AN EXAMINATION
INTO THE
PHILOSOPHY AND LITERARY EXPRESSION
OF
DON RAMON DEL VALLE INCLAN

BY

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INTRODUCTION

The old cry that nothing changes in Spain is no longer true. Entire Spain has been reorganized within the last forty years and this change in politics and national outlook, as is usually the case, has left its impression upon the national literature. Such upheavals are always accompanied by a huge literary output.

Galdós, in January of 1874, in one of his Episodios nacionales-Napoleón en Chamartín-regretted that Spain, once the leader of Europe in the quality and number of its novels and novelists, should have so dissipated its abilities as to be unable to do more than translate "those sentimental French stories". By a happy coincidence the renaissance of Spanish literature began that same year with the appearance of Alarcon's El Sombrero de tres picos and Valera's Pepita Jiménez. Since their appearance the Spanish public has revived its interest in novels and poetry and Spanish literary endeavor has taken on renewed energy.

The most interesting fact brought out by a study 1.

of contemporary Spanish writers is the variety of styles, of tastes, of tendencies among authors. Each is expressing his own individuality. The day of enslavement to French models is past. Spanish novelists insist on doing their own thinking and in creating their own styles, sometimes turning the tables and making of themselves models for foreign imitation.

The modern tendency is toward careful treatment, painstaking selection, devotion to minute detail. The distinguishing quality of modern Spanish writers is their power of evocation, which González Blanco defines as that ability—possessed solely by great artists—to awaken in the hidden recess of our soul violent shocks with clear visions of reality.¹ These writers, possessing a beautiful thought or a bit of propaganda demanding to be heard, so thrilled with the importance of the idea itself, present it in a series of pen pictures, caring little for plot or thread of narrative. Their passion is to make their readers see the thing as they see it, to feel the truth as they feel it, and to this end they spend their energies. The result is a delightful experience for the reader, who may keep the color, the vigor, the beauty of the thought, the author's angle of

view, the impression of the whole, without giving space in his memory to detailed incidents and involved plots.

In Ramón Jaén's list of celebrities he places first in point of literary personality Ramiro de Maeztú, Valle Inclán, José Martínez Ruiz, Pío Baroja, and Manuel Bueno. Their services they have enlisted in radical causes; heat of feeling has carried them to extremes but the very blaze of their belief in themselves and their purpose, purifies and justifies their production. They owe little or nothing to their predecessors; indeed they have no predecessors. What they place their names to, we may feel confident, is original. They love art, natural, true, without disguise. Their influence cannot but be for the betterment of their people; their firm stand for truth, for actuality, must be felt in stabilizing the restless elements of their country.

The renaissance, begun by Alarcón, Valera, and Fernán Caballero, started with a rush. Its natural fatigue and the "Great Disaster" caused a slowing-up in literary output from 1895 until about 1900, when it began again feverishly to make up for lost time. By 1909 another slump had come on. Felipe Trigo was very popular with young readers, who, far from being shocked at his stories, found them very entertaining.

With an insatiable reading public always demanding novelty and only half a dozen writers to supply the demand for "best sellers", masterpieces cannot be expected. It is too close now upon the time of their production to determine what will be the final place in literary history of the novels of these contemporary writers. Mere number of editions and total sales figures are not the basis for consideration; but rather the lasting qualities,—depth of feeling and conception, beauty of style that will bear re-reading, strength of purpose and universality of application.

There is no modern language so rich in possibilities as Spanish, no language so capable of expressing exactly the desired thought, so completely able to stir, through the cadence and rhythm of its syllables, our emotions to their depths. And there have been few writers so well fitted to try the fullest possibilities of this language, as the man who is to be the subject of our consideration, Don Ramón del Valle Inclán, conceded to be the greatest living master of Spanish prose style,¹ not excepting Martínez Sierra.

The ability is his to find for every idea the phrase carrying its exact shade of meaning, —sobriedad, González Blanco calls it.² He spends much time and care on his books and they are comparatively short. He sometimes has put out

1. Gonzáles Blanco; Los contemporáneos, p. 10.
only one book in a year, sometimes three or four, but never has he shown anything like the phenomenal production of prolific writers. The reputation which Valle Inclán's style has won more than repays him for the demands on his patience.

Very little is known in America about the personal life of Valle Inclán. A few suggestions may be pieced together from available articles by Spanish critics of his work. We know that he was born in 1870 and that his parents belonged to the aristocratic class. His name, as he is fond of signing it, Don Ramón del Valle Inclán, shows us his aristocratic tendencies.

In *La lámpara maravillosa*¹ he tells us that in early manhood he lost an arm by amputation and was on that account obliged to give up all thought of the active career of adventure which had attracted him. This physical handicap turned him to literary endeavors.

Luis Araquistain piques our curiosity with suggestions at personal description². He hints that Valle Inclán would be the theme of one of the most delicious and interesting biographies ever written in any language. But he does not enlighten us sufficiently. He speaks of the author as a surprising figure, more capable of attract-

ing attention than a whole crowd and he declares that he, with his gestures, his vocabulary, his diction and his elegance of language, would be a master of oratory if only professional orators in Spain had the least artistic ability. So we understand that Valle Inclán is very able to present his arguments in the legislative assemblies of Spain although he hates politics and politicians and keeps away from them as he would from a contagious disease.

Araquistain corrects the common impression, drawn from a reading of Valle Inclán's first books, from the sight of his barbas de peregrino and from a knowledge of his Carlist sympathies, that he is antiquated and out-of-date, a decade or two too late. He calls him the spirit of all times, reborn and exalted. A veces parece un profeta indio; otras, un sacerdote egipcio; en ocasiones, un apostrofador bíblico; a ratos, un legista romano; un día, un mago medieval; otro, un virrey en América; con frecuencia, cuando habla de la guerra apologéticamente, un capitán carlista...

Pero con haber tanto pretérito acumulado en Valle Inclán, lo característico en él, sin embargo, no es eso sino su aptitud para sentir en la actualidad circundante los gémenes mas ricos de futuro. En este sentido, es uno de los escritores españoles de mayor futuridad.  

1. Vargas Vila: Elogio del autor. Published as an appendix to the drama El Marqués de Bradomín, Madrid, 1907, p. 195.
Besides being a Carlist in his own country, Valle Inclán is an ardent sympathizer in Russia's revolutionary experiments. His spirit, ever searching for truth, eager for activity, hails every endeavor to arrive at realities and basic principles.

The dates of Valle Inclán's books conform to the history of the period into which he entered; —only three before 1900, when interest in literature had not yet been revived after the war; with the bulk of his best work so far appearing before 1910.

The first writings published of which we have a date are the Femeninas, historias amorosas, 1895. Two other books appeared before 1900,—Epitalamio, 1897 and Adegá, 1899. From 1900 until the opening of the Great War, Valle Inclán did his best work. The four Sonatas came first followed by El Marqués de Bradomín, a drama based on the material of the four Sonatas.

The Sonata de otoño is considered by most critics most characteristic of Valle Inclán. Of it, González Blanco says, "We have in this book—which has the inalienable merit worthy of being given a place in the anthology of literary history for having introduced into Spain, a new prose, which is no other than the modern prose—now cultivated here by Doña Emilia Pardo Bazán, and perhaps by her alone,—amended and augmented by the new finisecular tone; we have in this book, I was going to say, demonstrative
examples, indications of the style of Valle Inclán, so rich that in a few years already have appeared a crowd of imitators....

"Mi amor adorado, estoy muriéndome y sólo deseo verte! Aquella carta de la pobre Concha se me extravió hace ya mucho tiempo. Era llena de afán y de tristeza, perfumada de violetas y de un antiguo amor. I have here the first paragraphs of that surprising book; paragraphs which are in themselves conclusive and instructive....The teach first that Valle Inclán's style is not one of contortions and hair-raising, but nobly selected. With worn out and learned words, rightly grouped, he secures sensations which another would be obliged to force with bombastic vowels and high-sounding girations 1." Again 2 the same critic speaks of the Sonata de otoño as ese encantador poema.

These five books all came out by 1907, besides Flor de Santidad. González Blanco speaks of Valle Inclán as the admirable author of the Sonata de otoño and of Flor de Santidad, those two blossoming miracles in the common prose of the Spanish novel of recent times 3.

During the year 1908 appeared four books of short stories. Following these came the series on the Carlist wars;

1. Historia de la novela en España, p. 784.
—Los Cruzados de la Causa, 1908; Gerifaltes de antaño, 1909; and Resplandor de la hoguera, 1909. In the year 1914 appeared the two novels in dialogue form, dealing with Don Juan Manuel de Montenegro, Aguila del blasón and Romance de lobos.

His other later works are of lighter character, books of poetry, short stories, and La cabeza del dragón, a fantastic tale satirizing the constitutional monarchy of Spain, —all of them light except La lámpara maravillosa, in which Valle Inclán presents his own views on Spain, on art, on religion, on life;—anything he found crowding for expression he has put into this volume. It is of great value to the student of Valle Inclán, the artist and the man.

The Great War inspired La media noche, a short, weird dream story of the front line trenches. His last book, Hernán Cortez, is not yet published.

Critics call Valle Inclán the type of perfect artist, a writer with the soul of a conqueror; as able to manage the pen of Dante as to wear the sword of the Cid; very superior to Tolstoy and very similar to Josephin Peladin; a medieval soul, mixture of de Vinci and Savonarola, full of germinations of art and of obsessions of death. He has a power of ideation, and leaves with us that impression, inaccessible and inexplicable, despotic and sweet at the same time.

1. Idem. p.790.
Vargas Vila thinks Valle Inclán will not triumph in Spain but that the intellectual youth of America already so exquisitely cultivated, that youth which has made of Art something resembling a theology of Beauty, will seize upon Valle Inclán, will acclaim him, will follow him as the highest and purest master which the Renaissance in literary Spain can offer to the avid inquietude of their souls, enamored of a serious ideal.¹

As a man's personality colors all his actions and as it is only through the fruits of his mind that his mental processes may be discovered, perhaps we may, by analyzing the work of Valle Inclán, find the key which will open to us his personality, —those qualities which distinguish him from other men.

¹ Idem, p. 204.
CHAPTER I
Philosophy of Valle Inclán.

Section I
El temple de las almas.

Yo no admiraba tanto los hechos hazañosos, como el temple de las almas, y este apasionado sentimiento me sirvió igual que una hoguera, para purificar mi Disciplina Estética 1.

When Valle Inclán was a young man, he was attracted equally by literary glory and the glory of adventure 2. But when he was about thirty years old, his arm was amputated, thus removing from his thoughts any serious plans he may have had for seeing the world in whatever guise offered attractive possibilities. The sadness caused by this forced renunciation was somewhat lightened by his, as yet, undeveloped literary ability. He had written for publication, up to this time (1900) Femeninas, Epitalamio, and Adega.

From this circumstance Valle Inclán chose literature as his profession and made the souls of men and women his study.

To him the souls of men are always sad, lonely, misunderstood. No matter what the enjoyment of the present hour, the soul feels the futility of it, and seeks always the truth of love, of life, of God. And the search is long.

He finds that there are three transitions through which the soul must pass in its search for truth and peace. First,

1. La lámpara maravillosa, p.28
amor doloroso, where the heart is hurt at misunderstanding and cannot rise above its disappointments to see their ultimate triviality. Second, amor gozosó, where the heart has been hurt so many times that it seems it must take all the pleasures it can find and harden itself not to see the aches and disappointments. Last comes love with renunciation and peace, where the heart sees finally the vanity of earthly things and gets its pleasure from contemplation of and prayer for a future where disappointments and despair do not enter.

The souls of all Valle Inclán's characters are sad. Their sorrow draws the sympathy of readers who might otherwise feel disapprobation.

María Rosario¹, when the Marqués first met her, a girl of sixteen in a home happy with the laughter of four sisters and the love of a beautiful mother, with every want supplied and no reason for any care, has seen, in the miserable beggars at the gates, the sorrow that mars her joyousness. For such as they she is to give up her life of luxury and pleasure and to take up one of service and sacrifice.

The Marqués' words give us a sympathetic picture of María Rosario. Era una figura ideal que me hizo recordar aquellas santas hijas de príncipes y de reyes. Doncellas de soberana hermosura que con sus manos delicadas curaban a los leprosos. El alma de aquella niña encendíase con el

¹. Sonata de primavera.
mismo anhelo de santidad. Lloraba en silencio y resplandecía hermosa y cándida como una Madona, en medio de la sórdida corte de mendigos que se acercaban de rodillas para besarle las manos. María Rosario también tenía una hermosa leyenda, y los lírios blancos de la caridad también la aromaban. Vivía en el Palacio como en un convento, y cuando sus manos se aplicaban a una labor monjil su mente sonaba sueños de santidad. Hubiera querido convertir el Palacio en albergue donde se recogiese la procesión de viejos y lisiados, de huérfanos y locos que llenaba la capilla pidiendo limosna y salmodiando padrenuestrros. Suspiraba recordando la historia de aquellas santas princesas que acogían en sus castillos a los peregrinos que volvían de Jerusalén.

The Marqués himself was bored with the uselessness of his life. He had experienced every sensation, yet had nothing to remember with satisfaction nor anything to anticipate with eagerness. His life was already burned out. He realized it in his heart and it grieved him. El cielo siempre enemigo dispuso que sólo las rosas de Venus floreciesen en mi alma, y a medida que envejezco, eso me desconsuelo más. Presiento que debe ser grato cuando la vida declina poder penetrar en

1. *Idem*, p. 89.
4. See Chapter IV.
el jardín de los amores perversos. A mí desgraciadamente ni aun me queda la esperanza. Sobre mi alma ha pasado el aliento de Satanás encendiendo todos los pecados: Sobre mi alma ha pasado el suspiro del Arcángel encendiendo todas las Virtudes. He padecido todos los dolores, he gustado todas las alegrías. He apagado mi sed en todas las fuentes, he reposado mi cabeza en el polvo de todos los caminos. Un tiempo fui amado de las mujeres, sus voces eran familiares. Sólo dos cosas han permanecido siempre arcanas para mí. El amor de los efebos y la música de ese Teutón que llaman Wagner

Concha, while happy in the love of the Marqués, was always conscious of the fact that it would not be long until death would take her from him, and this ever present presentiment replaced some of the sweetness with sadness. But she faced the tragedy with a brave heart.

María Antonieta regretted the tangle she had made of her life. Hers was a conflicting nature, —the soul of a saint but the blood of a courtesan, with neither strong enough to dominate the other. The result was that her unfaithfulness to her husband brought her the joy of being loved but also a sense of failure in duty which saddened that joy. Not until her soul rose above her selfish desire for pleasures of the moment, did her heart and soul find rest,

2. Sonata de otoño.
3. Sonata de Invierno.
— the third phase of Valle Inclán's theory, —love of renunciation and peace.

Maximina was sad without knowing why. She was old without ever having been young. In her eyes was the answer to life, calm and sure, but still she did not know life; she knew the end of life but not its path.

Don Juan Manuel's was a soul saddened by ingratitude. The conduct of his five sons, dragging the noble name of Montenegro in the dirt, shamed him so that he scarcely cared to lift his head.

The heroines of Valle Inclán's short stories are commonly women who have found love outside marriage and are striving against the laws of convention. They are determined to have their happiness but the voice of conscience and religious teaching keep before them always the sin they are committing and tinge their joy with sadness.

As Valle Inclán says, we see that he is more interested in souls than in deeds. And he finds souls uniformly saddened by the vanities of this world and their search after the lasting truths.

1. Sonata de Invierno.
2. Aguila de blasón, Romance de lobos.
3. See page 1. supra.
The most striking thing about Valle Inclán's philosophy is his idea of el dolor de vivir. We find it everywhere expressed; it is his guiding motif. Every chapter breathes it, every character lives it.

If any one of his characters seems not yet to have discovered it, as la Niña Chole had not, he helps them to see it. He forces it upon them before the reader ends their acquaintance. No one is safe from it; the young children who must work for their living; the noble ladies who must renounce lovers for the sake of duty; mothers who must lose loved children; old men who realize the emptiness of their lives; the poor who have no hopes of comfort; all classes are alike touched by el dolor de vivir. It is the

1. Aromas de leyenda, p. 39.
2. Idem, p. 53.
all pervading atmosphere of Valle Inclán.

If people remained always as innocent and ignorant as children, with sensibilities unresponsive for long to sorrow and pain, easily led into new pleasures with no regrets for the old, memories insufficiently trained to tax themselves with old injuries, if people could remain as children they would not experience _dolor de vivir_.

Qué cruel es la vida cuando no caminamos _porella como ninos ciegos_.

As long as people insist in tasting the pleasures of this present life, they must experience the bitterness of their disappointment. And as they near the end _mirar atrás con el dolor de haber vivido es pasar bajo el arco de la muerte_.

Valle Inclán, in the book which expresses best his own philosophy says, _El dolor de vivir me lleno de temira_.

_Estos mis ojos de tierra están tristes de mirar y de amar_.

_El conocer de los ojos y de los oídos, todo el humano y carnal conocimiento exprime dolor, porque encubre siempre el deseo de perpetuarnos sobre el haz de la Tierra_.

This ever present grief, Valle Inclán says is the law of God.

2. _La lámpara maravillosa_, p. 213.
3. _Idem_, p. 35.
5. _Idem_, p. 146.
6. _Jardín novelesco_, p. 98
Christ wounded is struggling along in company with the holy hermit, who begs, Maestro, dejad que restañe vuestras heridas! Christ answers him, No puedo, Amaro. Debo enseñar a los hombres que el dolor es mi ley.¹

Valle Inclán has a group of beggars discuss this point:

**Ciego:** Reír no es loquear.

**Auxelo:** Pero es de rapaces que aun no conocen las penas del mundo.

**Ciego:** Y también de los viejos que las saben olvidar.

**Auxelo:** El Señor nos da las penas para que nos abracemos con ellos, y el que las olvida no cumple su ley.

**Ciego:** Y tu, cativo, piensas que yo puedo olvidar alguna vez que me falta la luz de los ojos?

**La Moza:** Cantar y reír nunca fué pecado.

**Auxelo:** Eso dice el Demonio. Pero para reír y cantar hay que holgar y dejar la tierra sin cavar. Y del no sembrar viene el no tener pan, y el robar, y el matar.²

Work and happiness do not combine for Valle Inclán. Effectively he contrasts them telling of the clown who died of sadness while making the people laugh at his jokes.³

¹. *Idem*, p. 98.
Pedro Pondal, the fortunate lover, was not happy although he was quite young and had experienced no misfortune. Octavía had defied convention to satisfy her love for him and to make him happy. But his head prematurely pensive seemed bowed with a mysterious sadness. His melancholy glance was the glance of those young men who, profoundly ignorant of life, seem to have a vision of all its griefs and all its miseries.

The Marqués is another example of el dolor de vivir. Old, gray, lonely, unattractive, he had the further grief of losing an arm. Me sentía muy débil, y al verme en pie con mi brazo cercenado, confieso que era grande mi tristeza.

Antonia, loved against her wishes by a young man who has taken first orders in the priesthood, regrets her involuntary attraction. It causes her so much anxiety that she becomes "all white and sad, bathed in a mysterious twilight, and so pale that she seemed to wear a halo like the moon."

For Valle Inclán, grief is on every hand, stealthily reaching out to surprise its victims with its cold grasp. No one is exempt; everyone must pass down the same road and at some place along the course his time will come. Though

1. Idem, p. 28.
2. Four Sonatas and the Marqués de B.
3. Sonata de Invierno, p. 188.
4. Cofre de sándalo.
5. Idem, p. 103
Following the shipwreck,¹ which Don Juan Manuel had escaped by coming ashore earlier in the night, when all on board were drowned, along the shore the widowed women and fatherless children were wailing. Those who heard them were sympathizing with them in their sudden sorrow, for to them would fall the same lot as to others upon whom fortune had frowned. Nothing was left them, but to beg alms at the gates that had once known them as guests.²

Valle Inclán pictures all poor people as downtrodden, lacking in incentive, and resistless to the course toward fate's waves might drive them. La suerte de un pobre es más triste que la de un cán.³

La Roja,⁴ who has been a life-long servant in the house of Don Juan Manuel, when she is to be ejected by the old man's five sons, realizes that she has no place in which to live out her hundred years. Where would she find a place to earn her bread, discharged from under this roof she had known so many years. Well she knew that she would not be able to find another protecting roof and una boca, aun cuando no tenga dientes, es una carga muy grande!⁵

1. Romance de lobos.
4. Águila del blasón and Romance de lobos.
5. Romance de lobos, p. 254.
Nor do Valle Inclán's poor try to bring into their starved lives the limited joy and brightness which their meager funds will allow. But, instead, resigned to their station and fortune, martyrs to their shortsightedness and fatalistic views, they fold their hands and await the inevitable results of their indifference, a state worse than the existing one. But they were born to poverty and no amount of exertion on their part could change their station in life.

Valle Inclán shows a sympathetic attitude toward these poor people: la condición del pobre, que sólo tiene una sábana de tierra, y un cobertor de tierra, y un jergón de tierra ... ¡y eso al morir! ¹ He realizes their condition but he offers no suggestions for its improvement, accepting the poor as an inevitable result of the selfishness of our civilization. Son muchos los pobres de Dios. Son muchos y han de ser más.²

The grief of living has reached already the little fellow³ whose grandmother has found him employment, guiding an old blind beggar. The little fellow considers sorrowfully the long road, stretching out far into the distance, and the wide fields which they must traverse in search of alms. They set their pace to give time to the old blind man's uncertain

¹. El embrujado, p. 42.
². Idem, p. 16.
³. Jardín novelesco.
feet and disappear very slowly down the road, while the old grandmother wipes her eyes, — ¡Malpocado! nueve años y gana el pan que come! ¡Alabado sea Dios! The boy of nine, just one of God's poor, has the responsibility of winning his own bread.

Valle Inclán gives us a vivid picture of the poor, some blind, some leprous, some crippled, homeless, starving, many of them utterly hopeless.

Los pobres de Dios
Por los caminos florecidos.
Van la caravana de los desvalidos,
Ciegos, leprosos, y tullidos.

No tienen albergue en la noche fría.
No tienen yantar en la luz del día,
Por eso son hijos de Santa María.
El polvo quema sus llagas rojas,
Sus oraciones son congojas:
Van entre el polvo como las hojas,
Van por caminos de sementeras,
Caminas verdes entre eras,
Endonde cantan las vaqueras.

In this poem as in other mention of the poor,

2. Aromas de leyenda,
Valle Inclán displays a sympathetic analysis of the lives of the poor, but offers no solution to their problems.

Valle Inclán clothes old age in sadness and regrets. Lloró al sentir la vida: Era un viejo muy viejo.  

Don Pedro\(^2\) when his son was murdered, became hard and cynical over his loss, tyrannizing over his household. But when he was refused his baby grandson to be the joyousness of his home and the companionship of his old age, he was too old to bear up under the fresh disappointment. "So old and so lonely. Now they may bury me." \(^3\)

The desolation of being left alone in old age after having known the loving companionship of a family, is one of life's griefs hardest to bear. Life then seems so useless and interminable. After having started one's family well on the path to goodness and happiness, to have them all pass on and leave behind the only one whose task is finished, seems out of the proper perspective, unnatural, inharmonious with nature's scheme.

A grandmother\(^3\) who has borne seven children and made seven burial dresses, is caring very tenderly for her only grandchild. Those children were given her that she might have the pain of bearing them and were then taken from her by death just when they might have been an aid to her declining years. How many tears her eyes had shed and how many more they had yet to shed! The dogs have howled for

1. *El embrujado*.
3. *Jardín novelesco*. 

three nights at her door. She had hoped that death would spare to her the baby grandson, the one she loves most of all her children, but death is relentless and comes also for this one.¹

A ghastly picture of the tragedy of living is that presented by the three young men who came home from the mill singing merrily.² They are bitten by a mad wolf. Los tres mozos, que antes eran encendidos como manzanas, ahora ñanse quedando mas amarillos que la cera. The three become outcasts and sit around in the sun awaiting death's summons, the strongest one helping the weaker two to crawl after food. Finally death comes to all three on the same night.

Grief is the constant companion of life all along the way. Don Juan Manuel ³ asks Paula, when her baby is crying, why she doesn't strangle it. What right had she to give it the misery she has known? Much better to let it die now. It will have to weep of hunger every day of its life just as it is doing now. Is it not a shame? To strangle it would remove it forever out of the reach of suffering and give to its soul liberty. — Ojala nos retorciessen el cuello a todos cuando nacemos.⁴

3. Aguila del blasón and Romance de lobos.
Amor y dolor son como el símbolo de la vida humana y nunca van deshermanadas. Amor sin dolor es una comprensión divina: Dolor sin amor un círculo de Satanás.

Love for Valle Inclán is synonymous with life. Then grief, his inseparable companion of life, must be inalienably linked with love. And we find it true, he does so inevitably combine them.

The Marqués 2 is a good representative of this theory. As he bends over Isabel, just after Concha's death, he says: "I am a saint who always love when I am sad." 3

Contrary to many popular modern novelists, Valle Inclán does not attribute to love such lasting qualities as faith, respect, understanding, trust. For him love and passion are synonymous and for that reason fleeting and fickle.

Octavia: Es mi único amor, mi verdadero y último amor!
María Antonia (su madre): ¡Ay, hija, nunca se sabe cuando es el último!

Young people may persuade themselves that they have been exceptionally favored by being allowed to discover a wonderful love, a true and lasting love. Then Valle Inclán

1. La lámpara maravillosa, p. 113.
2. Four Sonatas and Marqués de Bradomín.
4. El yermo de las almas, p. 90.
will mock their hopes:

Los desengaños,
El reumatismo, los amores,
Nunca matan. Matan los años
Cuando no matan los doctores

Siempre el amor parece eterno,
y siempre encuentra sepultura
Bajo las nieves de un invierno

El amor sólo ofrece desengaños

Spontaneity and involuntariness are Valle Inclán's never failing attributes of love. If love requires safeguarding, then it is not love; if it is jailed, it breaks its iron bonds, seeking freedom. Love is a proud servant, rendering homage only to the one it loves. Obedience may not be forced upon it. The only hope Valle Inclán sees for reviving a dying love is to free it again, to wander where it will, praying that it will not become interested elsewhere, but will return eventually to its old love, having decided that there are to be found in that love all the possibilities of any other. The secret of love's thrill is avoidance of the constant companionship that induces excessive familiarity with sordid details. Lovers require vacations from each other, friendships with others who serve

1. La Marquesa Rosalinda, p. 33
2. Idem, p. 133.
only to compare unfavorably with the loved one. The danger of married life is its unattractive routine and sordid intimacy. Many of Valle Inclán's heroines rebel at monotonous marriages and find the thrill, the spice of love in affairs with lovers. The fact that the daily lives and habits of these lovers are so little known to the women gives added zest and interest to the situation.

A woman in love is always young. 1 When she suffers she drowns her sorrow in tears; a man drowns his in blood. The desolation of being unloved makes the hours years. 2 Valle Inclán is of the opinion that only to woman does time offer insult 4. Man has so many interests to divide his attention. Love is the sole object of woman's anxiety and it causes her much concern.

Concha 5 in the arms of her lover, experiences the pain of loving which Valle Inclán describes so plausibly. Her arms encircled the Marqués' neck, she allowed her head to fall on his shoulder, and she wept. She wept for love, and for fear of eternal punishment 6.

Love and suffering are the same to Valle Inclán; the only thing of value to be sought in life. All life resolves itself into love. All the changes of our temporal

1. El yermo de las almas, p. 92.
2. Idem, p. 22.
3. La Marquesa Rosalinda, p. 168.
5. Sonata de otoño and Marqués de Bradomín.
lives are vain imaginings, and in the end combine as a unit of love or grief in arcanum of the life immortal.\(^1\)

The author defines love as ability to comprehend.\(^2\) So we may infer, since loving implies grief, that by understanding one comes to grieve, not merely for love selfishly, but for life, its vastness, its difficulty, its impending awesomeness. Individual effort is so puerile in its attempt to make an impression upon the forces of the world, to utilize them for personal advantage.

We saw before that suffering is the law of God.\(^3\) We find again, that linking of grief with love, that Christ our Lord wrote into love the highest perfection.\(^4\)

We have numerous expressions of the author's theory of the inseparableness of love and grief. Dona María\(^5\) is described as having a smile more sad than tears; and eyes that regarded Sabelita compassionately, eyes that had wept for the same pains of love for which Sabelita's were now weeping.

We find that connoisseur of love, the Marqués,\(^6\) experiencing the same sensations. Meditating on Maximina and her confession of love for him, he felt a flood of tears rise to his eyelids. It was the emotion of love, which gives a profound feeling of sadness to lives that are being ex-

1. _La lámpara maravillosa_, p. 148.
2. _Idem_, p. 110.
3. See supra,
5. _Aguila del blason_, p. 111.
6. _Four Sonatas and the Marques de Bradomín_.
The melancholy of a lovers' separation is touching. Their lives during the days that they were without seeing each other were ardent murmurs, interspersed with sighs. They held the melancholy of love and of the night. But within a few pages a brighter note is struck. There seems to be an unmixed joy of loving which appears only infrequently in Valle Inclán. The pains of love are soon turned to happiness. Among lovers it is always so. De las querellas salen las fiestas.

The countess of one of the short stories although she loved Aguiles Calderón very much, was hurt by his chance slighting words. Everything had ended between them. He had made of her an honorable woman, and she would continue to be so. Her daughters should not be shamed by hearing of their mother such things as he had just said of her mother. Her tone was at once so sad and so sincere that Aguiles Calderón realized that he had lost her. But the glance which she directed to him from the doorway, as she was leaving him forever, was not of hate, but of love!

A little girl, waiting for her lover's ship, sews on her wedding dress as she watches. She keeps watching the sea, that line where it meets the sky and her eyes and the pale rose of her lips hold a sacred sadness. With a sob she

1. Sonata de Invierno, p. 192.
2. Corte de amor, p. 121
4. Cofre de sándalo.
5. Idem, p. 222.
bends her head and kisses her work.

The captain is drowned at sea and the little girl, grieving for her lost lover, enters a convent. She takes with her his letters asking that she may keep them, a request which the abbess grants. Her trembling fingers show the good mother a cross which she takes from one letter. "It was his last letter. When I read it he had already passed from this world." She closed her eyes to stop her tears and kissed the cross.

Dona Isoldina,\textsuperscript{1} on the happiest day of her life, lost the one who was nearest to her of all the world, her husband. Colombina,\textsuperscript{2} finding her lover flirting with another, is assailed by jealousy; the bitterest pain of love.

¡Ingrato! ¡Falso! ¡Engañador!
¡Todo lo oí!
¡Voy a morirme de dolor!
¡No te rias! ¡Yo soy así!

The sorrows of mother love deserve a place in this classification. The author has given this theme sympathetic treatment in \textit{la Princesa},\textsuperscript{3} the mother of María Rosario who has decided to enter a convent. The princess finds such a plan difficult to accept. She realizes that it will be a

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{El embrujado}, p. 118.
\textsuperscript{2} \textit{La Marquesa Rosalinda}, p. 68.
\textsuperscript{3} \textit{Sonata de Primavera}. 
great comfort to know that the temptations and dangers of the world will not exist for her beloved daughter. But at the same time, her love makes it difficult for her to persuade herself that María Rosario may carry out her wishes. She must repeat her arguments often to keep herself convinced. She understood that her daughter would be much happier in the convent than at her side and she finally became resigned.

But when María Rosario entered her mother's room, wearing the white gown which would be her only garb for all her life, the princess turned very white. Tears came to her eyes and she fought in vain to hold them back. She embraced her daughter desperately and could not keep back a cry of anguish.

The author's lovers always suffer from love;—its physical pent up emotions expressed in tears, its desolation, its delay, its jealousies. They cannot be happy with it nor can they live without it.
Section 4.

Religion.

La moral de la vida es eso:
¡Una armoma de contrarios!¹

"Vanity, vanity, all is vanity." Love only survives; the rest is merely temporary.

Monseñor Gaetani, a priest, a nobleman of well known family, when he came to die, realized that most of his life had been given to things that were not essential. His honors, his greatness, everything he had hoped to realize during his life, at the moment of his death, scattered before his eyes like ashes. But God did not abandon him; he showed him the bitterness and emptiness of things. Shadows of Eternity surrounded him but his soul was lighted within with the glory of divine favor.²

The world is a dark prison through which souls must pass until they reach the light.³ Cares, disillusions, the actual poverty of wealth, recall the total vanity of human affairs.⁴

El mundo .... simboliza el mudar de las cosas y el cuidado que ponemos en ello.⁵

To analyze, to select the essential and eternal, is to know things in their divine relations,⁶ to grasp the significance

1. La Marquesa Rosalinda, p. 135.
2. Sonata de Primavera, p. 38.
3. Romance de lobos, p. 140.
5. La lámpara maravillosa, p. 151.
of their existence. All things speak a truth which man has not yet learned to understand. Shadows and sounds, the stars that are alternately lighted and extinguished, the silver waters that reflect them in their depths, events that echo over the world, all have an eternity and an efficacy in the grand rhythm of the world, where nothing is lost because all is the work of God.¹

It is not given to youth with its innocence, nor to old age with its wealth of experience, to divine the secret of eternity, but only is it given to the Supreme Judge to reveal at his pleasure the invisible ties which bind us to that future mysterious and far distant.²

Our minds are repeatedly inquiring into the destinations of our spirits when our bodies are given back to dust.³ The secrets of Nature are a continual marvel. Who tells the wheat to ripen and the bird where to come to rest? How does the rock know its purpose or the ripple its destination? Everything in the world has an endless path but it has to be forever a mystery until the death candles light our way into eternity.

We all love life because we know that at the end of the road is death, and we are like the ghosts of a tragedy who only reach their full measure of beauty of soul when confronted by the challenge of their destiny.⁴

3. Aromas de leyenda, p. 51.
4. La lámpara maravillosa, p. 174.
There is escape for those who love God, from everything except death. Pain is not fatal; no evil brings death in this world. It is only that God selects his own. We fear death because we are cowards. We have all come into the world to suffer. Our tribulations are the work of God and no one in this world has the power to make them cease. Death is not our greatest torture. It may be our greatest gift. For the sinner it is eternal night, but for the just it becomes eternal light. And to reach this eternal light, to merit God's favor, all that is necessary is to be human. Our purpose, our reason for existence, is to react naturally to the surrounding forces and circumstances. Impulses and instincts were not given to be ignored or denied. The life of pleasure and of the flesh is as much a part of the human program as any other life. Let each follow the promptings of his own desires and at the close of his life, just before passing on into the future life, let him devote a few hours or days to repentance and preparation of the spirit for eternity.

Valle Inclán urges upon himself the necessity of know-

3. Idem, p. 36.
5. Marqués de Bradomín, p. 36.
7. Aguila del blasón, p. 287.
ing things from all angles, of being a functioning part of the universe, pulsing with life and sensibility, loving and desiring with a worldly heart, creating within oneself the desire to be in the heart of things, learning the infinite longings of each form of life.\(^1\) When considering a tree, see it not only as does the gardener who gathers the fruit, but as does the wanderer who seeks its shade, the bird who builds in its branches, and the caterpillar entwined in its green leaf. Love this tree with all its influences, free from monetary gain, forgetful of self and worldly ends.\(^2\)

The author urges himself to love all things, not for the profit they are to him, but for the consciousness that all things are good. \(^3\) ¡Busca entodas las cosas un ingenuo conocimiento y procura amarlas en el bien ajeno, olvidada para siempre de tus fines mundanos, alma peregrina del mundo! \(^4\)

All three sides of development are equally important to Valle Inclán. He pleads for the lighting of the triple flame, joining la voz sagrada del barro y la voz genética de la forma, con el gemido de tu conciencia angélica. \(^5\)

1. La lámpara maravillosa, p. 190.
2. Idem, p. 190
5. Idem, p. 223.
At the close of the book which is made up of Valle Inclán's views on various subjects he has placed a chapter which is, in a way, a sermon, an exhortation addressed to the world wanderer.

He counsels the wayfarer to learn "to love the solitude of mountain tops, as the old alchemists searched for the symbolic Gold, the key to all knowledge, seek you the grace of love which you do not have, and perhaps one day you will be able to see upon the road of the afternoon the white shadow, the human form of the Word of Light. Bury in your soul the enjoyment of beauty, create beauty, live in beauty, and on contemplating your past from the other shore you will see love. Do not forget that the last and greatest reason which all things treasure up to be loved, is to be beautiful." Humanity is the fruit chosen from the marriage of the earth and sun. Jesus Christ makes divine the wicked flesh of the world, and his divinity transcends to the eternal substance of things..... Light is the word of all beauty. Light is love. Wanderer without destination, brother, love everything in the light of day and you will convert the wicked flesh of the world into the symbolic circle of the wise man's stone." 2

All flesh is frail and powerless in the grip of tempta-

1. La lámpara maravillosa,
2. La lámpara maravillosa, p. 243-246.
tion. No one is exempt from sin,¹ which, being blood, makes all brothers, even as does the blood of parents.² Incarnation in the flesh implies temptation and sin. *La carne es el pecado nefando, aquel goce sensual donde se relaja y profana la Idea Creadora.*³

Time gives opportunity for misguided action. All life is built of it. All hours are tainted with it.

*El pecado es el tiempo: Las furias y lujurias Son las horas del tiempo que teje nuestra vida*⁴

Even the most saintly carries in his mind the memory of some sin. *Son muy tentadores los caminos!*⁵ The devil is that satanic serpent of personality which infuses into the days of a life a quality which unifies them and makes of them an individuality.⁶

God, though a lenient God, will always punish the sacrilegious.⁷ He is a proud master. But he is very gentle with the penitent sinner, realizing the weaknesses of the flesh. The author believes that for such trespassers on the moral code as *la Niña Chole,*⁸ high heaven would have kind pardon, for hers

1. Sonata de Primavera, p. 154.
4. *Aromas de leyenda,* p. 58.
5. *El embrujado,* p. 82.
7. Sonata de Estío, p. 98
8. Sonata de Estío.
was nothing other than the eternal feminine sin,¹ common to her sex.

Life is predetermined, as unalterably as the paths of stars.² Having no alternative for the deed which lies ahead, the sinner may not then be held accountable for his action. Since the bloody path of life is determined in the stars,³ which heaven guides, the life lived according to first instincts is as true and eternal as the stars.

Life is surrounded by eternal beauty and goodness, and if life will only learn to love this beauty and goodness, it too will become beautiful and good, acceptable to the Creator of all beauty and goodness.

1. Idem, p. 191.
2. La lampara maravillosa, p. 179.
Solo debe procurarnos el triunfo de la causa. La facción republicana, que ahora manda, es una vergüenza para España. 1

Valle Inclán, in his national character, is pre-eminently a Carlist. Small mention is made in his literary works, of his political views. He has written three novels however which he calls the Carlist series, for the reason that they have as a background for their action, the Carlist wars. In these books he allows himself the privilege of some reflections on the present governmental administration.

In Spain it happens that all those who are in positions of importance are robbers. But they wish to be the only ones and that is not right. Justice would be to throw open the citadels and say to the people: We cannot all be good men so we will all be robbers. Then it would be seen how the war and smuggling would end. That would be a good law. It is the true law of God. 2

It is not only the actual head of the Spanish government to whom Valle Inclán objects, but it is also to those in important positions. He thinks it would not be sufficient for his pretender to be given the throne. He thinks many

1. Cruzados de la Causa, p. 38.
2. Idem, p. 102.
times that it would also be well to pass an edict cutting off the heads of those in high position, before his king should take the throne. ¹

Valle Inclán denies emphatically that the race of the old kings has died. The fact that the pretender lives the quiet life of a citizen, does not imply that he is any the less kingly than were his fathers. It is a recommendation rather than a criticism that the young prince should efface himself from royal circles.²

The author favors not so much a certain king as he does the accomplishing of justice throughout the nation, where foxes and thieves, as he calls those in political service have found comfortable resting places. He would organize a party to do justice to that breed of servants who have succeeded in becoming masters over their betters. He would burn their houses for them and lock them all up in the dungeon of his mansion, even if in doing this justice, it should be necessary to half depopulate Spain. Did not God wipe out all the peoples of the earth with the Flood?³

There are two distinct kinds of kings; one a good Christian who walks abroad in the fields and sits down to eat bread with his soldiers; the other, an unbeliever, with more than a hundred wives, never sets foot outside his

1. Idem, p. 179.
2. Voces de gesta, p. 22.
3. Cruzados de la Causa, p. 79.
great palace of Castile.  

A poor beggar may do many evil things without danger of condemning his soul. He who is in the greatest danger of being condemned, is the king, with whose actions everyone is familiar.  

The criticism Valle Inclán makes of the Carlist Cause is that it is broken up into small flames instead of spreading itself into one great blaze of effectiveness.  

Spain does not need new laws, because all laws, from the time they were written, have been bad. What is imperative is Christian application, of existing laws by one who can make of them wise laws, just laws, Christian laws, sympathetic as the teachings of the Evangelist. The common people are like children and should be governed with a gentle hand; the laws should experience throughout their administration the smile of Christ.  

The day when the poor should band together to burn the fields, to poison the fountains, would be a day of great justice. That day will come, and the sun, the sun of fire and blood, will have the face of God. Houses in flames will make them better ovens for their hunger than ovens of bread.

2. El embujado, p. 50.  
3. Cruzados de la Causa, p. 79.  
Women and children and old men and invalids will cry out from the flames and the poor will rejoice.... They were born poor and cannot rebel against their destiny. The redemption of the humble classes must be made by those who were born with the start of gentlemen when the light awakens in their consciences.¹

War has an ideal architecture which only the eyes of the initiated can divine, it is so full of telluric mystery and light. In no creation of man is better revealed the profound sense of landscape or is better sealed with human destiny. War makes eternal the soul of the people.²

War is forgetfulness of its life and of its end! A brilliance which burns out all thought! A blast and a blow of iron which reddens the soul and flays it with metal! A succession of lives in the grace of a familiar peace should be the rule of the world; and the law for all men should be that book, simple and divine, which contains the parables of Jesus..... Blood upon all fields is a sign of redemption.³

Valor is a virtue as great as humility, as kindness, as a voluntary vow of poverty.⁴

Burning and desecrating has never been a necessity of war. It is the atavistic barbarism which is an attendant

1. Romance de lobos, p. 79.
burden. Man yet is very near his ancestor of the woods, and at moments of great stress this progenitor reappears in him. It is true personality which war determines and places in relief, the same as wine does with drunkards. War is hate for the classic world; it is the hatred of foundlings for those of illustrious lineage.¹

In war, the cruelty of today is the clemency of tomorrow. Spain was strong when she placed military morality above compassion for women and children. In that time she had leaders, and saints, and hangmen, which is everything a race needs to rule the world.²

¹ Media noche, p. 54.
² Los Cruzados de la Causa, p. 40
CHAPTER II.
Valle Inclán's Literary Expression.

Section I.
His Ideas on Literary Art.

Ambicione que mi verbo fuese como un claro cristal, misterio, luz y fortaleza. ¹

Valle Inclán is considered to be the greatest living master of Spanish prose style. He arrived at this distinction, not by any attempt to win public approval, but by observing what, to him, was the important rule of writing, individuality. He wrote only for himself, ² not for the favor of multitudes. He compares himself to the nightingale that, from the topmost branch, pours out his soul without thought for or glance toward the world at his feet.

He saw the poetry of nature, he felt the harmony of the universe and the vividness of these sensations insisted upon being expressed in living words; the fever of style, resembling a mystic state, with moments of ecstacy and moments of barrenness and disgust. ³

The set rules of schools and masters, he considers

1. La lámpara maravillosa, p. 178.
vain, crass and ineffective. His method is to set down perceptions and sensations in the unique manner which best expresses their individuality. But despite all efforts at expression there will always remain hermetically sealed something impossible for words. Roads of beauty are mystic paths along which we drift gradually from our personal limitations to merge into the Soul of the World. Such emotion is incapable of being presented in words.

In everything sleeps a power of erotic evocation. Some of these evocations seem to waken at our approach, others hesitate to reveal themselves, others are not yet disclosed, while there are still others that will never be revealed.

Into this world of evocation only the poets penetrate, because for their eyes all things have a religious significance, most nearly approaching the only significance, the true relation of things. There, where most men find only differences, poets discover shining interlacings of hidden harmony. The poet reduces the number of inconsequential allusions to a divine allusion laden with significance. ¡Abeja cargada de miel!  

The poet, like the mystic, must have perceptions reaching beyond the limit which the senses mark, to see

3. Idem, p. 36.
4. Idem, p. 60.
imperfectly in the fiction of the moment and in the apparent turning of the hours, the eternal responsibility. ¹

The poet combines words, assembles them, and with known elements invents a line of monsters for himself. His own. He succeeds thus in awaking sleeping emotions, but not in creating them. That which is not in his consciousness he will never be able to put into words. ²

That which makes Valle Inclán distinct from all men, which before him was not found in anyone, and which after him will not exist in human form, remains fatally sealed within him. He feels it and wishes to express it, giving to his words, in addition to the significance generally carried by them, and without contradicting that significance, an emotional meaning engendered by himself ³. That is his everpresent purpose in writing.

The poet, having expressed himself in the mysterious, divinely inspired musical miracle of words, must always wait for that far off day when his enigmatical verse may be clear as a diamond of light for those other souls of whose sentiments and emotions he has been but the harbinger. The poet should search for in himself the impression of being mute, of not being able to say that which he holds in his heart and he should fight to say it and never be satisfied. ⁴

1. Idem, p. 51.
2. Idem, p. 60.
3. Idem, p. 60.
Everything is to be found in each of us; the only thing we can gain is to become less ignorant of ourselves, by critical study of phenomena and reactions. The words of poets, like those of saints, do not need to be interpreted grammatically to move souls. Their essence is in their musical resonance. Love induces the understanding of the heart, but where intellect comprehends, there speaks the presumption of Satan.

The degeneration of Spain is nowhere more apparent than in her speech. It is with grief and shame that the words of cart drivers and priests alike are heard. Their language is a low contamination of idioms; worldly French, English of the circus ring, and Spanish of the jácara.

Idioms are made by men and it is men who must unmake them. Sad indeed is the destiny of those races buried in the hermetic castle of their own outgrown languages.

It is Spain's duty to create anew a speech ardent, sincere and cordial. For many years, day by day, Valle Inclán has been working to improve the present day hollow and pompous prose which can not now be used in writing if the imperious summons of the hour is felt. Apparently,

4. Idem, p. 76.
5. Idem, p. 80.
such a stage has been allowed to exist this long because writers have been considering words in the light of reli-quaries and not as living hearts.\footnote{Idem, p. 85.}

Castilian started with the alluring promise of becoming the new latin, but for four centuries it has produced only boastful, shallow literature.\footnote{Idem, p. 85.} Eyes and ears were given man to be used in acquiring new thoughts, new perceptions, new education, in creating new reasons among things.\footnote{Idem, p. 88.} But to this day in the divine light of present day knowledge, men follow the classic rhythms, bound fast to them and their traditions and their set forms.\footnote{Idem, p. 89.}

The past has produced little that is worthy of such veneration. The famous legendary poems of ancient writers would be as burnt out ashes if they were not interpreted by modern readers and dressed in the light of present day knowledge.\footnote{Idem, p. 90.}

The greatest joy known to man is the exercise of his ability to create. All progress is the result of this instinctive passion. Writers who follow forms set down by others are falling short of realizing the maximum of which

\begin{itemize}
  \item [1.] Idem, p. 85.
  \item [2.] Idem, p. 85.
  \item [3.] Idem, p. 88.
  \item [4.] Idem, p. 89.
  \item [5.] Idem, p. 90.
\end{itemize}
they are capable.

Literary arts still seem, in spite of their several centuries of development, unformed, undefined and struggling for their existence. They appear as long roads down which uncertain souls wander in exploration of the World Within,—their own hearts. Expression of their truest natures is still in its experimental stages.

Valle Inclán struggled along his road alone, using no stock examples as guides, following no advice, heeding no counsel. His way is his own, unique in its course, distinctive in its end. After nine years of literary activity he announced that he had arrived at literature alone, proud and poor, without sending his books to those called critics and without once finding himself in that gossiping group where the females and eunuchs of Art encourage their vanities.²

In a preface, written in 1903,³ Valle Inclán presents many of his early ideas of literature, including his opinions of contemporary efforts. He confesses love for his own work about to be published, as much love as he has abhorrence for the work of some ancient young men, timorous and prudent, who knew how to join two words for the first time and whose methods were always the eternal hackneyed ones. Incapable of

1. Idem, p. 94.
2. Sonata de primavera, Dedicatoria.
3. Corte de amor.
comprehending that all life and all art are eternal change, they consider it heresy to adopt any measures not consecrated by three centuries of routine. They preach the respectable for the sake of being respected, but youth pretends not to hear their clamours, and it does well. Youth should be arrogant, violent, passionate, iconoclastic.¹

Valle Inclán would not have it understood by these remarks that he advocates the disappearance and death of the classic letters and the fire for all books so long called immortal. They have been many times his masters and he reverences them as he would noble old progenitors. He has always studied them and tried to imitate them but it never occurred to him to consider them inviolable and infallible. But there are in the world many unfortunate ones, victims of the Devil, who argue over the parables of Jesus, but would not dare debate for an instant one of the most worthless comedies of Echegaray or one of Grilo's lamentable sonnets.²

This adulation for everything sacred with the dust of ages is always an indication of intellectual slavery, unfortunately very wide-spread in Spain. Doubtless such conditions have been, in a certain manner, providential, because they served to light the iconoclastic fury which today possesses all young spirits. In art, as in life, to

¹. Idem, p. 20.
destroy is to create. Anarchy is always one sign of life and recuperation, and for Spain it is the only one possible.

Valle Inclán preferred to fight for a personal style. Reading the ancient books, he learned where the false classics were stolen and how the miserable literature of all those wretched ones who went to reap in the fertile fields of Cervantes and Quevedo was disguised. But Valle Inclán found it better to make his own garden and work in it alone and willingly. In this manner he reached his profession of a modernistic faith. He looked within himself and not in others for his expression of truth. The modern literary school, so much discussed, is nothing more than imitation. If any maledictions fall upon it, they fall only because it has faltered in its observance of tradition. The works which critics admit without protest and which all men admire are those which boast of a reputation for hundreds of years, and which no one examines because they already have universal sanction.

If in literature there exists anything which may receive the name of modernism, it is certainly a living expression of personality, and for this reason doubtless are seen in young writers more effort to express sensations than ideas. Ideas have never been the exclusive property of man, and sensations have. Ideas are in the intellectual atmosphere, they have

1. Idem, p. 22.
2. Idem, p. 23.
their orbit of development, and the most a writer can do is to present them through the dress of personality or through beauty of expression. It almost invariably happens that when a new torrent of ideas and sentiments transforms souls, the works of art to which it gives rise are barbarous and vigorous in the first period, serene and harmonious in the second, decadent and artificial in the third. Isolated, the personality of a poet will be able to advance or recede in the evolution, but literary work in general follows this orbit with absolute fatalism, until new ideas are germinated and new idioms formed.¹

From this discussion cannot be omitted, without serious injustice, the grammatical and rhetorical contortions, the characteristic failing of certain writers called modernists. In all literatures—if not in all times—there have been cultured spirits, and all our decadent and symbolistic poets of today, had in antiquity someone who surpassed them. No one now living has yet reached the extravagances of the Jesuit Gracián, who presented to us² the sun as a picador or horseman of the arena, who teases and taunts the Toro Celeste, while the stars, as ladies who watch the corrida from their boxes and balconies, applaud his success. The sun is next converted into a rooster and the stars into hens.³

2. Las selvas del año.
3. Corte de amor, p. 25.
If in literature exists something new which may receive the name of modernism, it is not certainly the grammatical and rhetorical extravagances as some ingenuous critics believe, perhaps because this word "modernism," like all words many times repeated, has come to have a significance as wide as it is doubtful. The characteristic condition of all modern art, and very particularly of literature, is a tendency to refine sensations and to increase them in number and intensity. There are poets who dream of giving to their stanzas the rhythm of the dance, the melody of music, and the majesty of the statue.¹

There are those who consider as extravagances all modern tendencies to attribute sense of color to sounds and to perfumes as Gautier, Bandelaire, Carducci, d'Annunzio and others have done. In reality conceptions of this character are a logical consequence of the progressive evolution of the senses. Today are perceived gradations of color, gradations of sound, and obscure relations among things, which several years ago were certainly not perceived. In primitive idioms there scarcely existed words to convey the idea of color, and it is recognized that paucity of words is a result of the poverty of sensations.

There exist today artists who pretend to find a

¹ Idem, p.27.
strange correspondence between sound and color. The
great poet, Arturo Rimbant, defined the color of the
vowels in a celebrated sonnet.

A - noir, E - bleu, I - rouge, U - vert, O - jaune.

And more recently, Renato Ghil assigned to vowels,
not only color, but orchestral value:

A - claironne vainqueur en rouge flamboiement.

This analogy and equivalence of sensations is
what constitutes modernism in literature. Its origin
should be sought in the progressive development of the
senses, which have to multiply their different percep­
tions and harmonize them among themselves, to form a
single sense.¹

Valle Inclán is lenient with modernism in its
correct interpretation, as representing progress in the
development of perception. But he object to the inclusion
in that term of the extravagant and ludicrous figures which
some authors affect, thinking themselves modernists. He.
is fearless in expressing himself in his books. His art he
finds within himself, strengthened in its facility of ex­
pression by his knowledge of the classics, but neither
slavishly modelled upon them nor hesitant to contradict
them.

Section II.

Author's purpose.

Cante solo para mí

Valle Inclán presents no thesis, advocates no cause, advances no theories, preaches no propaganda. He writes for the joy of creating; and the beauty of his expression is its only excuse for existence, and the only excuse necessary.

At the beginning of his career he had certain definite and individual convictions as to literary writing, its modes of procedure and expressions of personality. To him it seemed that the only way to write was to pour out one's soul into a message of beauty, to present only those perceptions and sensations which one held in his own spirit, having no right to introduce into such an individual contribution to the cause of beauty, any material not gained and proven by first hand experience.

The author has succeeded admirably in his paramount purpose. The effect of reading Valle Inclán is to acquire an impression of beauty, of love, of life, ardent, sincere, vivid, refreshing. He directs attention to the unique, the attractive and previously unconsidered angle.

In presenting to his readers the vividness and freshness of life, Valle Inclán's constant striving for a realization of his ideal of a style clear as crystal, yet mysterious, shining as light, strong to withstand all examination and criticism, have aided materially, causing him to voice
himself in a manner remarkable in its individuality, characterized by a delicate selection of shade, a happy ability to fit into a phrase the exact word to express his meaning.

Valle Inclán regrets the hackneyed Spanish prose style of his contemporaries. His own writing illustrates the possibilities to be found in a thorough study of selection and a careful grouping of quite commonly used words. Aside from his philosophical writing, Valle Inclán uses only well known words. The beauty of his style lies in the rhythm of his grouping of them.

Other than his desire to recreate the beauty of Spanish prose, Valle Inclán's purpose, if it is worthy to be so called, was to try his art at creating in the minds of his readers an impression of feudal peoples and customs although the actual settings of his stories are modern. He succeeds in endowing his characters with the temperaments and ideals of mediaeval times. Los ayeres guardan el secreto de los mañanas. The mayorazgos were the history of the past and ought to be the history of the future. Those gentlemen, poor but liberal, came from a military selection, strong and renowned. They were the only Spaniards who could preserve the respect of their fathers and the pride of a four syllable name. There lived in them the romanticism of battles and of venturesome undertakings that were symbolized in a wolf passant or in a

1. La lámpara maravillosa, p. 237.
lion rampant.

The common people are degraded by misery and the nobility by adulation and privileges, but the hidalgos, those plain men of the valley, were of the purest blood, distilled in the filter of a thousand years and of a hundred wars.¹

Wherever in Spain are found the nobility and strength of former times, in that spot is the true Spain. Navarre is one of the places so favored. Here are maintained the loyalty, the faith, the heroism as in the time of Spain's great power.... Those ingenuous souls who yet expect, from virtues grown stale and severe, to come the happiness of the people, are to be admired. To be admired and to be pitied, because, blind to all light, they will never learn that a nation, the same as a woman is only happy when it forgets what is called historic duty for the selfish instinct of the future which is above good and evil, triumphant in death.

The author has arrived at that moment when death is felt to tear aside its veils, when conscience announces that all destiny has been completed. He goes through the world with his eyes turned toward the past, full of memories as if he had lived a thousand years.²

Today there are no men resembling those former hidalgos capable of dying for an idea. Today, enemies, in place of

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¹ Cruzados de la Causa, p. 146.  
hating each other, shake hands smilingly. It would not be so hard to bear if the race of worthy men had ended abruptly; but for it to have degenerated so miserably, is disheartening.1

The reader is led to infer the esteem in which Valle Inclán holds the practices and personalities of the past by the number of times he attributes to his characters the noble and graceful attributes of long gone years.

Don Juan Manuel is called the last survivor of a grand race ... a brother in spirit to those great adventurers, who enlisted in the wars of Flanders and Italy, in search of episodes of love, of battle and of fortune.2 With him will go the last gentleman of his family.3 He is one of those hidalgos, despotic, fond of women, hospitable and violent, who yet remain like old pictures in silent, dead villages; villages which recall with their feudal names the rusty sound of arms.4 He is the shame of his sainted wife, whom he treats with the mercilessness, the cruelty of a Roman centurion of the times of the Emperor Nero.5 He drinks much and has the huge appetite of an old hero in the banquets of the Iliad. And like the kings of ancient times, the true kings, he has his court fool.7 The present is to him the same as the times of his grandfathers when it is a question of

4. Idem, p. 16.
5. Romance de lobos, p. 163.
meting out justice with his own hand. 1

The Marqués practices arts of love making learned in the old Greek stories and finds them still effective. Contemplating his tragic love for Rosario he felt that vague and romantic sadness which enchants lovesuits with the legend of great and tragic griefs of ancient usage. 3 "Like an adventurer of olden times" he went out to lose himself in the vastnesses of the old Aztec Empire, that kingdom whose history is unknown, the permanent sepulchre for the mummies of its kings. 4

When the Marqués was visiting Concha he had no servant, and she, "having the amusing practices of the princesses of picaresque history", placed at his disposal a page, "who might honor him better," as she told him smiling. 5

The pilgrim 6 who walked into Adega's life, that mendicant, desgrenado and bizantino, the border of his pilgrim's cape adorned with shells and his walking staff in his right hand, seemed to revive the penitent devotion of ancient times, when all Christianity thought to see in the heavenly heights, the road of St. James.

The old man whom the sheep were taken to for removal

1. Idem, p. 127.
2. Sonata de Estio, p. 75.
5. Sonata de otoho, p. 69.
6. Flor de Santidad.
of the curse,\(^1\) as he appeared under the shade of the apple
trees, smiling and doctoral, with his long white hair and
shining deep wrinkles like the saints of an old painting,
and carrying a lamb in his arms, seemed a kind and happy
grandfather of patriarchal times.

On the lips of Don Miguel\(^2\) appeared a smile of
beautiful disdain. The month of that daring hidalgo repro­
duced the expression with which the great men of other times
would defy death.

The five daughters of the princess\(^3\) appeared threading
their way through the intricate paths of myrtles and laurels,
with their skirts filled with roses, like characters in an
old fable. On another occasion these same daughters were
grouped in the moonlight of the terrace like fairies of old
tales.

Concha's daughters\(^4\) resembled two child princesses
painted by Titian in his old age.

The heroine of Flor de Santidad, standing motionless
in the midst of the shifting flock of sheep, with her staff
held firmly by its middle and the points of her seaman's cape
thrown back over her shoulders, seemed a herdsgirl out of the
sacred legends .... She had a beautiful old name. They
called her Adega.

1. Idem.
3. Sonata de primavera.
Valle Inclán is fond of describing gardens and palaces as being possessed of the grandeur and reverent beauty of former days. The gardens and palace belonging to Concha are described as possessing the lordly and melancholy old age of places where in older times was passed that charming life of gallantry and of love.

Homes organized on the same basis as that customary in feudal times, are common in Valle Inclán. Don Juan Manuel surrounded himself with many servants, more than he could support well. The Marqués had his squire or body servant who accompanied him on all his travels. Describing the inn, the author says "there is something patriarchal in the brushwood fire which glows in the fireplace and in that meal for the servants, many of whom were born under this very roof."

Aside from attempting to reconstruct the civilization of mediaeval days as it would exist under modern conditions, Valle Inclán avails himself of some few opportunities to put into the mouths of his characters, criticisms of various existing conditions and of a few contemporary literary figures. But the insertion is so skillfully made that the reader, not searching definitely for such material, would overlook it easily.

Occasionally we have an expression of patriotism, as

1. Idem.
2. Flor de Santidad, p. 178.
in this statement: The only true love is the love for one's country. And that in a book purporting to deal with a very different variety of love.

But much more frequently are to be found criticisms of modern conditions. What a destiny for noble houses and what disagreeable times are ours! Everywhere those in command are the enemies of religion and of tradition.

The present tendency to govern every occasion by its immediate precedent, is satirized in *La Cabeza del dragón* when the princess, on her way to be sacrificed to the lion, becomes tired and asks to rest. The Master of Ceremonies refuses because it has never been done before and he must follow the traditional customs of the court. Her companion insists that he investigate to see if there be any precedent of another princess becoming fatigued and to discover what was done in that case. All this concern about a matter so trivial is sarcastically directed at modern Spanish governmental practices of excessively painstaking attention to matters of small moment.

Only twice does Valle Inclán make any thrust at Spanish literary endeavors. When the Princess announces

2. *Sonata de Esteo*, p. 93.
to the Marques that her majordomo is a great artist, that old man modestly replies: "An artist! Today there are no artists. They all lived in ancient times."

Echegaray is disparagingly mentioned as a producer of sensational and dramatic phrases. The Duquesito confesses that his letters to Rosita, in all of which he speaks of her eyes where is hidden the soul of a sultana, were copies of tonterías he found in the dramas of Echegaray. When later the Duquesito displays a revolver threatening to kill himself for love of her, she inquires scathingly if he has copied that too from Echegaray. The phrases are from Echegaray, he admits, but the gestures are from Rafael Calvo.

On one occasion, Valle Inclán declares in a preface, the intent of his story. Flor de Santidad carries this introduction:

Revela en los halagos de un viento vespertino
La santa flor del alma que nunca se marchita.

which declaration of purpose assists the reader to an understanding of this unusual story.

Section III.

Characteristics of Valle Inclán's Method.

Un prudente arcaísmo en la elección de palabras, crepuscular languidez y encanto covaleciente o enfermizo en la cadencia, y el todo realizado por un severo decoro clásico; éste es el estilo de Valle Inclán.¹

A casual reading of Valle Inclán discloses the fact that here is no mediocre writer; nor yet a framèr of popular phrases designed to win the approval of critics and public; but, inspired by aesthetic conceptions, creating for his own pleasure, he has developed, in his endeavors to obtain beauty of expression, a style inferior to that of no contemporary in Spain. His words have the sparkle of jewels, the rhythm of poetry, the cadence of harmony.

In his handling of material there are several technical traits to which attention may be called. In the first place his books are all short. There are no detailed plots, no harrowing mysteries, no lengthy discussions. His descriptions are beautiful pen pictures, adding the correct touches of atmosphere and stage setting. His plots are inferior to his character delineation. Action is not rushed into climaxes and denouements, but instead gives the im-

¹ González Blanco: Historia de la novela en España desde el romanticismo hasta nuestros días, Madrid, 1909, p. 783.
pression of so many pages from the daily lives of human beings.

Valle Inclán has published several books of short stories, which appeared the same years as longer books containing many of the same incidents, in many cases the language being identical. It would be difficult to say which were written first, but from the incompleteness noticeable in the short stories, it is to be assumed that they were taken from the novels and published separately.

Another case of borrowing is that of the drama, *El Marqués de Bradomín*, based on the material of the four sonatas. The author has taken the hero of all four sonatas, the heroine from the third, the situations and climax from the fourth, the beggars and priest from the first, the exact language of each original situation, and has made of them a play very unsatisfactory and confusing to one who has previously read the sonatas.

The author might better have dramatised the best sonata, that of *Otoño*, and saved such prostitution of his art.

Supernatural phenomena are given considerable mention in Valle Inclán. Readers meet black cats; mountain herbs that have power to save life and cure the evil eye; curses on flocks and men, together with their cures; dreams of revelation and of prophecy; presentiments; death warnings by dreams, by bells, by barking dogs; and twice *La Santa Compañía*. Although, en-
umerated, they seem to have been introduced in abundance, in actual fact they are scattered unobtrusively thru all his books, with the exception of one or two cuentos where the entire plots are made to depend on black cats.

In most instances Valle Inclán's stories are told as a single thread of narrative, with no divergences and no advance warnings of the manner in which they will end. Almost the single exception to this statement is Concha's declaration in the early part of the book, following the dream she had of her death that it would be only her death that would separate her from the Marqués. Before the end of the story this actually happens.

Valle Inclán's stories uniformly have a sad or tragic ending, in keeping with his philosophy of the grief of living. Rosario goes insane over the fall of her baby sister and her grief at losing the Marqués; Concha dies; María Antonieta denies her love and chooses duty to an invalid husband; Don Juan Manuel is disgraced by his sons and struck down in his own house; his wife, María Soledad, dies of loneliness and shame; the unfortunate women of the Corte de amor meet death by sickness, drowning, or disappointment. It is only the Niña Chole, of all the author's main characters, who finds

2. Sonata de otoño.
3. Sonata de primavera.
4. Sonata de otoño.
5. Sonata de invierno.
6. Agüila del blasón and Romance de lobos.
happiness. Her lover, the Marqués, loses all his loves and endures a lonely and unattractive old age.

Valle Inclán introduces some few actually brutal touches. A servant is swallowed by a crocodile, the reader is given the ghastly picture of the monster with its greedy, yellow eyes and shiny body. María de Nieves, falls from a window to the courtyard, shocking her sister into insanity. The Niña Chole is pictured as the daughter and wife of the general, Diego Bermúdez, an incident so repulsive as to be abhorrent. All that saves it from a verdict of disgust is the inimitable style of the author himself. Don Juan Manuel's sons dig up a corpse and try to boil off the flesh to secure the skeleton which they may sell. But the flesh is persistent and they dump the whole mess back into the sack and return it to the cemetery. As the Marqués carries Concha's body from his room along the dimly lighted corridors, her hair catches in the latch of a door. In his excitement and his helplessness, he tears her hair from the lock by jerking her body, the force of which movement pulls open her eyelids which have already closed in death.

The brutality of these scenes alone is enough to preserve Valle Inclán from the charge of decadence which some

1. Four Sonatas and the Marqués de Bradomín.
2. Sonata de estío.
3. Sonata de primavera.
4. Sonata de estío.
5. Águila del blasón.
6. Sonata de otoño.
critics make. Such a charge is founded on his poetic powers of description which, while producing a prose worthy of musical setting, stop short of the extravagances of figures which would make it sentimental.

Even translated into English, various passages of description are full of lyric charm. "Seated at the fountain, she listened to the song of the threshers. She saw them go away as night fell and a feeling of peaceful happiness came over her. Her eyes like two rays of light were lifted up to heaven.

"This shepherdess of the white throat and golden eyebrows was living in a perpetual dream. Seated in the dim garden beneath the secular shadow, she sighed as the evening died, the brief blue evening full of sanctity and fragrance. She felt on her face the warm breath of the miracle and the miracle came to pass. On leaning down to drink from the spring which flowed half hidden by the labyrinth of myrtles, the violets of her eyes saw in the crystal of the water, lighted fitfully by the rays of the setting sun, the face of a tenderly smiling child." ¹

Valle Inclán's evocative power is remarkable. Probably the best example of it to be found in him is the entire Sonata de otoño, which is shrouded in the atmosphere of autumnal melancholy. In des-

¹. Description of Adega, Flor de Santidad; translation by Professor A. G. Byrns.
cribing the gardens surrounding Concha's palace are used the phrases; abandoned fountain, melancholy, full of memories, venerable cypress trees, dry and yellow leaves, fading flowers, indefinable aromas that bear the melancholy of memories, murmurs of water that seem to diffuse through the garden a peaceful dream of old age, of abstraction, of abandon.

Valle Inclán spends much care on his style, polishing and repolishing, cutting, changing, until only the necessary words remain; using words not unusual but unused, which, correctly grouped, give an impression of restraint. His modernism is not one of contortions, nor extravagances; but one nobly formed, lacking nothing, containing nothing superfluous, preserving from its classic heritage a needful care for proportion and exactitudes, realizing the possibilities of what a modern style may be and making valid the assertion of Nietzsche that only in view of poetry is good prose written.

His ability to discover the correct word, the exact shade for his meaning, called sobriedad, lends to his writing a clearness, a distinctness, a logic, which Zola declares the necessities of a great style.

Valle Inclán's style is a mixture of ancient vestiges

2. Le Roman Experimental, p. 46.
of picaresque novels together with modern flaubertian characteristics, — the ability to find for each idea the one noun to express it, the one verb to actuate it, the one adjective to qualify it.¹ His deft use of archaisms gives to his writings a distinctive quality directly in keeping with the feudal atmosphere he is striving to create.

By such distinguishing choice of words, Valle Inclán shows himself an emotional artist, unconcerned with making his readers think, but intensely interested in making them feel, using for his purpose only the surest, noblest, most exactly selected words, and arriving at the height of what Flaubert considers the greatest literary achievement, to raise the emotions of readers.

Valle Inclán studies things for their rarity, delicacy, charm, distinctiveness. He presents things from the unique angle of vision, finding in the smallest things, in the most insignificant phenomena, a lyric theme which has never occurred to his readers.

This characteristic of Valle Inclán remains impressed after details of his subject matter have been forgotten. It is for this ability he has become famous, for this beauty of style, together with his ability to recreate the souls of his people.

¹ Gonzalez Blanco: *Historia de la novela en España*, p. 781.
"Just as a portrait discloses the artist's opinion of his sitter, so the choice of a hero is an involuntary piece of self-revelation. As man fashions his idols in his own image, we are in a fair way to understand him, if we know what he admires."

James Fitzmaurice Kelly.

CHAPTER III.
Protagonists of Valle Inclán.

Section I.
El Marqués de Bradomín.

Era feo, católico y sentimental.

At the very outset of this examination into the personality of El Marqués de Bradomín, second only to Don Juan Manuel Montenegro in importance among Valle Inclán's characters, it would be interesting and much to the point of this study, since we are concerned primarily with Valle Inclán's own personality, to know what the author himself thinks of this Marques he has created.

We find at the beginning of the Sonata de primavera, the first of the five books having the Marqués for hero, this note:

Estas páginas son un fragmento de las Memorias Amables, que ya muy viejo empezo a escribir en la emigración el Marqués de Bradomín. Un Don Juan admirable. El más admirable tal vez...

Era feo, católico y sentimental.

By which we know that Valle Inclán approved of the Marqués; but whether it is the personality of the character he admires, or whether he is pleased with his own skill at creation, we have yet to see.
We surmise that he truly admires the character of the Marqués when in the last Sonata he favors him with a peculiar likeness to himself. We already know that, when a boy, Valle Inclán lost an arm by amputation, to which loss, we may assume, he is very sensitive. When we see that in the Sonata de invierno he awards the Marques the distinction of losing an arm in the Carlist rebellion, we suspect that his doing so is the result of a desire to, in some definite and unmistakable way, identify the Marques with himself. The fact that the Marques suffered his loss in the Carlist wars need not disturb us in such a conclusion. It is very probable that Valle Inclán merely felt, in providing such circumstances to surround the accident, that he himself if he must suffer such loss, would have preferred that it be in such a praiseworthy cause rather than for some unnecessary and unprofitable reason. To be sure, he does not tell us the circumstances attendant on his own accident; but the fact that he does not may induce us more properly to the conclusion that they were trivial.

Valle Inclán provides the Marqués with aristocratic ancestry, which, if we care to follow up the supposition of his close affection for the Marqués, falls in with the author's own social position and family.

1. La lámpara maravillosa, p. 22.
2. Sonata de invierno, p. 159.
Of his family, the Marques, introducing himself, says; Yo soy Bíbíena di Rienzo por la línea de mi abuela paterna, Julia Aldegrina, hija del Príncipe Maximo de Bibiena, que murió en 1770 envenenado por la famosa comediante Simoneta la Corticelli, que tiene un largo capítulo en las Memorias del Cabellero de Sentgal.¹

Such a tragic end to his great grandfather's life would give radical believers in effects of tainted ancestry excuse to forgive the Marqués his warped outlook.

Luis Araquistain hints ² that Valle Inclán would be the subject of one of the most delicious and stimulating biographies ever written. While Valle Inclán probably had nothing to do with his making that remark, and may not consider his own life particularly interesting, we are lead to feel, on reading the four Sonatas and the drama El Marqués de Bradomín, that the Marqués represents the life Valle Inclán would have liked to live. Whether he actually does or not, our limited sources of information do not permit us to know. Just to what extent the biography of the Marqués is delicious and stimulating is the subject of our study.

The Marqués de Bradomín is a feudal lord, transplanted to modern times. To understand and not misjudge him, we must remember that he is governed in his actions by standards, practices and conceptions of the middle ages.

1. Sonata de primavera, p. 20.
He has more refinement than his uncle, Don Juan Manuel Montenegro, more learning, more subtlety, and more sentimentality. But, in charity to the poor, in pride of family, in their attitude toward women, in feudal spirit, they are clearly related; and in final sadness and emptiness, both so misunderstood, so vain and purposeless, their lives are parallel.

Señor Osma describes the Marques as: una figura lamentable pero bellamente diseñada... enorme pagano católico, transportado de regiones exóticas... hombre primitivo, que calza guante de seda, que brutalmente se apodera de la hembra y le susurra, mientras la cantilena del desesperado amoroso. Fuerza, vigor, en el fondo; animalidad pintada con colores suaves, delicadas armonías y primorosas, pero brutalidad al fin, primitivismo racial.

El Marqués de Bradomín, en el decadentismo, es un hipócrita; se muere de hastío de exceso de fuerza, y falta de debilidad en que emplearla.

The outstanding traits of the Marqués' character are his pride, his sentimentality, his feudalism and his fatalism. These traits account for his peculiar acts and his disregard for consequences.

The pride of the Marqués carried him through several difficult situations. When his arm was being amputated he would not allow himself to cry out. He said of it,

1. Impresiones de lecturas, Jose Maríá Osma, (unpublished).
2. Sonata de invierno, p. 158
El orgullo, mi gran virtud, me sostenía. No exhale una queja ni cuando rajaron la carne, ni cuando serraron el hueso, ni cuando cosieron el muñón. The nun, when she placed the last bandage, murmured: No he visto nunca tanto ánimo.

When the Marqués has been caught in María Rosario's room and is ignored the next day by her mother, he says: Mi orgullo levantábase en ráfagas, pero sobre los labios temblorosos estaba la sonrisa. He braves her scorn and faces her down, leaving the room victor in the encounter. Crusé la silenciosa biblioteca y salí. Después, meditando a solas si debía abandonar el Palacio Gartani, resolví quedarme. Quería mostrar a la Princesa que cuando suelen otros desesperarse, yo sabía sourrér, y que donde otros son humillados, yo era triunfador. El orgullo ha sido siempre mi mayor virtud.

His ability to smile at adverse circumstances he regards as his greatest asset. He elaborates on it, when the priest suggests that his written memorias, or confessions, would carry a great lesson, he answers: Yo no aspiro a enseñar, sino a divertir. Toda mi doctrina está

1. Idem, p. 159
2. Sonata de primavera, p. 134.
5. Sonata de invierno, p. 235.
en una sola frase: ¡Viva la bagatela! Para mí haber aprendido a sonreír, es la mayor conquista de la Humanidad.

Returning to the Marqués' pride, — when Niña Chole is seized and carried off by her father,¹ the Marqués, although at the time sincere in his love for her, and although he realized that, with the help of his Indian carriers he could win her back, disdains to set in pursuit.

Yo sentía una fiera y dolorosa altivez al dominarme. Mis enemigos, los que usan acusarme de todos los crímenes, no podrán acusarme de haber renido por una mujer. Nunca como entonces he sido fiel a mi divisa: Despreciar a los demás y no amarme a sí mismo.

The self-esteem of the Marqués is evident throughout the series. He loses no opportunity to ascribe to himself flattering qualities, gallantries, only the best and most acceptable of intentions. On one occasion² the abbess was speaking to him of un caballero muy anciano que llevaba el título de Marqués de Bradomín. She called the old man un santo. The Marqués replied sin orgullo: Además de un santo, era mi abuelo.

With old age, the Marqués acquired the ability to master his emotions, with one exception: He conseguido

1. Sonata de estío, p. 196.
2. Sonata de estío, p. 92.
dominar todas las pasiones menos el orgullo.

Pride comes to his aid in his love affairs. He has a way of making his sweethearts his willing slaves. They are in awe of his superiority and his domination. Pride takes him through his succession of amores and out of each with scarcely a scratch. What he persuades himself is love, does not deserve the honor of the name. It is rather self flattery; it pleases him to keep himself the center of attention. We find such a good example of this attitude in his grief at the death of Concha:

Yo sentía una extraña tristeza como si el crepúsculo cayese sobre mi vida, y mi vida, semejante a un triste día de invierno, se acabase para volver a empezar con un amanecer sin sol. ¡La pobre Concha había muerto! ¡Había muerto aquella flor de ensueño a quien todas mis palabras le parecían bellas! ¡Aquella flor de ensueño a quien todos mis gestos le parecían soberanos! ....¡Volvería a encontrar otra pálida princesa, de tristes ojos encantados, que me admirasen siempre magnífico? Ante esta duda lloré. ¡Lloré como un Dios antiguo al extinguirse su culto!

The Marqués always with each affair regards himself deeply and truly in love, but each time he manages to forget and acquire a mood receptive to another just as real

1. Sonata de invierno, p. 23.
2. Sonata de otoño, p. 228.
and just as intense an affair. He says of María Rosario at the beginning of the first sonata:¹ María Rosario fue el único amor de mi vida. Han pasado muchos años, y al recordarla ahora todavía se llenan de lágrimas mis ojos áridos ya casi ciegos.

But we find him, at the opening of the Sonata de estío, fleeing to America to escape the memory of Lili. Again he can not stay long in mourning. On the voyage he succumbs to the spell of a pair of eyes like Lili's. When La Niña Chole is torn from him by her father, and he realizes the General's claims to her, he is desenganado para siempre del amor y del mundo² and turns his horse toward the solitary plains of Tixul.

But his desengaño does not prevent his reopening an old love affair with Concha, now slowly dying. After days spent in idyllic happiness she goes from him. He says:³ Todavía hoy el recuerdo de la muerta es para mí de una tristeza depravada y sutil ... El corazón sangra y se retuerce, y dentro de mí ríe el Diablo que sabe convertir todas los dolores en placer.

By the time the Marqués reaches the fourth epoch of his life, that treated in the Sonata de invierno, he begins to realize that he cannot much longer expect to be the ob-

¹. Sonata de primavera, p. 95.
². Sonata de estío, p. 196.
³. Sonata de otoño, p. 222.
ject of a woman's love. He tries desperately to induce María Antonieta, the only woman who yet loves him, to leave her invalid husband and come to him. She repeatedly and definitely refuses. Bits of their conversation throw considerable light on his character. He tells her that if he does go away she will call him back again, so great does he think his own attractiveness. She, to make him the more willing to leave, tells him she has had another sweetheart. He asks if this man has supplanted him. Finding that instead the other man preceded him, the Marques says: 1 Es un consuelo. Hay quien prefiere ser el primer amor: Yo he preferido siempre ser el último.

We get a hint of the philosophy and guiding motive of the life of the Marques when he says to María Antonieta in answer to her charge of cruelty: 2 ;Qué cruel es la vida cuando no caminamos por ella como niños ciegos! This remark seems the key to his whole life for he has the heart of a child, loved by everyone, but tyrannizing over those he loves most, demanding every pleasure within reach without thought for consequences. As the child represents the barbarous period of man's development, so the Marqués seems a modern barbarian, loving intensely and passionately and wherever the fancy strikes him, wandering about where the richest fruits draw him, fighting for his own caste, the

1. Sonata de invierno, p. 252.
Carlist sympathizers, and possessing, over his primitive instincts, only the minimum degree of surface culture to make him presentable to modern readers.

His very life seems to depend on the wealth of some woman's affection. When he finds himself growing old and neglected he turns in desperation to Maximina, the young girl who attends him in the hospital where his arm is taken off. It is only after he has won from her a confession of love, that he finds out she is his daughter. Whereupon, instead of turning that passion into paternal care and tenderness, taking her into a horror for his declining years, he rides away

\[ \text{Al remontar un cerro me volví enviando el último suspiro al viejo caserón donde había encontrado el más bello amor de mi vida.} \]

From this experience, he goes immediately to María Antonieta, pleading for her to come away with him.

And, then, at the close of the book, having missed his opportunity to redeem his life of dissipation by making a home for Maximina, he withdraws into himself and mourns the passing of his loves. He feels that no woman can love him any more because of his white hair and his loss of an arm. María Antonieta's encouragement: ¡Qué importa tu brazo de menos! ¿Qué importan tus cabellos blancos? Can it be that

1. Sonata de invierno, p. 192
2. Sonata de invierno, p. 209.
this is a plea from the author's own heart? Have his desires for the love of some particular woman been unanswered and does he attribute it to either of these conditions in his own appearance?

The Marqués, when he appears in other novels, seems to have abandoned all thoughts of amores and to have given himself up to service in the Carlist wars. But he can not forego a bit of self approval and boastfulness, when he thinks back over his conquests. Yo solamente he dado a comer de mi corazón. Pero ha sido a las mujeres más hermosas de mi época. ¹

The Marqués has a terror of growing old and unattractive. He persists in the manners and thoughts of a young gallant but he can not prevent his graying hair nor the wrinkles that will come. His sweethearts are always young and beautiful. Their infatuations for an old man may be explained by the fact that the Marqués is a nobleman, very experienced in the art of love making and with a considerable record of conquests behind him. Each is flattered to think that such a wonderful man, who might make love to anyone of hundreds of women he knew, should select her from among them.

The Marqués for his part, while naturally and inevitably sentimental, selects for sweethearts those who can keep fresh in him the memory of his youth. Concha, the greatest and

¹. Cruzados de la Causa, p. 77.
most beautiful love of his life, had been a childhood sweetheart. They liked to sit and dream aloud of their happy playtimes together. María Antonieta, who appears in the last Sonata, was a "left-over" sweetheart from his early manhood. Maximina, the only new departure of his last years of which we hear, is a mere girl. Of her eyes, which he thought so beautiful, he said: Yo los había amado porque encontraba en ellos los suspiros románticos de mi juventud, las ansias sentimentales que al malograrse me dieron el escepticismo de todas las cosas, la perversión melancólica y donjuanesca que hace las víctimas y llora con ellos.¹

When the last link between the Marqués and his youth is broken, when María Antonieta refuses to leave her husband and her duty, although her heart cries out at the pain of denial, the Marqués replies to her pleadings for forgiveness of the hurt she is doing him: No es rencor lo que siento, es la melancolía del desengaño, una melancolía como si la nieve del invierno cayese sobre mi alma, y mi alma, semejante a un campo yermo, se amortajase con ella... ¿Quién sabe lo que guarda la vida? ¡Adiós, mi pobre Maria Antonieta! ²

The Marqués, wounded to the core by this proof of the waning of his attractiveness, took sad but dignified leave

¹. Sonata de invierno, p. 207.
². Sonata de invierno, p. 254.
of María. As he reached the door, he longed to turn for a last look at the field of his final defeat, but pride and hurt vanity stayed him: Si la guerra no me había dado ocasión para mostrarme heroico, me la daba el amor al despedirse de mí acaso para siempre. ¹

His misery is complete; he has nothing to which he may look with hope. All pleasures of life are behind him and even into the memory of them has crept something of bitterness, of disappointment, of the realization of their futility. His philosophy of fatalism is failing him. It was very obliging, when he was in the prime of life, in backing up his arguments that God means us to be happy; so if he gave us desires, he means for us to have their satisfaction. But what about the decline of life when all we want is a peaceful corner with our group of loved ones? The Marques had not considered that in the flush of his enjoyment. He had now no family, no quiet home, no memories of days well spent to cheer him to the thought that his life had been worthily employed.

This sense of wasted life and barren future attacked him even before María Antonieta had failed him. He soliloquized at the opening of the last Sonata: Comenzaba a sentir algo hasta entonces desconocido en mi vida alegre y aventurera, una vida llena de riesgos y de azares, como la

¹ Sonata de invierno, p. 254.
de aquellos segundones hidalgos que se enganchaban en los tercios de Italia por buscar lances de amor, de espada y de fortuna. Yo sentía un acabamiento de todas las ilusiones, un profundo desengaño de todas las cosas. Era el primer frío de la vejez, más triste que el de la muerte... Había sonado para mí la hora en que se apagan los ardores de la sangre, y en que las pasiones de amor, del orgullo y de la cólera, las pasiones nobles y sagradas que animaron a los dioses antiguos, se hacen esclavas de la razón.

Women were an obsession with the Marqués. We find that in the opening chapters of his memorias when he is still a boy: Dios me perdonará si prefiero este Palacio, con sus cinco doncellas encantadas, a los graves teólogos del Colegio Clementino.2

His whole attitude toward women and his relations with them are consisely presented in his remark: Siempre he creído que la bondad de las mujeres es todavía más efímera que su hermosura.3

He seems to think the only reason for woman's existence is that she be the object of some man's affections. To any woman, failing in this, her whole life is empty, worthless and vain; but realizing this, all thoughts of honor aside, her life has reached its climax in beauty, grace and purpose. How well he sets forth this theory, speaking of La Niña Chole, the woman who entered his life at its summer

1. Sonata de invierno, p. 11.
2. Sonata de primavera, p. 46.
3. Idem, p. 35.
Heat, and who, more than any other, earned her right to live, as he sees it; Aquella mujer tiene en la historia di mi vida un recuerdo galante, cruel y glorioso, como lo tienen en la historia de los pueblos Thaís la de Grecia y Ninín la de Francia, esas dos cortesanas menos bellas que su destino. ¡Acaso el único destino que merece ser envidiado! Yo hubiera tenido igual, y quizá más grande de haber nacido mujer: Entonces lograría lo que jamás pude lograr. A las mujeres para ser felices les basta con no tener escrúpulos, y probablemente no los hubiera tenido esa quimérica Marquesa de Bradomin. Dios mediante, haría como las gentiles marquesas de mi tiempo que ahora se confiesan todos los viernes, después de haber pecado todos los días. ¡Por cierto que algunas se han arrepentido todavía bellas y tentadoras olvidando que basta un punto de contrición al sentir cercana la vejez!

His innate gallantry and the gentleness produced by sentiment, never allowed him to be brutal. Nor was he crafty and dishonest. He was sincere enough in his own mind. It is only that he is not capable of a love so deep and strong and true, as to dominate his whole life and to endure even after its impossibility of fulfillment is apparent.

His gallantry he reveals in the remark siempre como un deber de andante caballería, respetar esos pe-

queños secretos de los corazones femeninos.\(^1\)

His complete subservience to the demands of love, disregarding the accepted conventions of honor and duty, he exposes in his conversation with Maria Antonieta:

She says "¿Tú vienes a exigirme que abandone a un pobre ser enfermo? Tú quieres que le deje en manos mercenarias, y eso, jamás, jamás. Sería en mí una infamia." To which he makes answer:— *Son las infamias que impone el amor pero desgraciadamente ya soy viejo para que ninguna mujer las cometa por mí.*\(^2\)

Even as a young man, the Marqués was helpless in the power of his strong passions. When he does try on one occasion to control his emotions, all the elements of nature and of his own being seem to conspire against him, leaving him powerless: "Fueron horas de tortura indefinible! Ráfagas de una insensata violencia agitaban mi alma .... Advertíame preso de una desusada agitación y al mismo tiempo comprendía que no era dueño de vencerla y que todas aquellas larvas que entonces empezaban a moverse dentro de mí, habían de ser fatalmente furias y sierpes. Con un sentimiento sombrío sentía que mi mal era incurable y que mi voluntad era inpotente para vencer la tentación de hacer alguna cosa andaz, irreparable. Era

He has the grace to acknowledge his transgression in this instance, but excuses himself because of lack of sufficient powers of resistance: *En achaques de amor, quién no ha pecado? Yo estoy convencido de que el diablo tienta siempre a los mejores.*

This subtly boastful excuse of such strong temptation he repeats on another page: *Quise volver a sumergirme en mi amoroso ensueño, pero el canto de un sapo repetido monótonamente bajo la arcada de los cirpeses, distraía y turbaba mi pensamiento. Recuerdo que de niño he leído... que el diablo solía tomar ese aspecto para turbar la oración de un santo monje. Era natural que a mí me ocurriese lo mismo.* And he goes on to absolve himself and paint his innate goodness and moral impotence: *Yo calumniado y mal comprendido, nunca fuí otra cosa que un místico galante, como San Juan de la Cruz. En lo más florido de mis años, hubiera dado gustoso todas las glorias mundanas por poder escribir en mis tarjetas: El Marqués de Pradomín, Confesor de Princesas.*

Later on the Marqués abandons the idea of excusing his conduct and boldly states it for everyone’s ears. He

boasts of his achievements era feliz con esa felicidad indefinible que da el poder amar a todas las mujeres. Sin ser un donjuanista, he vivido una juventud amorosa y apasionada, pero de amor juvenil y bullente, de pasión equilibrada y sanguínea. Todavía hoy, después de haber pecado tanto, tengo las mañanas triunfantes, y no puedo menos de sonreír recordando que hubo una época lejana donde lloré por muerto a mi corazón: Muerto de celos, de rabia y de amor.

The Marqués repeatedly calls himself un gran pecador. When the priest suggests that a book of his life would be interesting he replies that he would have only sins to tell. He confides to the reader that he who has been un gran pecador learned in the dawn of his life that Después de una noche en lucha con el pecado y el insomnio, nada purifica el alma como bañarse en la oración y oír una misa al rayar el día. La oración entonces es también un rocío matinal y la calentura del infierno se apaga con él.

He classes himself with the sinners in making the announcement that he has found by actual experience that only the greatest saints and the greatest sinners have the virtue necessary to flee from las tentaciones del amor.

1. Sonata de estío, p. 10.
2. Sonata de invierno, p. 235.
4. Sonata de estío, p. 68.
This was the occasion when he was fleeing from the hypnotic eyes of La Niña Chole.

Without the slightest blush, the Marqués confesses that, as in other days when he was a boy he used to sleep in the laps of the ladies at the tertulias in the Palace of Bradomín, so now esta afición a dormir en un regazo femenino la conservo todavía. ¹

With this remark we see the Marqués as he is,—a boastful and unrepentant libertine. He does not excuse his conduct because of the influence of his uncle's life, nor because of his heritage from his grandfather. And nothing the author says tells us whether he wishes us to make allowances for the Marqués on these grounds. Apparently it is left to our own judgment.

When not actively engaged in sentimental distractions, the Marqués shows a nature, reserved, proud, charitable. The servants in his household and those in the households which he visits find him a just and kind master. The beggars think him the greatest man in his region and call his house la puerta de mucha caridad. ²

His gentleness, his poetic nature, the beauty of his love making, save him from being abhorred and make him, rather envied for being so completely able to throw himself into his happiness and so certain of the truth of his philosophy.

1. Sonata de estío, p. 50.
We must not be too harsh on the Marqués. He had persuaded himself that his theory of license was correct. And besides that he had the respect of his relatives, friends and servants. He read a great deal, was an ardent Carlist and a cultured gentleman. Valle Inclán is fond of applying to him the English word "dandy" which seems to express his idea better than any Spanish word he can find. In the Marqués' declining years he is called aquel viejo dandy que amaba tanto la originalidad, la impertinencia y la andacía.¹ Again the author calls him el amable Marqués² and reminds us of su alma feudal³ as if he feared we might forget that the Marqués is not a modern man, but the last of a noble mediaeval family, not to be judged by modern standards, but by the customs of the days he has outlived. To make the situation more clear to his readers, the author gives the Marques these words —De todo me acuerdo, Minguinos. Después de haber vivido, como yo he vivido, se está siempre con los ojos vueltos hacia el pasado.⁴

Valle Inclán likes the Marqués in spite of the many times he slyly pokes fun at him. He makes this friendly indictment apuntaba en sus palabras un dejo de ironía, aquella ironía, con que el viejo dandy lograba dar a todas las cosas, y a todos los sentimientos, un aire de frivolidad galante.⁵

The Marqués has unique reasons for being a Carlist, quite in keeping with his eccentricities and again illumining his con-

1. Cruzados de la Causa, p. 77.
2. Idem, p. 36.
4. Idem, p. 46.
5. Idem, p. 179.
He says to the abbot: I am a Carlist for aesthetic reasons. The Carlist cause has for me the beauty of great cathedrals. It would content me that they should declare it a national monument."

The abbot confesses his ignorance of such a class of Carlists. To which the Marqués answers: Los Carlistas se dividen en dos grandes bandos: uno, yo, y el otro, los demás.

But the Marqués is not the "mollycoddle" his aesthetic thoughts might suggest. He is on provocation a stern soldier, fierce, thirsting for encounter, a leader for the satisfaction of fighting. He says of himself Yo sentía alzarse dentro de mí el ánimo guerrero, despótico, feudal, este noble ánimo del Renacimiento, que haciéndome un hombre de otros tiempos, hizo en éstos mi desgracia. ¡Soberbio Duque de Alba! ¡Glorioso Duque de Sesa, de Terranova y Sántangelo! Magnífico Hernán Cortez! Yo hubiera sido alférez de vuestras banderas en vuestro siglo. Yo siento también que el horror es bello y amo la purpura gloriosa de la sangre y el saquero de los que incendían meses, y a cuantos hacen desafueros al amparo del fuero militar.¹

But though cruel in war, he is by nature kind and charitable. When a poor young soldier is maliciously shot down near his house, he provides a funeral and a burial place in the great sepulchre where the bodies of his ancestors have been laid.² That was in

¹ Sonata de invierno, p. 182.
² Cruzados de la Causa, p. 223.
his later life when he had learned that false pride is worthless and wicked, and that all men were his brothers, even to the poorest and most unfortunate.

In every way, except in his relations with women, the Marqués was a courtly and polished gentleman. Wherein he erred was in overstepping the line modern convention sets down. But the author's treatment of him can not be called immoral since that word applies only to such books as incite to viciousness.

Such a life as that of the Marques can not be considered to incite to vice; for any intelligent reader would see in the lonely, useless, end of such a life that which would prevent his taking it for his own.

1. Emilia Pardo Bazán: La cuestión palpitante, Madrid 1883.
Section II.

Don Juan Manuel de Montenegro
"el último superviviente de
una gran raza."

Don Juan Manuel de Montenegro, hero of the comedias
barbas series, uncle to the Marqués de Bradomín and his superior
in every respect except in culture, is Valle Inclán's best
creation. He is the last of a fine old family, reverting in
characteristics to the mediaeval adventurer, feudal landlord,
knightly seeker of love and fortune.

He is master in his own house, permitting suggestions
from no one except from Don Galán, his buffoon, whom he calls
his voice of conscience and whom he keeps in imitation of former
feudal lords. Yet all his household call him a kind master, a
king within, the father of the poor. An excellent picture of
Don Juan is the following taken from the conversation of the
Marqués and the abbot: ¡De veras que es magnífico!'...¡Y qué
arrogante, a pesar de los años! ... es siempre un gran señor.
Vive rodeado de criados que no puede pagar, haciendo la vida de
todos los mayorazgos campesinos: Chalaneando en las ferias,
jugando en las villas y sentándose a la mesa de los curas en
todas las fiestas.... También hace sus visitas a la rectoral.
Ata su caballo a la puerta, y éntrase dando voces. Se hace
servir vino, y bebe hasta dormirse en el sillón. Cuando se
despierta, sea día o noche, pide el caballo, y dando cabeceos sobre la silla, se vuelve a su Pazo de Santañón.

... es el último superviviente de una gran raza....

Hermano espiritual de aquellos aventureros hidalgos que se enganchaban en los tercios de Flandes o de Italia por buscar lances de amor, de espada y de fortuna. 1

The picture is not complete without mention of his gruffness and his huge voice. El caballero llega con la escopeta al hombro, entre galgos y perdigueros que corren llenando el silencio de la tarde con la zalagarda de sus ladridos y el cascabeleo de los collares. Desde larga distancia grita llamando a su barragana, y aquella voz de gran señor, engolada y magnífica, penetra hasta el fondo de la sala. 2

His niece, the nun, begged him once not to shout so loudly for fear the guards might find them and discover the arms they had concealed in the convent. The old gentleman answered her Tengo esta voz porque jamás ando con secretos. Porque yo todo lo hago a la luz del sol. 3

Valle Inclán uses in describing Don Juan such phrases as viejo hidalgo; un gran señor; hidalgo mujeriego y despótico, hospitalario y violento; linajudo; viejo patriarca. The author speaks of such physical characteristics as: la voz, siempre soberana y magnífica; la llama violenta de sus ojos; la mira compasiva; un frente altanera y desguarnida que parece cobijar todas

1. Marqués de Bradomín, p. 92.
2. Aguila del Blasón, p. 16.
las violencias, lo mismo las del amor que las del odio; su boca colérica; una sonrisa llena de tristeza y de sarcasmo; un apetito animoso, rústico y fuerte; su risa violenta y feudal; grandes voces, que hicieron ladrar a los perros atados en el huerto.

Don Juan is such a favorite among the villagers that he is made godfather to half the children of the vicinity. While stopping to chat with the Marqués one day, he excuses himself to hurry on; tenía de sacar de pila a uno de los hijos del molinero. Con ése son cincuenta y siete los ahijados que tengo.

Don Juan loves his relatives with a personal devotion that makes him willing to fight for them. This same niece of his, in showing him his duty is in protecting the convent, tells him that in this he may save the whole community. Don Juan answers her: "And what does the community matter to me. It is you, one of my blood, who are of importance. You need my help, you have it. You need my protection, you have that. And you need not ask me for it, niece."

Don Juan is very fond of his wife, María Soledad, who has left him because, although she loves him much, she can not bear to live with him and have him flaunt a mistress before her eyes. Don Juan is ashamed of his treatment of Doña María and regrets that it is impossible for him to be true to her. María is the only woman he has ever loved; besides, he is even a little afraid of her goodness.

She comes to help him when she hears he is ill, in spite of Sabelitás presence in his house. Don Juan is grateful to her
for her kindness in coming. She reminds him that she has been ill and reproves him for not coming to her. He answers her, ashamed: — No me atreví ... ¡Te había ofendido tanto! Doña María: ¡Y olvidaste que yo te perdoné siempre todo! Don Juan Manuel se cubre los ojos con un ademán trágico aprendido allá en sus mocedades románticas.¹

Don Juan has five sons by Doña María, all of them ruffians and cutthroats; he calls them ingratos, malvados, and traidores;² and wishes he had wrung all their necks when they were children.³ He sadly views the possibilities of their carrying on the family name: Conmigo se va el último caballero de mi sangre.⁴ His old house servant, La Roja, begs him not to be too harsh on young blood for we can not be sure that it will be permanently bad. She admits however that the sons have inherited from their father only his despotism but are far off from his nobility.⁵ But Don Juan is not optimistic. He has cast them out of his house forever and tells their mother when she comes asking for their share of the estate that she may return to them and say he does not know them.⁶

Their respect for their father is so small that one of them leads a band of highwaymen to attack him on the road and to rob his house.⁷ He tells La Roja⁸ that they will never in-

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¹. Aguila del blasón, p. 108.
³. Romance de lobos, p. 125.
⁴. Aguila del blasón, p. 71.
⁵. Idem, p. 23.
⁶. Aguila del blasón, p. 140.
⁷. Idem, p. 27.
⁸. Idem, p. 73.
herit from him anything but stones; and if any one of them enters his door, he will kill him and bury him in the dungeon. Speaking of them he calls them, not his own sons but hijos de Satanás. So great does he think their hatred of him, that he tells a beggar in the cave to cut off his head after he has died and take it to his sons, who will pay well for it and relish it as a rich dish.

His sons' ungratefulness and baseness is Don Juan's one great sorrow, in addition to regret for his treatment of Doña María. For him, it is a curse on his own life and a just punishment for the unhappiness he has brought to his wife.

One day Don Juan meets Don Pedrito, the most vicious of his sons, in the road. At first he does not recognize him.

Entonces le mira con altivez, pero sin cólera, desengañado, desdénoso, triste: — ¡Ah! Eres tú, bandido.

El Caballero se coge la barba estremecida por la risa, una risa extraña, de viejo loco, desengañado y burlón.

Don Pedrito: no me encienda la sangre, que si me vuelvo lobo, lo como.

El Caballero: Apéate del caballo, y verás quién tiene más fieros dientes ... ¡Apéate, para que sepas quién es el lobo!

After Don Juan has left his house and gone off to die in the cave he comes back with a band of beggars, whom he calls his true children. His sons, angered at being disturbed in their

1. Romance de lobos, p. 263.
3. Romance de lobos, p. 103.
4. Idem, p. 263.
ruthless enjoyment of his property, strike him down as he enters the house.

Cara de Plata is the only one of the five sons who shows any good heartedness. He grows ashamed of his brothers and goes off to fight in the Carlist rebellion. Don Juan Manuel tells him: Si tienes el corazón de tu padre, mucha gloria puedes alcanzar bajo las banderas del Rey! ¹

The viejo hidalgó is very proud of his family name and fortune. He proudly boasts and believes that even the smallest children know the coat of arms of the noble house of Montenegro ². To which the Marqués adds that it is el más ilustre de los linajes españoles.

His sons' shameful conduct hurts him so and makes him so angry that he will not discuss it with anyone. Sabelita and La Roja are discussing the robbery instituted by Don Pedrito. They say of Don Juan: Aun cuando nada dice, y oculta la pena que le consume .... lleva un rey dentro... al curarle las heridas se le saltaban las lágrimas y no se quejaba. No se queja por no verse compadecido, y su alma y su cuerpo sufren en silencio.... Cierto, cordera... Esta noche le oí muchas veces suspirar mientras aquí le velaba con Don Galán. Una vez aventuréme a preguntarle de qué se dolía, y mandóme al infierno contodos los demonios, y no volví a sentirle.³

1. Cruzados de la Causa, p. 175.
2. Marqués de Bradomin, p. 112.
3. Águila del blason, p. 50.
Don Juan's rough speech to La Roja is characteristic of him. He orders Adreina to light the fire and cook some meal. She says there is no meal for the rats have eaten it. He roars at her: Enciende el horno... Si no hay harina que cocer te quemaremos a ti por bruja.

Even Sabelita, la barrangana, comes in for her share of harsh treatment. Don Juan does not love her or he could not treat her so. He never speaks to María Soledad as he does to Sabelita when she sends in another servant with the food he has ordered her to bring.—Aquí no hay más amo que yo ni más voz que la mía. ¡Isabel! ¡Isabel!

Espera un momento: está pálido de cólera. En la frente desguarnecida del Caballero laten abultadas las venas, que dibujan sus ramas azules bajo el marfil de la piel.

Sabelita: ¿Qué hay?

El Caballero: Deseo saber quién es el señor de esta casa.

Sabelita: Creo que Don Juan Manuel Montenegro.

El Caballero: Pues si lo soy yo, ¿cómo hay quién amenaza con cerrar la puerta a los criados que yo más estimo porque me sirven mejor?

Sabelita: Yo no amenazo a nadie con cerrar la puerta y hoy mismo saldré de aquí para siempre.

1. Idem.
El Caballero ríe con cruel y despótico desdén.

El Caballero: ¡Isabel, tú y todos haréis lo que yo mande! Pedro Rey, dirás a tu mujer que venga a verme mañana y que os perdone la renta de este año. Isabel, sírvenos un jarro del mejor vino, que quiero que beba conmigo Pedro Rey.

Don Galán es el único servidor que evita el cruel y despótico tratamiento y tiene menos respeto por Don Juan, probablemente, que cualquiera de los demás servidores. Doña María una vez preguntó a Don Juan por qué permitía el insulso comportamiento de Don Galán.

Don Juan respondió: Don Galán es mi hombre de placer: Los reyes antiguos, los verdaderos reyes, todos tenían corte de bufones.

Doña María: Yo no alcanzo de esas historias, pero me basta con saber que a los criados no deben permitírsele ciertas insolencias.

El Caballero: ¡Ni a los criados ni a ningún nacido! Pero están exentos los bufones que vienen a ser como la voz de nuestra conciencia.

Doña María: ¡Don Galán la voz de tu conciencia!

El Caballero: La voz de mi conciencia que me muestra la vanidad y la miseria de todas las cosas. Don Galán con sus burlas, sus truhanerías y sus insolencias

1. Aguila del blason, p. 67.
edifica mi alma, como ese señor capellán edifica la tuya con sus sermones.

Don Juan is that type of cruel, hard man who likes best someone who is not afraid of him and who tells him exactly what is the matter with him. Such audacity inspires admiration and respect.

But for the cringing official of the law who comes to examine into the robbery case, Don Juan has only contempt.¹ He laughs at justice as the officer sees it and refuses to give out any details, declaring he will mete out justice with his own hand, following the example of his grandfather.

"But those were other times" objects the escribano.

— Para mí son lo mismo éstos que aquellos.... me hice siempre justicia por mi mano, sin que el amigo me moviese ni el enemigo me acobardase. Esa otra justicia con escribanos, alguaciles y cárceles, no niego que sea una invención buena para las mujeres, para los niños y para los viejos que tienen temblonas las manos, pero Don Juan Manuel Montenegro no necesita de ella.

El escribano: Mi persona es sagrada, Señor Don Juan Manuel. Estoy en funciones y represento al juez.

El Caballero: ¡Aquí el juez soy yo!

El Escribano: Represento al rey.

El Caballero: ¡El rey soy yo!

¹. Aguila del blasón, p. 127.
El Escribano: Usted no es un hombre, Señor Don Juan.

El Caballero: ¡Yo soy león! ¡Yo soy tigre! 1

And many times it pleases Don Juan to call himself un lobo. 2

Like a wild beast at bay, con un puñal a la garganta reíase el Mayorazgo sin declarar donde tenía los dineros. 3

His fierceness he keeps to the last. When, locked in his room he tries to starve himself to death, and is continually disturbed in his lamentations by the servants beseeching him to let them in, he throws open the door and thunders at them: — ¡Será preciso que mate a uno! ¿No me dejaréis morir en paz? Malditos todos, que llegáis a esta puerta y no respetáis mi dolor. Cierro los ojos para morir y vuestras voces me despiertan.

Despite his ferocity, Don Juan was a fine and noble man, — magnífico, Valle Inclán calls him. When the Marqués asks his page, Florizel; — ¿Tan gran señor te parece Don Juan Manuel? Florizel cleverly replies: Mejorando las nobles barbas que me oyen.

Don Juan was fond of blustering around and making pretense at being a rough man, to whom sentiment was distasteful. But at unexpected moments, his innate nobility

1. Aguila del blason, pp. 127 and 128.
2. Romance de lobos, p. 68.
3. Aguila del blason, p. 92.
4. Sonata de otoño, p. 108.
of character would make itself apparent in some chance remark. Don Galán, one day, allowed himself some insolent remark about Sabelita in Don Juan's hearing. El Caballero siezed on him at once: Imbécil Don Galán de todo te está permitido habler menos de la señora Doña Isabel Castro de Cela.¹

Don Juan was always kind to women and children and to his vassals. He gave freely of his stores to those in need. After a storm at sea, which left many widows in the community, Don Juan arranged for each widow to be given a load of corn.² Nor were his gifts made with a view to ostentation. His heart was generous, gentle, sympathetic and responsive to everyone's distress. His miller says to him: — ¿Hay puerta de más caridad que la suya?³ And an old man, reminiscing, says: Las puertas del rey no son más caritativas. Recuér dame un año, por la fiesta, que mandó dar de beber y comer a todos los rapaces que bailaren. Yo era rapaz entonces.⁴

His servants are very loyal to him and admire him tremendously. Their grief, when they think him dying, is touching. Era el espejo de los ricos... ¡Era el más grande caballero del mundo! ¡Castillo fuerte!... ¡Sol resplande-ciente! ¡Toro de valentía! ⁵

1. Aguila del blasón, p. 104.
2. Romance de lobos, p. 194.
3. Aguila del blasón, p. 84.
4. Idem.
5. Idem. p. 44.
There was a fascination about Don Juan, an irresistible drawing power, that attracted those to him, whom we would expect to be most repelled. Sabelita, whom he would permit no one to slander, but whom he treated brutally, could not overcome her devotion. — *Me trata como a una esclava, me ofende con cuantas mujeres ve, y no puedo dejar de quererle.*

She realized that she should resent his treatment, but the hypnotic spell, in which she was held, although she felt it, she was not strong enough to break.

Don Galán takes extreme liberties with his master and even makes disparaging remarks about him to the servants. He takes no care to select his audience. Anyone within earshot is obliged to listen to his coarse wit. He tells Liberata: *Sois nuevos en la casa, y no se os alcanza que agora sucerderá lo que tantas veces. Fuese Doña Sabelita, pero no estará mucho tiempo mi amo sin traer otra moza para que le espante las moscas mientras duerme.*

María Soledad, the nobleman's wife, does not respect her husband. But her unconquerable love for him, causes her to be resigned to his shameful conduct, and to care for him when he is ill. She knows it is not love he feels for Sabelita nor for Liberata. Otherwise, when she came to his home and found Liberata dining with him, she would not have 1. *Aguila del blasón*, p.116.
stayed even to see out the scene which followed. La resignada señora permanece muda y altiva ante la farsa carnavalesca del marido que esconde a la manceba debajo de la mesa..... Don Juan Manuel, con mano tremula y rabiosa coge el plato que ante él humea apetitoso y se lo alarga a la manceba escondida debajo de la mesa, al socaire de los manteles.

— Hártate, can.¹

Don Juan acknowledges his guilt and accedes to her demands to leave his own house while Sabelita is there, saying as he departs:— Yo soy un lobo salido, un lobo salido, un lobo salido.²

María does not blame him for his treatment of her but accepts the explanation he makes her, which he repeats when he grieves for her death: Como el hombre necesita muchas mujeres y le dan una sola, tiene que buscarlas fuera. Si a mí me hubieran dado diez mujeres, habría sido como un patriarca. Las habría querido a todas y a los hijos de ellas y a los hijos de mis hijos. Sin eso mi vida aparece como un gran pecado. Tengo hijos en todas estas Aldeas, a quienes no he podido dar mi nombre...

Yo mismo no puedo contarlos ... Y los otros bandidos,

temerosos de verse sin herencia por mi amor a los bastardos, han tratado de robarme, de matarme ... Pero yo tengo siete vidas. Todo lo pago con sus lágrimas aquella santa.¹

The servants also grieve for Doña María as for a mother, crying: ¡Era Doña María la madre de los pobres! ¡Nunca hubo puerta de más caridad! ¡Dios Nuestro Señor la llamó para sí y la tiene en el cielo, al lado de la Virgen Santísima! ¡Era la madre de los pobres!

Don Juan, hearing their weeping, reproves them: ¿Porqué no camináis en silencio? Era mi madre también, y todo cuanto tenía en el mundo, y no lloro.²

By this we are convinced that Don Juan loved Doña María and never anyone else. Another proof is his denouncement of Sabelita when she comes at the request of his servants as a last effort to persuade him to give up his fasting. She calls through the locked door: — Soy Isabel, señor. Don Juan shouts at her: — El Demonio no te llama Isabel - el Demonio te llama voz de mentira, cuervo de ingratitude, sierpe de hipocresía, brasa de lujuria.³

As Don Juan nears the end of his life, he is torn

1. Romance de lobos, p. 69.
2. Idem, p. 83.
3. Idem, p. 217
between the desire to repent of his sins so he may go to join Dona Maria, and the determination never to weaken but to die as he has lived. He understood the teachings of Christ, for he says of the affair in which the young soldier was murdered near his house: —¿qué asesinato!

Estoy solo y no podré hacer nada. Pobre mozo, hubiera buscado asilo en mi casa, le hubiera defendido. Es la verdadera hidalguía, y la verdadera caridad, y la verdadera doctrina del filósofo de Judea ... Jesús de Nazaret no hizo guerra, pero dio su sangre por la redención de los humildes. Ese mozo, hijo de pescadores, era mi prójimo...

Y los hijos, una parte de nosotros .... mis hijos no son una parte mía. Esos son unos bandidos. Una parte mía, ese imbécil que duerme...

Y Don Juan Manuel despertó con el pie al bufón.

When Don Juan thinks Sabelita dying he makes a pitiful attempt at praying, with the help of Don Galán who knows as little of it as he:

El Caballero: Tú sabes rezar, Don Galán.
Don Galán: Como el Padre Santo.
El Caballero: Empieza.
Don Galán: Mi amo y si no es muerte?
El Caballero: Padre nuestro que estás en los cielos.
Don Galán: Mi amo, no tenemos hisopo ni caldero...
El Caballero: Calla borracho, que quiero rezar y me distraes.

Don Galán: Recemos a una, mi amo.

El Caballero: Padre Nuestro que estás en los cielos.

Don Galán: Amén Jesus.¹

Dona Maria finds them thus; and kneeling beside them, guides them in the Padrenuestro to the end. Then Don Juan, realizing his unworthiness and his share in Sabelita's transgression, begs Doña María to go on:

reza tú sola porque mis oraciones de nada valen y no pueden ser atendidas en el cielo. Soy un gran pecador y temo que los bienaventurados se tapen los oídos por no escucharme. ¡Reza tú que eres una santa!

After Doña María's death. Don Juan decides to confess his sins and then shut himself up to die. He has the priest called in and makes a public confession before all the servants and neighbors assembled in the great hall, hoping that, by explaining to everyone wherein he had sinned, he might prevent some other from arriving at unhappiness. ¡Yo he sido siempre el peor hombre del mundo! Ahora siento que voy a dejarlo y quiero arrepentirme.² He vivido siempre como un hereje,

¹ Aguila del blasón, p. 250.
² Romance de lobos, p. 152.
sin pensar que hay otra vida, y ahora siento una luz dentro
de mí.... necesito la absolución de mis pecados para re-
junirme con mi mujer en el Cielo .... Haré confesión
público....

No tengo más que un pecado.... He sido el verdugo
de aquella santa con la impiedad, con la crueldad de un
centurión romano en los tiempos de emperador Nerón....
No tengo otro pecado que confesar.... La afición a las
mujeres y al vino, y al juego, eso nace con el hombre....

Don Juan is so annoyed by his servants while trying to
starve himself, that he cannot get his thoughts in order and
his heart prepared for God. He flings open the door and
rushes out of the house. No one tries to stop him, so as-
tounded are they all at his wild appearance. He makes his
way to the shore and finds an old cave: En el fondo de una
caverna socavada por el mar, el viejo linajudo, espera la
muerte como un viejo león.... Fui toda mi vida un lobo
rabioso y como lobo rabioso quiero perecer de hambre en
esta cueva.

His idea is that death is the sole escape from
misery and provides the only opportunity for rest. He
philosophizes: No basta estar sentado para descansar,
ni basta estar dormido. Es preciso estar muerto. El

1. Romance de lobos, p. 231.
pensamiento vuela de día y de noche.... El mío vuela y realiza todo lo que mis manos no pueden realizar porque me las ata la vejez como me las ataron aquellos miserables. Si estas manos fuesen con mi pensamiento, y lo había ahorrado a todos.\(^1\)

Don Juan is a nobleman of old Castile, strong, cruel, brave, domineering, but with a substratum of sentiment and tenderness; noble in the final analysis, in spite of the misery he has brought to Doña María and to Sabelita.\(^2\)

Señor Osma calls him Don Juan Manuel de Montenegro, el tipo de todos los granujas, soberbio y grande y brutal.\(^3\)

He is remarkable for his admirable honesty, his brutal violence, his supreme independence. He looked to no one for aid in his quarrels, brooked no insolence from servant or vassal, and was disdainful of book learning and what he considered "effeminate" culture. In this last respect he differs widely from his nephew, the Marqués de Bradomín, who, when he calls Don Juan un hermano espiritual de aquellos aventureros hidalgos, says of himself: Yo pude serlo, si no hubiera tenido la manía de leer. Los muchos libros son como los muchos desengaños: no dejan nada en el corazón.\(^4\) Here the author speaks from his own heart, for

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1. Aguila del blasón, p. 61.
3. Impresiones de lecturas, unpublished.
4. Marqués de Bradomín, p. 94.
when he was young he wanted a career of adventure but substituted literature when the other was made impossible.

Both of these men sinned in their relations with women; but, in such relations, Don Juan was above the hipocrisy which the Marques practiced, as much on himself as on the women. Don Juan did not feign love to Sabelita nor to Liberata, nor to others of his former house keepers, whose presence at one time and another in his house is hinted.

Neighbors and acquaintances of Don Juan, although they had some knowledge of his shortcomings, saw those qualities in him so eclipsed by his strength of character and his ideals of justice as to make his faults appear negligible in comparison.

Two men discussing war and politics have this to say of him: vive en el pecado desde hace muchos años, es mujeriego, despótico, turbulento, pero su valor y su caridad son ejemplares. Yo creo que en la hora última se salvará por esas dos virtudes.... el valor purifica todas las virtudes. ¹

The presentation of Don Juan's life cannot be called immoral, for he is surrounded by an atmosphere at once feudal and mystic. We shiver at the words of the man who calls himself un lobo rabioso. His attempt to end an unhappy life by starvation in a robbers' cave on the seashore

¹. Resplandor de la hoguera, p. 123.
is sufficiently unreal and uninviting to repel any who might think to imitate him.
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