MANUEL FERNÁNDEZ Y GONZÁLEZ
SPANISH NOVELIST OF THE
ROMANTIC PERIOD

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By

Oneta Maxwell

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APPROVED:

Anna L. Oursler
In Charge of Thesis

A. A. Arnold
Head, Department of Foreign Languages
A. L. O.

O. C. McTurnan
Dean of the Graduate School

PREFACE

In this thesis on Manuel Fernández y González, Spanish novelist of the Romantic Period, I have studied all available material on his life and have translated four of his books in an effort to learn something of the style of Spanish Romantic novelists, and to evaluate, if possible, the importance of his place in Spanish literature and of his novels as literature.

Some critics believe that we are on the verge of a return to the ideals of Romanticism in literature as a reaction against the existing prevalence of realism and naturalism. This belief is based upon the rapidly increasing popularity, today, of furniture, glassware--in fact, anything with Victorian atmosphere. So we may very soon see a return to popularity of such English authors as Dickens, Scott, etc., and there may be many imitators of such writings.

Manuel Fernández y González is an excellent example of a Romanticist who killed himself with effulgence; he carried imaginativeness to such an extreme that it was no longer enjoyed and appreciated after the tide had turned against Romanticism.

The increasing popularity of Mexico with American tourists, and the war in Spain, in addition to the increased knowledge of these countries brought through magazines, newspapers, the radio, and vitaphone, has caused Americans to become more Spanish-conscious. The novel, many critics maintain, is now

the most important medium of literary expression and more people read novels today than any other form of literature. Henry James says, "The Novel remains still, under the right persuasion, the most independent, most elastic, most prodigious of literary forms." For these reasons it was thought that a Spanish novelist of the Romantic Period would show the characteristics of his age well and would be significant to us today.

Romera-Navarro makes in his Historia de la Literatura Espanola the following statement about Manuel Fernández y González:

> Poseía el autor, también, en grado eminente el arte de hacer interesante el relato: Men Rodríguez de Sanabria (1853) y El cocinero de Su Majestad (1857), en particular, son novelas que el lector, por muy sesudo que sea, si tiene algo de imaginación, no dejará de las manos hasta acabarlas.[1]

This statement aroused the desire to know more of this unusual figure of Spain's Romantic Period. The study was somewhat handicapped by the inability to procure, because of the war in Spain, more than four of his novels. The good fortune of obtaining an entire book on the life of Fernández y González, however, seems to me to have far outweighed this handicap.

I wish to acknowledge gratefully my sense of appreciation to Miss Anna L. Oursler and Mr. A. A. Arnold for their valuable suggestions and untiring aid in the study of this Spanish novelist.

O. M.

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1. Manuel Romera-Navarro, Historia de la Literatura Espanola, p. 502.

C O N T E N T S

INTRODUCTION

Manuel Fernández y González

Captain Cárdenas was fighting for the liberty of Spain in 1821, when his young and beautiful wife, Rita González del Rivero, bore him a son, Manuel. The captain brought his newborn son to the army camp and prophesied to his soldiers that the first words which the child's lips would pronounce would be, "Liberty".

When Manuel was two years old he came running toward his father one day, with tottering, uncertain steps, and, climbing on his father's knee, he very distinctly pronounced these three sentences:

"¡Papá! ¡Mamá! ¡Viva la libertad!"[2]

His father's eyes filled with tears when he heard the first words of his young son, because the liberty of Spain was more remote than it had been two years before, and Ferdinand VII still ruled despotically.

That ardent liberalism, which had flamed like a ray of sun, was broken into a thousand pieces by the bloody sword of Ferdinand VII. And Captain Cárdenas was one of those who felt the sting of the king's ire. He was exiled from Madrid and sentenced to imprisonment at Granada. His wife and child followed him there and lived in a small house close to the prison, fearing every day, as they watched prisoner after prisoner die at the mercy of the firing squad, that they might never again see their beloved husband and father.

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2. F. Hernández-Girbal, Una Vida Pintoresca--Manuel Fernández y González, p. 16.

Manuel was now nine years of age. His favorite playgrounds were the streets of Albayzín and the rooms of the Alhambra; and he always accompanied his mother when she visited his imprisoned father. Manuel's playmates were the sons of a widow, Mariana Pineda, whose husband had been a martyr to the cause of Spanish liberty. She, like her husband, was destined soon to approach her end facing the firing squad.

During this time Manuel was developing spiritually and mentally. From all possible sources he procured books which he devoured insatiably in some dark corner. He read everything from El Cid and the Iliad to Don Quixote, and became so engrossed in reading that he remained insensible to all surroundings. From a very early age he began to weaken his eyes by reading at all hours and in poorly lighted places. At the age of twelve he was already scribbling verses.

Thus as the adolescent was awakening to the awareness of an incomparable world of art and fantasy, Ferdinand VII died, September 1833, and a month later the bloody civil war began which was to last for seven unforgettable years.

In 1835 there came to light a small volume of poems entitled "Manuel Fernández y González, Poesias". And at the same time the prison doors were opened before the astonished eyes of Captain Cárdenas.

Manuel was then fourteen, and the parents decided that they must give their son an education. Accordingly he was sent to the University of Granada where he acquired, from

reading the old classics, romances, and histories, a great love for ancient lore. He later became a leader in the famous 'La Cuerda', an organization of the literary minds of Granada.

At sixteen, Manuel was very tall, his eyes were lively, hair abundant; he had a strong, vibrant voice, and a sensitive face. Influenced by reading the novels of Sir Walter Scott, which he perused with interest and admiration, Manuel conceived the idea of creating historical novels. He wrote El doncel de Don Pedro de Castilla, which was read with much interest in Granada. Animated by this success, he tried to write more.

The civil war ended, and in 1840, when Manuel was nineteen, he became a soldier in the army of her majesty, the Queen Isabel II. Manuel soon became interested in the theater; he saw the first performance of Genoveva de Brabante, at the teatro Principal, and witnessed the touching scene when Joaquina Baus, who had played the leading role, introduced her son, Manuel Tamayo y Baus, the eleven year old author of the drama.

This company of players, especially Baus, encouraged Manuel and predicted for him a brilliant future as a poet. They had also encouraged him to write for the theater and when he showed his manuscript of El bastardo y el rey, a four act historical drama in verse, to Tamayo y Baus, it met with his hearty approval.

Two months later this play was presented in the teatro Principal. The author's name was not given on the program.

The first act ended in a great ovation. As the succeeding acts were presented, the emotion and enthusiasm of the audience increased, and at the end of the play there was such a clamor for the author that his name had to be disclosed. At that very moment Manuel, cold, wet from the heavy downpour of rain, and very lonely, was performing his sentinel duty at Motril.

Civil war broke out again. In August of 1842, sergeant González was moved to Granada and in December he was made inspector of military provisions.

He wrote La mancha de sangre which was published in serial form and was received with clamorous praise. The next year, when he was twenty-four years of age, he was placed in charge of la Dirección de Estado Mayor but he was still able to continue with his writing. Two new novels came from his pen during the succeeding years, El horóscopo real and Los hermanos Plantagenet, which added new heights to his fame.

Manuel returned to Granada and was received with adulation by his friends, who listened open-mouthed to the stories of his glorious military adventures. Some months later Fernández y González began to write his novel, Martín Gil, the prologue of which is, according to F. Hernández-Girbal, one of the best pieces of prose which ever came from his pen.

He wrote El laurel de los siete siglos, secretly using the rooms and gardens of the Alhambra for his study. One day, looking from a window of the Alhambra, he saw a beautiful

girl, La Fornarina. He immediately fell in love with her and later, against the wishes of her parents, eloped with her.

Fernández y González and his bride spent some months at Granada and then he felt the need for new horizons and so went to Madrid. There he almost starved to death until Don Alvaro de Luna was published and had a very satisfactory success. Then he finished one of his best novels, Man Rodríguez de Sanabria. In a short time his name began to be known and appreciated.

In 1852 he published a drama of magic, La infanta Oriana, in which he demonstrated the full power of his imagination. Then came Los monfíes de los Alpujarras, his masterpiece El cocinero de Su Majestad, and Bernardo del Carpio which contains a vivid and exact description of the rooms of the Alhambra.

Then La Discusión, that periodical which bestowed or withdrew the stamp of approval on an author and entirely controlled public opinion on literary things, began to react against him. But Fernández y González wrote for other periodicals, worked long and hard hours, and was, for a short time longer, destined to be as happy as a king surrounded by his court.

Manuel visited taverns and cafes, searching ceaselessly for new character types for his novels. It is said that one night as he passed a cemetery, a man stopped him and, introducing himself as the Barón del Destierro, or Satan in human form, told Manuel that he must write the story which he, Satan, was going to tell him and that it would make him forever

famous as a novelist. Fernández y González was not able, afterwards, to determine whether it had been a dream or an actual experience, but from the interview with the devil came the novel, Luisa, o el ángel de la redención. It was published serially in La Discusión, while readers waited with visible anxiety for the next installment. It was a complete and incomparable triumph. One day the magazine left out his installment of Luisa. Manuel, consumed with rage, rushed to the publisher's office and angrily demanded an explanation. "Don't you know it's like leaving Madrid without bread?", were among his angry words. But the publishers only laughed, and refused to be disturbed over this latest manifestation of the pride and vanity of Fernández y González. He was often enraged because of errors in the printing of his stories. It was almost impossible to read the author's writing and the copyists and proofreaders, through their inability to decipher his manuscripts, often gave whole sentences an entirely different meaning.

In a few months the popularity of Luisa had risen to an unheard of height throughout Spain. Everyone read and discussed the adventures and misfortunes of Luisa and the Barón del Destierro. Never before had a publisher in Spain had the good fortune to publish such an overwhelmingly successful story. At this time Fernández y González was at the very peak of his popularity. He was even asked to read some of his poetry before the exclusive Club Ateneo. He was a good poet but a very bad reader.

Then he turned again to drama and published Entre el cielo y la tierra. Propitious criticism called attention to its grand effects, vigorous crises, and brilliant and profound actions. The defects were that some of the speeches and scenes were too long and that the entire drama was too highly imaginative. His dramatic version of El Cid, Cid Rodrigo de Vivar, was presented at the Novedades Theater on December 18, 1859 and met with approval.

The next year he was forced, because of the condition of his eyes, to hire a secretary to whom he dictated La cabeza del rey don Pedro, El rey del mundo, and El pastelero de Madrigal. The novela folletinesca or serial novel of intrigue was at its zenith, and Manuel Fernández y González was its indisputable king. But it was a novel purely for pleasure and not a novel of art; its intent was to awaken and then satisfy curiosity. It was the novel of chivalry of the nineteenth century.

Fernández y González never refused to write a story for any publisher who requested it. So great was his imagination and fertility that he can be compared only to Dumas and his followers in France. He became so steeped in his novels that his actions and conversation were like those of his characters.

He dictated to one secretary every morning, and to another in the afternoons. To each one he dictated at least sixteen large pages which represented a profit of ten or twelve duros each. He collaborated with Julio Nombela on some books, and that author tells us how hard they worked and the long hours

they had to spend in order to get their work to the publisher on time. In 1864, Fernández y González published an almost endless chain of novels, including Historia de los siete murciélagos, La maldición de Dios, Historia de una venganza, La princesa de los Ursinos, Dona María la Brava, El pozo de los suspiros, etc.

Hernández-Girbal tells us that Fernández y González had the mind of a genius and the soul of a child, that he was capricious and badly educated, and was very proud and vain. Someone, in commenting on his fertility, compared him with Lope de Vega, and from then on Manuel wrote with even more rapidity. He was fortunate in having a very gifted and efficient secretary whom he called Lucano. Manuel often worked on three or four books at the same time and sometimes was not able to keep his different sets of characters and plots in mind, as is shown by the following example.

> Algunas veces, olvidándose de los personajes, entre la inmensidad de gentes que tenía revueltas en su cerebro, dictaba:
>
> — Dona Andrea, que era el prototipo de la seriedad y del buen juicio...
>
> — ¡Eh! Poco a poco, don Manuel—le interrumpía su taquígrafo—. Mire usted que a esta dona Andrea la hemos vuelto loca en el capítulo quinto, a consecuencia de la entrevista que tuvo con la querida de su esposo.
>
> —Pues, amigo Lucano, no tengo mas remedio que volverla a la razon, porque me hacen falta sus consejos al final de la novela.
>
> —Me alegro mucho —asentía Lucano—, porque me parecia una buena senora.
>
> Y en un dos por tres quedaba curada de su demencia.[3]

3. F. Hernández-Girbal, op. cit., pp. 197, 198.

Fernández y González enjoyed frequenting cafes because he was sure to hear someone say, "There is the greatest novelist in the world." Another example of his pride and vanity is shown in the following quotation.

> Otro dia, pregunto Marcos Zapata a Fernández y González:
>
> —¿Quien es mejor poeta, Homero o tu?
>
> Y el novelista le respondio, torciendo la boca en un gesto de duda:
>
> —Hombre. Te diré....[4]

But he vigorously denied that he was vain or proud.

> —¡Jamás! decía, moviendo los brazos como aspas de molino—. Yo no ha sido vanidoso en mi vida. ¡Ni lo soy!
>
> Como los demás dudaran, les aplasto diciendo:
>
> —¿Pero os creéis que si yo fuera vanidoso, estaría aquí con vosotros?
>
> Desde aquel día, todos proclamaron la <u>modestia</u> del <u>modesto</u> escritor.[5]

In 1866 Fernández y González became obsessed with the desire to go to Paris where he planned to rival Dumas on his own ground. But because of civil strife in Spain the trip had to be postponed for some months. When he finally arrived in Paris, Manuel was deeply humiliated to find that the publishers there had never heard of him. After some time, however, he was able to gain recognition and began to move in literary circles much as he had in Madrid.

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4. F. Hernández-Girbal, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 210.
5. <u>Ibid.</u>

Pope Pius IX excommunicated his book called La maldición de Dios, but later lifted the ban and pronounced it a good book. The words of the Pope filled Fernández y González with pride--even the Pope recognized him as a great writer.

He had left La Virgen de la Paloma with the Manini publishers, unfinished. After much hesitation, to save their own faces, they secretly hired Julio Nombela to finish it, and the readers never knew the difference. Fernández y González was working, in Paris, as never before and his eyesight was becoming worse and worse because of overstrain and alcoholic indulgence.

The Spanish queen and her young son, Alfonso XII, were forced to flee from Spain and they took refuge in Paris where Fernández y González met them often. He comforted the queen with "Nadie puede asegurar, senora, lo que ha de pasar manana."[6] And little did he realize how significant, in a tragic sense, those words would become in his own life.

During the heat of the revolution Fernández y González returned to Madrid. After the revolution, the popularity of the novel of intrigue waned, and the publishers substituted the tomo de a peseta, or the dime novel. With the change in government, Fernández y Gonzalez felt his popularity decrease, but he retained his old arrogance and vanity.

In 1870 he revived El Cid Rodrigo de Vivar. It was very well acted and was a great success. The author received

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6. F. Hernández-Girbal, op. cit., p. 243.

flattering comments from López de Ayala, Tamayo y Baus, and García Gutiérrez and felt that he was much superior to them.

Then, on February 11, 1873, Alfonso XII was proclaimed king of Spain. To celebrate this, Fernández y González produced a two act play which was a decided failure. When no one applauded, González became very angry and shouted that the work was above the intelligence of an audience composed of swine.

During the following six years the popularity of this favorite novelist declined rapidly. Editors no longer sought him, people did not read his novels, he was almost blind; the arrogance which was so much a part of him was lost, he saw approaching him the black silhouette of the misery of old age and he had no strength with which to fight it.

He believed himself to be, and with reason, superior in native ability to the contemporary authors, and seeing them rise in public favor while he fell, could scarcely contain his indignation. The current moderns were opposed to his romantic sentiments, and the literature of his day seemed to him inferior, gross, and despicable.

One night a boy of about sixteen years came to see the novelist. He said his name was Vicente Blasco Ibánez and that he had run away from home so that he might come to Madrid to see his idol, the great Manuel Fernández y González. The boy had a book ready to sell at that time but had not been able to find a publisher. He stayed with Manuel in the capacity of secretary until his mother and the police came after

him. While there, the boy had taken the dictation of La chula sensible and El mocito de la Fuentecilla, and had finished them at the request of Fernández y González when the novelist had become too sleepy to continue the dictation.

In 1886, when a pension was proposed for Fernández y González, he remarked that he had been wearing mourning for himself during the entire preceding year. And it was true, the popular novelist, the brilliant poet, had died. During the first days of 1888 he was ill, poor, starving, forgotten, but devotedly cared for by his wife. He suffered from bronchitis and a suffocating catarrh. Even as he was dying, he still made plans for a happy future in Andalucia, if the government would grant him a commission. The entire fortune of that man who had earned a million with his pen, consisted, at his death, of a package of cigarettes and six reales which were discovered in his coat pocket.

—"Se continuará" were his last words, those same words he had written so often as the last words of his romantic heroes. It was on January 6, 1888 that he died, and two days later he was given a magnificent burial. The funeral was so elaborate that one of the spectators of the brilliant procession was moved to exclaim, "And thus they bury a man who has left six reales!"

SYNOPSES

La Cruz de Quirós

The scene of the story is the very beautiful land of Granada; a land favored by the Gods. The city is built on seven hills and is surrounded by the Sierra Nevada mountains. The plain of la Vega is at the foot of the hills of Granada and the Sierra Moclin forms its borders.

Our hero, Pedro Quirós, as the story opens, was riding along this plain as the sun was disappearing behind the mountains one beautiful evening in the spring of 1640. Pedro was a young man about twenty-four years of age, dark, very handsome, and richly and ornately dressed. He was riding a fine black horse which evidently was accustomed to being ridden rapidly over very mountainous country.

They climbed to the top of one of the mountains and there, at midnight, Pedro arrived at the deserted tower and was met by a monstrous dwarf, Barrabás. He was a giant, yet so hunch-backed that he seemed to be a dwarf. His arms hung down so far from his shoulders that they almost touched the ground. He took Pedro's horse and Pedro went on into the castle where he was met by a young lady, Mari-Perez, who had a letter for him from her mistress, Margarita.

The letter read: "They wish me to marry a man I hate. Save me. I cannot write more. María, who stayed in the caserío, will tell you what I cannot say to you.—Margarita."

Quirós finds out as much as he can from Mari-Perez and then they plan that she marry her lover, Capuchin, who is

one of the Diez Compadres of which Pedro is the captain. They are a band of robbers but they often do good deeds for the poor.

Quirós left Mari-Perez in his castle, until the following morning when she and Capuchin were married, and rode on to the Diez Compadres. They robbed the train of the Count of Fuen-Labrada (who is the man who Margarita Enríquez, the daughter of the admiral of Castille, is supposed to marry) and then Quirós and two others, disguised as friars, come to the inn where Fuen-Labrada and his retinue are staying. Quirós and the sixty-five year old count of Fuen-Labrada have a conversation about the Diez Compadres which finally ends in Quirós revealing his identity and fighting the count, "as a wolf fights a wolf", until the count was dead, killed by the embrace of Quirós.

The retinue of the count left the inn of Perico Enreda and soon afterward the count's dead decapitated body was discovered. This horrified the inhabitants of the inn and caused them to believe that the Diez Compadres had visited them that night.

Even though it was past midnight, Quirós went to visit the admiral of Castille, father of Margarita, and first introduced himself as don Juan Venegas much to the terror of the admiral who believed him to be the spirit of Juan come back to haunt him. But Quirós finally assures him that he is the captain of the Diez Compadres and reminds him that he is really flesh and blood and that Veneges had taken

poison to keep himself from being executed as a traitor to the king, and was buried in an unhallowed grave without even having his name on the cross which marked it.

Quirós showed the admiral his birth certificate which showed he was born on the sixth of January, 1636, and had been taken to a parish priest to be reared. His ancestry was not known. Then Quirós tells that one day he saw a young man who looked so much like him that he was sure they were brothers--his name was don Juan Venegas. They later had discovered that Quirós was six days older than Venegas and were certain they must have the same father. They became well acquainted and Quirós, talking often to him while he was in prison awaiting his execution, swore to avenge his death. "And now I have a part of the revenge," said Quirós as he took the bloody head of Fuen-Labrada from the sack and showed it to the admiral, "the rest is that I shall marry your daughter."

Both the Count of Fuen-Labrada and Margarita's father had worked against Venegas and had forged letters which had caused him to be sentenced to death as a traitor to the king. When the forgery had finally been discovered, it was too late to raise the victim from his tomb.

Quirós left the admiral to ponder on his visit and immediately Barrabás, who had followed him and had been listening to all the conversation, entered. After many explanations and preliminaries, he explains that Quirós is the son of the father of don Juan Venegas and the wife of the

admiral, which would make him the half-brother of Margarita. Only the fear that the brother and sister might marry causes Barrabás to tell the story, he says.

The admiral nearly loses his mind after reading definite proof of his wife's adultery, and he is dangerously ill for many weeks. All this time Margarita had been in a convent with her aunt, and Capuchin had been sent by Quirós to take the house next to the convent and to learn all that he could about her.

Margarita, in the convent, had received several anonymous letters (really from Barrabás) telling her that her mother had committed adultery during the time her father had been in Venice for a year, and that the man she loved was not really Venegas but her own half-brother. The letters also contained the full story of the life of Quirós, the captain of the Diez Compadres, and she was for the first time informed of the death of Venegas, whom she had always thought Quirós to be. All this was a terrible blow to Margarita--to find out that her mother was unfaithful and that the man she loved was her own brother and captain of the notorious band of robbers.

However, these letters were not truthful. Barrabás had sent them because he was in love with Margarita and did not want her to marry Quirós.

What really had happened was this: The last visit Quirós and Venegas had was just before the execution of Venegas was to take place, and he had showed Quirós some poison he intended to take so he would not be so disgraced

as to be executed as a traitor. Quirós tried to persuade him that he, Quirós, should die instead of Venegas because he had no family, no name, and no one loved him. Of course, Venegas would not consent to the exchange; but as Venegas is writing the evidence which Quirós can show to the world proving they are brothers, Quirós secretly takes the poison himself and is already close to death when Venegas notices him. Don Juan is very much upset but finally changes clothes with the corpse and escapes.

Venegas finds that all his money and property have been confiscated by the king, so he becomes the captain of the Diez Compadres, resolving to avenge the death of his half-brother. Because he wanted no one to know him, he killed everyone who saw his face (with the knowledge that he was the captain of the robber band) so no living person knew him except his own companions.

To Margarita he wrote that they must not see each other in public because he had had a quarrel with her father; but they met secretly every evening and exchanged letters through Mari-Perez. Don Juan's excuse luckily corresponded to the story told her by her father, who dared not inform her of the death of her lover.

It went on thus for a year and then suddenly Margarita's father told her that she must prepare to marry the Count of Fuen-Labrada. She would not consent to this so her father sent her to the convent of Santa Isabel la Real.

Then after Margarita had received the anonymous letters telling her relationship to Quirós, she became very silent,

unhappy, and moody. This lasted for a year and Juan did not know how to explain it except that she no longer loved him or else she knew he was now poor.

Finally as the year drew to its close, Juan decided to go to the convent secretly and find out the real reason for her silence. But Barrabás planned to capture Margarita at the same time. There was much fighting and confusion and Barrabás captured Margarita and fled with her to the mountains by way of a secret tunnel.

Venegas and his comrades searched for her for six days, and had a fight with her father's followers in which all the Diez Compadres were killed except Venegas. He finally discovered Margarita and Barrabás hidden in a cave. Barrabás started to escape with her but Venegas shot him in the stomach and he died shortly afterward.

Venegas and Margarita fled to the seashore where they took a boat to escape to some other land, but they were caught and taken captive--don Juan to prison and Margarita to her father's house.

One day Margarita heard a great commotion in the streets. It was don Juan Venegas being executed. Margarita's father entered the room and realized, on seeing Margarita, that it was really Venegas and not Quirós whom he had caused to be killed. Margarita was crazy with grief but pardoned and forgave her father as she fell dead in his arms.

Historia de los Siete Murciélagos

One evening, at dusk, a tired horse and rider came up the mountain of Hedjaz to a very quiet, sequestered spot near the lake. The horse fell, exhausted from fatigue, and Aben-Zohayr, the rider, cried bitterly over his loss of the horse--another misfortune added to the one of being conquered by the inhabitants of the plain that day, and being forced to flee to the inaccessible mountains.

As Aben-Zohayr wept, he was attracted by the voices of two beautiful nymphs, Fayzuly and her sister Rhadhyah. He forgot his troubles as he saw their beauties and involuntarily drew closer to listen to their conversation. Fayzuly was saying to her sister, in a very sweet voice, "I have seen my future; I shall love the son of a nymph and of a king, but before that I shall have to combat a bad spirit, which will throw a charm over me; but my love will save me and shall come with me to our castles of air and to our gardens of lakes."

"And I," said Rhadhyah, "shall have a believer who shall be king and shall lose his kingdom and shall go to Mogreb to die. I shall follow him to Eden; but that will not happen for eight hundred eighty years."

"I shall wait nine hundred for my love," answered Fayzuly.

Aben-Zohayr was astonished at these words and felt certain that he was in love with the beautiful white-skinned one who had such black eyes--Fayzuly. He rushed closer to the place where they were but they had disappeared. Even though deeply

saddened by his misfortunes he vowed that he would not give up, so after repeating an evening prayer, he took his tiger skin out and, with it for a bed, slept.

All night he dreamed of the beautiful Fayzuly. In the morning Eblis, the devil, came and sat by him, and Aben-Zohayr fell under his power. He asked God for the love of the beautiful Fayzuly and when she did not reappear to him, he blasphemed God (that is, the God of the Mohammedans) and called on Eblis to give him the woman he wanted.

Immediately a spirit appeared to him and asked him what he wished.

"Nine hundred years of life, the secrets of astrology, and Fayzuly," he answered.

"And you will give me your soul?" asked Eblis.

"Yes," answered Aben-Zohayr.

"Very well, arise, and drink the water of the lake and you shall have that for which you have asked," answered the spirit.

When Aben-Zohayr awoke, the evil exterminator, who had appeared from the lake and decreed that almost everything in the surrounding country should disappear, had vanished and all was quiet. Aben-Zohayr was very pale and very thirsty so he drank from the lake. Then Fayzuly appeared and Aben-Zohayr, on his horse, Rhadjih, pursued her but she flew like an arrow. Fayzuly, the rider, and the charger disappeared, losing themselves among the clouds of tomorrow.

Eight hundred eighty seven years passed without man, beast, or bird treading the soil of this country or cruising through its air. It was the last of February of the year 901 (according to the Mohammedan calendar) when a tired and travel-worn pilgrim arrived here. He was Abu-Kalek, who was an old warrior of the race of Almorabides and was going on a pilgrimage to the Mecca, fulfilling the last will of the king of Granada. Abu-Kaleb drank of the same water of which Aben-Zohayr had drunk and was made young again.

Abu-Kalek was unhappy about this return of his youth, he tried to escape from the valley but could not, and all the trees were sterile so he was very hungry. Finally he saw a swallow circling above him and he shot it. Around its neck hung a small key made from an emerald. Abu-Kalek took the key and as the swallow died it said in a weak voice, "Look!"

Abu-Kalek looked at the key and saw, written in the smallest characters, the words "Only God is conqueror!"

In the cave he saw on a gold plaque the words, "God is great!" He fitted the emerald key in the door, and opening it, saw a beautiful stairway. A horrible figure defended the entrance, it had the head of a cockatrice, wings of a bat, body of a lion and tail of a serpent. This was the last trial for Abu-Kalek but he passed it and saw the splendid vision of Eden.

Then he saw a most beautiful maiden in whose arms was a young man. She was Rhadhyah, the purest of the nymphs, the

queen promised to the believers. The man in her arms was Boabdil, the last of the Moorish kings. Boabdil had lost Granada to the Nazarenes and wished now only to live peacefully with his wife, Rhadhyah.

Boabdil said that Abu-Kalek should be the teacher of his son for twelve years and then could abandon him to his destiny. The mother took off her sash and threw it over the horse's neck to bind the bargain saying, "When the twelve years have passed you shall return it to my son." The vision disappeared and Abu-Kalek thought it had been only a dream but soon a man appeared with a child and he had the sash on his horse. They were the same things he, Abu-Kalek, had seen in his dream. Abu was asked to select a place for a fortress, which he finally did though much astonished, and immediately the magnificent Alhambra arose. He took the child and went with him to the fortress to live.

And thus it happened that the prince, Aben-al-Kalek was served as never a prince before him had been served. Abu-Kalek was always at his side teaching him the best of things. So by the time he was twelve he knew much, was well-educated in every line; he was as beautiful as Rhadhyah and as brave and fierce as Boabdil.

On the prince's twelfth birthday Abu-Kalek sadly bade him goodbye and proceeded on his journey to Mecca while the prince made his own pilgrimages.

Five years later they met. The prince had spent his enormous fortune on the poor and for hospitals; he had

travelled and had made holy war on the Nazarenes. The prince says he often dreams of a woman but has never seen her, he feels strangely disturbed by this feeling.

Abu-Kalek tells him that his fate is to love a nymph who has been subdued by a rebel spirit and has slept, charmed, for eight hundred years and that it will take much strength and courage to free her. In order to free her he will have to subdue the seven enchanted, condemned spirits, in the form of bats, which guard the seven stories of a strong castle on the highest of three hills. The prince departed to meet this new test of his strength and Abu-Kalek, saddened by the parting and feeling that he had fulfilled his destiny, died, and the Alhambra of Hedjaz became his tomb.

Mohamed Aben-Al-Hamar

Aben-Al-Hamar was the only support of the Moslems in Spain. He reformed the laws of Granada and constructed the Alhambra for his own residence. One day, as he was meditating on his immense wealth and power and wondering why he was unhappy and could not sleep, he caught sight of an antelope in the distance and pursued it. He came to a sad and solitary tower. It was a tower like a solitary palm tree in the desert; like a ship abandoned on the immense seas. Inside all was richness and luxury and an old man sat by the fire. He was the spirit of the Future. He asked Al-Hamar why he was sad, and received the reply that it was because he had found no pure woman to love--he had found only impurity and falseness.

The old man tells the king that he shall see the future:--

The Dream of King Al-Hamar

It was night and Granada was as quiet as a cemetery. Abu-Yshac, Abu-Abdalá, Abul-Hassán and Juzef-ben-A'bd-ala, the prince, were talking in one of the rooms of the best inn in Granada. Juzef, youngest son of Al-Hamar, was fifteen, very elegantly dressed, robust and gallant, very handsome, and his countenance had the frankness of a child and the profound reserve of an old man. They were concerned about the morrow when the elder brother of Juzef was to be crowned successor to Al-Hamar.

They went to the Jew, Absalom's house and Juzef went to see the beautiful Betsabé whom he loved. She was a prisoner and Juzef had the power to free her but she says she must be a sultana. She subtly incites him against his father and brother by appealing to his pride and ambition which he had probably inherited from his mother, Wadah, who perhaps had recalled her story as she had rocked him. Her story was:--

Wadah, when young, had been sold by her father (for a horse) to Cairván. A young man she had loved had been killed, by her father, before her eyes. One day as she was riding through the forest she rescued a young arab from a lion, and they fell in love. The arab, an enemy of Cairván, used her to receive intelligence of his enemies' moves. This was soon discovered and he was killed. Wadah was sold to a Jewish merchant, Absalom. She was exposed in the market place for

sale but no one could pay as much as the Jew wanted. As Wadah's hatred increased, her beauty grew and her value increased. If the Jew had not loved money so well she would not have known a third master. She was finally sold to Al-Hamar, the king, and Juzef was the fruit of their union.

So Juzef had this hatred from his mother mixed with the good qualities of Al-Hamar. He looked on his brothers as strangers--he was a cancer in the family of Al-Hamar.

Wadah's only hope to continue in power was to get the throne for Juzef, her son, so she used Betsabé, whom he loves, to help her attain her end. Betsabé is doomed to become a bat (her wings are already growing) within a year unless Juzef rescues her. He may do this by promising to love her always above everyone else. He promises solemnly and her enchantment disappears--the bat wings fall off. She is overjoyed and calls her three enchanted sisters, Djeidah, Zahra, and Obeidah to her and returns them to their former human shape so that they are no longer bats.

The sisters pledge themselves to kill or do anything to retain their power so that the enchantment will not return. They agree that the king shall die, if necessary, so that Juzef may have the throne and Betsabé may become sultana. Juzef is terrified at these plans but remains true to his promise to Betsabé to put her first in his thoughts.

The Jew enters and is condemned to a fate such as the one Betsabé has suffered for the past seven years--to be chained in the room. Then the three rebel slaves who have

been downstairs all this time enter and fall under Betsabé's power. She says they must assist Juzef in battle that night, and during the evening they are to go, disguised, to the fiestas.

The Fiestas of Bib-Rambla

It was a costly and gorgeous fiesta. In the beauty contest Betsabé won the decision of the judges and aroused the intense hatred of Wadah, who had expected to win.

At the bull fight, the bull was so fierce that it killed all except Mohamet, the prince, and the king. An unknown knight in green saved these two.

Wadah was terrified at her loss of power and enraged; she took a lamp and went through a narrow passage under some stairs. It led to the room where Betsabé had been imprisoned and where Absalom was now in chains.

The Jew, Absalom, tells her the story of Djeouar, a young man who, given supernatural power by a skull which he found in the fire, took Naomi from her husband, Aben-Sal-Chem, who is the enemy of Djeouar's race because he had killed Djeouar's father. The Jew reveals that Naomi was the mother of Wadah and that Djeouar was his own brother. Naomi's father was Kelb-Namir, who assassinated the husband of her mother. For eighteen years Kelb-Namir had wooed Naomi's mother, Sayaradur, without avail, then he was changed into the form of her husband, Abu-Djeouar, for one night. Sayaradur thought it was her husband returned to earth. When

she saw Abu-Djeouar beside her the next morning she killed him, but he had already promised to live with the four bats forever if they permitted him to have one night with Sayaradur. Sayaradur had a child, which was Naomi, and she was so sorrowful that she died shortly afterward. Aben-Sal-Ghem, who was thirty-three years of age but had never loved, took care of Naomi.

Djeouar used his talisman, the magic skull, to obtain everything he wanted, but it would not work with Naomi. Finally Djeouar realized that he was meant to live with the four bats as a kindred condemned spirit.

Wadah is given a charm by which she can hold the love of kings; and now, Absalom tells her, the charm is broken unless she can gain the help of the spirit Djeouar.

An army had formed against Al-Hamar but was conquered. Juzef fought for his father and married Betsabé in spite of the objections of Wadah. Everything had been fulfilled as foretold.

The Second Vision of Al-Hamar

Wadah was in a beautiful room in a cave at Colina Roja. Djeouar was there and told her that she could regain her charm if she would go to the place in her room where she had kept her talisman and there she would find a piece of blue silk which is the magic carpet of Solomon; she is to call Betsabé and demand the ring of Solomon, then go to the minaret of the castle and, turning the stamp of the ring to the east,

ask that the Alhambra be built. She must do this before Betsabé finds out she has the magic carpet.

Betsabé revealed to Juzef that she had caused the bull at the bull-fight to be unconquerable and also the enemy troops, but in each case her love for him had caused her to withdraw her power to save him. But now he must take a golden apple, filled with poison and put the poison in the bath water of his father so that he will die. Juzef obeys because he is in her power.

Wadah did as Djeouar had advised and the castle is built on top of the Colina Roja and Betsabé and her three sisters are again bats. Wadah is overjoyed and tells the king the entire story.

The vision of the future disappears and Al-Hamar is complimented on being so calm about such a tragic future. The magician asks what punishment he asks for his son who gave him the poison from which he is slowly dying. The king asks pardon for his son and is told that because he has been so good he is to live in eternity with Wadah and that his son will join him as soon as prince Aben-al-Malek breaks the charm of the nymph who sleeps in the tower of the Seven Floors.

From then on everything happened as it had been prophesied. Alfonso X of Castille attacked Granada, the king fled and died on March 29, 1273.

Prince Juzef and the three nymphs disappeared and Wadah died shortly afterward. Mohamed II succeeded his father and there were nineteen more kings until Boabdil, who lost the throne.

The Tower of the Seven Floors

Fifteen years had passed since the fatal time, 1492, when the armies of Castille and Aragon had driven the weak Boabdil from Granada. There was only one place which the Nazarenes had not torn up and profaned. That was the Tower of the Seven Stories which was protected by mystery and terror.

On this day, fifteen years after the conquest, prince Aben-al-Malek appeared, obeying his destiny, and, killing a Nazarene guard outside the tower, entered it to free his beloved Fayzuly.

In the tower Betsabé and Juzef are sleeping and Djeouar calls to him to awaken and adds that if he aids prince Aben-al-Malek that night, his soul will find rest and peace.

Prince Aben-al-Malek enters the tower at midnight and is tempted by, and conquers, tenderness or effeminacy, the temptation of riches, the suffering of pain, of illness, and misery. He finally arrives at the top, rescues Fayzuly and flees with her. God pardoned Djeouar and Juzef and allowed them to enter paradise. Betsabé with her three sisters and their three lovers were transformed into seven bats.

Every night of San Juan at midnight, when the first bell sounds, the tower trembles and a noise is heard within and a headless horse carrying a rider comes out, runs like the wind to the forest of the Alhambra until he arrives at the gates of Granada, and on the expiration of the last bell of midnight turns back to the tower and never comes out until midnight

of the next San Juan day. Unhappy is the one who sees at this time the horse without a head.

And thus ends the legend of the Tower of the Seven Floors.

Los Hermanos Plantagenet

It was the foggy night of November 15, 1194 when the story opened, and a ship was sailing, with great difficulty, up the Thames. The four men on deck peered into the shadows and could barely distinguish the small Isle of Dogs, which was in the Thames at that time. Because of the wild, lonesome appearance of the island, they would have been surprised to see that on it was a young man of about twenty-two years, seated in front of a fire close to a log hut. His hair and clothing were dripping wet, making it evident that he had recently taken a bath, and, judging from the signs of blood on his arms and legs, it had undoubtedly been a forced one.

In a short time a man about thirty-five years of age, masked, and dressed in black, appeared on the island. But the fugitive, who was really Richard Espada-larga, as we later discover, had already sensed his approach and had departed, after obliterating all signs of his presence. Another man appeared and went through a peculiar ritual of questions and answers with the man in black. One after another came until there were six men in the hut. They called themselves 'brothers of the fog' and Adam Wast was their leader. Their number also included the hangman of the Tower of London, whom we later discover to be Godfrey, the twin brother of Richard Espada-larga. This group was plotting against the crown of England.

As they left the hut they were stopped by the fugitive who had left so hurriedly a short time before. For the last

two years he had lived by hunting in the forests. But now these forests were considered the property of the king, and so his living was becoming increasingly precarious. He explained all this because he desired to be admitted to the group, but his request was not granted.

Richard Espada-larga was much surprised to discover that his brother, Godfrey, was a member of the group. Richard accompanied his brother to his room but was unable to appease his three days' hunger there, for Godfrey had no bread either. The nobles had bought all the wheat in England and were selling it at such exorbitant prices that only the very rich could eat. Godfrey feared that in order to live he might have to part with his treasured possessions, a rich suit embroidered in gold and a beautiful sword. These rich possessions were reminiscent of the life which the two brothers had led when Henry II was alive and they were his adopted sons.

Richard recognized, as he glanced out of the window, a young woman called Kitty. She had been in love with him but had married Adam Wast after she had been assured that Richard was dead. When Richard went out to meet her, she, after recovering from her surprise, suggested that they go to the house of Lady Esther, the Countess of Salisbury, for protection. When Kitty presented Richard Espada-larga to the noble lady, she was surprised and jealous to see the look of recognition and joy on their faces.

Lady Esther was madly in love with Richard and suggested that they marry immediately. She was worried over her father's

disappearance and felt the need of someone to protect her. Richard agreed to do her avenging but, conscious of his doubtful origin, he refused to link his unknown name to her illustrious one. He explained that he had neither name, parents, past, nor future. He then told the story of his past as he knew it. He and his brother had been found abandoned at Westminister Abbey and had been adopted by King Henry II and brought up at the court. Then Richard Espada-larga had accompanied Richard Coeur-de-Lion to the Holy Land. As they were returning, two years ago, the ship had been wrecked and he did not know what had happened to King Richard. Richard Espada-larga had returned to the court but had been spurned by everyone. During those two years he had led a life of banditry and now his life was being sought.

After Richard's interview with Lady Esther, he and Kitty went to an inn and Robin, the owner, showed them to a room where a king had died. Repeated questioning brought the revelation that the king was Henry II and only a very few people knew that he had died at this place. Robin continued his revelations by relating that, several years before, a young dancer had come there seeking a room. She admitted that a great gentleman was her lover and he must have free access to her room. Sometime later a daughter was born to her. Then one night Robin discovered the old King, Henry II, dying in that very room after a hard day of fighting against his rebellious sons. The dancer had become insane and had died recently.

As Robin was about to continue his story, he was interrupted by the entrance of Adam Wast and his five brothers of the fog, who attempted to take him prisoner. The king's guard, attracted by the noise, came and took all of them to prison. A large crowd, which later grew to alarming proportions, had collected around the house as the fight was in progress.

Two hours before these occurrences, a rich Jew called Saul or Agiab, was attempting, as usual, to convey his love sentiments to Lady Esther. Tonight he was even more menacing than before, but her father, Lord Salisbury, entered just in time to save her.

The four men who had been sailing up the Thames at the beginning of our story were Lord Surrey, Count of Essex, duke of Northumberland, and King Richard. They noted, as had Saul and Lady Esther, that the mob was fast becoming more violent and were demanding the heads of Eleanor, the queen mother, and the Bishop Eli.

Richard, after making his identity known, received a great ovation from the mob, and the heralds joyfully proclaimed his return. The king discovered that the people were suffering from lack of bread and that they had been tricked and deceived by Bishop Eli, for which offenses the Bishop was immediately sent to prison while those he had sentenced to prison were freed.

Robin revealed to King Richard that Adam Wast was organizing a conspiracy against the crown. Adam had once had a

great influence on Robin. In fact, as Robin said, "I was Adam's first slave." But one day Robin had rebelled, and as he was on his way to London he met, and united his fortunes with Clary, a dancer. In London they had met another dancer, Kitty, whose lover was Henry II. Her daughter was two years old when the father, King Henry, had died. The child did not know she was the king's daughter.

One day Adam found Robin, and Robin did an unpardonable thing in accidently revealing to Adam that Kitty was King Henry's daughter. Adam immediately dishonored her and then he arranged to marry her. It was easy to see that Adam had some plan in mind. The mother, a dancer, had become insane and died in a short time.

King Richard held conferences with the bishop, Godfrey, and then with his own brother John until everything was settled to his satisfaction. John was asked to leave England and the bishop was severely punished.

Lord Salisbury revealed to his daughter, Lady Esther, that Richard Espada-larga and Kitty were brother and sister, although they did not know it. Richard and Godfrey were the twin sons of King Henry II and Lady Rosamund Chifford, while Kitty was the daughter of the king and a dancer.

The torture chamber at the Tower of London was a terrifying sight and it was in readiness for Adam West. The king was anxious to know the details of the conspiracy and the names of Adam's accomplices. After much torturing, Adam confessed and was sentenced to die within an hour.

King Richard requested that Salisbury be granted anything he wished for as a reward for his faithfulness. Salisbury's request was that he allow his family to unite with the king's. The king could not understand when Salisbury mentioned a connection between his daughter and Richard Espada-larga. Salisbury had heard everything from the king's own lips and knew that the two Richards were half-brothers.

Then Salisbury told the story of Henry II. He had been crowned king, in 1154, at the age of twenty. Two years later he was advised to marry Eleanor. It was a very unhappy marriage for she was thirteen years his senior and very ugly. So Henry II had found a satisfactory love in Rosamund Chifford, who bore him twin boys, and later he had had a daughter by the dancer.

King Richard agreed to the marriage of Lady Esther and Richard Espada-larga, recognizing him as his half-brother and Kitty as his half-sister. Richard is also pardoned for his banditry. As a fitting closing scene, Godfrey brought in the head of Adam Wast, who had been executed for treason.

Epilogue

Three months and twenty-one days later, on April 6, the armies of England were fighting desperately. King Richard was stabbed by a javelin on which was fastened a note which said, "I am the husband of your sister; I am the one whom you put in torment; I am the one sentenced by you and saved by Satan to exterminate you; I am Adam Wast, and you die at my hands, because this javelin is poisoned."

By the time they were able to remove the king to his tent he had already arrived at a state of unconsciousness from which he did not recover.

Luisa, o el Ángel de la Redención

One very cold and stormy night Luisa went, as she often did, to pray at her mother's tomb. The mother had died exactly one year before. On this particular night Emilia, the sweetheart of the Viscount of Rudaguas, had sent him, so that her curiosity might be satisfied, to the cemetery to procure a letter which she had seen behind the glass of a tomb marked, "Luisa". The viscount met Luisa, who thought he was Juan de Castro, her lover, and so permitted him to take her home in his carriage. As he lighted a cigarette, she discovered her mistake and recognized that he was the dissolute Viscount of Rudaguas. She arrived home safely but dropped a portrait of herself, which the viscount took possession of, as she alighted from the carriage. Later, the viscount, knowing how to color and add to a story, defamed her name, as he drank with his friends, and showed Luisa's portrait as proof. The Baron of Destierro, or Satan, the protector of Luisa, was present and challenged the viscount to a duel, the result of which was that the viscount received a cross-shaped wound on his face.

Luisa was beautiful and well-educated in spite of the fact that she had been brought up in complete isolation. Her mother, Luisa Adelaida Clara, had died on her daughter's seventeenth birthday. Luisa Clara María had loved her mother dearly but had never been able to find out anything concerning her father. The mother had died with this warning to her daughter on her lips: "Your six grandmothers have died here

like this; see that you do not. You have a powerful protector from whom you shall receive money each month. Never leave the house unaccompanied. If you should fall in love, flee from that lover for he is not for you."

Luisa's own memoirs tell how she suffered after her mother's death. She had two excellent servants, Anselmo and Martha, but no companions. Desiring to use her money, Luisa ordered Anselmo to search for a good priest through whom she might give help to the needy. He found father Quirós, a pure, saintly man. But the man who sent Luisa her money objected to her giving money to people whom she did not know. Father Quirós then told her the story of Antonia who had been adopted, when a baby, by a couple who had no children. They had given her an excellent education and then her father had lost all his money trying to satisfy her tastes; both parents had died in poverty. Antonia suffered greatly, became ill, and finally, after a year, sought rest and peace in death. Her attempted suicide had not been successful, however, and she was now in the hospital. Quirós and Luisa went to visit her often, and when she was able to leave the hospital Luisa cared for her.

Then one day Luisa had met Juan de Castro, a young portrait painter whom she hired to paint her portrait. He was twenty-four, handsome, dark, and had distinguished manners. Juan had studied at the Academy until his father had died four years before, and then he and his mother had lost their fortune through unwise investments. Luisa fell madly in love with Juan and they planned to marry as soon as the period of mourning was over.

Antonia discovered that Juan loved only Luisa's beauty and really did not care for her. She tried to tell Luisa about Juan's unworthiness but Luisa resented it and the two were no longer on friendly terms. Luisa became more infatuated with Juan day by day, in spite of the fact that she often recalled her mother's warning. Juan was becoming wealthy; he was selling his pictures even though they were bad, but he spent the money in dissipation and wanted more and more.

Then three days before the year of mourning was up, Luisa had received a mysterious letter reminding her that she had forgotten her mother's warning and that she would find a letter at her mother's tomb which would contain a key to the ebony door which she had been forbidden to open. And that was the night she had gone to the cemetery and had met Rudaguas. Back in her room, she opened the ebony door and discovered a luxuriously furnished room. A handsome man, dressed in black, sat in the room. He told Luisa that he was Satan, transformed into a man in order to help her, and that he had for six generations advised her family and supplied them with money. He recounted to her the following history of her grandmother, six generations removed, whose name was Luisa Inés María. He called the story--"Jew, Gipsy, and Martyr."

One night just before three a. m., a man was killed as he hurried home from a conference with his comrades. It was Ruy Perez, the king's quarter-master. For the cause of his death one must go back twenty-six years, to 1628. He was then thirty and was captain of the infantry in Monferrato. One

day he found the dead bodies of a man and woman who had apparently starved to death. By their side was a one year old child who was almost dead from hunger and cold. An old woman who cared for her told Ruy Perez that the child was the daughter of a Jew and a Gypsy and was under a curse because her parents had been excommunicated. "If you adopt her, she will cause your death," the old woman had warned him. But Ruy Perez, because he had no children, had not heeded the warning. He had the child baptized as Luisa Inés María, and took her with him until the war was over and they could return to Spain. There, because his jealous wife, Genoveva, suspected that the child was the result of some illicit love affair of his, Ruy Perez took her to a devout cousin of his to be brought up. Her parentage was not revealed but she was well received in the convent. She was there twenty years and by that time Genoveva, the cousin, and all who had been in charge of the convent when she had been brought there, had died. Ruy Perez, at fifty, saw and loved Luisa, and they were married. But he soon discovered that he had been deceived for she told him that she hated him because he had caused all her misfortunes and that she loved don Cristobal de Vives, the Viscount of Rudaguas. She believed that she was of royal blood and would not believe Ruy Perez when he told her the truth. So for vengeance Luisa had decided to marry Ruy Perez but to be his wife in name only. The king of Spain had tried for a long time to find favor with Luisa but had always been spurned. Then, after six years, Ruy Perez was ambushed and killed one

night as he went home; his key was taken from his pocket and given to the king who entered Luisa's room by means of it. So she, Luisa's sixth grandmother, had a daughter by the king. The mother became insane; she had loved the Viscount of Rudaguas but had discovered that he was being paid by the king to win her affections.

"And that was one hundred ninety-eight years ago," continued Satan, "and since that time I have been the protector of your family."

Then Satan continued with the following story of Antonia. Dona María thought she was in love with Luis Quinones, a young student of the University of Alcalá. He had studied for the clergy and now was madly in love with María, whom he asked to marry him after he should return from two years in Mexico where he hoped to gain riches. But María, desiring immediate riches, had married a rich old man whom she did not love. She later attempted to elope with her husband's young nephew, but they were discovered by her husband and the nephew was killed in the ensuing fight. María escaped during the fight, and outside the house fell into the arms of Luis de Quinones who loved her so dearly. She had to hide from the law and her husband, so she married Luis, although she now hated him. A daughter, Consuelo, was born to them. María, who was the grandmother, six generations removed, of Antonia, died and left Luis to care for the beautiful, ten year old Consuelo. Luis was blind and they had a very hard struggle to keep from starving. Consuelo fell in love with the

Viscount of Rudaguas, the man who had helped the king ruin Luisa's sixth grandmother. Later she is expecting a child and so left her father and went to Toledo where he finally discovered her. Rudaguas had abandoned her before the child was born. The child was a girl whom she named Consuelo. Then the mother was accused by the Inquisition and she committed suicide rather than confess. Father Acebo took the daughter to bring up.

The punishment of the Viscount of Rudaguas was that he married a fallen woman, Camilla, who was unfaithful to him. She bore him a son, Juan de Vives. Satan concluded his story to Luisa by revealing to her that she and Antonia are half-sisters.

Luisa's house burned; it was the worst fire the city had ever known. It was thought for a time that she would surely perish but Andrés and a sailor named Martín Iglesias or el Moreno, saved her. Andrés worked for a cabinet maker, José Perez and his wife, Eloisa. They had a daughter, Leontina, and an adopted child, the sixteen year old Ana. Both were secretly in love with Andrés. Luisa had moved to Antonia's house since the fire and was tutoring children in languages. She came to the cabinet maker's house to give French lessons to Leontina. She recognized Andrés as the one who had saved her from the fire, and Andrés fell in love with her as soon as he saw her. José Perez's business failed but Andrés saved them with the money he had won at the lottery. The parents believed that Andrés had saved them because he

loved Leontina, so they arranged the wedding and he could not refuse to marry her. Andrés later saved Luisa's life again and then she began to love him and no longer loved Juan de Castro.

The Viscount of Rudaguas married his rich cousin, Emilia, immediately after the death of her mother. Some suspected that the mother had been poisoned. Rudaguas had already revealed to Juan de Castro that he desired to marry his cousin, Emilia, because she was rich, but that he wanted Luisa as well, and he bribed Juan to marry her and then permit him, Rudaguas, to have access to her.

So Luisa and Juan were married and Andrés and Leontina, but neither marriage was ever consummated. Luisa soon found out how she had been deceived by Juan, and Leontina found out that Andrés cared only for Luisa.

Satan next told Luisa the following story of her fifth grandmother, Luisa Isabel María. One day all Madrid was surprised to see a horse running away with a beautiful woman. Don Luís de Góngora killed the horse but the woman did not thank him for it because she had been urging the horse on and was fleeing from her husband. She was Luisa's fifth grandmother and the rescuer was don Luís de Góngora, the poet. Luisa's mother had died insane when the child was two years old. Income from Ruy Perez's fortune was brought to her house each month. Three years after King Philip had entered Luisa Inés María's room, Satan forced the king to recognize this illegitimate daughter so that she might enter a convent for her education.

One day the king brought a very ugly man to see her at the convent. He was Gutierre, and Luisa was informed that she was to marry him. The arrangement had been that Gutierre was to have Luisa for a wife in exchange for giving the king his beautiful sister, Julia. Luisa could not find out why she was to marry this very ugly man, whom she hated, but she knew it was useless to resist the king. After the wedding, as they rode to receive the king's blessing, she broke away from the procession and as she was mounted on the fastest horse, they could not overtake her. A bandit, Gabriel, followed Gutierre and killed him, thus performing a favor for Luisa.

Góngora took Luisa to her home, and then he received an anonymous letter from a lady who wished to meet him at a certain hour. He, believing it to be Luisa, went and was enchanted by Julia. It later was discovered that Julia was not really Gutierre's sister but was Julia de Acebedo, the daughter of Consuelo Quinones and the first Viscount of Rudaguas. This was the Julia who was the grandmother of Antonia.

Gabriel, the bandit, used this information about Julia's birth to blackmail her into marrying him and renouncing the love of Luís de Góngora. She promised to do this in order to keep the story of her birth quiet.

Julia requested a royal marriage license from the king but the groom's name was not filled in. The plan is that she is to receive the king that night shortly after her marriage. Góngora feared that he might be the groom, so he fled to

Salamanca and prepared to take holy orders. So Julia married Gabriel, who burned the papers revealing her birth record, and she poisoned him soon after the ceremony. Julia went to her rendezvous with king Philip IV and people thought that her husband, Gabriel, had died at sea.

Both Luisa and Julia went to Salamanca in an effort to recapture the affections of Góngora. Each one did everything possible against the other. Finally Luisa informed the Santa Hermandad of Julia's ancestry and the officers, shortly afterward, came and took her to prison where she remained for two months, after which she was freed but was forced to wear garments which distinguished her as an evil woman of an accursed race. The second Viscount of Rudaguas, who was really Julia's half-brother, helped her and by bribing the judges of the Inquisition, he was able to procure her absolution of all guilt. Then Julia and the viscount married, not knowing they were brother and sister.

Luisa was extremely irritated at the turn of events and incited her husband, Gutierre, to fight a duel with Rudaguas which resulted in the death of Gutierre. Julia gave Luisa a poison which caused her to sleep yet be able to walk and talk. Luisa was to have a child by Rudaguas but she had been under the influence of the poison and knew nothing of it. Luisa had given Julia a poisoned handkerchief which, because she had carried it only a short time before losing it, had caused her to become insane instead of dying immediately. But Julia was imprisoned again for poisoning her husband,

Gabriel, and died there giving birth to the king's child. The viscount had realized that Luisa was the cause of all Julia's trouble so he had determined to dishonor her; and so Luisa died giving birth to Rudaguas' daughter. Thus Satan concluded his story to Luisa of her fifth grandmother, Luisa Isabel María.

That day Luisa was introduced to the beautiful Cesárea, wife of the Baron of Destierro, who informed her that she, Luisa, was really the Marquise of Guapeltepec and was very rich. Luisa's father had died two years before, in Mexico, and the baroness had been sent to search for his daughter.

Luisa was informed that her husband, Juan de Castro, had been mysteriously wounded. He lived for a few days and then died. A lengthy police investigation followed. Cesárea revealed a signed statement of Juan de Castro stating that he had married Luisa voluntarily but was never to be more than a shield for her illicit relations with another man. Everyone was horrified at such a crime and they all believed that Luisa was innocent.

Cesárea recalled the deaths of the former viscounts of Rudaguas and then told the following story of the mother of Luisa. The mother, at eighteen, had fallen in love with the Viscount of Rudaguas, father of the present viscount. He was married and had a six year old son but that made no difference to him. Because of this infatuation for the viscount, her mother insisted that the daughter marry the Marquis of Guapeltepec. Rudaguas bribed a servant and worked very hard

and subtly, to gain admission to the house. He even challenged the marquis to a duel, but the marquis thought he was insane and knocked him down, disregarding the challenge.

After the wedding, when Rudaguas had recovered from the blow which the marquis had given him, the two fought a duel. The marquis fell but was only slightly wounded. He went to Mexico without seeing his wife again, and wrote to her that she had dishonored his name and he would not recognize her children. He believed that Rudaguas had been the father of her child. And so three months after the duel, the present Luisa was born. Luisa had never known before that she was born of a legitimate marriage, heir of an illustrious name and of immense riches.

Luisa Isabel, the grandmother of the present Luisa, had died, poisoned by Anselmo who was paid by Rudaguas for executing the murder. But Satan forced a confession from Anselmo and fought a duel with Rudaguas in which the later was mortally wounded and confessed, as he died, that the child, the present Luisa, was the true daughter of the Marquis of Guapeltepec. These proofs of the legitimacy of his daughter were taken to the marquis in Mexico but it was a long time before he could be found. When his wife's innocence was made known to him, he died from joy, but not before he had arranged his affairs so that Luisa was heir to his fortune.

Satan explained to Luisa that her mother had finally been unable to resist Rudaguas and had borne him a daughter, Antonia. She had been taken to an orphanage by her father and was soon adopted by a childless couple.

Cesárea brought the news of Juan de Castro's death and also told that the present Viscount of Rudaguas would soon be hanged because he and Emilia had poisoned her mother.

Andrés and Satan fought a duel over Leontina, the wife of Andrés. Satan, or the Baron of Destierro, was overcome but Andrés also fell as if dead. Luisa, deeply in love with Andrés, went to view his body as it awaited burial in the cemetery. Her doctor asked to see the bodies of Andrés and the Baron and was surprised that there were no signs of decomposition in spite of the fact that the weather was hot and they had been dead twenty-four hours.

As Luisa sat alone, by the side of Andrés's coffin, the Baron, who was Satan in human form, came to life and told her the story of her great-grandmother, Luisa Eugenia Antonia, who had also been in love with a dead man. She had been in love with a revolutionist, Lorenzo, who had found it necessary to go on a secret mission to Paris where he was guillotined. Luisa Eugenia gave birth to a daughter (grandmother of the present Luisa) and when she was two years old, the mother found out that the child's father had died. She called on Satan and said she would sell her soul to him if he would resurrect her husband. Satan did this and they were together for six days; then both died.

Andrés revived from his apparent death but was very ill for some time and then became insane. The Baron had come to life also and there was a great commotion in Madrid over the disappearance of the two corpses from the cemetery. Luisa

and Antonia and the others were taken to prison because they were suspected of having something to do with the illness of Andrés. But at last he recovered his sanity. Leontina procured some false letters which proved that Andrés and Luisa were guilty of adultery and so the two were imprisoned for a time until the letters were proved false.

Rudaguas had tried to escape from Spain, disguised as a woman, but his assistants had betrayed him and instead of helping him had killed him and don Cosme.

Andrés became very ill again and was positive that he was soon to die. He wanted to be married to Luisa, and finally, after it was discovered that Leontina was dead, they were married. When Andrés was declared out of danger, they decided to keep apart for a year during which Andrés was to wear mourning for Leontina.

Thus the virtue of Luisa had redeemed her six grandmothers and she had, with the help of God, conquered Satan.

A Critical Study

The Romantic movement, which took place in the first half of the nineteenth century, marked a change from the rigid adherence to classic standards to an appreciation of the beauties of nature and of imaginative sentiment. As the Classical Age has often been called the Age of Reason, so imagination is the dominating element of the Romantic Period. The themes such as religion and social reform which were popular during the Classical Age were substituted by those of the Middle Ages; for example, the Crusades, and themes of the modern world such as discoveries, conquests, and revolutions. This active interest in their national past was not only a characteristic of the Spanish Romantic Period, but of England, France, and Germany as well. The treatment of these subjects by the Romanticists is free and individual in contrast to the conventional treatment of the classicists.

Some of the most distinctive elements of the Spanish Romantic Period are the same which are characteristic of the dramatic productions of the Siglo de Oro, and in which we have seen fantasy and lyric qualities dominate, yet imposed on a realistic background. Romanticism appeared in Spain at a later date than in the other European countries because of the tyranny of Ferdinand VII (1808-1833), and the social unrest in Spain which was due to the desire for more freedom in government.

During this period of revolution and unrest, many Spanish writers took refuge in foreign lands, and when they returned

to Spain they brought with them the ideas gained from contact with the followers of the Romantic movement in those countries. Another influence came through the translation of German and French Romanticists into Spanish, and above all the translation of the novels of Sir Walter Scott. So Spanish literature took on new life, and in 1834 there appeared several literary compositions which were considered important forerunners of Romanticism. One of the most important of these is El moro expósito by Don Ángel de Saavedra, duque de Rivas which, according to Historia de la Literatura Espanola by Hurtado and Palencia, was the first victory of romanticism. This romantic legend, which may be considered a novel in verse, uses the same plot as the ancient Los Siete Infantes de Lara. It concerns the rivalries and acts of vengeance of the members of a Castilian family of the tenth century. Francisco Martínez de la Rosa introduced romanticism in the theater with his La conjuración de Venecia. This drama is full of passionate, tragic, and mysterious love which develops in the midst of persecutions and sepulchers. It abounds in conspiracies, secret executions, and masked men, who are skilled in the use of the dagger. All these characteristics were carried on by succeeding romanticists.

Manuel Fernández y González is the most prolific novelist of the Romantic Period and one of its most outstanding. The characteristics of all true Spanish literature are three in number, namely: geographic exactitud, sobriety of invention, and vigorous realism. Manuel Fernández y González is constant

and exact in his use of the characteristic of geographic exactitud. He begins La Cruz de Quirós with a lengthy and vivid description of Granada and the beautiful plain of La Vega which lies just below Granada's seven hills. As the characters go from place to place, each hill or stream they cross and each village or town they pass through is given its correct name. In Historia de los siete murciélagos, the streets of Granada, the rooms of the Alhambra, and other places are portrayed accurately and scrupulously. Fernandez y Gonzalez had a true gift for description; he seemed to know exactly the words to use in order to give the most accurate and vivid picture. H. Hernández-Girbal, who wrote a biography of this novelist's life, gives this example of his almost uncanny powers along this line. For a book he was writing, Manuel needed to describe the king's palace at Valladolid. He could find no one who had seen the palace nor describe it, so he said, "It should be like this," and wrote his description. Later, when the book was published, readers who had seen the palace stated that it was a very accurate description of it.

Even the book with an English background, Los Hermanos Plantagenet, has this quality of geographic exactitud. Sometimes he finds it necessary, for the plot of the story, to have some minor geographical detail changed; as, for example, the island in the Thames near London, but he excuses this with the explanation that it existed thus during the period of which he writes.

However, when it comes to sobriety of invention and realism, Fernández y González falls far short. This is perhaps the reason that the great popularity of his novels did not endure much beyond the lifetime of the author himself. Luisa and her adventures with the Baron of Destierro, who was really Satan in human form, in Luisa, o el ángel de la redención was highly imaginative and fantastic. The other books also lack realism and sobriety of invention. Historia de los murciélagos was so highly fanciful and preposterous as to seem almost like a fairy story with an enchanted princess and all that goes with a story of that kind.

Notwithstanding all this, the characters in his books are often treated in a most realistic way. Even Luisa, who is called the angel of redemption, is revealed as being in love with Andrés while she is married to Juan de Castro and does not hesitate to tell her husband that she desires his death so that she may be free to marry Andrés. The love affairs of the six maternal ancestors of Luisa are revealed in all their sordid ugliness, as are those of Antonia's progenitors.

In Los Hermanos Plantagenet, King Richard, in contrast to Sir Walter Scott's portrayal of him in Ivanhoe, is not treated as a paragon of justice and the benefactor of his people. Neither is the hero of the book, the half-brother of King Richard, shown as a perfect, never-erring crusader.

In summarizing Fernández y González's work from the standpoint of the three characteristics of Spanish literature,

it could be said that he has only one, geographic exactitud, to a marked degree. Taken as a whole his works are distinctly romantic, in spite of the occasional appearance of some characteristics of realism.

The form of Luisa often becomes vague and almost incoherent because of the inclusion of too much detail. The story of each of Luisa's six maternal ancestors is revealed to Luisa and the reader in exactly the same manner until the device becomes somewhat monotonous. These interspersed stories are so often alike in content that it is difficult to keep them in mind correctly, and since each ancestor's name is also Luisa, many times it is a laborious task to differentiate between the main story and its many parallel sub-plots. However, there is some purpose in revealing Luisa's ancestry since it explains the situation in which she finds herself. Then, in order to explain Antonia's place in the story, all her ancestry is also recounted. So the story becomes chiefly a series of biographical sketches of the ancestors of Luisa and Antonia. The book called Historia de los siete murciélagos is similar in form to Luisa; long sub-plots are related until one almost loses sight of the main plot.

The author himself tells his stories, although in each book he lets a character tell a part of the story. For example, he has Satan tell the stories of Luisa's grandmothers, but the reader loses sight of this fact and the impression is that the author tells the story. Each novel is narrated in the third person, except a part of Luisa, ostensibly copied from her own memoirs.

Fernández y González becomes the omniscient author at times with Luisa and with Antonia. No one point of view is kept throughout a novel. He shifts the point of view frequently, but does it in an artistic manner. He reveals some of the thoughts and desires of both Luisa and Antonia as well as those of other characters in each of his books.

The style of Manuel Fernández y González is unique and striking. He has a forceful way of telling his story. The reader is usually not prepared for a startling revelation, nor does the author prepare the way for a climax, but hurls it like a bolt out of the blue, yet in the most unconcerned, matter-of-fact fashion. Even the most startling facts are revealed in a casual manner and with the use of a few simple, short words.

His use of short, dramatic sentences may be illustrated from the following page, chosen almost at random from Luisa.

> Llegó aquella noche.
> Eran las diez.
> Dos carruajes salian al mismo tiempo.
> El uno por la calle de Toledo.
> El otro por la de Segovia.
> En cada carruaje iban cuatro hombres.
> Uno que debia batirse.
> Dos que debian autorizar el duelo.
> Y un médico.
> En uno de los carruajes iba Andrés.
> En otro el baron del Destierro.
> Andrés iba impaciente.
> No amaba á Leontina.
> Porque Leontina le habia deshonrado, en secreto primero, públicamente después.
> Porque Leontina habia huido de su casa.
> Nadie por el momento habia notado aquella fuga.[7]

Another characteristic of the style of Fernández y González is his use of questions for dramatic effect.

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7. Manuel Fernández y González, Luisa, Vol. II, p. 302.

The following excerpt from La cruz de Quirós illustrates this device.

> El canon era muy largo.
> No terminaba nunca.
> ¿Habrían acabado de exterminar los del almirante a sus compañeros?
> ¿El estaría ya perseguido?
> ¿Podrían alcanzarle?[8]

The author uses dialogue in abundance, but it is seldom used to convey any point vital to the plot. The language in both dialogue and narrative is somewhat pompous, sententious, and grandiose. The author evidently realizes how difficult it is to make characters reveal themselves in word and deed and how relatively easy it is to gossip about them.

Manuel Fernández y González has the habit of beginning his novels at the center of an action and then back-tracking to pick up the threads, after which he continues on to the climax. These headlong beginnings hold the interest of the reader, but the ensuing explanation often becomes so involved that it is only with great effort that one is able to follow the thread of the story. The time sequence is often difficult to follow, though after the entire novel has been read one can usually adequately reconstruct the sequence.

Even though his plots are elaborate and involved, they do hold the attention of the reader. I would say that his redeeming trait, his outstanding characteristic, is his story-telling skill, or his ability to hold his readers. His novels really have the quality of holding the reader breathless, not

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8. Manuel Fernández y González, La cruz de Quirós, Vol. II. p. 113.

allowing him to lay the book aside until the end has been reached. Romera-Navarro, in his Historia de la Literatura Espanola, states that the novels of Fernández y González are such that the reader, if he has an imagination, will find it impossible to lay them aside until he has finished the last page.

If Fernández y González were writing today, doubtless he would be one of our great detective story writers, because his plots are emphasized while he pays little attention to characters and setting. The results of his early voracious reading are shown in his use of historical background which he deftly fuses into the novels so that one is scarcely conscious of the fact that they are historical. He, like Sir Walter Scott, uses the backstairs method of historical novel writing. That is, he never uses a prominent historical figure as the principal character, but places him as a minor character seen through the eyes of the hero or heroine.

If there is a moral to his plots, or a plan, it is to show that good triumphs over evil in the end. He uses over and over again, in his plots, the device of mistaken identity, and unrevealed relationships. In La cruz de Quirós Barrabás reveals that Quirós is the half-brother of don Juan Venegas and also of Margarita. Richard Espada-larga discovers that he is the half-brother of King Richard in Los Hermanos Plantagenet. In Luisa, there are many examples of previously unknown relationships revealed such as Antonia and Luisa having the same mother, and the Viscount of Rudaguas and Antonia children of the same father.

Fernández y González's novels often lack the quality of shapely definiteness, or giving the most space to the most important things, and this is especially true in Luisa. In this book the shapeliness is impaired by the great amount of space given to the stories of Luisa's maternal progenitors. He over-uses the device of parallel sub-plots until one almost loses sight of the main plot. All six stories of Luisa's grandmothers are similar to her own life. Undoubtedly the author believed that by the repetition of such a plot he could more easily obtain that "willing suspension of disbelief" which Coleridge mentions. Of course these histories of her ancestry explain why Luisa has led a life of solitude, why Satan is her protector, the mystery surrounding her name, and why her mother did nothing to dispel this mystery. In short, it gives the reader the clue to Luisa's character.

The endings are usually good but often do not leave us with the sense of life continuing on into the future. Perhaps the most striking and surprising ending was that of La cruz de Quirós. The others end in the more conventional, 'and they lived happily ever after', manner. He uses surprise climaxes to perfection, and in La cruz de Quirós he even uses tragic anticipation, so that the reader, from the first chapter of the book, has the feeling of approaching disaster.

The reader often wonders if the author changed his mind in the middle of a book and decided to alter the story. In La cruz de Quirós, the story of don Juan Venegas, Quirós, and Margarita is told very convincingly from the point of view of

Barrabás. Then, suddenly the reader is informed that the story thus far has not been true at all, that Barrabás was in love with Margarita and for this reason had told that Margarita and Quirós were brother and sister. Then we discover that Quirós is really not Quirós at all, but Juan Venegas, the true lover of Margarita. However, the story is not to end happily after all because Venegas is hanged for the crimes he had committed while he has been acting as leader of the Diez Compadres, and Margarita falls dead in her father's arms at the moment of the hanging. The reader has not been prepared in any way for these sudden changes. No hint had been dropped that Barrabás was in love with Margarita; there had been no motivation for the change.

Fernández y González makes evident attempts at careful character delineation, but for some reason one remembers only the plot. The characters do not live; the reader does not feel that he is really well-acquainted with them. His personages do not always act in character. One is astonished to discover that it is the quiet, gentle don Juan Venegas who has been committing the terrible crimes under the name of Quirós. He does motivate this, however, with the oath of vengeance which Venegas takes as he exchanges places with his half-brother, Quirós, who has just committed suicide so that he, Venegas, might escape from prison.

It takes a great deal to create a vision; to create even one character is a great undertaking and perhaps Fernández y González could have created many great characters had he not been obsessed with the idea, and the need, to write great

quantities of material. He draws his characters from royalty, the nobility, and from the lowest classes. Those he draws from the lower classes, however, usually belong to that class of law-breakers which remind one of Robin Hood. Fernández y González seems much interested in exteriors for he always describes minutely the costumes of his characters.

No doubt he was extremely conscious of his reading public and wrote what he thought they desired to read. This may explain his copious use of intrigues, mistaken identity, unrevealed relationships, illegitimate children, etc.

La cruz de Quirós and Luisa contain passages which have the same characteristics as the Gothic romances of Mrs. Radcliffe and Horace Walpole. For example, in La cruz de Quirós, the hero approaches a deserted castle, on a lonely hill, just at the stroke of midnight. In Luisa, things of importance happen just as the clock strikes twelve, and often the scene is in a cemetery. The atmosphere of tension, terror, storms, fear of approaching disaster, are present in all four of the novels, and give the same impression as the Gothic novel of eighteenth century English literature.

D. Armando Palacio Valdés, in his Semblanzas Literarias, states that he finds it difficult to say anything good about Manuel Fernández y González because he feels that the novels of González had a pernicious influence on him as a child. Valdés admits that he perused the novels voraciously and tried to imitate the heroes of the stories to such an extent as to be almost disastrous to his own well-being. Valdés continues

in the same vein, stating that Manuel Fernández y González enjoys great fame among the most virtuous classes of the Spanish nation. Landladies have been known to become so deeply interested in his books that they would forget to ask tenants for their rent. So Valdés says that he would not dare take González down from his pedestal.

He did not always write bad novels, according to Valdés. Some of Spain's best historical novels were written by him, early in his career, among which are: El condestable D. Alvaro de Luna, Men Rodriguez de Sanabría, Martín Gil, El cocinero de Su Majestad, and Los Monfíes. He did not revive the Middle Ages by a minute and attentive study of their costumes and exterior physiognomy as Sir Walter Scott did; but recreated by his powerful imagination their actions, sentiments, speech, etc., in the world of the spirit. The aspirate accents which resound in the Middle Ages seem to vibrate pure and fresh in the breezy fantasy of Fernández y González. He is more of a realist of the Middle Ages than his master, Sir Walter Scott.

He could be better, no doubt, by excluding ninety per cent of the adventure from his novels. But, then, after all, none of us has lived in the Middle Ages, and the narration of the marvelous happenings of these Middle Ages cannot possibly irritate us as our own times, when nothing happens, will irritate our descendants. There are those who maintain Providence has been very hard with us because she put on us a high-topped hat instead of a helmet.

Continuing, according to Valdés, Fernández y González is a better poet than a novelist. Perhaps it is because the poet is constituted and characterized for fantasy, understanding and study coming to be nothing more than auxiliaries of his inspiration, while the novelist needs equal parts of a superior intelligence and a picturesque imagination. Valdés believes that the talent of this novelist is nearer like that of Zorilla who is the modern poet who has best recreated the traditions, beliefs, battles, arrogance, tournaments, and display of old Spain.

Instead of continuing to study in order to improve his technique, Fernández y González commenced to hurl from his pen a deluge of novels of impossible adventures. This insatiable desire for adventures was the cause of his perdition. In his carelessness he entirely abandoned literary studies, hoarding on the other hand a supply of rogueries and basenesses which he aspired to present as admirable. He seems to present the scandal of the time, not as Tacitus did that of Rome--to present an accurate picture of the times, but only for the sake of scandal.

His novels came to light by wholesale and by cubic meters; Mr. Fernández y González had an establishment in liquidation within his head, says Valdés. These novels were destined to entertain the less learned classes of society. They lost almost altogether the character of literary works and were for a time even prohibited from many libraries. The only things he paid attention to, in writing his novels, were to

surprise, to frighten feminine imaginations, to excite curiosity, carrying it all along violently by incredible and absurd happenings.

In this manner he captured an immense popularity. He had, and still has, many readers, but they give him no lasting reputation. They read only for distraction, 'to kill time', and usually do not even stop to look at the name of the author whose book they hold. If they should notice the author's name, they are not capable of attributing admiration to him, as likewise a child never stops to admire the inventor of a game with which he diverts himself. Such is the opinion which the critic, Valdés, has of this novelist.

Valdés believes that the novel of intrigue, which Fernández y González cultivated better than any other writer in Spanish literature, is the most detrimental institution ever invented for the affliction of letters, except the ten cent novel, into which the last drops of disordered inspiration of Fernández y González have been compressed. The absolute absence of artistic foresight is noteworthy in his last novels, according to Valdés. The author does not, he says, meditate nor calculate anything which constitutes the background and form of a Romantic novel. He prefers to abandon himself to the tumultuous current of improvisation, and there follows scene after scene of delirious fantasy. The opinion of Valdés is that Manuel Fernández y González converted his art into a business by writing so much that no one thing was in his mind long enough to become good literature.

Manuel de la Revilla has written a criticism of González in the introduction to Una vida pintoresca--Manuel Fernández y González, by H. Hernández-Girbal, which seems to be a more sympathetic treatment of the novelist than that of Valdés. The gist of the introduction, in free translation, is as follows:

> The misled genius is like a fallen angel, who even in the depths of the abyss retains the vestiges of his past grandeur. Such is don Manuel Fernández y González. Flung by his ill luck to regions where he should never have descended, he never completely lost the great gifts with which nature had endowed him.
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> Highly ardent imagination, powerful and inexhaustible inventiveness, great and impetuous inspiration, such were the gifts which were given to Fernández y González. He had it in his power to become one of Spain's greatest lyric poets, dramatists, and novelists; but by misfortune, exterior circumstances on one side and his own defects on the other, such beautiful qualities have been made entirely sterile. The Spanish race, almost always superior in artistic endowment, has the disadvantage of being indolent and averse to study. The Spaniard, who has a lively imagination and is characterized by the clarity of his intelligence, shows a hostile reaction to study, and does not care to improve his native qualities by work.
>
> In Spain, the cultivation of letters is not a lucrative profession. The Spanish people applaud themselves in possessing many literary geniuses, but rarely are they given anything to eat. He who follows the profession of writing and does not unite it with political or military pursuits, may live full of glory but may die from hunger. He who lives by his pen must produce much work and produce it quickly, and these certainly are not the best conditions for producing perfect literary contributions. In another country, Fernández y González might have been a great writer; in Spain he contributed in a large way to the decadence of letters, but not without leaving powerful productions worthy of his genius and fame.
>
> If Manuel Fernández y González had been given an enormous dose of equal quantities of reflection, correction, and good taste, he would have been the greatest of Spain's novelists. His invention and

ability to give interest and movement to his stories could not have been improved, but it is useless to look for detailed study and finished picture of his characters, nor does he give detailed and finished pictures of epochs and places, nor that distinction and good taste which the contemporary novel claims.

He imitated Alexander Dumas, not seeing anything in his novels except action, and he sacrifices all to that. He looked always for effects and strove vigorously to cause surprise. In short, he reproduced in a low modern form the book of caballerias. If Fernández y González had studied and had gone deep into the depths of history, he might have competed with Sir Walter Scott and Bulwer-Lytton. However, he was obliged by necessity to write by the job, and immediately fell into the boundless depth which is called the novel of intrigue, and which today has been converted into the dime novel (el tomo de a peseta).

Fernández y González wrote three hundred novels amounting to nearly five hundred volumes, in addition to much poetry and drama. Any one of the historical novels previously cited (page 62) would have been enough to give fame to the author. But these are not the only laurels of González. His lyric poetry ascends not infrequently to that grandiloquence, that elevation of concept, and richness of form which are glorious stamps of the celebrated sevillana school. He also deserves praise as a dramatist although he does not, of course, compete with the masters. His productions reveal some outstanding qualities. He follows faithfully the classic tradition of Spain, looking for his inspirations in the glorious deeds of history or in the poetic customs of Spanish ancestors, romantic without exaggeration, adroit at times in painting of characters, vigorous in his effects; not always happy in the choice of subjects, energetic, brilliant and picturesque, Fernández y González occupies a worthy place among Spanish dramatists.

Such is Manuel Fernández y González a singular mixture of great qualities and great defects, meriting at the same time enthusiastic applause and severe censure. His place in Spanish letters has been like that of a storm cloud, which shades with its beauty and at the same time rains desolation and ruin everywhere. This quotation might be fittingly applied to him "to erect a statue in his honor and burn the greater part of his works at its feet." [9]

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9. H. Hernández-Girbal, op. cit., Introduction by Manuel de la Revilla.

Thus is concluded the essay written in 1879 by Manuel de la Revilla.

CONCLUSION

In summary, after this study of Manuel Fernández y González, I would say that, while his books hold the interest of the reader, they are novels of the hour, written for amusement and not for art. The beauty of form is lost by the inclusion of too many incidents, too many sub-plots.

My own personal judgment is based only upon the four books: La cruz de Quirós, Historia de los siete murciélagos, Los hermanos Plantagenet, and Luisa, which are not included among his best novels. However, Valdés, Girbal, and Revilla bear out this opinion. The study was an intensely interesting one, especially the part concerning the author's life. His own life, as portrayed by H. Hernández-Girbal, was even more interesting and almost as romantic as some of his own fantastic creations. His was an excellent example of an author whose writings were very popular during his lifetime but did not endure long afterwards. A recognition of Manuel Fernández y González's defects and good points causes one to be more than ever appreciative of good literature, both Spanish and English. Doubtless his poverty and his desire to be more prolific than Lope de Vega contributed to his failure. Had it not been for his poverty, and had he written less, he might have been as great as Sir Walter Scott or Alexander Dumas.

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