Benito Perez Galdos and His Works in the United States

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BENITO PÉREZ GALDÓS AND HIS WORKS
IN THE UNITED STATES.

BY
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V I T A

Ferdina Juliette Capparelli was born December 20th, 1910, in Chicago, Illinois. She was graduated from the John Marshall High School in 1928. The Bachelor of Science in Education Degree was conferred by the Northwestern University in 1932. The writer attended the University of Chicago Graduate School and also La Universidad Nacional de México in Mexico City, Mexico. She served on the Faculty of the Pan-American Council teaching Spanish. She has been teaching Spanish in the Chicago Public High School System for the past eight years, and is a member of the faculty of the Latin-American Institute.
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The name of Benito Pérez Galdós would be familiar to any one at all acquainted with Spanish literature. The subject of our study, Galdós, ranks extremely high in modern Spanish letters. He is one of the most popular modern novelists, and one of the greatest, if not the greatest in Spain. This supremacy in the field of the novel has extended into the United States where he is considered the most eminent Spanish novelist. It is here in the United States where the name of this gentleman is held in high esteem, respected, and proclaimed as the outstanding champion of progress of social reform. There are more publications by Galdós than any other modern Spanish writer.

We are aiming in this thesis to study, gather and weave into a logical, critical and cohesive unit, opinions and criticisms of various literary men in the United States, and thereby ascertain the extent of Galdós' popularity and the reason or reasons for the same.

It is hoped that this study might bring a more definite appreciation and evaluation of the position held by Galdós in the literary circles of the United States.

This study has been made by a research of books, periodicals, comments and articles written by men of letters in the United States about Galdós.
INTRODUCTION

Benito Pérez Galdós was born on May 10, 1843, in Las Palmas, Canary Islands. He attended the English schools there until the age of thirteen. At fifteen Galdós left the Islands and went to Spain. The Colegio de San Augustin, Madrid, Spain, was the next school on Galdós' educational itinerary and it was here that he was awarded his Bachelor's Degree. He matriculated at the University of Madrid, to study law. Law did not appeal to him. He became intensely interested in the field of literature, his attention focusing chiefly on the Latin poets. Music and painting are the extra-curricular subjects that Galdós studied. His talent in these fields is manifested in his literary works and many of his editions of Episodios Nacionales contain his own creative illustrations.

The year 1864 marks Galdós' graduation from the University and the official commencement of a series of literary endeavors by him. Actually El País, El Eco de, ---- were Galdós' first literary projects written in Las Palmas, but he never considered them of any importance. In 1866, while in Madrid, his initial journalistic output was a group of articles on art, literature and drama, which were published in La Nación. As a member of the staff of Las Cortes, Galdós was assigned to report on the sessions
of the legislature. He wrote for La Revista de España, and for
El Debate, of which he was editor. Many associates and friend-
ships were cultivated with outstanding people who occupied im-
portant political and literary positions. A study of the life of
all classes of the people was made by Galdós during this brief
but lucrative journalistic period. Galdós observed society and
civilization from behind the scenes through his journalistic
work. For the literary work he was to do, no other experience
could have served him so well. He was prepared to speak boldly,
and, if necessary, in "headlines". Some commentators of Galdós
seem to have agreed that journalism was a bypath for him and he
"happened" into it. The implication is also made that he turned
aside from it at the earliest possible moment. Facts seem to
disprove this theory. In reality journalism proved one of the
great events in Galdós' life. Eventually, however, he decided
that journalism was not his vocation. In the meantime he was
preparing himself for the writing of novels and dramas, particu-
larly dramas as his innermost desire was to be a dramatist. His
first two dramatic attempts, which were poetic dramas, La Expul-
sion de los Moriscos and El Hombre Fuerte, were never performed
because they were rejected by the director of the Theatre of
Madrid, to whom he had submitted them.

Galdós' trip to Paris in May, 1867, was the authentic
reason which convinced him to become a novelist; he engaged
himself so completely in the study and reading of Balzac that it
is believed his influence on Galdós was responsible for Galdós turning from the drama to the novel.

Galdós began to write his first novel, La Fontana de Oro, in 1868, and finished it in the same year, while on his second visit to Paris. However, when Galdós was en route home he witnessed an incident that proved tremendously important to him in his literary life; it was the Revolution of September, 1868, in Barcelona, and, despite the fact that he had no share in the actual rebellion, the sight of it all was responsible for his profound concentration on the internal unrest in Spain.

The political revolution of 1868 gave rise to the Spanish novel which afforded literature an instrument to portray the ideals of the people of that epoch. The novel was that particular form of Spanish literature of the nineteenth century which served as a means to combat political factions, of which there were two, the Liberalists, and the Traditionalists. Galdós was a Liberalist.

By 1873, which is an extremely important date in the life of Galdós, he was the author of three novels, La Fontana de Oro, La Sombra and El Audaz. In that year he wrote and published the first four of his Episodios Nacionales. His accomplishments were equally as successful in each ensuing year up to 1876, when the first of his group of Novelas de la primera época, Doña Perfecta appeared, which was followed shortly by the two series of historical and contemporary novels.

He secluded himself from society and even his friends in
order to devote his time to tenacious study and diligent work, but occasionally he would interrupt his intensive work to travel. In addition to his many trips to England and Europe, he made a number of trips into the interior of Spain, by way of donkeys, tourist passage or third class. While travelling in this style Galdós was afforded an opportunity of spending time at the roadside lodgings and associating closely with all types and classes of people. In this manner he visited the provincial regions and outskirts of Spain instead of the cities. He was acquainted with every nook and corner of Spain and he understood the Spanish people as no other contemporary writer could possibly understand them. Galdós' great talent was his ability to put into words what he saw and heard during his travels. The whole of Spain, every town, province, every unit of its population, every shadow of its thought, and every year of the nineteenth century is embraced by Galdós. Galdós has essayed to paint some specific phases of Spanish life in practically all his novels. Sharp observation and energetic style are also manifested. He is a realist. The canvas upon which he wrote stretched widely, and took in all parts of Spain, except the one where he was born, the Canary Islands. It seems as though Galdós had witnessed the life of the entire country during the nineteenth century. Although the pioneer of municipal and parliamentary institutions in Europe, Spain arrived at the doors of the nineteenth century in a belated phase
of development. This century is in the history of Spain the Constitutional Century, not only in the political, but in the national and cultural sense of the word. During the nineteenth century Spain had to assimilate not only the French Revolution, but the Renaissance, and some elements of the Reformation. It was a chaotic period of wars, which devasted the body, no doubt, but definitely stimulated the spirit of the nation. Galdós began to write simultaneously with the Bourbon Restoration.

No one has felt, has lived and has reproduced in writing this epoch as has Galdós. No one is as Nineteenth Century as he. He felt it, he was in the stride of it, he understood the people, the era, and the life as it was lived. He saw and felt the progress of it. His liberalism is purely Nineteenth Century in style. A century of history, with the pictures of the personalities of all classes and types of people; their sorrows, tragedies, struggle for existence and achievements. In brief - the type of society of the Nineteenth Century is what Galdós painted on his literary canvas.

Our author is distinctly Spanish in every respect and his literary output is authentically Spanish, filled with Spanish ambiente. He is Spanish and not regional. In his cosmopolitan manner he depicts reality with its problems of everyday life as it is seen in Spain and yet this identical reality is transferrable to any individual in any country, which accounts for his universal popularity.
Galdós is at his best in his descriptions of middle class life as he was familiar with it, especially in Madrid. His novels of middle class life are his most important works. They may be divided into three groups:

1. Historical
2. Economic
3. Religious

Galdós is not a novelist of the upper class of society, he is a novelist of the working people.

Costumbrista, Madrid has been authentically painted in Galdós' novels.

It is the opinion of one writer that Anglo-Saxon people are rather unfamiliar with Spanish literature, and he thinks it is quite discouraging that not even Galdós, who is most representative and the most prolific of the modern Spanish writers, is not better known. It is pointed out that had he been a Frenchman, or a German, his fame would have been universal; being a Spaniard, it is hardly more than peninsular. It is humiliating to record that many of Galdós' best novels still remain unexploited.

One may truthfully say that the body of Galdós' work is assembled into a methodical scheme of experiences and observations of the social life of Spain during the Nineteenth Century. However, in order to make so large a task possible, Galdós had to employ the method of the historical novel, the realistic novel,
and the symbolic novel. He excels in the present-day social novels.

In the Spanish speaking world, and especially in America, Galdós is known exclusively for his Episodios Nacionales, and for those of his novels in which there is the religious question. Although he is great in all his work, he was greatest in the novels where he described the contemporary life of the middle and lower classes of Madrid. Thus, in painting the Madrilenian reality Galdós revealed that which it had in common with the rest of the Peninsula and all humanity.

It may be said that Galdós, together with Alarcon, Pereda and Valera, his literary contemporaries, have founded the modern Spanish Novel. Authentically speaking the true master of the modern novel in Spain is Galdós. If other novelists are capable to rival, or perhaps surpass him in some particular manner or style, no one has erected so vast and so wealthy a literary monument, or structure more concretely built.

Galdós is considered one of the world's great novelists and the greatest literary personage of Nineteenth Century Spain. The style of the rich literary worth of his novels, combined with his genuine sincerity of purpose and progressive ideas, have not simply made him one of the eminent and illustrious writers of the national literature, but have made him the "apostle of progress and liberalism". The prophet who laid the foundation for the modern writers of modern Spain.
He was a great artist and his novels became immortal works. According to an eminent writer Galdós was one of the masters of the contemporary novel in Europe and without doubt will continue to be one of them.

Galdós made his debut as a dramatist with Realidad in 1892. In 1897 he was elected to the Real Academia de la Lengua. Due to illness and old age infirmities, Galdós just about stopped writing in 1917, which date also marked the close of an epoch. Death claimed Galdós on January 4, 1920; thus taking from Spain the greatest modern Spanish author, but leaving to the world a monument of new literature.

Galdós, as has been said before, was a prolific writer and his contribution to the literary field was tremendous, as may be seen by his forty-six Episodios Nacionales, seven Novelas Españolas Contemporaneas, twenty-five plays, plus hundreds of miscellaneous articles. The international fame which Spain enjoyed in the field of modern fiction is in part due to the literary offerings of Galdós, and the three other contemporary writers of his period.
CHAPTER I

GALDÓS THE NOVELIST

Benito Pérez Galdós, the father of the modern social novel, according to William Dean Howells, was the most progressive and without a doubt the most superb of the new school of the Spanish novelists. He is the one great novelist who is Spanish rather than regional; and he excels in portraying the life of the Capitol. In his labor as a novelist Galdós was not only steady but definitely productive. His creative genius is manifested by the fact that he is prolific and because of this Galdós was successful in literature.

Human nature, as studied by an unprejudiced writer of the nineteenth century, is the subject of Galdós' novels. However, from his complete knowledge of Spain, Geddes-Josselyn claim Galdós is the sole authentic national writer of his century. Corresponding to this opinion is that of Northup who says that: "Galdós is the novelist of all Spain, and the apostle of progress among the nineteenth century novelists".


Galdós' main interest is man. He renders to man exactly the same place which the painters of the Spanish school gave him, chiefly the background. He was an observer; an observer of the life of Spain, and for his setting he has used Spain, chiefly Madrid. He paints truthfully and artistically society as he has seen it in the Capitol, cities, provinces and locales. His portraits are imbued with a realism that has little rivalry, but does justice to his realism, for Galdós is a realist. His literary canvas embraces the life of the middle and lower classes of Madrid during the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. 5

The events of everyday life are reflected in a very natural manner on his broad canvas. These people, with their grave problems and misfortunes, are treated in a kindly and compassionate way, with a profound understanding and a human gentleness. At no time is he unkind toward humanity, nor does he bear disdain or contempt for the lowly and less fortunate. Truly a humanitarian and an optimist, as well as a Spaniard, who Spanish literature is decisively international. The general tone throughout his works is that of profound sympathy for sorrow and misfortune; his love

for the poor and the under-privileged. His idealism is human, and the sincerity in his interpretation of emotion is genuine. It is clearly evident that Galdós has contempt for the ordinary and vulgar. Elements of degradation and demoralization are non-existent in his works. Pathos and tragedy are the characteristics, but these may be accounted for by the fact that these literary treatises are based on life, life as it is actually lived. Galdós reproduced life as he saw it. There were no additions of fads, frills, nor fanciful ideas to embellish it. He simply reproduced in writing what he actually witnessed and observed, yet the reproductions are intensely dramatic. His talents of music and painting, plus his taste for only the good in life, may be detected in his fineness of manner of handling situations and presenting backgrounds.6

Galdós loved and admired Dickens who served as an inspiration for him, and it is believed that a great similarity exists between the character and the outlook of both men. Each had the most profound respect and undying sympathy for poor and a great disdain for the greedy plutocrats.7

7. Ibid., pp. 10-11.
His work reflects his human attitude, tenderness, compassion, kindness and understanding of people and especially those less fortunate ones who are confronted with problems. Purely from the humanitarian angle, he has a great dislike for the privileged class. He interprets these as unfair, injurious, detrimental and conducive to evil. Socialism is attractive to him, not as a political doctrine, but as a channel through which he could ameliorate the conditions of the poor and the unfortunate. Here again Dickens is reflected in his works. His intellectual sincerity and powerful optimism are of the same rank because of Galdós' broad ideas of life are manifested in his novels on the social problems of contemporary life. Too, Galdós' kindly attitude and impartiality are manifested by his spirit of fair play in that he presents both sides of the question and favoritism does not exist. Partiality on his part manifests itself only when it comes to the dangerous results of problems pertaining to the Church and the institutions of politics.

Galdós' prose contains no gallicisms, it is natural. Style was at no time his cardinal thought, and although "Galdós has ignored as many conventions as possible", Waldeck says, "he

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achieved a result which is the very quintessence of anti-Sardouism, the utter abolition of the ficelle". However, Bell claims that:

"Few modern writers would distinguish as he does between the adjectives confortable and confortante—'confortable humildad', 'lechos comodos y confortantes'. Nothing better than subtle preciosity of the Modernists shows up the vigour and sanity, the restrained eloquence and castizo air of his prose." 11

When Byess-Stiefel 12 edited Doña Perfecta they discovered the vocabulary of the text to contain about six thousand different words. On the other hand, the belief of the Purists, writes Lewis, 13 is that Galdós' style is not perfect, and that many of his sentences are grammatically incorrect, but in respect to this Lewis says that:

"This belief scarcely detracts from the real worth of his novels, nor from the benefit American students may derive from reading such vivid portrayals of Spanish, or, rather, of human character." 14


From the standpoint of style, *Marianela* reflects the uniqueness of Galdós' early style. It is apparent this is one of his very early novels, prior to his discovering a style, or perhaps several styles, of his own: but it gives birth to a new tone in Spanish fiction. At the same time his style of writing has been subject to criticism because of its negligence and *Krappe-Levin* add that there are signs of hurriedness in Galdós' work. However, they further state in their criticism that:

"As for Galdós' style, for all its equality of improvisation, it is living, colored, versatile, and all in all is so excellent a vehicle for expressing the gamut of emotion, indignation, sarcasm, humor, tenderness and pathos, that one should certainly not rank it below the highly polished diction of a Valera or the overcharged richness of phase of a Pereda." 17

In accord with *Krappe-Levin's* opinion of Galdós' style is *Marsh*18 who says that:

"He is the master of a singularly rich and virile style, a style not modeled upon a fad, but expressive of the whole nature of the man: capable of eloquence, of wit and humor, of anger and scorn; now simple and unadorned, now laden with a burden of reflection and of the great traditional memories, literary and other, of the race. The Spanish purists have indeed declared this style to be far from impeccable, and this is altogether probable. But none the less it has something much more important than impeccability; it has life and strength, and, when its master pleases, beauty."

17. Ibid., pp. 10-11.
Butler Clarke describes Galdós' style as being "pure without pretensions to brilliancy".

In his novels there is logical presentation, variation, development and treatment of character. Nature plays an important part in the studies of the author, which he reflects in the reputation of his characters and in the natural conditions surrounding them. Objectiveness, which is one of the keynotes to his style, may perhaps be the reason, or answer, for the intellectual interpretation and depictions of characters in their predicaments and their surrounding misfortunes, which he analyzes with human and understanding tenderness. He does not confine these problems to provincial or local characters, as these problems are universal, and his characters are people who are to be found in any country, because they are human and subject to the same trials and tribulations the world over. However, Waldeck claims that when it comes to personalities, Galdós' women characters are strong.

*La Sombra*, written in 1866, or 1867, and published in *La Revista de Espana*, was the first novelistic attempt by Galdós.

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It was, however, succeeded by what is believed to be his first novel, *La Fontana de Oro*, a novel of historical and revolutionary character.

In 1867, Galdós' attention was so greatly absorbed in the revolutionary tumult of his own age, and likewise by the terrible chaotic condition in Spain that he initiated a type of historical novel in *La Fontana de Oro*, in which he made a study of the causes and history of that particular period, and painted an odious personality in the character of Ferdinand VII. Consequently four years elapsed before the book was completed and published. During this lapse of time Galdós visited France and was on his return trip to Madrid, by way of Barcelona, when the Revolution of 1868 broke out. It was this Revolution which deprived Isabel of the Spanish throne.

The revolutionary agitation of this era and the terrible chaotic condition of Spain in the early part of the century all created within Galdós the urge to write *La Fontana de Oro*. In this work he made an investigational study of the history of that time and painted the abominable character of Ferdinand VII, as it showed itself in one of his shameful acts. The publication of it in 1871 created no great impression, appealing only to a few efficient critics.


In this literary work, Bishop\textsuperscript{24} says, Galdós describes the ambitions of "ardent youth" of 1820 who rebelled against the laws introduced by Ferdinand VII after the French were expelled from Spain. Through the character of Lazaro, a student, who is the hero, he expresses his own ideas of the time.

According to Krappe-Levin,\textsuperscript{25} \textit{La Fontana de Oro} is the literary output of Galdós' liberal zeal at the induction of the rebellion against Isabell II's reactionary form of government.

Krappe-Levin state that:

"Of greater literary importance was an historical novel, \textit{La Fontana de Oro}, written in 1867. This work, the scene of which was laid during the reign of the bigoted Ferdinand VII (1814-1844), was inspired by the liberal ardor of Galdós at the sign of the revolt against the reactionary government of Isabell II."\textsuperscript{26}

Northup\textsuperscript{27} describes \textit{La Fontana de Oro} as a historical novel, relating life in Spain during the early part of the nineteenth century.

\begin{itemize}
  \item 27. Northup, \textit{op. cit.} p. 37
\end{itemize}
From 1820 to 1822, during the reign of Ferdinand VII, political clubs met to talk over the calamitous ordinances which marked this sovereign's rule. The Golden Flaunt, a cafe, is where these groups held their rendezvous. Geddes²⁸ points out that Galdós used the name of The Golden Flaunt, La Fontana de Oro, for the title of his first novel in which he says Galdós painted his impressions of the time, and that the ideas of Galdós are to be found too in the described ideas of Lazaro.

²⁸. Geddes, op. cit. p. 3.
EL AUDAZ

The novel La Fontana de Oro was followed by El Audaz (The Fearless), written to portray the same era. The hero is a staunch radical who rebelled because of an injustice done to his family by the Count de Cerezuelo. He was in love with the Count's daughter, but as fate did not decree the union the story is climaxed with the hero meeting his death on the street.

Bishop\textsuperscript{29} concludes with the following statement: "These early books are conceived upon conventional romantic lines, and hardly give promise to the author's future fame."

Geddes\textsuperscript{30} believes that El Audaz, which is a historical romance, was written as the result of the success of his first novel. It was published in 1872. The historical incidents which took place in Spain in 1804 formed the background for this novel. However, these two novels were the introduction to the extraordinary series of Episodios Nacionales which followed.

\textsuperscript{29} Bishop, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 6158-59.

\textsuperscript{30} Geddes, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 5.
MARIANELA

Editions

Marianela is an idealistic or romantic novel, according to Geddes-Josselyn. Through the sentiments experienced by Pablo and Nela, the genuine worth of feeling as a vital phase of our existence could not be more impressively portrayed. The story does not hold the attention of the reader from the psychological point of view only, but it brings out the author's social attitude, and especially his interest in presenting current problems.

He paints a picture of a mining town whose inhabitants are poor workmen struggling for an existence, and a few rich people, who enjoy the luxuries and comforts of life at their expense. Geddes-Josselyn further adds that:

"The social problems concerning ignorance and education, poverty and wealth, selfishness and duty toward society, occur in the author's mind. These questions are treated with the lucidity and vigor of which the writer is so capable, and reveal his sympathy with progressive modern ideas, such as are clearly shown in the realistic novels."

32. Ibid., pp. 9-10.
Marianela reflects the eminent quality of Galdós' writing, the deep inner feeling and shrewd perception of the tragedy of present social conditions and the futile opposition in which illiteracy and intolerance involve people. Gray concludes his description by saying that:

"The picture is as clear as if Dickens had drawn it."

Del Río says, "la retórica sentimental ahoga el limpio discurrir de la acción."

According to Ford, Galdós had the power to use his "Psychological sense" without any realistic mingling and to such a degree that the result was a charming story like Marianela. This beauty and delightfulfulness was in part due to the simplicity of some of the paragraphs, and the manner in which it handles results of feeling and the basic idea. Marianela is an excellent example of Galdós' early style and mode of writing. The literary productions after Marianela are all "realistic".


Galdós is one of the first Spanish authors in recent years to include the working man among the social elements necessary to bring about an improved scheme of things.

In accordance with his feeling for the great need of education and training and the results of how one is doomed to misery and deprivations, he creates Marianela. He shows the need for reforms and changes not only in society, but likewise in the educational system.

Up to a certain time Howells°*° was of the belief that Galdós wrote romantic or idealistic novels and he claims that when he read Marianela, which belonged to this category, it tired him very much, and also that he was surprised because it was unlike his later work, which is all realistic. At this point he says that:

"But one does not turn realist in a single night, and although the change in Galdós was rapid it was not quite a lightning change, perhaps because it was not merely an outward change, but artistically a change of heart."


Doña Perfecta has been acclaimed by many as Galdós' major accomplishment. It has become his most celebrated work abroad, and in all probability will become the most accepted example of his literary work to the English reader. Bishop points out that Galdós assumed the most serious attitude in his novels, and his attention was particularly concentrated on the problems of life and destiny, of which Doña Perfecta is an example. He further adds that:

"Doña Perfecta combats the undue influence of the confessor, or religious adviser in the family; the tone toward the church is severely critical but not destructive."

Bishop goes on to quote Howells who claims that:

"Galdós attacks only the same intolerant ecclesiastical spirit that elsewhere would be known by another name."

Galdós emphatically paints the bigotry of a remote, detached and uninformed village, and its unendurance of modern concepts, in the novel Doña Perfecta, which many critics classed as Galdós' masterpiece. The unfortunate consequences which may result from any persistent following of transmitted beliefs is the aim of Galdós in this novel.

38. Bishop, op. cit., 6161, 6155, 6157.
The character of Doña Perfecta personifies the consequence of inherited bigotry. In the beginning she is strongly attached to her nephew and brother. She is a kindly woman and favors the idea of her daughter marrying her nephew. However, she changes, and became an odious person. Ultimately, the engineering and the execution of the plans of the murder of her nephew may be directly placed on her. The manner in which Galdós handled this complete change of character is not only excellent but qualified to such a degree as to render to Doña Perfecta its worthy position among the important and great modern contemporary novels. 39

Doña Perfecta is the portrayal of the symbol of advancement, battling with the elements of transmitted doctrines and customs. It presents the question of religion.

Northup further adds that:

"The characters are symbolic: Pepe Rey, of progress; Doña Perfecta, of bigotry leading to crime; the Penitentiary, of obscurantism; Rosario, who loses her reason as a result of the difference of the rest, stands perhaps for the afflicted Spanish nation."

He concludes with the following statement:

"The novel contains excellent types, but the total effect is false. The characters have been too carefully chosen in support of a thesis."40

In Ford's criticism he states that:

"The Doña Perfecta, which out of all his novels has made the most noise abroad, illustrates what happens when his antipathies take one of their most determined forms, anti-clericalism, a corollary of which is for him that faithful practitioner Catholicism is always under the priestly thumb and is always a blind bigot."41

No doubt this "corollary" is the thesis of Doña Perfecta, and Galdós made it absolute by his producing the mother in the character that he did, even to the extent of surrendering her own daughter in preference to deviating from her beliefs. Ford accuses him of painting a distorted idea of religion, of Catholicism as exercised in Spain, in this novel. It is very sad that Doña Perfecta should have the privilege of being so celebrated abroad, because it tends to render a perverted notion of the religious side of Spanish life. Ford adds that:

"All this is a great pity; Galdós is one of the most powerful novelists of the modern world, but he has let the spirit of propaganda betray him into injustice and unrighteousness."42

Geddes43 contends that Galdós used the element of bigotry as his subject of ridicule. He did not attempt to argue with Catholicism; for, as Mr. Howells claims, "He is Spanish and Catholic, and his novels only attack the customs and ideas cherished by

secular fanaticism to the injury of the church." According to Geddes, Galdós' aim was to reproduce truth as he saw it and to permit his readers to come to their own conclusions; this he brings out in the statement that:

"The purpose does not obtrude to the extent of interfering with art, yet appears clearly enough to indicate the attitude of the writer."

However Geddes claims that Galdós does not use "dramatic effect" to create emotion in his readers' minds.

Howells believes that as one reads the story he feels the actuality of incidents to the degree that he sympathizes, hates, loves, and admires, as he would if he were actually involved in the particular situations. He claims the story has its fallacies. He also says that:

"There are tags of romanticism fluttering about it here and there; and at times the author permits himself certain old fashioned literary airs and poses and artifices, which you simply wonder at. It is in spite of these and with all these defects, that it is so great and beautiful a book."44

Howells further adds:

"For her as I confess for me "Donña Perfecta" is not realistic enough, realistic as it is; for realism at its best is not tendencious. It did not seek to struggle with human tribulations, but is richly content with portraying human experiences; and I think Señora Pardo-Bazan is right in regarding "Donña Perfecta"

44. Howells, op. cit., p. 9
as transitional and of a period when the author had not yet assimilated in its fullest meaning the faith he had imbibed." 45

Pepe Rey may be described as a kind man, having courage, charitableness and a kindred soul, yet who is undiplomatic to the point where he actually enters into intrigue. He rebelled against his pilot, yet, in his very heart, he knew he had committed a wrong. 46

The priest, Don Inocencio, who was Doña Perfecta's spiritual adviser, had no malice in his heart. He was merely concerned in the salvation of her soul.

Rosario may be described as one of the most fragrant flowers of womanhood, who sacrificed the one great love of her life for her devotion to her selfish mother.

Howells states that:

"Next to this excellent method, which I count the supreme characteristic of the book merely because it represents the whole, and the other facts are in the nature of parts, is the masterly conception of the characters." 47

These characteristics are representative of particular phases of human nature. We may put our own acquaintances and foes in their place. They are not extreme.

45. Ibid., p. 8
46. Ibid., p. 10
47. Howells, op. cit., pp. 10-12
"They are of mixed motives, mixed qualities; none of them is quite a monster; though those who are badly mixed do such monstrous things." 48

Dona Perfecta herself is the most excellent character, and efficacious production of the story. Through her bigotry she is close to actually being a devil and in reality performs the works of the devil.

He further adds that:

"Yet even she is not without extenuating traits. Her bigotry springs from her conscious and she is truly devoted to her daughter's welfare; she is of such a native frankness that at a certain point she tears aside her mask of dissimulation and lets Pepe see all the ugliness of her perverted soul. She is wonderfully managed. At what moment does she begin to hate him, and to wish to undo her own work in making a match between him and her daughter: I could defy anyone to say." 49

Howells claims that he has labeled, or perhaps, half labeled, this novel tendencious; then again he contradicts himself by saying that in a particular broader view it is not tendencious.

In his conclusion, Howells points out that:

"It is eternal interest of passion working upon passion, not the temporary interest of conditions antagonizing condition, which renders Doña so poignantly interesting, and which makes its tragedy

48. Ibid., pp. 10-11.

immense. But there is hope so well as despair in such a tragedy. There is the strange support of a bereavement in it, the consolation of feeling that for those whom suffered onto death, nothing can harm them now; that even for those who have inflicted their suffering this peace will soon come.*

In the Introduction to Doña Perfecta, Howells\(^5\) says that Doña Perfecta treats in artistic magnitude with the attachment to bigotry, as it treats with the fervor of love, the ardor of ambition, the zeal for revenge. In his conclusion he adds that, "Galdós is Spanish and Catholic, and for him bigotry wears a Spanish and Catholic face. That is all."

According to Staver\(^5\) Doña Perfecta may be described as a "protest contra religious intolerance." The story grows as it is told; the characters develop by themselves in speech and action; thus allowing the incidents to occur unintroduced. He never predicted their course, he did not foretell anything even so much as the weather. He builds the story gradually but logically, everything follows in sequence.

Coleman\(^5\) in her comments of Doña Perfecta says, it is a discussion of the evils created by religious intolerance.

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50. Ibid., p. 12.
From Marsh's point of view Doña Perfecta was the first novel in which Galdós's new conception prevailed and he claims that:

"In it Galdós brought the new and the old face to face; the new in the form of a highly trained, clear-thinking, frank-speaking, modern man; the old in the guise of a community so remote from the current of things that its religious intolerance, its social jealousy, its undisturbed confidence, and price in itself must of necessity declare instant war upon that which comes from without unsympathetic adversary. The sympathies of the author, as his closing sentence shows, are the new, but his conscience as artist has none the less compelled him to give to the old its right of full and fair utterance."

Destruction is the unavoidable ultimatum for one whose physical strength is weak. However, the least destruction is for those who have been impelled to destroy their enemy.

Doña Perfecta was Galdós's first new literary endeavor. It presented a conflict between an intelligent, but an unskillful young man, and a "bigoted" village in Central Spain. Since it is a tragedy, and a tragic ending is inevitable, it ended tragically.

Krappe-Levin further adds that:

"There cannot be the slightest doubt on which side the author's sympathies are although his fairness both as an artist and as a philosopher does not allow him to attribute the whole blame to one party alone.

54. Marsh, op. cit., p. 11
55. Ibid., p. 11
Doña Perfecta was put on the Index; nevertheless, it was exceedingly successful, and established a European literary reputation for Galdós: it was translated into almost every civilized tongue and was hailed by progressives everywhere." 57

One of the strongest criticisms of Doña Perfecta is expressed by Cesar Barja when he states that much of the novelistic and dramatic work of Galdós rebels against the religious and clerical fanaticism and the natural defects and problems that result from them.

"As, for example, in the famous novel Doña Perfecta, a tremendous satire against the religious and clerical fanaticism of Doña Perfecta and her friend and counsel, the Canon Don Inocencio. There are two Spains, the old and new; two ideas, new and old, that enter into conflict; the religious, and clerical fanatic represented by the character of Doña Perfecta and the Canon, and the religiously indifferent, liberal and laity represented by the Engineer Pepe Rey." 58

Barja continues by saying that:

"en verdad, más que una novela es la obra una idea, una tesis, y ni siquiera una idea ni una tesis; es una pasión tan fanática como la de un catolico intrasigente." 59

There is too much vehement passion in the work, too much spirit of attack and of propaganda.

Doña Perfecta and her companions, instead, are more than painted, they are caricaturized. The total presentation that they

57. Ibid., p. 9
59. Ibid., pp. 344-345.
make is unfavorable; it is more than unfavorable, it is grotesque. It is obvious that Galdós was indifferent to the idea of making Doña Perfecta a saintly woman and Pepe Rey an ill-mannered ruffian. For which reason the critics claim that it is really lamentable that an artist like Galdós weaves a fable as coarse as that of Doña Perfecta with the intervention of the police, social revolution, and assassination.60

In Angel Del Río's description of Doña Perfecta he says that: "Se consigue una superior armonía estética".61

60. Barja, op. cit., p. 345 (Translation)
61. Del Río, op. cit., p. 27.
Without doubt **Gloria** presents the race problem. The heroine, a Catholic, is in love with an intelligent Jew whom she can't marry because of the racial differences. **Northup**\(^{62}\) points out that **Gloria** stirred up agitation when it was presented to the public. Bigotry and clericalism were the subjects of his criticism, and not religion, nor Roman Catholicism. Galdós was a Catholic, and a crucifix always hung on the wall of his bedroom.

**Morley** quotes **Menéndez y Pelayo**, who is not to be labeled as partial in the field, as saying that:

"**Gloria** is one of Galdós' best, not only because it is more carefully written than others, but also by reason of the gravity of its content," (love between a Catholic girl and Jew), "the pathos of the story, the psychological richness of the principal figures, the gradual, majestic unrolling of events, the skillfully masked denouement, and above all the lofty ideal which governs the whole and is never lowered even in the moments when emotion is most engrossing."\(^{63}\)

In **Gloria**, as in **La Familia de León Roch** and **Doña Perfecta**, we find the argument, that of "religious toleration." The religious sentiment and suffering of a small country town, as described by Galdós, is comparable in vividness and interest with its equal,

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to the town of Orbajosa, in Doña Perfecta. Geddes claims that the entire first part of Gloria was framed in Galdós' mind one day as he was crossing the Puerta del Sol. The image of the plot was brought plainly before his mind. The first part was finished in two weeks. The critics solicited him "to prove something" and, therefore, out of respect he wrote the second part. Gloria, La Familia de Leon Roch and Doña Perfecta have a definite purpose, and as most of Galdós' literary works, are "realistic".

Gloria and La Familia de Leon Roch, which are classed in the same category with Doña Perfecta, have the same problem of "ignorance or stubborn religiosity". Marsh says that although Gloria is not perfect in technique, this was due to the haste in which Galdós wrote it, it has enjoyed tremendous and merited praise. Marsh further states that:

"The theme is not unlike that of George Eliott's "Daniel Deronda, one of the protagonists being an English Jew, with the profoundist attachment to the traditions of his race, the other a Spanish girl, in whom the faith of her fathers' is an ineradicable instinct. Few finer and more tragic situations have been imagined by moderns than this. No less tragic, though less poetic, is the ruin of Leon Roch, weighed down by the burden of an insanely bigoted wife."6

64. Geddes, op. cit., p. 9
65. Marsh, op. cit., pp. 11-12
66. Ibid., pp. 11-12
Gloria is as much a study of nature as it is a portrait of Spanish life. It is above the ordinary because of its variations and definiteness of character and "liberal justice of the author's views". The merits of the work are in "the charm of the two lovers;" "equal and various goodness of four Lancíguas;" humorous individuality of the braggart type, and the three religious gossips of

1. Caifás,
2. Amarillo,

Galdós presented a religious prejudice and an attitude of intolerance in their conflict with modern ideas in this novel.67

Of all this group, the author says, Gloria has been accepted as the best of his novels. In this work the problem is executed in a different manner. Gloria is the heroine, and the daughter of a religious father and niece of a Bishop. Daniel Marton, a Jew, is the hero. One love unites them and one religion separates them. Jesus, a child, fruit of this love, is born. The result of the invincible religious opposition is the impossibility of their union in matrimony, the social asphyxiation, the death of Gloria, and the final separation of Marton.

It is not an anti-religious novel, rather a resumé of Galdós' whole religious idealism, and this statement Berja qualifies by quoting from Galdós:

"La religion es hermosa cuando une, horrible y cruel cuando separa!" The child, Jesus, is also, the symbol of a new religion: the religion of love, that unites, that is opposed to the different creeds that separate." 68

Again Barja quotes Galdós for the purpose of illustrating religious idealism:

"Tu precioso y activo niño Jesús, estás llamado sin duda a intentarlo; tú, que naciste del conflicto, y éres la personificación más hermosa de la humanidad emancipado de los antagonismos religiosos por virtud del amor; tú, que en una sola persona llevas sangre de enemiga razas y éres el símbolo en que se han fundido dos conciencias, harás sin duda algo grande." 69

Gloria is a dramatic novel and has many beautiful scenes. What, in the heroine, is most suspicious is the liberty of thought which the author gives to her at certain times to the point of rejecting, as absurd, the separation which results from the difference of religious creed between two persons who are in love with each other. 70 It is simply a novelistic creation without particular interest. In conclusion the novel has its defects; it is, without doubt, a very acceptable, dramatic and beautiful novel, with psychological, loving, sympathetic poetical divinations. 71

69. Ibid., p. 346.
70. Ibid., p. 347.
Galdós' novel is governed by the principle more dramatic of suspense than of interest, unexpected revelations of which there are many in Gloria, as that of the religion professed by the Jew. The ending of the novel, death of Gloria, is a dramatic incident, as is the assassination of Pepe Rey, and the death of Marianela. There, in such novels as represented, he had to regulate them, in conformity to requirements of the scene. 72

In concluding the criticism of Gloria, Krappe-Levin point out that:

"This book shows how deeply rooted is religious prejudice, even in the most enlightened, and how moderns are engulfed by the hatreds and antipathies of their ancestors." 73

LA FAMILIA DE LEON ROCH

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Editions

La Familia de Leon Roch presents the same problem as Doña Perfecta; the struggle between the old form of Spanish religion and "modern scientific thought". Maria, who married Leon, the Scientist, corresponds to the character of Doña Perfecta, and

72. Ibid., pp. 356-357.
73. Krappe-Levin, op. cit., p. 9
like her, is governed by her confessor. Both she and her husband have attempted to convert each other, and this conflict is of equal intensity as that between "Doña Perfecta and Pepe Rey", with the same fatal climax.

Northup describes La Familia de Leon Roch as the story of a broken marriage due to religious diversity between husband and wife.

According to Krappe-Levin, in 1878, with La Familia de Leon Roch, Galdós returned to the same attack he made in Gloria.

In Rogers' criticism he says that:

"With Doña Perfecta (1876), Gloria (1876-77), and La Familia de Leon Roch (1878), he attacks religious bigotry and clericalism, which were rife in Spain. The progressive stand taken by these works produced a tremendous effect and won for their author immediate international recognition and fame. He continued in his later novels to be concerned with social questions, and with tempered realism he treats several phases of Spanish life. Also, they carry the characteristic defects of Galdós, carelessness of style."

74. Geddes, op. cit., p. 9
75. Northup, op. cit., p. 373.
77. Rogers, op. cit., p. 15.
Fortunata y Jacinta, the four volume novel is Galdós' masterpiece. It is a tale of two unhappily married women, one of the proletariat, and the other of the bourgeois, whose lives through the forces of destiny have been twisted with each other.

Morley describes this work as "an acute and detailed study of transformation in the Madrid Bourgeois".

The fact that Fortunata y Jacinta contains an abundance of characters and particulars, that it is devoid of capriciousness and imagination, that it has many incidental stories, pictures and accounts, make the main characters appear unimportant. However, Rogers considers the novel, Fortunata y Jacinta, an efficacious detail of the humble life of Madrid.

Corresponding to Rogers' opinion is that of Geddes, who says that the manners and customs of Madrid are reproduced excellently in Fortunata y Jacinta.

78. Northup, op. cit., Chapter 21, p. 373
80. Rogers, op. cit., p. 15.
81. Geddes, op. cit., p. 11.
In *Misericordia* Galdós described the humble nature of the Matrilinean society; the central theme, Christian charity, true Christian charity, that which gives without taxing, nor measurements.

Padín\(^{82}\) points out that the lexicon of *Misericordia* is extraordinarily rich, varied and pure: adding that this characteristic of the novel makes it still more adaptable to Puerto Rico.

Galdós’ "transition" to his ultimate literary period was initiated by *La Desheredada*, and he has indicated that the great obstacles of his vocation began with this literary creation.\(^{83}\)

Rogers\(^{84}\) describes *La Desheredada* as a "naturalistic portrayal of contemporary customs".

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84. Rogers, *op. cit.*., p. 15.
ANGEL GUERRA

Religious mysticism as studied from the psychological point of view is the subject treated in Angel Guerra. 85

In Morley's 86 description he says "Angel Guerra is a masterly essay of modern mysticism, well localized in the ancient city of Toledo," and that it with the four Torquemada books and Nazarín, curious in psychology and perfect in art, the rival, if not the model of Antonio Fogazzaro's II Santo. 87

Geddes points out that in Angel Guerra and Nazarín Galdós treated a different phase of religious sentiment.

In the opinion of Northup, 88 Angel Guerra and the four books of Torquemada series, are among his best literary works.

TORQUEMADA

Torquemada is a psychological study of the effects of usury upon character. 89

However, Rogers' 90 description of the Torquemada series

85. Rogers, op. cit., p. 15
86. Morley, op. cit. p. 552
87. Geddes, op. cit., p. 11
88. Northup, op. cit., p. 373
89. Ibid., p. 373.
90. Rogers, op. cit., p. 15
corresponds to Northup's in which he describes it "as a psychological study of the moral effects of usury".

NAZARÍN

The curate Nazarín wishes to be a modern Christ, but he is a Christ in whose nature the impulses of rebellion are still alive, more active than contemplative, and in all he lacks religious union. The personage is completely strange to the society of the Galdosian novel and is contrary to the ideas generally defended by the novelist. He represents Galdós' effort for the understanding of the mystic and Christian ideology, more Christian than mystic, and in all, because of the opposition that the hero encounters in both society and church, and because of the futility of his career, the work, involves a criticism of social and militant Christianism.91

These aforementioned novels are only some of Galdós' literary works, but each reflects the interest Galdós had in the social and intellectual affairs of his country, and each represents the author and his ideas. Rogers'92 conclusion is that "they show Galdós as an able and fecund inventor, a careful observer, and a skilled painter of life and customs, but with a liberal prejudice."

92. Rogers, op. cit., p. 15.
In the other three novels of the religious group: Angel Guerra, Nazarín and Halma (a continuation in large part of Nazarín), the problem established is more idealogical than psychological. They are novels of a study of two aspiring mystics, Angel Guerra and Nazarín, and of the heroine of Halma, who completes it by falling under the influence of Nazarín. More than in the subtle analysis of the soul and very much more than in mystic sentiment, the value of the novel lies in the evocation of the means which served as his principal stage - the City of Toledo. The interruptions which this very thing causes in the development of the action, constitute, on the other hand, a great defect.

The largest part of Galdós' novels are panoramas of classes and customs, and are pictures of contemporary society. Other novels are purely exemplary and the value is an example of a problem of a class. The novel is then, principally, the novel of attack and of propaganda, a weapon of combat. The pure aesthetic interest descends from the plane of serene and impartial contemplation to the agitated moral, religious and political struggle. The novels of the third epoch are panoramics; those of the second epoch, the style of Doña Perfecta and of Leon Roch are novels of propaganda.

Panorama of types, of customs, and thesis of combat, go frequently together.94

There is no element of free play of the imagination in his later works as in his earlier ones. His thoughts were expressed very measuredly, yet, in his early career, it was the reverse. He was aesthetic, and his sentiments expressed measuredly sometimes were the cause of an uninteresting character in his novels. He did not inject himself into his works; his characters are purely objective studies.

Various phases of the present day society are treated in Galdós' other group of novels. In the one category of his novels he illustrated the catastrophes that occur as the result of the women of the humble strata of society who have had a glance at the luxuries and comforts of the well-to-do and who try to exact the same. This idea was well brought out by Galdós in Miau where the husband, an official, is hounded to death by the demands of his wife, daughter and sister-in-law, and ultimately he takes his own life.

La de Bringas is a portrait of a family's struggle to become a part of the upper strata of society. The details of the story embrace the cunning means employed to achieve their end.

The second category of stories is concentrated on the thought of how a woman, is suddenly left without funds, will secure

a means of livelihood. *Fortunata y Jacinta, La Desheredada, Tristana* and *Tormento* fall in this classification. Galdós painted the sadness of this whole situation because it was this element and this element alone that influenced and interested him. The particulars were of no interest to him.

In the third or last category, there are the novels which reveal the loveliness and elevating influence of "natural sentiment", as it is found through *Marianela*. *Angel Guerra, Nazarin* and *Helma* characterize the worthwhile outcome which can result from a particular pure and bigoted, yet a more or less mystical religious sentiment.

It is pointed out that even his critics are in agreement that Galdós' realistic novels have a style that his earlier literary works, the *Episodios Nacionales*, never possessed. Howells quotes *Emilia Pardo-Bazan* as saying that of Galdós' later novels, she was of the contention that Galdós understood that "the novel of today must take note of the ambient truth and realize the beautiful with freedom and independence". In her book, *La Cuestion Palpitente*, *Bazan* classifies him as first among the Spanish realists, as *Clarín* classifies him first among the Spanish novelists.

95. Howells, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7-8.
All are localized in Madrid, in the Madrid of the years following the Revolution of 1868. They are characteristics or distinctive years. In his novels Galdós describes the dying old Spain, already overthrown in the series of struggles and of the crisis it had passed through in the nineteenth century, and a newer Spain, perhaps more conscientious of itself, forming with difficulties and confusion. Galdós' novels portray this state of transition and insecurity. 96

The world, which passes through his novels, is that so-called middle class, which, as some one has said, is neither middle, nor even class. Merchants and shop keepers, doctors and lawyers, businessmen and bankers, teachers and students, inn keepers and servants, employed and unemployed, sometimes hobnob with the aristocracy as in Lo Prohibido. 97

Northup 98 criticized Galdós' later works for the injecting of thesis. Galdós excelled when he painted life without "arriere pensee". The life with which he was most familiar was that of the Capitol, particularly so of the middle and lower strata of society.

The following are clearly manifested throughout the aforementioned works; a deep moral tone, the calamities of present-day

96. Barja, op. cit., p. 349.
97. Barja, op. cit. p. 349
98. Northup, op. cit., p. 373.
living, and an uneasiness of the futile opposition in which ill-literacy and unendurance implicate his characters. Marsh\textsuperscript{99} emphasizes the fact that the effect, as a whole, as created by his novels, is not depressing. Galdós does not make moral reflections, nor does he weep or emulate. On his canvas he painted the life of Spain as he witnessed it in a chaotic period. Marsh\textsuperscript{100} concludes that:

"He shows us life as it appears to him in a critical period of his nation's history, unfolding it before us in its incessant variety, and not debauching us by lessons of unmanly pessimism any more than by alluring optimism."

Ford\textsuperscript{101} stresses the long and intimate friendship which existed between Galdós and Pereda, and which did not terminate until the death of Pereda in 1906. Their friendship was admirable, though there existed a great difference of opinion in doctrine, and in apropos of this Ford says that:

"Pereda's inability to resist the challenge which he saw in two novels of Galdós, Doña Perfecta and Gloria, and particularly the latter, led to the composition of a

\textsuperscript{99} Marsh, op. cit., p. 13
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid, p. 13.
\textsuperscript{101} Ford, op. cit., p. 229
polemical narrative, De Tal Palo, Tal Astilla, (1879). The bad faith, whether conscious or not, of Galdós' stories is its own refutation, and Pereda was the hide-bound in his own conversation to meet the other novelist effectively on his own ground.  

Ford continues by stating that:

"In these unmistakable attributes of the author, Doña Perfecta, Gloria, La Familia de Leon Roch and Fortunata y Jacinta, are his genius for observation, his skill in construction evinced an absolute unity of plot, combined with diversity and fitness of incident, his inevitiveness and large degree of plausibility in the creation of character, and his courage in urging his antipathies."  

Literature had a greater appeal for Galdós and Baroja than politics and they have been labeled with "always having an axe to grind," but they are not guilty of being propagandists. However, Galdós was tremendously eager that people should have a "rational view of life", and he did everything he possibly could to assist the Spanish people to realize it.  

Trend believes that Galdós, Baroja, and "Azorín" are of importance to English readers, because the Spain and Spaniards

102. Ibid., p. 232
103. Ibid., pp. 239-240
104. Ibid., p. 240
which they paint are "natural and reasonable". He compares these men to Cervantes, pointing out that they have traveled about Spain and have witnessed much; they have actually conversed with the men and women of Spain. "Their emotions are all primary emotions."

Trend further ends that:

"Pérez Galdós, by being thoroughly himself and honestly Spanish, was as a realist as Cervantes, or any other writers of picaresque stories. He knew Spain better than most people, and had a profound knowledge of the Spanish character. His men and women are nearly all of them natural and convincing, because their Spanish characteristics are never exaggerated." 106

Loiseau 107 contends that of the modern contemporary writers Galdós is one of the most popular, not just in Spain but wherever the Spanish language is spoken. He observed everyone and everything very keenly, but he never took notes. Perhaps the lack of smoothness and inaccuracy of his style were due to his fast writing, but these minor defects were overbalanced by Galdós' good qualities, such as originality, simplicity, strength and richness of quality.

The combination of the characteristics of Dickens and Balzac are found in Galdós' style. "Like Balzac, he has undertaken

106. Ibid., p. 51

to write a kind of comedie humaine of his time or his century."
He may be compared to Dickens in that his abundance of sympathy was
slightly ironical, his sense of humor was not stifled, and children
appealed to him greatly. He moralized objectively and in the man­
er of actually painting a portrait of life as he has positively
seen it from various angles, the happy and the unhappy, the for­
tunate and the unfortunate, the humorous and the pathetic. 108

According to Waldeck, 109 Galdós' canvas was so broad that it
embraced all groups of humanity. He is the only novelist who suc­
cessfully brought his readers in nearer touch with life.

Huntington compared Galdós to Dumas and he says that:

"Galdós' literary works occupy a place in Spanish
literature akin to that of Dumas in French literature,
although he has been successively compared to Erck­
mann-Chatrian, Balzac, and Zola." 110

Bassett 111 considers Galdós as an "eminent Spanish novelist"
who ranked very highly in the literary world, not only because he
was prolific but because of his unusual literary variation.

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110. A. M. Huntington, "B.P. Galdós in the Spanish Academy",
The Bookman, V. (1897), No. 3. p. 222.
111. R. E. Bassett, "Spanish Text", Modern Language Notes,
XIX (January, 1904), No. 1, p. 11.
From Clarke's criticism one would be inclined to believe that Galdós did not consider the plot as an important or necessary phase of the novel. He even goes so far as to suggest that Galdós would have more readers if he took this into consideration.

Galdós failed to paint nature compassionately, and he used scenery solely for the stage setting. He did not endeavor to produce local color with exactness, and Bishop adds that "the impression of his books, on the whole, is a gloomy one".

However, Galdós' writings fall into three divisions:

1. Realistic novels
2. Historical novels
3. Plays

Las novelas de la primera epoca consist of twenty-eight realistic novels, which include his early novels of 1870-1878, of these Van Horne says, "the best known are Doña Perfecta and Gloria. There are twenty-one novelas espanolas contemporaneas written in the period of 1880-1897, and "among them, are probably Galdós' best productions, especially the four volume novel, Fortunata y Jacinta."

Galdós' novels are not written from a "costumbrista" point of view because their settings are in Madrid and in this way he deviated from the pattern of the regional novel that was typical of the nineteenth century style of writing. Since in Madrid is found a representation of all the Spanish provinces Pattison claims Galdós, Spain's special author, is "the most representative of Spain as a whole". He is considered the one great nineteenth century city novelist, and it can be said he is the only one who dedicated himself principally to city problems -- those of social organization, economic welfare and religious reform.

Krappe-Levin state that:

"Juan Valera, Pedro Alarcón, José Mariá Pereda, Armando Palacio Valdes, the Padre Luis Coloma, Dona Emilia Pardo-Bazan, and, last Benito Pérez Galdós, have succeeded along very different lines, and with striking independence of manner, in composing a mass of fiction which depicts the real Spain of today perhaps more adequately than the novelists of any other country have been able to render their native land. And Pérez Galdós, the most fruitful of them all, has embraced the entire century in his work, and affords us, on the whole, the clearest and fullest account of the recent spiritual and social life of his nation anywhere to be found." 116


Galdós ranks par excellence in the modern social novel. He assumed the role of historian of customs and manners. In the novel Galdós may be compared to Dickens. In the hands of Galdós the novel achieved new heights of accomplishments. The mental attitude, opinions and feelings of the Spanish people are all reflected in his works. However, in Brett's conclusion he points out that no one else has given to Spanish literature what Galdós has given in the way of his seventy-six novels. They reflect the social and historical conditions of his century. Galdós' fame and position were achieved by him as a novelist.

CHAPTER II

GALDÓS AS A DRAMATIST

The close of the Nineteenth Century witnessed a curious state of affairs in the field of Drama. Naturalism was at its height in France, but it influenced only a few of the Spanish novelists. On the whole Spanish writers refused to follow the French current.

Galdós turned from novelist to dramatist with Realidad. There have been many opinions as to why Galdós turned from novelist to dramatist, and some are: "he desired a more direct method of influencing the public" and "hope of infusing new life in the Spanish national drama". Since the last quarter of the Nineteenth Century in Spain produced a drama definitely inferior to the novel, perhaps Galdós made an effort to elevate it to the same high standard as it was in other European countries. However, the principal belief is that it was a "purely creative urge".


The three interests in Galdós' work, which served as the subject matter for his dramas are:

1. The study of characters for their own sake.
2. The national problems of Spain.
3. The philosophy of life.4

The ideas in Galdós' dramas are the same as those in his novels. They are: the study of the individual, character interest, natural problems, universal problems of life, problems of the individual that treat of family and society. Galdós was tremendously interested in character.5

The aim of the modern school was to present on the stage a picture of life as it is. This new school, of which Galdós is acclaimed the father, is a school of literary and social progress, genuinely interested in a new Spain.6

The progress of the modern contemporary drama falls into three stages:

1. Romanticism
2. Naturalism, and

5. Ibid., p. 24.
6. Ibid., pp. 8-9.
Naturalism did in no way affect Galdós. Realism served as the main subject for Galdós' dramas. Morley⁷ stresses the point that realism furnished the background for his plays. He gives us a picture of Spanish society, wealth, poverty, old titled families, degenerating; and the middle class with its spiritual qualities and un thriftiness.

That the skill of the novelist was very apparent in the beginning years of Galdós' dramatic career is agreed to by Berkowitz.⁸ He also states that his defects as a dramatist are considered by other critics, and readers, as due to his worth as a novelist. This they qualify with the idea that a novelist cannot immediately change to a dramatist. A much discussed subject was the reason for Galdós' transfer to the theatre. The general consensus of opinion is since Galdós enjoyed the reputation of a novelist for over twenty years, he may have had to give it up, although it was his sincere wish to retain it.

Galdós was the pioneer to present the modern social spirit of the Ibsen drama into Spain, yet Ibsen was not a stranger to Spain because there is evidence that Echegaray had somewhat sensed his influence. The dissimilarity of racial temperament and the

⁷ Morley, op. cit., p. 15.
Spanish faculty of absorbing foreign literary works so completely as to make them seem native to Spain is the obvious distinction between Ibsen and Galdós. Galdós' originality has not suffered detraction because he permitted himself to be persuaded from the outside. Probably it only indicates the commencement of an aim, so definitely evident today, "to align Spain culturally with the rest of Europe".  

In the beginning, the professional dramatic critics manifested a momentous opposition to Galdós. As a novelist, rather than a dramatist, his audience acclaimed him. The attitude toward Galdós today has had a complete revolution. He has been accepted by the contemporary Spanish dramatists into their guild and they have given him an eminent place. From the standpoint of criticism there has been a dismissal of the opinion of the difference between his novels and dramas because it is realized that their meaning is the same.

At times Galdós' dramas are still produced, but from the point of view of excellent literary reading material they possess a more lasting value than the dramas of many other dramatists whose accomplishments have never been the subject of question. It is true Galdós was forced to strive for "acceptance on the stage", yet,

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10. Ibid., pp. 32-33.
it was without an effort that "he won recognition as a literary
dramatist", and Berkowitz adds that "perhaps there is greater glory
in the second achievement".11

Clark12 believes that the modern Spanish drama occupies a
more important place than is generally believed. Galdós has gained
world wide fame, and his position among contemporary dramatists is
high.

Even if Galdós ranks as one of the greatest writers of
Spain, his prominence and popularity having been achieved in the
field of the novel, his dramas have won for him first place among
the dramatists. Galdós was quite advanced in his career before
he began to write drama, and his first drama may be dated from the
early nineties to 1905.13

Many of his dramas are dramatizations of his own novels,
but the later ones reflect improvement over the earlier ones be-
cause Galdós became more adapt to combining the "knowledge of the
drama with that of fiction", thus giving his plays "breadth and
caracter".14

Galdós is one of the three dramatists, (Galdós, Guimera
and Echegaray) who expressed and manifested the finest traditions

12. Barrett H. Clark, Masterpieces of Modern Spanish
13. Clark, op. cit., p. 228
of the Spanish state in Spain and abroad, and this he did with all due honors. Quoting from Clark, who believes that:

"Galdós and the other two are not doomed to oblivion, for he is a man of vision, and a man of passion, his art is still alive, even though it is not the outgrowth of the latest discoveries of scientists and historians." 15

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UN JOVEN DE PROVECHO

Un Joven de Provecho, a comedy in four acts, was written in 1866. In this play he dextrously treats the standard model of dramatic art which in later years he undertook to challenge, and if it could have been done, to eliminate from the Spanish stage. Un Joven de Provecho is a product of an "intelligent dramatic technician"; it represents the class of dramatic writer that Galdós became without choice on his part at the time he chose the dramatic field of writing for his manner of expression.

In conclusion Berkowitz says that:

"It lacks the basic qualities invariably associated with Galdós' art; his creative power, his humaneness, genuine humor, vivid and convincing realism, in a sense, even his personal and colorful language." 16

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15. Ibid., pp. 11-12.

La Expulsión de los Moriscoe, and El Hombre Fuerte, which were published in part only, were two of Galdós' earliest works. *E. de Lustario* written in 1902, is a character play with powerful stress on romance. It was written in redondillas. Twenty years passed between the publication of his first novel *La Fontana de Oro* in 1870, and the first presentation of his drama, *Realidad*, in 1892. 17

**REALIDAD**

2 Editions

*Realidad* was Galdós' first drama and it is a dramatization of the novel by the same name. It presents the eternal triangle but in a novel way. The play consists of five acts and reads like a novel. The incident Galdós selected is definitely as old as "human passion" but he placed it in a distinctly modern setting. However, Wallace 18 says, "To demonstrate that the real is more extraordinary than the imaginary, that reality is the great inventor, the ever fruitful and ever original master," is the central idea of the play. The action is, unquestionably, not complicated and there is no element or indication of love intrigue.


Through the character of Orozco, a rich man, and philanthropist who brings much happiness to many people by his generosity and charity, Galdós brings forth a Christian character whom he painted as a modern saint. He painted him as a victim of his own suffering, anguish and torment resulting from his eagerness to help the poor and distressed. The portrait on the canvas is that of a person with a noble soul, a human understanding and a kindly but strong and sentimental heart and mind. Galdós makes a contrast in his delineation of the characters of Orozco and his wife, Augusta, who is unfaithful, and wicked but who has a spirit of distinction. She suffers the pangs of a scorned love because Viera, her lover, is in love with another woman and consequently there are many conflicts. First of all the father of Viera and Orozco are not only business associates but friends. Viera himself has both qualities of good and bad. His ideas about love were along very generous free thinking lines. He encounters difficulty and Orozco volunteers to assist him. Augusta offers money to him, but he refuses it. Soon Orozco learns of Augusta's infidelity after he has a conversation with Viera; Viera takes the easiest way out, suicide. Orozco has finally consented to forgive Augusta if she will confide in him but she finds it too difficult and a terrible mental battle follows. Yet he would have forgiven her if she would have raised herself to his plane of virtue and tell him she was repentent. He had forgiven her lover. They continue to live
together but their souls are forever separated.\textsuperscript{19} And through the character of Orozco, Galdós had forcibly manifested the persistence of the traditional national sentiment, a characteristic which prior to this has never been revealed as strongly as Galdos brought it out. "So far as I know", states Wallace,\textsuperscript{20} "Orozco is the first husband in Spanish drama to pardon a guilty wife, the first one to break the Calderonian tradition, - to kill for honor's sake." Wallace\textsuperscript{21} further adds that the denouement is distinctly or directly in opposition to the Calderonian concept of honor equally as much as it is in opposition to the Cervantesque.

That Galdós was definitely determined to depart from tradition is reflected in this play. The solution is philosophical instead of conventional. It is almost unlike a drama for the stage because Galdós made a deep and subtle psychological study.\textsuperscript{22}

In Morley's\textsuperscript{23} evaluation, Morley claims Realidad is one of the most original and profound of Galdós' creations. A really penetrating study of character that shows its inner reality.

\textbf{References:}


23. Morley, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 29.
It is Galdós' only play based on the sex problem and is another version of *La Incognita*.

Quoting from Morley, he says that:

"Realidad has superfluous scenes and figures, and a scattered viewpoint. There are two parallel dramatic actions, the first, more obvious and theatrical, the fate of Viera; the second, of loftier moral, the relations of Orozco and Augusta, which are decided in a quiet scene, pregnant with spiritual values."

The public waited anxiously to see the play and its reception was of varied sentiments. According to the anti-Calderonian view, Galdós' combination of novel and drama, the slow action, the fantastic use of hallucinations and ghost of the lover, created a fiery discussion in which many of the real beauties and "sane innovations" in the drama moved on unnoticed.

In Brett's conclusion he says that, "on the whole, the critics and public were unprepared to accept such a play with enthusiasm". Its failure, Wallace claims, was attributed to its "spirit of tolerance, of considerate love, and of charity".

LA LOCA DE LA CASA

3
Editions

La Loca de la Casa, a comedy in four acts, presents a family problem of a different type. It deals with a man without ideals who is dominated by his wife. The struggles are very dramatic, the argument is very complicated, but, the fundamental idea is sincere.

The characters' names are definitely symbolic, José María Cruz-Cross, Victoria-Victory. José was a man devoid of culture, background and education, but possessed an adventuresome spirit and ambition, whose philosophy was money and strength. After a successful trip to California, where he amassed a fortune, he returned to Spain, where he associated with rich nobility only because he too was rich, equal to them financially. He was not charitable, as a matter of fact, he didn't believe in the doctrine of charity. He contended that, "Charity helped lazy men". Money was his sole education.\(^26\)

Victoria and Gabriela are the daughters of a widowed nobleman, who has no money but who has a title. Cruz was in love with Gabriela and asked her father for her hand in marriage, but she refused him, thereby insulting him. Victoria began to con-

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sider entering a convent, then decided to marry Cruz to solve the family's financial problem. Herein Gabriela presents the element of sacrifice. Since she marries Cruz, he now is obliged to support the entire family. Victoria's sacrifice was never known by Cruz, whose only interest was money. Victoria personifies idealism, she is an idealist.

La Marquesa, the mother of Victoria's former sweetheart, came to her because she was in need of money. She justified her coming, even though her son had jilted Victoria, by telling her she was distraught as to whom to ask for aid. Victoria appealed to Cruz and he flatly refused the request. However, Victoria had been able, through economy, to save a little money, and without her husband's knowledge, gave it to La Marquesa. Cruz learned about the assistance and disapproved. In distress she leaves him and this gives rise to a conflict of which Victoria won out because Cruz is so much in love with her and is willing to forgive her. As a result she becomes the controlling head of the house.

27 Morley, believes the excellency of the play is to be found in the study of the characters of Victoria and Cruz, particularly in the characterization of José who is crude, homely, but human. It is the story of two opposite personalities brought together in marriage merely by opportunity, and at the same time, it presents a picture of the bourgeoisie and aristocracy.

In Brett’s description of La Loca de la Casa he labels it a paraphrase of the fable of Beauty and the Beast, and is also being too complex a study of character to be properly handled within the confines of a drama. Consequently, the symbolic triumph of virtue over evil is achieved without enough vindication.

Dramatic interest, strong characterization, honest depiction of national traits and thought, and lifelike dialogue are the four basic requirements for dramas used as textbooks, and which Warshaw claims are the very ones found in La Loca de la Casa. He, also, believes that it represents Galdós, because its dramatic incidents have the power to command and retain one’s attention and acquaint the audience with one or more new and sympathetic figures.

LA DE SAN QUINTÍN

3rd Editions

This play is considered superior to his others from the standpoint of construction. The purpose of it is to eliminate the prejudice that makes for class distinction. Galdós accomplished this by the marriage of the Duchess to the socialist worker. It has been said the success of the play can be attributed to the "popularity of the idea", or central theme. 30

28. Brett, op. cit., p. 811
A comedy written in three acts "furiously romantic" in which honor and virtue are triumphant. The argument presented is the love affair between Rosario, the Duchess of Quintín, and Victor, a socialist workman of questionable parentage. His assumed father, Don Cesar, has provided him with a costly education and therefore he is not a man of labor or of the laboring class and consequently he does not authentically symbolize the lower class. In it is presented, Rosario, a widow, poor but noble and lonely and, despite the fact that in the end she learns Victor is not Don Cesar's son, she marries him, which is evidence that to her the question of his illegitimate birth was of no importance. The subject of moral is treated somewhat like Echegaray by Galdós.

The play itself is designed to represent the formation of the wasted, dissipated or expended aristocracy and the powerful Plebeian to establish a new prospering or growing group. "Symbolic of the amalgamation of the upper and lower classes", representing in simple manner, a picture of the social classes and it definitely symbolizes Galdós' philosophical reform. La de San Quintín has some impressive scenes even though "it drags in parts". It was received very enthusiastically by the public and this is qualified by its fifty consecutive performances in Madrid alone. The propaganda it contains is responsible in a way for its reception in Spain.
In Morley's criticism he points out that the last act is weak and unnecessary, the scheme of action is ordinary and frequently has erroneous motivation. Galdós talks more about Victor's socialism than what he actually presents or makes it visible. The "kneading scene", (Rosario kneads dough while Victor, her lover, watches her), is symbolic of very high comedy and Galdós employed it for the purpose of representing the amalgamation of the upper and lower classes of society. The literal translation is "a hard fought battle" of which Galdós drew the title from a historical incident - "A Spanish victory outside the French city of Saint Quintín, 1557."

LOS CONDENADOS

3 Editions

Galdós' skill in treating a religious and spiritual theme is illustrated in Los Condenados, a lengthy drama written in three acts. The play in itself has a moral tone, and it is obvious that Galdós' idea was to teach a lesson; that which is rarely presented in a "positive age". In the main, Los Condenados is a play that is extremely elevating in character.32

Los Condenados is a symbolic play in which Galdós presents the following lesson that: "We all live in the midst of our lies, and that salvation is attained only by sincerity and confession by one's own free will, not under compulsion." This is the Ibsen's and Tolstoy's philosophy. The play was a failure.

Galdós' purposes and intentions are explained, interpreted and even criticized by himself in the Prologue, which gives emphasis to the importance of the Prologue.

He has not written any other drama that has such apparent lack of force, nor imperfections in logic as has Los Condenados, many of which Galdós himself admitted in the preface.

Salomé, the inexperienced daughter of a rich Aragonese farmer, elopes with a wild character, José Leon, who does not repent until his sweetheart becomes insane as a result of his perversity. 33

Galdós believed that it was the privilege of the individual to commit error, as well as his duty to be repentant when he had become aware of his wrong; but he disapproved of society imposing any punishment on the individual. Los Condenados brings out this point very markedly, indicating the only occasion where "Galdós' social philosophy was radical" It is believed that the influence of Ibsen could be found in this drama. 34

33. Morley, op. cit., p. 31.
Morley contends:

"That is the secret of his fondness for the dangerous situation of the beneficial lie, or justifiable oath, which brought him severe criticism when he first used it in Los Condenados (2-16), and which he repeated in an equally conspicuous climax in Sor Simona." (11, 10)

"Galdós defended the lie through which good may come, in the preface to Los Condenados, with reasoning like that of a trained caninst." Critics contend that a lie of that nature gives the impression of hypocracy from the mouth of Pantoja, (Electra lv-8), despite that fact it was not designed for that purpose. The idea is not completely new from the standpoint of dramatic theme because Ibsen, in the Wild Duck, stated that "happiness may be based upon a lie". However, Galdós sought equality in Los Condenados with the thought "that man lives surrounded by lies, and can find salvation only by embracing the truth, and accepting expiation".

Frequently Galdós was drawn by stocism and he was successful in rendering or producing dramatic interest to the most "unemotional of philosophies". 36

36. Ibid., p. 25.
Voluntad, is a dramatic story in which the heroine by pure strength of character saves her family from ruination. The scene takes place in a store in Madrid. It has two themes which have no connection to each other; one has "the doctrine of salvation by words; the other, "the doctrine of the necessary union of complementary studies." Morley describes Voluntad as having "practical sense and dreamy imagination."

This is a study of the human conscience, but it has been weakened to a certain degree in the dramatization of the story. Although it attacks religious fanaticism, it is considered one of Galdós' best dramas both as an artistic story and as a symbol of the "chronic particularism of Spain".

Morley, believes the third act is practically uncalled for, the denouement is hurried. Of all Galdós' plays, Doña Perfecta

37. Morley, op. cit., p. 33
38. Ibid., p. 24.
best represents Galdós' genuine theatrical ability. The drama acts as an exposition and explanation of the novel, because the motivation, particularly on the part of Dona Perfecta, is brought out clearer in the drama than in the novel. 39

**LA FIERA**

Edition

La Fiera is an attack on political fanaticism and its extremes, in which Galdós presents both sides objectively. In Morley's analysis he points out that it has much intrigue, and that Galdós is making a "plea for tolerance". It has been said La Fiera was coldly received.

**ELECTRA**

Editions

Electra is "strictly contemporary" and brings forth a new victory for Galdós, since it is considered one of his best dramas. This is based on the artistic value and unity. Its appearance created a tremendous sensation.

Electra, herself, is a gay and happy young girl, full of adventure, who works in the laboratory of Maximo, a widower, who is the father of several children. As a newcomer to his labora-


tory, she is very much engrossed in her work. Soon people begin to entertain fallacious ideas and notions about her relationship with Maximo. Eventually, she finds herself in love with him, and he asks her to marry him, but Pantajo, who is her guardian and with whom she lives, and who believes himself to be her father, makes every effort to persuade her to take the veil. All is in vain, for he is not successful and she wishes to marry Maximo. As a last resort he tells Electra, deceitfully, that Maximo is her half brother. She refused to believe Pantajo. She is convinced, however, when her mother’s apparition presents itself and confirms Pantajo’s story. She therefore enters the convent. A nun comforts her and advises that her calling is not that of a nun. During the course of this conversation, by coincident, Maximo comes and Electra takes permanent leave of the convent to go with him.41

Of Electra, Bassett says that:

"In the presence of obscurantism of a particular offensive sort, if degrees may be admitted in such a term, the author shows his wanted tact and forebearance." Yet his feelings cannot be mistaken when, in the end, Electra finds consolation in the apparition of her mother and renounces her vows in the following words:

"Te doy la verdad, y con ella fortaleza y esperanza.

Si el amor conyugal y los goces de la familia solicitan tu alma, déjate llevar de esa dulce, atracción, y no pretendas aquí una santidad que no alcanzarías. Dio está en todas partes."

To sum it up it may be said these lines contain the moral of the play, and in Bassett's conclusion he points out that the unity of the acts is not sufficiently or completely clear to satisfy the mediocre reader's literary judgment. 42

Galdós illustrates his technique and subject matter in Electra. According to Tucker's 43 classification it is a symbolic play in which Galdós symbolizes the struggle between modern science and the Church for the possession of Spain. Electra portrays Spain herself; the Marquis (the old aristocracy with progressive ideas), Cuesta (modern business), and Maximo (modern science), and all are allied against Pantajo who represents the clerical parity. Galdós' marked ability enabled him to extend the struggle quite beyond national bounds and through the main characters of the drama he brings forth personages of significance and universal appeal.

In Electra, Turrell states that modern scientific thought is the weapon Galdós used to combat narrowness and bigotry. Spain will progress and can "come to life", (resucita -- the last word of the play), only by accepting the accomplishments of science.

42. R. E. Bassett, "Spanish Texts", Modern Language Notes, XIX (January, 1904), No. 1, p. 16.

On the other hand, Turrell believes that it is an expression of the liberal and scientific ideas of its author and that it is absolutely not directed against the Church. 44

Havelack 45 claims that: "Electra demands a purified and humanized Catholicism which shall be in harmony with the claims of nature and of Social Progress", and that it is not movement hostile to the Church.

Probably, Galdós' "greatest triumph" was the first or initial performance of Electra. In Madrid it was received with enthusiasm and great honor was paid to Galdós. The provinces, particularly, attempted very strongly to prevent its presentation; the conservative party initiated strong propaganda against it. In one city the actors were denied sleeping accommodations, and consequently, were obliged to spend the night in the streets. In another the performers were compelled to take leave of the theatre before the performance began in order "to escape violence at the hands of the clericals."

Galdós admitted that "war was waged against the work" not only from the pulpit but from the confessional, too. It is obvious Electra is an "expression" of the "liberal and scientific


idears" of Galdós, yet it in no respect was aimed against the Church, despite it purposely lashes some of the abuses so prevalent in Spain at that time and practiced by the clerical party. Turrell further states that:

"Last night will mark a great date in history for the Spanish theater and for liberty. It is a movement of social and political renovation. Spain demands light and liberty; she demands the right to live under modern European conditions; she is coming to life". 46

Bunnell 47 is of the contention Galdós did not contribute a great deal to the theatre in terms of quantity but his dramatic works were graciously accepted. However, Electra was written in 1900 as the result of a request made by the Director of El Teatro Español when he asked Galdós for a play for his forth-coming season. This was the psychological moment for Galdós and he grasped the chance afforded him for the promotion of his liberal ideas by writing Electra. When it was produced it created a great sensation. Bunnell further contends that Galdós' aspirations for the Spanish people and Spain are all expressed in "resucita", and that this word is definitely the motive of the play.

In Fitzgerald's 48 comparative study of Mr. O. S. Bunnell's edition of Electra, he is of the opinion this play is directed at

46. Turrell, op. cit., p. 11
48. John D. Fitzgerald, "Galdós' Electra", Modern Language Notes, XIX (March - April, 1904), Nos. 3-4, p. 74.
clericalism for the most part, but it is especially against "the Regulars and Jesuitical influence". Of the characters of this drama, he believes character Pantojas, is the most sinister and that is fanatical and bigoted, and every word uttered from his mouth is done so for a purpose, and Galdós "meant no one to tamper with his text".

Brett\textsuperscript{49} definitely considers Electra, as an attack on "religious intolerance", and he claims that while there are scenes of admirable strength there are scenes of weakness as well and he classes it as Galdós' "stormiest success".

"The enormous vogue of Electra, its wide sale and performance in many European countries, were not justified in intrinsic value", and this is true especially in the protagonist, according to Morley\textsuperscript{50}, who also says Electra is not an attack on the Church, and, therefore, does not believe its popularity was justified.

This symbolic play, says Warshaw\textsuperscript{51}, is considered one of his most interesting dramatic works, created arguments between radicals and clericals; and a Spain torn between reaction and progress is what the Spanish public saw. His ideas of religion have been the fundamental reason for argument and enmity against Galdós. This is demonstrated by the fact that when Electra was presented, even

\textsuperscript{49} Brett, op. cit., p. 809
\textsuperscript{50} Morley, op. cit., p. 35
\textsuperscript{51} J. Warshaw, "Galdós' Apprenticeship in the Drama", Modern Language Notes, XLIV (November, 1929), No. 7, p. 16.
beyond the boundaries of Spain, the battle of criticism raged. Warshaw openly accused Galdós of attacking the Church, and to a greater degree, the temporal measures used by the priests among the faithful Catholic people.

Chandler 52 says, too, that all of Spain was agitated by the assailment he made upon the Church. Lewis 53 claims that Electra was written in defense of the "movement for social and political renovation". However, Van Horne 54 is of the opinion Electra's fame rested upon its "modernistic tendencies".

The confinement of Adela de Ubas in a convent was the reason for a long feud, which lasted much over a year and stirred Spain profoundly. However, when Electra was presented, Geddes accuses the Spanish public of immediately associating Electra with Adela despite Galdós' remonstrance, and as a result the argument, in order for it to be treated more generally, was transferred to the field of art.

Herein, Galdós brings into the play his apparitions of departed loved ones, the element of deceit, and injustice as demon-


strated by gossip; and character study of different individuals.

According to Havelack, Electra, makes no definite impression on the average reader, and he claims Galdós says, and truthfully, that:

"He has concentrated into "Electra" the ideas that have animated the whole of his career, but the public at once identified Electra with Adela de Ubas", and it is "the symbol of progress and of revolt against clericalism and Jesuitism." 56

Although Morley 57 claims Electra is strictly contemporary, and considered one of his best, it has greatest artistic value, unity and style.

Throughout Spain Electra stirred excited approbation and disapprobation, and, too, Wallace 58 attributes the great sensation created by this drama to its obvious and indubitable assailment upon "Jesuitical methods of coercion". Yet, the author does not appear to make this the purpose of the work. The main interest of the play is not to be found in the character of Electra, but in the character of Pantoja.

Tucker claims that:

"Gradually the opposition died down. It was perceived that Electra was not an attack upon religion, but only upon certain practices that called for reform." 59

56. Havelack, op. cit., p. 13
57. Morley, op. cit., p. 35
In Lewis' 1903 edition he says that:

"Galdós experienced his greatest triumph—most outstanding victory at the debut of Electra. It was from this performance his admirers carried him home on their shoulders." 60

ALMA Y VIDA

Editions

Alma y Vida is a symbolic drama in four acts, Galdós' greatest effort to write "a literary symbolic drama" on a large plane. It was considered Galdós' essential offering to the feeling created in Spain by the Spanish American War. It paints an authentic picture of the Duchess of the late Eighteenth Century, who was controlled by a tyrannical dictator. Through the submissive character of the Duchess, Galdós demonstrates the powerfully imposed tyrannical rulings of administrators. 61

In Geddes', 62 criticism he also describes it as a symbolic play and says it has many very fine scenes. The Spanish public received it warmly. On the other hand, Alma y Vida is considered by Turrell, 63 a semi-symbolic play, almost melodramatic.

In defense of the vagueness of this drama, Galdós said it was more suggestive than clear and he claimed that "it symbolizes

60. Lewis, op. cit., p. 8
63. Turrell, op. cit., pp. 11-12.
the decline of Spain, the dying away of its heraldic glories and the melancholy which pervaded the soul of Spain".

"Appropriate to the national psychology of the era is the unhappy conclusion." However, Galdós did not completely achieve his aim or purpose through the pathetic character of Laura who is very affecting. Morley, 64 claims that: "Yet no mediocre mind or ordinary imagination could have conceived such vast thoughts".

**Mariucha**

*Edition*

*Mariucha* is a comedy in five acts in which Galdós preaches and "gospel of labor" and "firm will". It manifests his modern ideas which may be compared to Tolstoy and Nietzsche. His plea is for the elimination of tradition and political tyranny, and for freedom from social conventions. The play expresses Galdós' idea of naturalism, "man as he is with his sins and passions" and this naturalism is not defamatory or morbid. From the scientific angle, Bertrand Russell believes "the impulse has more importance than the desire" in this particular drama.

Morley is of the opinion that as time went on and Galdós advanced in years, his attitude toward the church grew kindlier; this is established by Galdós' use of the figure of the "good

64. Morley, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
angel", the priest; also, by his disapproval of heedless or negligent charity, which he contended encouraged indolence.65

The play as a whole did not appeal to the aristocratic group of Madrid, but achieved its mediocre success with the middle class, particularly, in the provinces. Perhaps, this may be qualified merely by the fact that it presents a powerful picture of shattered aristocracy, almost reduced to the point of begging alms yet having too much pride to forfeit its inane titles. The types of characters favored by Galdós are demonstrated through his characters of the heroine, who possesses the qualities of vigor, strength, energy, force and resource, and the youth who atoned for his earlier life by an exalted exertion of the volition. However, Brett66 thinks Mariucha is probably one of the most interesting of Galdós' dramas.

**EL ABUELO**

7

**Editions**

The stage version of *El Abuelo* is an adaptation of Galdós' novel of the same title, published in 1897. In order to reduce the novel to the conformity of a play, he was compelled to omit a great deal of it, which he did quite freely. Critical comment on it has brought to attention the resemblance which it bears to


Shakespeare's King Lear. The suggestion, however, of Shakespeare's influence originally came from a newspaper notice that Galdós was contemplating an arreglo of King Lear for the Spanish stage. Apparently, he never carried out his original intention, because the "novela dialogada" appeared instead. No doubt there was influence; but its extent has been somewhat exaggerated. Galdós, unquestionably received his initial inspiration from Shakespeare, but aside from that his play is an original creation. Viewed from the standpoint of its protagonist, El Abuelo, suggests King Lear through the lot of Albrit, a fallen nobleman seeking aid and comfort among his former subjects. 67

The first performance of El Abuelo was given in the Teatro Español on Carnival Sunday, February 14, 1904. On the following three days, including Ash Wednesday, it was played twice daily to capacity audiences, and thereafter it enjoyed an indefinite run in the Capitol. In the provinces its success was equally impressive. Its first presentation and publication was in the Capitol, Madrid. At first the cold feeling of the audience toward the play expressed itself in stereotyped comments about its length and lack of sufficient action, and the wide gap that separates a dramatist from a novelist. With the fifth act, however, a radical change of opinion came, that resulted in the most enthusiastic and prolonged ovation in the annals of the Teatro Español. 68

67. Morley, op. cit., p. 36.
Apparently, Galdós followed *Shakespeare* in the settings of several scenes and in the effective use of meteorological phenomena; but it is believed there is more evidence of that in the novel than in the play.69

Berkowitz gives a brief summary of the plot as follows:

The old Count of Albrit had gone to America years before to look after the gold mines his grandfather left him and in the meantime lost his entire fortune. His ancestors were kings and princes. He returns now as a poor old blind man.

The proud Count of Albrit was summoned to Valencia because of his son’s illness, but arrived two hours after he had expired. The aged Count was so grieved and heart broken that he sat at the foot of his bed weeping bitterly. After a while he began to scrutinize the room and on a dressing table he came across an un­
finished letter that Leon was writing just before his death, and the contents he learns were as follows: It was addressed to his wife, the mother of Dolly and Nell: "Give me my daughter or I shall take steps to claim her, you can have the other one who is not my daughter according to your declaration to your lover, the painter, Carolos Eraul, I will throw her in your face."

The poor Count was so astounded that he immediately became determined to learn the truth as to who was his legitimate grandchild. He wanted to find out in order to erase the blot on the family name. He sends for his daughter-in-law, La Condessa,

and arranges through the priest, to meet her at his former estate, Pardina, where he grew up, where his ancestors lived and where once he was lord and master. Now the estate is owned and occupied by the Count’s former servant and his wife. The children lived with them and were cared for by them. They have a tutor, Don Pio.

The day comes and he arrives at the estate to keep the appointment. Nell and Dolly are teasing their tutor. He stands in the background and listens to their conversations and teasing. The manner in which Galdó’s paints the scene of the children is a masterpiece itself. The Count is baffled; he tries from the voices to discern which of the two is his son’s child. Dolly comes up to him and looks at him pathetically and offers to help him; they don’t know that he is their grandfather.

Finally he enters the garden of the estate and he is greeted by his former servants. In the meantime La Condessa arrives, he questions her directly to the point but she refuses to answer. In the meantime the mayor has prepared a celebration in the honor of her arrival and all the dignitaries are to be present. The children are to go but Dolly refuses, giving the reason that she wants to stay at home with her grandfather. The Count is convinced she is the true one. Whenever he is left alone with the children he questions them as to the color of their eyes, hair, complexion, etc. He is baffled, as he is blind and cannot see for himself. Nevertheless, Dolly is always very kind and attentive to
him so when he senses doubt he reverts his ideas back to the fact that she must be the one. La Condessa, fearing that a scandal may be caused by her father-in-law, decided to place him in an asylum on the grounds of insanity and this is to be done with the aid of the mayor. In the meantime, Dolly is removed to the house of the mayor in order to make the way clear for his removal to the asylum. La Condessa meets the Count and tells him she has given the priest full authority to reveal the truth. Thus the Count learns that Dolly is the illegitimate child. He can't believe it because she has been so kind, loving and tender to him. He is reassured. Dolly escapes and comes to him to tell him she will go anywhere with him because she loves him dearly. Don Pío, Dolly and the Count decide to go away together. When Dolly tells him she will go anywhere with him, he looks to Heaven and says, "What endures is that which is within, the soul can never die", and all three go away together. 70

There is a great similarity between El Abuelo and King Lear, however, Galdós' characters are original persons. Galdós' originality is in the central idea of the drama, love, honor, etc. In it, like in all his other literary productions, he introduces different interpretations, of modern society, subjects, etc. The problem presented is that of inheritance of character. Morley

says that: "Its theme is diametrically opposed to the traditional Spanish conception of family honor, and so its popularity at home is a sign that Galdós was able to educate his public to some extent". Galdós' philosophy is expressed in the words, "good may come out of evil, honor lies not in blood, but, in virtue and love". The plot is simple, direct, and has style; the drama is aesthetic, democratic; has organization and universal interest. Galdós made a master stroke through the playful children. Local society is painted on this canvas. Goodness, nobleness, kindliness, etc., the typical Spanish characteristics are those Galdós uses in this character description of Albrit. Like in his novel Marianela, so in El Abuelo, his leading character is a pathetic blind figure. It was published in Madrid, considered his best dramatic work and was more successful than Electra. Too, it enjoyed the greatest public success, next to Electra. Again it is reiterated that El Abuelo is Galdós' best play and it can properly rank as one of the masterpieces of Modern Drama. 71

In Wallace's 72 criticism he definitely claims that El Abuelo is not only considered one of the "greatest" dramas ever presented on the Spanish stage, but also claims that it is one of the "greatest" in the field of contemporary drama.

71. Morley, op. cit., p. 37
It is undoubtedly true that Galdós was endeavoring to present elevating themes and convey sublime ideals. However, as the play opens we are immediately presented with a struggle and passion, but it is not the fundamental conflict of bodily desires and emotions. Amidst this prevails the spiritual element which struggles for victory, and which ultimately triumphs over the severe traditions, the trifling prejudices, and the false ideas which have long been disputing in a hard and futile struggle.

Wallace says, it appears as if Galdós is saying:

"Oh foolish generation, blind to the radiance of truth, and deaf to the harmony of the simple and eternal verities, why do you grovel in the mire, seeking to sully and to injure and to kill? Instead, look up and see an eternal, yet simple, truth which will make all things straight." 73

Wallace 74 concludes his criticism with the following remarks: "His lofty spirituality responds to a yearning in the people, a yearning which long since was classified as a beatitude."

Clark 75 seems to be of the opinion that had El Abuelo been written as a novel it would have been much more charming and no doubt more forceful. It is a fusion of the dramatic with the novelistic, yet El Abuelo isn't of any principal importance either from the standpoint of its theatrical or its intrinsic dramatic

73. Wallace, op. cit., p. 365
74. Ibid., p. 366.
75. Clark, op. cit., Introduction, p. 4.
properties. Yet Staver believes that El Abuelo is one of the best plays Galdós has written.

Chandler claims that El Abuelo has proven to be Galdós' greatest success next to Electra. It is a play that Spanish critics have compared to King Lear, especially from the standpoint of the theme, "struggle against old traditions and prejudices". He adds, that El Abuelo is more characteristic of Galdós' thought and manner, and that it emphasizes his belief in the quality of the spiritual and material worlds.

Commenting on this work, Brett makes the following statement that: "No play of Galdós' has provoked such spontaneous and lasting enthusiasm as El Abuelo".

BÁRBARA

Edition

A tragicomedy in which the Governor compels Bárbara, who stabbed her cruel husband, to marry his brother in preference to the man whom she really loves and who is accused of being the murderer; she revolts.

Of all the dramas written by Galdós none created more re-


gard for him as an "original creator" than Bárbara. The motivation is delicate and the ideas are suggestive. It has the element of mystery and Galdós paints the crushing power of national conditions; and at this point quoting from Galdós who says that: "There is no change, no reforms possible in the world. All things must return to their primitive state".

Morley adds that:

"these considerations nonplussed contemporary audiences and critics and caused Martínence to regard the play as an 'Ironique divertissement', intended to demonstrate that Galdós' art was supple and objective enough to set forth an idea apparently at variance with the general inspiration of his theatre." 79

Another of Galdós' plays that received a cold reception: Paulina, wife of a doctor, personifies the type of woman whose soul is redeemed by the combined forces of love and science. In his treatment of the theme he has neglected the element of vitality. 80

_79. Morley, op. cit., p. 38_

_80. Ibid., p. 39._
PEDRO MINIO

1 
Edition

This comedy, the scene of which takes place in the Old 
Peoples' Home, achieved only a fair success. It is a true comedy 
and, while it is Galdós' sole comedy it definitely is a minor play, 
containing some degree of symbolism. 81

ZARAGOZA

1 
Edition

Zaragoza is a dramatic lyric written in four acts and is 
Galdós' only one of its kind, an opera. The protagonist is the 
chorus of the citizens. 82

CASANDRA

1 
Edition

This symbolic drama in four acts is an adaptation of Galdós'
novel. Casandra, a wealthy, old and childless widow whose fortune 
is the subject of attention of any number of distant relatives, 
whom she disappoints with her decision to give her property to 
the Church, which she eventually does. Morley believes that

81. Ibid., pp. 39-40.

82. Ibid., p. 40.
Casandra is anticlerical, but that it reflects Olympian irony and not animosity. The moral it teaches is that "only love is fertile, and dogmatism is sterile;" and that love only is strong or forceful enough "to drive away the spectre that oppresses Spain".  

**CELIA EN LOS INFIERNOS**

1 Edition

Another four act comedy but having a rather ordinary romantic plot. Through the character of the lovely and generous Marchioness, Galdós upholds the faultiness of poorly dispensed charity, which in Mariucha he censured; without a doubt, in this play Galdós’ emotions won over his keen judgment.

**Celia en los Infiernos** is probably the only drama in which Galdós recommends a definite and sound explanation; but its thought of charity is not upheld by the theory of private frugality in El Tocano Salomón. Berkowitz further adds Galdós exhibited understanding, disposition and leniency in his feelings toward the clergy and aristocracy.

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85. Berkowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 27.
ALCESTE

Edition

A tragicomedy written in three acts which Galdós definitely took from the drama *Euripides* and served as the source of material for Gluck's opera. It is the story of a Queen who dies in place of her husband. Morley describes it as having both humor and pathos.

SOR SIMONA

Edition

This dramatic work is impregnated with a poetic atmosphere and through it Galdós tells a story of how a fugitive nun nurses the wounded soldiers during the last Carlist War. Her spiritual character saves this dramatic work.

The sentiments of human love and kindliness toward one's enemy are found in *Sor Simona* (1915), the drama that may have been written as an inspiration from the World War I. This, also, could be applied to *Santa Juana de Castilla*, but Galdós' interest in the unhappy queen's character dated back some time. He "condemns imperialism" and makes a plea for a "humane interest" in the

86. Morley, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42
working class. Perhaps, it could also be considered as Galdós' "spiritual farewell". As Barja administers the last rites to the queen, who reiterating the Credo, we may see in her a symbol of the aged author repeating his faith in "the spirit of Christianity", but not in the letter. "By virtue of its delicate artistry", Sor Simona according to Berkowitz, "marks a fitting close to Galdós' dramatic career". 88

EL TACAÑO SALOMÓN

1
Edition

Herein Galdós preaches and, obviously, the subject is thrift. This play and Celia en los Infiernos are the products of a man who has given up all hope of ever gaining anything worthwhile in society by practical and logical methods, and who has taken recourse to the illusions of a child dreaming of a fairy godmother. 89

SANTA JUANA de CASTILLA

1918 marks the date of Galdós' last drama. It was in the

89. Morley, op. cit., p. 43.
form of a tragic comedy and ranks as one of his best. Not only is Galdós' spirit reflected, but, also the spirit of Spain. The construction is perfect and the dialogue is short, concise, unadulterated and genuine. The characterizations are drawn softly and finely and the personified characters are dignified and elevated while a veil of calm sadness embodies the play itself.

The story is a portrait of the old age and death of Juana la Loca, widow of Philip, and daughter of a Catholic king. Her character is idealized, and she represents self-effacement, humility, and love for the humble. One day she secretly went to a village in the country, where she talked with the peasants, regarding their problems and tribulations. This resulted in her being accused of heresy. However, on her deathbed, the priest was able to convince them she was yet an untainted Catholic. Galdós has symbolized present-day Spain through the character of the queen by his explanation of her last moments, just as he has shown with Laura in Alma y Vida. However, she is akin to Galdós, blind, infirm, aged, living in a state of retirement from the rest of the world, and lastly in meditation on approaching death. Morley quotes Luis Brun: "A mournful, somber, triptych, of three acts, the central panel of which is lit by a ray of light". 90

90. Morley, op. cit., p. 36.
Realdid, Los Condenandos, Doña Perfecta, Alma y Vida and Santa Juana are the only five tragedies Galdós wrote, and Doña Perfecta is the only one that produces profound tragic emotion. However, Los Condenados, Voluntad, La Fiera, Alma y Vida, Bárbara and Amor y Ciencia are classed in the same category with those that were not quite as fortunate as the others, and Brett attributes the reason to the fact:

"At times Galdós has introduced elements at variance with long established practice; again he has employed a symbolism of debatable significance, or has indulged in illogical, even melodramatic devices which appear incongruous in an author usually so realistic. Yet these works contain profound philosophic ideas developed in original and interesting fashion."91

In summing up Galdós' dramas, Morley describes them in the following manner: Realidad, a drama of reality and considered Galdós' most original and profound, and the only play based on the sex problem. La Loca de la Casa, a drama of conflicting personalities united by chance in marriage, and whose merit lies in the study of the two characters. It depicts the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy. La de San Quintín symbolizes the worn out aristocracy and the plebian to form a new thriving stock and represents his

philosophical reform. Los Condenados has little artistic merit, and is symbolic. Electra is strictly contemporary, treats the clerical question, and considered one of his best, has the greatest artistic value, unity and style. Doña Perfecta, Voluntad, Alma y Vida, Mariucha represent modern ideas, such as found in Tolstoy and Nietzsche; also manifest naturalism. In Doña Perfecta, he assailed religious fanaticism, and not the Church. In the like manner he assailed political fanaticism in La Fiera and Sor Simona.

Although Galdós disapproved of the system of the Catholic Church, his dramas reveal an increasing sentiment of benevolence for the clergy. He never permitted his feelings to manifest the prejudice which clericals were prone to ascribe to him. That Galdós was definitely far removed and above prejudice is revealed by the fact that he presented both phases of a problem in its true respective scope without even the slightest suggestion of his personal opinion. According to Morley he was authentically cosmopolitan, unprejudiced and purely objective. At this point he adds that the impression Galdós wished to create was an unavoidable "tragic conflict between two stages of culture, rather than of a murder by the malice of any one person."92

Berkowitz\textsuperscript{93} does not believe Galdós' dramatic career could be divided into different periods; only in regard to technique. It is generally said that after \textit{El Abuelo}, his best artistic success, Galdós' dialogues are more spontaneous and forceful, character delineations lighter in touch and in his construction he is more "deft". In the dramatic development of Galdós as a dramatist Berkowitz points out some of the facts in his dramatic growth. There was a period between \textit{La Fiera} (1896) and \textit{Electra} (1901) in which Galdós practically dedicated all of his time to the historical novel. One may say this interval was temporary withdrawal from the dramatic field, and Berkowitz claims that:

"Since this interval corresponds approximately to the period of spiritual and intellectual revolution headed by the so-called "Generation of 1898" and embraces the year of the Spanish-American War, it may be that Galdós intentionally refrained from giving utterance to his reflection on contemporary events." \textsuperscript{94}

In 1902, when conditions were once again propitious for impartial remarks, Galdós appeared on the stage with \textit{Electra} and \textit{Alma y Vida}, and in them with perfect expertness he makes an analysis of the national state of mind. Tyranny is Galdós' "preoccupation" in these two dramas, as in \textit{La Fiera}, but with the exception that he is chiding vehemently the tyrannical forces

\textsuperscript{93} Berkowitz, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 14

\textsuperscript{94} Berkowitz, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 14-15
endeavoring to enslave Spain. His discouraging experience with Electra is the reason, if there is any, for his pessimism in Alma y Vida. The opposition this drama produced evidently was sufficient to convince Galdós that tyranny had not been, and probably could not be subdued entirely. Herein, Berkowitz says that:

"In this conviction, which amounts to disillusionment, lies the principal cause of his subsequent retirement into privacy of his study where, turning his gaze away from the supposed realities of life of which contemporary ephemeral literature is chiefly made up, he reflected profoundly and serenely on human behavior in its broadest significance." 95

It appears that Galdós was quite impervious to success and failure as he did not change his style nor method, and much of the weakness of his dramas may be attributed to his theory that the novel and the drama are not separate arts. 96 In Morley's criticism of Galdós' style as a dramatist he enumerates the following defects:

"Clumsy exposition,"
"Superfluous minor characters and scenes,"
"Mistakes in counting upon dramatic effect where the audience found none," and
"Tedious dilution of a situation."

There is a great deal of variation in the dialogues when it comes to vitality, says Morley, but in some dramas, the vitality is animated, full of life, vigorous and strong, and weak in others

95. Ibid., p. 15.
(Celia en los Infiernos, Electra), yet in still others (Amor y Ciencia, Maruicha), it is somewhat rhetorical. Realidad and El Abuelo, however, are strong plays, strongly written. In concluding his analysis of Galdós' style, Morley claims that:

"Galdós never reached skill in naturalness-intensity of dialogue that distinguishes the pure dramatic talents of contemporary Spain. He never succeeded in forging an instrument perfectly adapted to his needs." 97

Antiquated asides and soliloquies were eventually eliminated from his style, and in his last works, such as Sor Simona and Santa Juana de la Castilla, 98 and through vigorous self discipline, he achieved a fluidity and purity of style that classed him with the most outstanding and celebrated masters of pure Castillian.

Galdós may be considered the forerunner of contemporary Spanish dramatic dialogue, which is distinguished by the "absence of rhetorical bombast". According to Berkowitz, 99 he achieved a dialogue that is light, lofty and beautiful with dignity. His language has always been individual and different from the very earliest period of his dramatic works, and Galdós' attainment is all the more effective because the Spanish drama of previous decades supplied only a few patterns of "natural prose dialogue". The soliloquies, although Galdós did the greatest harm to stage dialogue with them, eventually decreased in number but are considered

97. Ibid., p. 12.
"excellent models of Spanish prose".

Classical in flavor and modern in diction and syntax is the description applied to the language Galdós used in his dramas, a composite of Spanish speech. Berkowitz further describes the language as being marked with dignity but at the same time it is pliant, popular without being ordinary or common, figurative but clear and always most proper.

It has been said that twice Galdós' usual calmness was disturbed all because his dramatic technique was subject to very opposed criticism. After he explains his own belief on the use of symbolism in the modern drams, in the prologues to Los Condenados and Alma y Vida, Galdós, himself, openly admits that he considers "dramatic technique in general as an artificial, conventional and changeable procedure". (This explanation was given in response to press criticism).

"Slow exposition, long scenes, superfluous characters, excessive psychological analysis and an occasional lapse of logic", are the defects admitted by Galdós, and according to him these faults are not grave failings, and only critics and audiences with fixed opinions and ideas of drama consider them as such.100

Berkowitz points out that Galdós generally resorts to the device of main plot and sub-plot in order to demonstrate the

100. Berkowitz, op. cit., p. 16.
specifically Spanish and the Universal aspects of his theme. His chief purpose practically excludes "emotional appeal", and, likewise, he never resorts to overwhelming his audience with dramatic tricks. In all instances his dialogue is suitable and the characters seem to belong to their respective periods and location of regions. The success of half of Galdós' dramas was of varied degree, "a fair record for any dramatist," yet truly so in reference to Galdós who was endeavoring to introduce a new technique. This he did in preference to adhering to the patterned or traditional standards.

To demonstrate one or more "philosophic principles" in each of his dramas was his principal purpose. Galdós "fairly charges the atmosphere with the seriousness of his intention", Berkowitz says, because he depends on the audience's ability to be aroused intellectually and to be elevated to a high degree of spiritual glorification; that is his reason for indulging in symbolistic uses and sublime figures of speech and placing emphasis on the cerebral factors. Too, there are other particularities of technique besides those failings admitted by Galdós himself. The almost plain genuineness of Galdós' themes and characters is impressive, even though they are for the greatest part merely "philosophic abstractions"; the obvious artificiality of the outward structures, which make the plot and background, is alike impressive. At times Galdós fails to bring forth a feeling
of natural truth, where he endeavors to be realistic in the general sense of the word. Despite all the minute exactness and detail he gives to the characters' movements on the stage, and he is seldom successful in presenting a definite illusion of life. To a certain extent this may be attributed to the fact that Galdós followed a formula, in the architectural formation of his plays, which he considered conventional. Berkowitz goes on to say that Galdós' treatment of plot "often reveals a distribution of emphasis which does not establish clearly the relative importance of the component elements". Perhaps this is not to Galdós' incapacity to rid himself of the novelist's tendency of minute details but to his way of observing life in Spain. In order to exhibit the particularly Spanish, and the Universal aspects of his theme Galdós makes use of the main plot and sub-plot. However, critics have often met with difficulty in realizing the central significance of Galdós' dramas because frequently he gives to the sub-plot what may be considered a "national problem", while on the other hand, the "main plot centers around some principle of moral or ethical import". Thus Voluntad has two different themes: the spiritual redemption of Alejandro, and the economic rehabilitation of Isidora's family. It is difficult to say which of these two was Galdós' chief interest.102

A definite sluggishness of working out is disclosed in Pedro Minio, says Morley, and in the dramas written after it. Galdós shrank from the work necessary for the purpose of gaining their whole worth from particular predicaments, and characters, and he was inclined to arrive at the explanation of the plot by the use of a deus ex machina.

In describing Galdós' technique, Barrett H. Clark says that:

"Galdós' technique is not the technique of Eschegaray, nor of Scribe, nor of Ibsen; it is rather a technique derived from the earlier Spanish drama, and partly evolved out of the author's own novelistic methods."

On the other hand, Morley says that there are some critics who claim that Galdós' symbolism is very much similar to Ibsen's symbolism. In neither one of the two is the identity of character and idea drawn to the degree that the real human contour of the character is lost; both the idea and the person are used to impart a deep philosophy. Even the names he uses are in many instances definitely symbolic, as for example Don Infinito, Celia, Victoria, Cruz, etc. Don Pío is a symbol of the pity, kindness, tolerance, benevolence, stoicism and the many other virtues Galdós maintained.

103. Morley, op. cit., p. 13
104. Clark, op. cit., p. 3
Turrell states that "as has been said, Galdós is originally a novelist. He has introduced to the theatre the standards and technique of the novel".

Galdós generally reserved realism for the second character and minor scenes. The following will furnish general studies - *Voluntad*, the dry goods store; *El Abuelo*, the parasites and the children; *Doña Perfecta, Santa Juana* - the peasants and other particulars, but scarcely to any important person, or to any pivotal scene. Humor was practically always concomitant with realism and this, too, was reserved for the background. Morley concludes his discussion on realism in Galdós' works by saying that Galdós has not written one play which may be considered an authentic realistic drama, not even *Realidad*, and his most persuading dramas are those which have the largest proportion of realism.

Despite Galdós' persistence in minute analysis, which naturally created heated arguments from the critics, he turned out a striking gallery of outstanding sketched characters in his dramas. Originality, compatibility, interest, logic and persuasion are the terms that may be used in describing them. There is hardly a drama that he has written that doesn't have at least one

106. Turrell, op. cit., p. 5.

107. Morley, op. cit., p. 16.
impressive character, and even the minor figures have a lively personal sphere. In this gallery he has produced a "fairly representative cross section of Spanish humanity of recent generations". It consists of aristocrats, middle class and working people, urban and rural types, professional men, metropolitan and provincial characters, idlers, petty clerks, dreamers, scheming women, religious people, sharpers, psychologically abnormal people, visionaries, revolutionists, dissolute characters, peasants, fanatics, gypsies, etc. In brief, a small world.

It is only natural that at some time or other, from amidst such a group, there should be a repetition of particular characters. Those, of course, would be the ones representing the author's partial ideas. The following characters represent, in degree, the vigorous, resolute and level-headed women, Isidora (Voluntad), Rosario (La de San Quintín), Victoria (La Loca de la Casa), and Mariucha (Mariucha). It is evident that Galdós believed in the regenerating power of women. 108

Warshaw, describes his eminent male characters as free-thinkers or agnostics in religion, commonly liberals or radicals in politics and with scientific tendencies; seldom are they "conventionally religious" persons. He further adds:

"His priests and devout women characters are usually intolerant, caustical, and ready to avail themselves of guile in behalf of the creed, though in fairness it must be mentioned that a few good self-sacrificing, Christlike priests are also presented by him." 109

"That the figures of a dramatic work should be personified of abstract ideas has never pleased me." This statement was made by Galdos, and some critics are of the opinion that Galdo's never used personified abstractions in his dramas while on the other hand some critics claim he did. 110 When Galdo's was imaginative, he was at the same time "incurably romantic," nearly as romantic as Echegaray, and this statement may be substantiated by the fact that a great many of his main characters are types purely romantic. 111

The hero and heroine are, usually, the antithesis of each other and the clash of their personalities and opinions are what give rise to the conflict. According to Berkowitz's opinion he doesn't believe Galdos' characters should be described as real because in his last study they are "creations", not "creatures" created for the purpose of giving speech to some special idea Galdo's had in mind. His characters are flexible despite the fact one ideal controls them. Frequently, his characters achieve elevation and observing them from this point their colorless environment appears unreal.
and inconsistent, and only become authentic to the observers or readers by their interpretation of the philosophical or ethical truth or reality.\textsuperscript{113}

Frequently, Galdós selects psychologically perplexing personalities which is evidence that he does not at all times concentrate on rational characters. Berkowitz\textsuperscript{114} says it is unusual to find comic characters in his drama. Compassion is the outstanding characteristic in the treatment of Galdós' character, and sometimes this virtue even exceeds his knowledge or perception. This is qualified by the fact that his dramas are just about devoid of the customary villain, except, however for Don Juan in La Fiera. On all occasions he is sympathetic in his feeling regardless whether the characters' viewpoints differ from his, or whether the circumstances presented are polemical. This substantiates his motive for portraying fair-minded religious people in Los Condenados and Electra; a progressive priest in Mariucha, attractive aristocracy in Amor y Ciencia and Electra. Through his particular selection of characters he draws dramatic effect from the strength of contrast.

\textsuperscript{115} Tucker describes his characters as interesting, and as

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{113} Ibid. p. 17.
\item \textsuperscript{114} Ibid., pp. 22-23.
\item \textsuperscript{115} Tucker, op. cit., p. 327.
\end{itemize}
individuals who are clearly defined, but he claims that his minor characters despite their elaborate portrayal are not in conformity with their position in the play. Galdós presented scenes solely for their own purpose without making any allusion to their connection with his plot.

Warshaw\textsuperscript{116} claims that Galdós is one of the few novelists in the world who has pursued the drama and was successful with it. Galdós was classed next to Echegaray in the field of drama of the second half of the Nineteenth Century. The "incorrectness of his views" has frequently been cited as the reason for his frequent fortunes. However, of the twenty-one plays Galdós wrote seven of them achieved theatrical success which is evidence that Galdos was quite fortunate in his stage enterprise. The seven plays are \textit{La Loca de la Casa}, \textit{La de San Quintín}, \textit{Dona Perfecta}, \textit{Electra}, \textit{Mariucha}, \textit{El Abuelo}, and \textit{Celia en los Infiernos}. Warshaw also believes that Galdós was unable to obtain a place in the theatre probably because his immaturity; his inclination to follow the prevailing romantic style, with which he was unfamiliar, or, perhaps, the restraint, which resulted from the manner in which he wrote verse.

Contrary to Mr. Paul Patrick Roger's opinion of Galdós'\textsuperscript{116} Warshaw, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 461.
position and merits as a dramatist, Berkowitz believes that:

"From a purely literary standpoint, his dramas share the merits of his novels; in so far as genius expresses itself in substance and not in form, Galdós the dramatist, will stand the test of time as well as Galdós, the novelist, and not necessarily by virtue of those plays which were stage successes." 117

Tucker is of the opinion that Galdós is without doubt the most important dramatist of Spain. Galdós found his only rival in the dramatist, Echegaray who was twenty years older than Galdós. Ibsen, from a point of view only, has inspired Galdós. Tucker says that:

"He is the worthy forerunner of Benavente. He is a modernist in his perception of trend of thought, the conflict between science and medieval concepts and practices, and the coming of a new social order. Such are the point of view and purpose that largely dictate his choice of material. His technique is not so modern. He disdained the artificiality of the well-made play, and refused to be bound by rules. But he inherits from his Spanish past, even as far back as Lope de Vega, relics of the romanticism, secrets and revelations, hidden or lost letters or other documents and like devices of structure." 118

Among the critics who were considered his enemies, it was said that Galdós possessed no dramatic talent; yet, on the other hand, others classed him as one of the greatest modern dramatists, including Benavente. His success in writing about difficult situations was accomplished through his "theatrical sense". He was not

118. Tucker, op. cit., p. 327.
known to cast aside that which was difficult to write about for his genius was diversified. Here, Morley\(^{119}\) points out two factors against the success of Galdós' dramas: One, "poor practical equipment", he cut himself off from social diversions and he never went to the theatre until Realidad was staged. Two, "drama is a genre of condensation," and Galdós never condensed; he used lengthy pages to develop situations. His art was not that of a short story writer. To the drama Galdós introduced a vain idea, the custom of the broad canvas, a passion for increasing secondary characters, and the study of the critical exactness of their psychology, and Morley says that:

"Only by sheer genius and power of ideals could he have succeeded in becoming, as he did, a truly great dramatist," and "his reputation as a dramatist is higher at present than during his lifetime." \(^{120}\)

However, by the time Galdós had reached his last years, he had acquired a broader and more poetic vision and was less particular. At this point, Morley quoted the words of Gomez de Baquero:

"The last works of Galdós, which belong to his allegorical manner, offer a sharp contrast to the intense realism, so plastic and so picturesque, of his earlier writings." \(^{121}\)

In Berkowitz's discussion on Galdós' position as a dramatist, he claims Galdós' career comes within the ultimate stages

\(^{119}\) Morley, op. cit., p. 28.
\(^{120}\) Ibid., p. 12.
of the Echegaray School and the Commencement of the Generation of 1898 and it is only natural that Galdós should have "something in common with both". The simulitude between him and Echegaray and his disciples, especially Eugenio Sellés (1844-1926) and Joaquín Dicenta (1863-1917) lies fundamentally in "emphasis on social questions and philosophic reflection" and in "seriousness of tone". The differences are that Galdós defied "conventional technique;" did not place stress on rhetoric, powerful struggle and passion, and that he wrote consistently in prose. However, in their latter years, they, too, resorted to writing in prose. Galdós' "independent individualism" is the bond which binds him to the Generation of 1898. He is representative, to a degree, of the commencement of the separation of "literary convention" and the unavoidable unfolding movement of a genuinely personal art. Berkowitz adds that: "This development was only a tendency with Galdós; with his younger contemporaries, especially Jacinto Benavente, it was becoming a practice. From the artistic standpoint, then, Galdós is a transition dramatist." There can be no doubt that he was the source of inspiration for the generation of writers that immediately followed him, however, this should be attributed to Galdós, the "spiritual father of modern Spain," and not to Galdós the novelist, nor Galdós the dramatist.

In Wallace's\textsuperscript{123} comparative study of Galdós he says his plays are thesis plays, problem plays and plays of ideas. They are written for the presentation of a problem, a problem that may be discussed. There is a great similarity between the dramas of H. Ibsen and Galdós. Ibsen dramas are dramas of ideas. Galdós' dramas are dramas of ideas. Galdós is not romantic. Ibsen is not romantic. We may compare Ibsen's "Doll House" to Galdós' "El Abuelo", and find this great similarity. Ibsen was the father of modern contemporary drama in Sweden. Galdos also may be compared to Shakespeare from the standpoint of his El Abuelo to Shakespeare's King Lear. Galdós was the chief exponent in the field of the new drama. He was and is considered the greatest in the sublime interpretation of his ideas and his prominence was a distinct proof of the Spanish peoples' lofty visions.

Morley\textsuperscript{124}, on the other hand, does not consider Galdós as the most skillful expert among the Spanish dramatists who argue through the medium of the drama, the important and vital problems of the day. He believes Galdós is surpassed in this rather transitory phase of dramaturgy by Linares Rivas. He never was preceptive in the narrow sense. Now and then Galdós alluded to a moral in the closing words of a drama, but he was never so devoid in artistic sentiment as to interpret his thesis in fixed expressions, like

\textsuperscript{123} Wallace, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 362.
\textsuperscript{124} Morley, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 18.
Echegray and Brieux. His belief was, "the intention speaks from the action".

Rogers\textsuperscript{125} frankly admits Galdós did not win any great name for himself as a dramatist. The value of his dramas is inferior to his novels. He used the theatre as a means for the "propagation" of liberal ideas in Spain.

In dramas that appear to contradict one another, Galdós presents both sides of the question. However, he is more famous, in Spain especially, because he is the originator of Spanish contemporary drama; though he is considered a great novelist, he is greater as a dramatist.\textsuperscript{126}

In conclusion Brett says that:

"The century closes with two original and forceful figures in the persons of Pérez Galdós and Benavente. Galdós, representing all that was most modern and progressive in Spanish life and thought, and endeavoring to create a theatre which characteristically ignored many traditional principles of dramatic art, must be regarded as the bed-rock on which the Generation of 1898 strove to build a new Spain."\textsuperscript{127}

Galdós' dramas are philosophical, symbolic, educational and entertaining and are of the novel type. In many of them there is a conflict of good and bad in which he tried to represent his ideas. Through these ideas Galdós shows his profound understanding of life and above all his great sympathy for everyone. His is the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{125} Rogers, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 16.
\item \textsuperscript{126} Morley, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 24.
\item \textsuperscript{127} Brett, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 10.
\end{itemize}
theatre of ideas and reality and there is much of the element of humanity in his dramas. One may rightfully say that the same genre pertains to almost all of his dramas. He contends, bad is found in the ideas instead of being the fault of the people.

According to Morley, Galdós was religious and impartial. His concern was primarily social questions, and lofty moral studies. Conventional in his ideas and he believed in the regenerative power of human nature. "Sympathy with everything human stands out even above his keen indignation against those who oppress the unfortunate", and his philosophy is:

"Nothing in life is too insignificant or too wicked to be entirely despised."

Concurrent with his trait of sympathy is his theory, writes Morley that "Opposite elements compliment each other", and it is necessary they be enjoined in order to provide life with complete happiness. This philosophy, is prevalent in many of Galdós' dramas. 128

His philosophy of the inevitableness of sorrow carried him to a prominent position as an "Imaginative Philosopher". At this point Berkowitz quotes from Menéndez y Pelayo's criticism in which is said that:

"Galdós lacks the lyric flame which touches with poignant emotion the common things of life. He did not

entirely escape the rhetoric of his race. Little interested in the passions of sex -- too little to be altogether human. But his works appear extraordinarily vast and many sided when one compared it with that of his French contemporaries of the naturalistic drama, who observed little except sex. He was not an exquisite artist; he was judged by the standards of the day, naive, unsophisticated, old-fashioned. But he was a creative giant, a lofty soul, throbbing with sympathy for humanity, and with yearning for the infinite." 129

Berkowitz further believes that Spain is greatly appreciative of its heritage and highly esteems the great master who gave it, and that his position as a dramatist justifies the belief "That in Spain literary attainment is more often than not the result of individual inspiration". Here he points out that Galdós even went so far as to claim that the "drama was his old love", and perhaps this may be best qualified by Galdós' own words when in 1912 he was interviewed by Señores del Olmet and García Carranza, he told them the following:

"Sin embargo, el género literario que más me seducía por el que sentía mayores entusiasmos y el que cultivé primero, el género dramático. En el teatro tenía puesta me ilusión." 131

Berkowitz further states that:

"The career of Galdós is significant in another way; he alone can claim the honor of having introduced the vogue of the continental drama on the Spanish stage. It was his broad conception of dramatic art that brought to Spain the spiritual drama which was current in the Scandinavian countries and in Germany." 132

129. Berkowitz, op. cit., p. 27
130. Ibid., pp. 31-32.
132. Ibid.; p. 32.
The following are the twenty-seven Dramas written by Benito Pérez Galdós, and the critical analysis by literary men whose works were edited and published in the United States.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Drama</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Un Joven de Provecho</td>
<td>1866</td>
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<td>2. El Hombre Fuerte</td>
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<td>3. La Expulsión de los Moriscos</td>
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<td>4. Realidad</td>
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<td>5. La Loca de la Casa</td>
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<td>6. Gerona</td>
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<td>7. La de San Quintín</td>
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<td>8. Los Condenados</td>
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<td>9. Voluntad</td>
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<td>10. Doña Perfecta</td>
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<td>11. La Fiera</td>
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<td>12. Electra</td>
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<td>13. E. de Lustario</td>
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<td>14. Alma y Vida</td>
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<td>15. Mariucha</td>
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<td>16. El Abuelo</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Bárbara</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Amor y Ciencia</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Pedro Minio</td>
<td>1908</td>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Zaragoza (an Opera)</td>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Casandra</td>
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<td>22.</td>
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<td>24.</td>
<td>Sor Simona</td>
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<td>El Tacanño Salomón</td>
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<td>26.</td>
<td>Santa Juana de Castilla</td>
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<td>27.</td>
<td>Antón Caballero</td>
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worked over by the Quintero brothers from an unfinished sketch, Los banidos.
CHAPTER III

GALDOS AS A CHAMPION OF LIBERAL SPAIN.

Galdos represents a mental and moral state quite common in the Spain of his time, in the last decades of the past century, when, as a reaction against the conservatism and the traditionalism of monarchial and Catholic Spain, the former suspended and the latter attacked political liberalism, more religious than political was in style.¹

However, long before the New Religious Humanism came into being, Galdós' works manifested many of the cardinal principles of this new movement. The Humanists' theory is that man has to a certain extent the power to direct the progress of his own evolution. Although, Galdós did not agree wholly with the beliefs of the Religious Humanists, according to Kercheville,² he advocated "the insistence on the value of the individual personality, the belief in the perfectability of human personality, and many other humanistic principles."


Galdós' very last works reflect a spirit of tolerance and kindliness, and they bear no trace of a combative or intolerant attitude as was found in his earlier works, such as in Doña Perfección. He now has belief, Kercheville claims, in "higher reality with its corresponding belief in the value of an active love and the supreme worth of the individual personality." Kercheville further adds that:

"The insistence upon the value of human personality, and the absolute lack of creeds in what may be called Galdós' religious liberalism, as seen in Misericordia and Santa Juana show a striking similarity to the New Humanism which is being discussed today." 3

In describing the New Humanism, Kercheville says that:

"It is neither purely scientific, nor yet purely religious in its nature. It is in a general way an attempt to spiritualize the realm of science, and to imbue religion with the best in the spirit of science. "Scientific Humanism is chiefly the product of the laboratory and lacks many of the vital elements possessed by Religious Humanism." 4

Galdós' long and attentive study of life culminated in his evolution to a view of a "higher reality". However, when it comes to the question of the dismissal of magic from religion Galdós is in agreement with Patter's idea. It is clear that Galdós dwells on the disunion of the spirit of religion "from all elements of

4. Ibid., p. 479.
magic, superstition and ignorance", which are the chief reasons for the evils produced by "religious fanaticism". Galdós' disapproval of "false mysticism" in La Familia de Leon Roch and Angel Guerra, probably serve as the best example of this idea.

Throughout the three periods of his literary works, Galdós is practically in complete agreement on the subject of "supreme value of personality", with the New Humanism. The stress he placed on individual personality is the substance of a great deal of later works. In La Fontana de Oro, the motive of the individual is defended by Galdós in Lazaro, the young liberal hero. He personifies the young Spanish liberal. Here, too, Galdós pleads for the individual personality of Clara, whose individuality has been overwhelmed by "religious fanaticism". 5

In the second period the insistence on the "value of personality" is the same, but in the third or last period he places a greater stress on the value of individual personality, and at the same time he gave it the most perfection. This is demonstrated in his treatment of the character of Santa Juana whom he portrays as the individual who is attempting to live her own life in a "society of fraud and hypocrisy".

However, unlike his belief in the first two literary period, Galdós in the third period manifests his belief in the self-

perfectibility of man, but a bit skeptical in respect to the success of it being worked out in society completely. Too, he believes it is chiefly up to man to work out his own salvation.

On this point of perfectability of society, which is naturally a collection of individuals, Galdós is only philosophically optimistic, whereas New Humanist and the Religious Humanists are definitely persuaded. Galdós' liberal views are in agreement with those of the New Humanism. The Humanists' theory is that man has to a certain extent the power to direct the progress of his own evolution. True, his belief, in the last period is powerful in respect to the idea of the "perfection of character", and he gives birth to this idea in Voluntad. Misericordia, Amor y Ciencia, Sor Simona and Santa Juana are the ones in which there is the development of the individual yet with the Religious Humanists the belief embraces society as a whole. But, Kercheville is of the opinion that when it comes to the progress of society as a whole, Galdós is devoid of "enthusiastic optimism". This, he considers as one essential difference between Galdós' ideas and those of the New Humanists. At this point Kercheville says that:

"Galdós remains an optimist; however, to believe that human perfectibility will come as a result of individual conscience rather than collective idealism in the form of a new creed or doctrine."

Kercheville further adds that:

"One of the most important elements in the New Humanism is "scientific technique of control," and up to this Galdós is in accord, but the parting of ways comes, for Galdós in his religious liberalism shows an evolution away from the belief in science to cure the problems that harass the human soul." 8

In Clarín's testimony he says Galdós is a religious man, and that his novels manifest a philosophical tendency and a powerful desire for whatever is good. Profoundly concerned in the well-being of his country, whose history has occupied a great deal of his time, the most vital questions pertaining to society are the ones that held his interest. He advocated advancement. He further says that:

"While, undoubtedly, Galdós is the banner-bearer in a great popular movement of modern reform, he remains above all a literary man, too universal in all his sympathies to assume an extreme attitude."

Convinced that the Church, society and the educational institutions needed reform, his themes debated the evils created by religious intolerance, prejudice, poverty, misfortune, misery, lack of education and of opportunity for betterment and privileges. In his treatment of these subjects he was genuinely in earnest.

His sentiment toward the Church is particularly critical, but not subversive. The attack definitely does not fall on the Catholic Church but on religious bigotry, and its resultant injury.

8. Ibid., p. 484.
He criticizes the traditional secular ideas tenaciously held and practiced to the degree where injury to the Church itself is created. Wanting perfection in the one thing which to him should be perfect, he was critical of the human frailities he found within it. It is this element which has been the basis of labeling Galdós as anti-Catholic by many critics. The prominence of his work in Catholic Spain is an obvious proof that his purpose is properly interpreted. Galdós is Catholic.\(^{10}\)

Portnoff\(^{11}\) is of the opinion Galdós and Tolstoy are two great men representative of the nineteenth century. He claims both, but in different ways, seek God, and both, from the start of their life in the literary field, tore down the old life. The "measure of free religious feeling" was introduced into literature by them. The year of 1870, marks the initial date of its presentation into Spanish literature by Galdós. His theory that faith and reason are inseparable created a revolution in historical Christianity that caused the clergy and the traditionalists to raise a "cry to Heaven".


These ideas of Galdós prompted the clergy to consider him a heretic whose purpose it was to do away with religions and first of all with Christianity. Portnoff quotes F. Blanco Gargía, a monk, who in *La Literatura Española en el Siglo XIX*, described Galdós "un antipático defensor de disolventes ideas" and who propagated "tendencias disolventes". However, Portnoff definitely believes people are blind if they are not able to see that Galdós is closer to Christ than his contemporaries, Pereda and Alarcon who are representative of just the opposite of Galdós' ideas.

In *Doña Perfecta*, *Maria Egipcia*ca and *Gloria*, Galdós is protesting against intolerance and yet the main value is not to be found in this protest or in his strife against fanaticism but, Portnoff says:

"In Galdós' creation of modern characters representative of the spirit of the new society, of the new idealism of the nineteenth century with which he constructed an invincible dike that separated from them forever from the monks - Matamalas, or the Doña Perf- fectas, Maria Egipciacas and others, the incarnation of austre materialism, and egoistic mysticism, which believed itself the defender of religion morality.12

Through the characters of Muriel, Pepe Rey, Leon Roch and others Galdós introduces his new idealism.

In Portnoff's13 comparative study of Galdós and Tolstoy he points out that the pen Tolstoy used was used more vehemently

13. Ibid., p. 36.
against dogma and against the church than Galdós' pen, and that Galdós always remained on an aesthetic plan.

Galdós contended bad education and bad government were responsible for ignorance, hypocrisy and disloyalty to friends. He was tolerant of others' religion although he, himself, was not a religious person, and according to Trend, Galdós could understand a man being a good Catholic, not clerical, but Galdós refused to accept a plan, which he believed deprived Spain from progressing in the course of European civilization.

Clericalism is a terrible enemy of Galdós, writes Barja, it means fanaticism, slavery of the conscience, mental obstrucction and moral debasement.

In Egan's criticism he claims that:

"Leon Roch is an elaborate attack on what Galdós considers the exaggerated religious devotion of Spanish women. He damages his case, however, by over-coloring his pictures." 16

As for the character of Leon Roch, himself, he has personified him as a free thinker, a Christian in everything but belief and who with regard to the effects of Christianity on civilization accepts them, but without conceding its "divine foundation". He


represents the spirit of incredulity of one who has suffered and who has been persecuted a long time, while Maria, his wife, with all the defects of a bigoted, impetuous, ostentatious and passionate woman typifies that of the Catholic faith as advered to the "Saintliness of liberalism". Yet, one may say that Leon is not exactly an atheist. If Galdós had not resorted to handicapping his religious characters with failings, faults, defects and vices he would have afforded his readers a just opportunity for making a decision between the effects of liberal thinking and of amplified worship. But as it is, his religious characters are either fools or hypocrites.¹⁷

Maria compels her husband to pledge his word that he will surrender his meetings of "free-thinkers", and he does, but on one condition, which he puts in the following words: You may go to Mass on Sundays and Holidays, and confess once a year, but without previously selecting your confessor". Then he goes as far as to promise her he will go to Mass with her every Sunday. Here she prevails upon him to go to Confession too. However, according to Egan, it is in this very scene that the fallaciousness of Galdós' argument is most obvious, and at this point he adds that:

"Galdós has great talent; some of his descriptions are charming; he has that literary knack which all writings must have, just now, to produce interest; but there is a falseness in the labored attempt he

makes to show how saintly an unbeliever is, and how saintly believers are, that ruins all confidence in his "realism" and spoils the best points of an admirably written novel!"

Egan continues by saying that:

"One may forgive gibes which strike excrescences— the barnacles, as it were on the surface; but when in Gloria, Galdós advocates a kind of Spinozism as a substitute for the Catholic religion in Spain, one wonders how deep is his supposed Catholicity." 18

In a comparative study Havelack argues that if Valera is on a small scale the George Meredith or the Thomas Hardy, then of contemporary Spain, Galdós may be considered its Sir Walter Besant and he further believes that Galdós is even more than that because not only does he vary the aims of liberalism, social progress and religion, but he is at the same time its representative of the national and patriotic spirit of Spain. In spite of the fact he is sympathetic and progressive he has evaded any partial interpretation. That Spain was introduced to herself and to modern methods by none other than Galdós is the contention of many.

Galdós' persevering endeavor to show to Spain "the path of modern progress" is probably the most outstanding characteristic in his literary works. Again and again Galdós placed the entire energy or strength of his strong personality on the side of

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liberalism and modernism.  

Morley is of the opinion that Galdó's could be considered a radical nowhere outside of Spain and that when one stops to take into consideration the type of ideas and notions which were prevalent in Europe under the influence of Ibsen, Tolstoy and others, the Nietzschean doctrine of self-expression at any cost, the new theories of government organizations and the right of women to live their own lives one cannot consider Galdó's as anything other than a social conservative. Morley contends Galdó's was neither a radical nor an original thinker from the standpoint of social questions.

As Galdó's advanced in years, Pattison claims he became more liberal in his political thought and attitude. This came through a gradual development, first his belief was in constitutional monarchy, followed by a republican confirmation and ultimately he became a socialist. In to being considered the greatest novelist of nineteenth century Spain, "Galdó's is also considered the greatest champion of the liberal cause." He contended that literature should have a purpose and the author should endeavor to teach his public. Galdó's preached "a gospel of work,


humanitarian sympathy for the masses, and religious reform" because he believed Spain was in need of reforms. At no time did Galdós manifest a lack of patriotism or optimism in respect to Spain's future progress, despite the fact his thoughts were concentrated on Spain's defects.

However, instead of censuring the absence of liberalism, Galdós makes every effort to prove the possibility of returning the primary significance and proposed value to human relations. He attempts to eradicate the prejudices from life and this he would do in a conservative manner; (This is the substance of Galdós liberalism).

In admission of Galdós being a spiritual leader in Spain's national life, Azorín, claims he is a creator along with Costa and that he was responsible for the "spiritual agglutination of Spain." Also, it is clear, that it was impossible for the Generation of 1898 to escape the "process of spiritual agglutination" that Galdós set into action. In his argument, Azorín says the New Generation owes to Galdós "todo lo mas intimo y profundo de su ser: ha nacido y se ha desenvuelvo en un medio intelectual creado por el novelista."

Thus only from the literary point of view, the influence of Galdós on the Generation of 1898 is of a "new conception of Spanish reality" and not of technique, style or theme.


Bell attributes to Galdos, "the Radical Revolutionary Galdós" with his "castizo" manner and his unobstructed sense of reality, the power of having never lost hold on the younger generation. Without a doubt it sincerely sensed his love of reality. At this point Bell quotes Azorín who states that:

"To Galdós, the new Generation of writers owes the very essence of its being. He introduced something into contemporary realism unknown to the older novelists, the spiritual atmosphere of things, dark, grey, uniform, everyday life, the social spirit, the sense in the artist of a reality superior to ordinary superficial reality, the relation existing between a real visible obvious fact and the series of concomitant causes by which it is determined." 27

Galdós' name since his death has been linked to Cervantes' because of what they had in common: the only difference being in their idealism, Cervantes' idealism looks backwards. Galdós' looks forward and it is the symbol of a generation to come. 28

In Berkowitz's study he points out the similarity between Galdós and Cervantes lies in the philosophical realm and Galdós' theory that all will be made use of and nothing will be wasted or cast aside in the course of transmission which may even require drastic changes, is where Galdós and Cervantes meet on the same plane. Here Berkowitz further adds:

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27. Ibid., p. 22.
"Cervantes and Galdos both interpret life as a process of restoring vanished rights and of righting inevitable wrongs. A true disciple of Tolstoy in his unbounded love for humanity, Galdos shows great concern for the wronged, disinherited, meek and humble; and because he is also tolerant he will not allow the total elimination of the offenders. He disapproves, but contends that through rehabilitation things can be effected." 30

Impartiality, humanitarianism, optimism, rationalism, exaltation of each conscience and his disdain for unfairness and wrong doing are the salient features of Galdos' philosophy of life. These characteristics prove Galdos to be a definitely true Spaniard. His interpretation of human behavior is on the basis of permanency and universality. Frequently his impartiality is forgotten. He has been considered prejudiced because he possessed powerful convictions. At this point Berkowitz says that:

"The truth of the matter is, however, that he is partisan only in problems relating to religion and politics; and in these opposes not the basic idea, but the tendency toward institutionalism and its inevitable consequences." 31

Galdos' great sympathy for the humble and uneducated laboring classes is the basis of most of his radical ideas in politics, economics, and, to a certain degree, religion. To the following question: Does this mean Galdos himself was irreligious?

Warshaw replies that a much more careful study than any yet made will have to be undertaken before the question can be decided. He had a high regard for "natural religion" but as for conventional religion it was said he showed very little interest. Yet Clarín claims that Galdós was a religious man and Warshaw says perhaps a few good Catholics will agree to Clarín's statement.

Most of his writings advocate changes, advancements and rebellions against old forms and traditions. In works that appear to contradict one another, Galdós presents both sides of the question. His thesis works are reform; he was always combating that which he thought was detaining the progress of his epoch. He never scandalizes nor destroys, but rather built. Galdós is a reformer, and he endeavors to construct and yet, at all times, he remains authentically Spanish.

Frequently it has been said that of all people the Spaniards are the most democratic and Keniston believes this to be authentic if we interpret democracy as a sympathetic respect for one's fellowmen which is considered the principle of all social equality. He further contends that from among all of his country, Galdós deserves the title, "The Great Democrat", and he who was often considered the enemy of a faith, is "the great defender of faith,

34. Keniston, op. cit., pp. 204-206.
faith in democracy, faith in justice, faith in the eternal truths, faith in man."

In conclusion, Berkowitz claims Galdós possessed self-control, and his life was devoted to calling forth generous and charitable sentiments in mankind. He worked in the spirit of self-sacrifice for the betterment of his nation and humanity. He was a true optimist, and he was thoroughly convinced that Spain could be "remade".

CONCLUSION

In this thesis Benito Pérez Galdós has been treated from the standpoint of the novelist, dramatist and reformer. The material gathered for this study has revealed that Galdós was a keen observer of life, and was gifted with a retentive memory and ability to visualize the past. He was thoroughly familiar with Spain and his point of view was cosmopolitan, a trait rarely found in a Spaniard. Imbued with the modern contemporary social viewpoint, his literary output reflects his realism that has little rivalry, but does justice to his realism, for Galdós is a realist. Too, Galdós is essentially Spanish. He is symbolic of the tendency to paint the life of modern Spain soberly and artistically; he interpreted the social scenes of his day "as he saw it".

Galdós is the father of the modern social novel and drama. His range of work is the widest and the most prolific of all his contemporaries. He is pre-eminently the novelist of Madrid, and his literary products are portraits of Nineteenth Century life in Madrid and its courts. The changes and developments which he knew fundamentally were recorded in the novel and drama which he used as an instrument for the expressing of his ideas on reform.

The power and charm of Galdós lies in his penetrant humanity, whether we consider him as a novelist, dramatist, or a refor-
Children, blind and old people play important parts in his portraits and he is successful in their characterizations. He resorts to apparitions and ghosts of departed loved ones to influence the making of a decision, and he brings reform to Spain through doctors and engineers.

To Benito Pérez Galdós might be accorded the title of the Apostle of Progress of Modern Spain. The word "patriot" is a dangerous label to give to anyone in these days, but according to the opinion of many Galdós was from the first and above everything a patriotic Spaniard, whose earliest dreams were not literary, but political. It has been said that during his later years he was favorably considered for the Nobel Prize in literature but was not awarded it, so it was said, because of the unwillingness of the Nobel Foundation to give offence to Catholic Spain by selecting for this distinction a man known to be strongly anti-clerical. Ultimately, it is claimed that Galdós was "singularly honored in his lifetime; with the exception of Alessandro Manzoni, perhaps, no novelist was ever so popular with his contemporaries."
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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Ferdina J. Capparelli has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Modern Languages.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

12-2-46
Date

Signature of Adviser