the windows,
And lock up the door ;
Leave to frolic and dance
She will give us no more.

"Old Aunt will be sent
To take us to mass,
And stop all our talk
With the girls as we pass.

"And when we walk out,
She will bid the old shrew
Keep a faithful account
Of what our eyes do ;

"And mark who goes by,
If I peep through the blind,
And be sure and detect us
In looking behind.

"Thus for your idle follies
Must I suffer too,
And, though nothing I've done,
Be punished like you."

"O sister Miguela,
Your chiding pray spare ;—
That I've troubles you guess,
But not what they are.

* "Young Pedro it is,
Old Juan's fair youth ;
But he's gone to the wars,
And where is his truth ?

* 138

"I loved him sincerely,
I loved all he said ;
But I fear he is fickle,
I fear he is fled !

"For he's gone of free choice,
Without summons or call,
And 't is foolish to love him,
Or like him at all."

"Nay, rather do thou
To God pray above,
Lest Pedro return,
And still more you should love,"

Said Miguela, in jest,
As she answered poor Jane ;
"For when love has been bought
At cost of such pain,

"What hope is there, sister,
Unless the soul part,
That the passion you cherish
Should yield up your heart ?

"Your years will increase,
And your griefs manifold,
As, in truth, you may see
From that proverb of old :

"If, when but a child,
Love's power you own,
Pray, what will you do
When you older are grown ?" ²⁵

* 139 * A single specimen like this, however, can give no idea of the great variety in the class of ballads to which it belongs, nor of their poetical beauty. To feel their true value and power, we must read large numbers of them, and read them, too, in their native language; for there is a winning freshness in the originals, as they lie imbedded in the old Roman-

²⁵ The oldest copy of this ballad or *letra* that I have seen is in the "Flor de Romances," Sexta Parte (1594, f. 27), collected by Pedro Flores, from popular traditions, and of which a less perfect copy is given, by an oversight, in the Ninth Part of the same collection, 1597, f. 116. I have not translated the verses at the end, because they seem to be a poor gloss by a later hand and in a different measure. The ballad itself is as follows : —

Riño con Juanilla
Su hermana Miguela;
Palabras le dize,
Que mucho le duelan :
"Ayer en mantillas
Andaas pequeña,
Oy andaas galana
Mas que otras donzellas.
Tu gozo es suspiros,
Tu cantar endechas ;
Al alua madrugas,
Muy tarde te acuestas ;
Quando estas labrando,
No se en que te piensas,
Al dechado miras,
Y los puntos yerras.
Dizenme que hazes
Amorosas señas :
Si madre lo sabe,
Aura cosas nuevas :
Clauara ventanas,
Cerrara las puertas ;
Para que bayemos,
No dara licencia ;
Mandara que tia
Nos lleue a la Yglesia,
Porque no nos hablen
Las amigas nuestras.

Quando fuera salga,
Dirale a la dueña,
Que con nuestros ojos
Tenga mucha cuenta ;
Que mire quien passa,
Si miro a la reja,
Y qual de nosotras
Boluio la cabeça.
Por tus libertades
Sere yo sugeta ;
Pagaremos justos
Lo que malos pecan."
"Ay ! Miguela hermana,
Que mal que sospechas !
Mis males presumes,
Y no los aciertas.
A Pedro, el de Juan,
Que se fue a la guerra,
Afeicion le tuue,
Y escuche sus queexas ;
Mas visto que es vario
Mediante el ausencia,
De su fe fingida
Ya no se me acuerda.
Fingida la llamo,
Porque, quien se ausenta,
Sin fuerca y con gusto,
No es bien que le quiera."
"Ruegale tu a Dios
Que Pedro no buelua."
Respondio burlando
Su hermana Miguela,
"Que el amor comprado
Con tan ricas prendas
No saldra del alma
Sin salir con ella.
Creciendo tus años,
Creceran tus penas ;
Y si no lo sabes,
Escucha esta letra :
Si eres niña y has amor,
Que haras quando mayor ?"

Sexta Parte de Flor de Romances,
Toledo, 1594, 18mo, f. 27.

ceros, that escapes in translations, however free or however strict ; — a remark that should be extended to the historical as well as the miscellaneous portions of that great mass of popular poetry which is found in the early ballad-books, and which, though it is all nearly three centuries old, and some of it older, has been much less carefully considered than it deserves to be.

Yet there are certainly few portions of the literature of any country that will better reward a spirit of adventurous inquiry than these ancient Spanish ballads, in all their forms. In many respects they are unlike the earliest narrative poetry of any other part of the world ; in some, they are better. The English and Scotch ballads, with which they may most naturally be compared, belong to a ruder state of society, where a personal coarseness and violence prevailed, which did not, * indeed, prevent the * 140 poetry it produced from being full of energy, and sometimes of tenderness, but which necessarily had less dignity and elevation than belong to the character, if not the condition, of a people who, like the Spanish, were for centuries engaged in a contest ennobled by a sense of religion and loyalty ; — a contest which could not fail sometimes to raise the minds and thoughts of those engaged in it far above such an atmosphere as settled round the bloody feuds of rival barons, or the gross maraudings of a border warfare. The truth of this will at once be felt, if we compare the striking series of ballads on Robin Hood with those on the Cid and Bernardo del Carpio ; or if we compare the deep tragedy of Edom o' Gordon with that of the Conde Alarcos ; or, what would be better than either, if we should sit down to the "Romancero

General," with its poetical confusion of Moorish splendors and Christian loyalty, just when we have come fresh from Percy's "Reliques," or Scott's "Minstrelsy" ²⁶

But, besides what the Spanish ballads possess different from the popular poetry of the rest of Europe, they exhibit, as no others exhibit it, that nationality which is the truest element of such poetry everywhere. They seem, indeed, as we read them, to be often little more than the great traits of the old Spanish character brought out by the force of poetical enthusiasm; so that, if their nationality were taken away from them, they would cease to exist. This, in its turn, has preserved them down to the present day, and will continue to preserve them hereafter. The great Castilian heroes, such as the Cid, Bernardo del Carpio, and Pelayo, are even now an essential portion of the faith and poetry of the common people of Spain; and are still, in some degree, honored as they were honored in the age of the Great Captain, or, further back, in that of Saint Ferdinand. The * 141 stories of Guarinos, * too, and of the defeat of Roncesvalles, are still sung by the wayfaring muleteers, as they were when Don Quixote heard them in his journeying to Toboso; and the showmen still rehearse the adventures of Gayferos and Melisendra, in the streets of Seville, as they did at the solitary inn of Montesinos, when he encountered them there. In short, the ancient Spanish ballads are so

²⁶ If we choose to strike more widely, and institute a comparison with the garrulous old Fabliaux, or with the overdone refinements of the Troubadours and Minnesingers, the result would be yet more in favor of the early Spanish ballads, which represent and embody the excited poetical feel-

ing that filled the whole nation during that period when the Moorish power was gradually broken down by an enthusiasm that became at last irresistible, because, from the beginning, it was founded on a sense of loyalty and religious duty.

truly national in their spirit, that they became at once identified with the popular character that had produced them; and with that same character will go onward, we doubt not, till the Spanish people shall cease to have a separate and independent existence.²⁷

²⁷ See Appendix, B.