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A Drama of Early Christian Rome

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HEAVEN \*\*\*

Produced by Dennis McCarthy

THE

TWO LOVERS OF HEAVEN:

CHRYSANTHUS AND DARIA.

A Drama of Early Christian Rome.

FROM THE SPANISH OF CALDERON.

With Dedicatory Sonnets to  
LONGFELLOW,  
ETC.

BY  
DENIS FLORENCE MAC-CARTHY, M.R.I.A.

POR LA FE MORIRE.  
Calderon's Family Motto.

DUBLIN:  
JOHN F. FOWLER, 3 CROW STREET.

LONDON:  
JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN, 74 and 75 PICCADILLY.

1870.

Calderon's Family Motto.

"POR LA FE MORIRE". --  
FOR THE FAITH WELCOME DEATH.

THIS motto is taken from the engraved coat of arms prefixed to an historical account of "the very noble and ancient house of Calderon de la Barca"--a rather scarce work which I have never seen alluded to in any account of the poet. The circumstances from which the motto was assigned to the family are given with some minuteness at pp. 56 and 57 of the work referred to. It is enough to mention that the martyr who first used the expression was Don Sancho Ortiz Calderon de la Barca, a Commander of the Order of Santiago. He was in the service of the renowned king, Don Alfonso the Wise, towards the close of the thirteenth century, and having been taken prisoner by the Moors before Gibraltar, he was offered his life on the usual conditions of apostasy. But he refused all overtures, saying: "Pues mi Dios por mi murio, yo quiero morir por el", a phrase which has a singular resemblance to the key note of this drama. Don Ortiz Calderon was eventually put to death with great cruelty, after some alternations of good and bad treatment. See "Descripcion, Armas, Origen, y Descendencia de la muy noble y antigua Casa de Calderon de la Barca", etc., que Escrivio El Rmo. P. M. Fr. Phelipe de la Gandara, etc., Obra Postuma, que saca a luz Juan de Zuniga. Madrid, 1753.

D. F. M. C.

TO  
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW,

IN GRATEFUL RECOLLECTION OF SOME DELIGHTFUL DAYS SPENT WITH  
HIM AT  
ROME,

This Drama is dedicated  
BY  
DENIS FLORENCE MAC-CARTHY.

TO LONGFELLOW.

I.

PENSIVE within the Colosseum's walls  
I stood with thee, O Poet of the West!--  
The day when each had been a welcome guest  
In San Clemente's venerable halls:--  
Ah, with what pride my memory now recalls  
That hour of hours, that flower of all the rest,  
When with thy white beard falling on thy breast--  
That noble head, that well might serve as Paul's  
In some divinest vision of the saint  
By Raffael dreamed, I heard thee mourn the dead--  
The martyred host who fearless there, though faint,  
Walked the rough road that up to Heaven's gate led:  
These were the pictures Calderon loved to paint  
In golden hues that here perchance have fled.

II.

YET take the colder copy from my hand,  
Not for its own but for THE MASTER'S sake,--  
Take it, as thou, returning home, wilt take  
From that divinest soft Italian land  
Fixed shadows of the Beautiful and Grand  
In sunless pictures that the sun doth make--  
Reflections that may pleasant memories wake  
Of all that Raffael touched, or Angelo planned:--  
As these may keep what memory else might lose,  
So may this photograph of verse impart

An image, though without the native hues  
Of Calderon's fire, and yet with Calderon's art,  
Of what Thou lovest through a kindred Muse  
That sings in heaven, yet nestles in the heart.

D. F. M. C.

Dublin, August 24th, 1869.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THE PROFESSOR OF POETRY AT OXFORD AND THE AUTOS  
SACRAMENTALES OF  
CALDERON.

Although the Drama here presented to the public is not an 'Auto,' the present may be a not inappropriate occasion to draw the attention of all candid readers to the remarks of the Professor of Poetry at Oxford on the 'Autos Sacramentales' of Calderon--remarks founded entirely on the volume of translations from these Autos published by me in 1867,[\*] although not mentioned by name, as I conceive in fairness it ought to have been, by Sir F. H. Doyle in his printed Lectures.[+]

In his otherwise excellent analysis of *The Dream of Gerontius*, Sir F. H. Doyle is mistaken as to any direct impression having been made upon the mind of Dr. Newman in reference to it by the Autos of Calderon. So late as March 3, 1867, in thanking me for the volume made use of by Sir F. H. Doyle, Dr. Newman implies that up to that period he had not devoted any particular attention even to this most important and unique development of Spanish religious poetry. The only complete Auto of Calderon that had previously appeared in English--my own translation of *The Sorceries of Sin*, had, indeed, been in his hands from 1859, and I wish I could flatter myself that it had in any way led to the production of a master-piece like *The Dream of Gerontius*. But I cannot indulge that delusion. Dr. Newman had internally and externally too many sources of inspiration to necessitate an adoption even of such high models as the Spanish Autos. Besides, *The Dream of Gerontius* is no more an Auto than *Paradise Lost*, or the *Divina Commedia*. In these, only real personages, spiritual and material, are represented, or monsters that typified human passions, but did not personify them. In the Autos it is precisely the reverse. Rarely do actual beings take part in the drama, and then only as personifications of the predominant vices or passions of the individuals whose names they bear. Thus in my own volume, *Belshazzar* is not treated so much as an historical character, but rather as the personification of the pride and haughtiness of a voluptuous king. In

The Divine Philothea, in the same volume, there are no actual beings whatever, except The Prince of Light and The Prince of Darkness or The Demon. In truth, there is nothing analogous to a Spanish Auto in English original poetry. The nearest approach to it, and the only one, is The Prometheus Unbound of Shelley. There, indeed, The Earth, Ocean, The Spirits of the Hours, The Phantasm of Jupiter, Demogorgon, and Prometheus himself, read like the 'Personas' of a Spanish Auto, and the poetry is worthy the resemblance. The Autos Sacramentales differ also, not only in degree but in kind from every form of Mystery or Morality produced either in England or on the Continent. But to return to the lecture by Sir F. H. Doyle. Even in smaller matters he is not accurate. Thus he has transcribed incorrectly from my Introduction the name of the distinguished commentator on the Autos of Calderon and their translator into German--Dr. Lorinser. This Sir F. H. Doyle has printed throughout his lecture 'Lorinzer'. From private letters which I have had the honour of receiving from this learned writer, there can be no doubt that the form as originally given by me is the right one. With these corrections the lecture of Sir F. H. Doyle may be quoted as a valuable testimony to the extraordinary poetic beauty of these Autos even in a translation.

### LECTURE III.--Dr. Newman's Dream of Gerontius.

"It is probable, indeed, that the first idea of composing such a dramatic work may have been suggested to Dr. Newman by the Autos Sacramentales of Spain, and especially by those of the illustrious Calderon; but, so far as I can learn, he has derived hardly anything from them beyond the vaguest hints, except, indeed, the all-important knowledge, that a profound religious feeling can represent itself, and that effectively, in the outward form of a play. I may remark that these Spanish Autos of Calderon constitute beyond all question a very wonderful and a very original school of poetry, and I am not without hope that, when I know my business a little better, we may examine them impartially together. Nay, even as it is, Calderon stands so indisputably at the head of all Catholic religious dramatists, among whom Dr. Newman has recently enrolled himself, that perhaps it may not be out of place to inquire for a moment into his poetical methods and aims, in order that we may then discover, if we can, how and why the disciple differs from his master. Now there is a great conflict of opinion as to the precise degree of merit which these particular Spanish dramas possess. Speaking as an ignorant man, I should say, whilst those who disparage them seem rather hasty in their judgments, and not so well informed as could be wished, still the kind of praise which they receive from their most enthusiastic admirers puzzles and does not instruct us.

"Taking for example, the great German authority on this point, Dr. Lorinser [Lorinser], as our guide, we see his poet looming dimly through a cloud of incense, which may embalm his memory, but certainly does not improve our eyesight. Indeed, according to him, any appreciation of Calderon is not to be dreamt of by a Protestant". Lectures, pp. 109,

With every respect for Sir F. H. Doyle, Dr. Lorinser says no such thing. He was too well informed of what had been done in Germany on the same subject, before he himself undertook the formidable task of attempting a complete translation of all the Autos of Calderon, to have fallen into such an error. Cardinal Diepenbrock, Archbishop of Breslau, who, in his "Das Leben ein Traum" (an Auto quite distinct from the well known drama "La Vida es Sueno") first commenced this interesting labour in Germany, was of course a Catholic. But Eichendorff and Braunfels, who both preceded Dr. Lorinser, were Protestants. Augustus Schlegel and Baron von Schack, who have written so profoundly and so truly on the Autos, are expressly referred to by Dr. Lorinser, and it is superfluous to say that they too were Protestants. Sir F. H. Doyle, in using my translation of the passage which will presently be quoted, changes the word 'thoroughly' into 'properly', as if it were a more correct rendering of the original. Unfortunately, however, there is nothing to represent either word in the German. Dr. Lorinser says, that by many, not by all, Calderon cannot be enjoyed as much as he deserves, because a great number of persons best competent to judge of his merits are deficient in the knowledge of Catholic faith and Catholic theology which for the understanding of Calderon is indispensable--"welche fuer Calderons Verstaendniss unerlaesslich ist". Sir F. H. Doyle says that to him these Autos are not "incomprehensible at all" (p. 112), but then he understands them all the better for being a scholar and a churchman.

Sir F. H. Doyle thus continues his reference to Dr. Lorinser. "Even learned critics", he says, "highly cultivated in all the niceties of aesthetics, are deficient in the knowledge of Catholic faith and Catholic theology properly to understand Calderon" (Lectures, p. 110, taken from the Introduction to my volume, p. 3). "Old traditions", continues Dr. Lorinser, "which twine round the dogma like a beautiful garland of legends, deeply profound thoughts expressed here and there by some of the Fathers of the Church, are made use of with such incredible skill and introduced so appositely at the right place, that . . . frequently it is not easy to guess the source from whence they have been derived" (Lectures, p. 111, taken from the Introduction to my volume, p. 6).

This surely is unquestionably true, and the argument used by Sir F. H. Doyle to controvert it does not go for much. These Autos, no doubt, were, as he says, "composed in the first instance to gratify, and did gratify, the uneducated populace of Madrid". Yes, the crowds that listened delighted and entranced to these wonderful compositions, were, for the most part, "uneducated" in the ordinary meaning of that word. But in the special education necessary for their thorough enjoyment, the case was very different. It is not too much to say that, as the result of Catholic training, teaching, intuition, and association, the least instructed of his Madrid audience more easily understood Calderon's allusions, than the great majority of those who, reared up in totally

different ideas, are able to do, even after much labour and sometimes with considerable sympathy. Mr. Tennyson says that he counts--

"The gray barbarian lower than the Christian child",

because the almost intuitive perceptions of a Christian child as to the nature of God and the truths of Revelation, place it intellectually higher than even the mature intelligence of a savage. I mean no disrespect to Sir F. H. Doyle, but I think that Calderon would have found at Madrid in the middle of the seventeenth century, and would find there to-day, in a Catholic boy of fifteen, a more intelligent and a better instructed critic on these points, than even the learned professor himself. I shall make no further comments on Sir F. H. Doyle's Lecture, but give his remarks on Calderon's Autos to the end.

"At the same time", says Sir F. H. Doyle, "Dr. Lorinzer's knowledge of his subject is so profound, and his appreciation of his favourite author so keen, that for me, who am almost entirely unacquainted with this branch of literature, formally to oppose his views, would be an act of presumption, of which I am, as I trust, incapable. I may, however, perhaps be permitted to observe, that with regard to the few pieces of this kind which in an English dress I have read, whilst I think them not only most ingenious but also surprisingly beautiful, they do not strike me as incomprehensible at all. We must accept them, of course, as coming from the mind of a devout Catholic and Spanish gentleman, who belongs to the seventeenth century; but when once that is agreed upon, there are no difficulties greater than those which we might expect to find in any system of poetry so remote from our English habits of thought. There is, for instance, the Divine Philothea, in other words, our human spirit considered as the destined bride of Christ. This sacred drama, we may well call it the swan-song of Calderon's extreme old age, is steeped throughout in a serene power and a mellow beauty of style, making it not unworthy to be ranked with that Oedipus Coloneus which glorified the sun-set of his illustrious predecessor: but yet, Protestant as I am, I cannot discover that it is in the least obscure. Faith, Hope, Charity, the Five Senses, Heresy, Judaism, Paganism, Atheism, and the like, which in inferior hands must have been mere lay figures, are there instinct with a dramatic life and energy such as beforehand I could hardly have supposed possible. Moreover, in spite of Dr. Lorinzer's odd encomiums, each allegory as it rises is more neatly rounded off, and shows a finer grain, than any of the personifications of Spenser; so that the religious effect and the theological effect intended by the writer, are both amply produced--yes, produced upon us, his heretical admirers. Hence, even if there be mysterious treasures of beauty below the surface, to which we aliens must remain blind for ever, this expression, which broke from the lips of one to whom I was eagerly reading [Mr. MacCarthy's translation of] the play, 'Why, in the original this must be as grand as Dante', tends to show that such merits as do come within our ken are not likely to be thrown away upon any fair-minded Protestant. Dr. Newman, as a Catholic, will have entered, I

presume, more deeply still into the spirit of these extraordinary creations; his life, however, belongs to a different era and to a colder people. And thus, however much he may have been directed to the choice of a subject by the old Mysteries and Moralities (of which these Spanish Autos must be taken as the final development and bright consummate flower), he has treated that subject, when once undertaken by him, entirely from his own point of view. 'Gerontius' is meant to be studied and dwelt upon by the meditative reader. The Autos of Calderon were got ready by perhaps the most accomplished playwright that ever lived, to amuse and stimulate a thronging southern population. 'Gerontius' is, we may perhaps say for Dr. Newman in the words of Shelley,

'The voice of his own soul  
Heard in the calm of thought';

whilst the conceptions of the Spanish dramatist burst into life with tumultuous music, gorgeous scenery, and all the pomp and splendour of the Catholic Church. No wonder therefore that our English Auto, though composed with the same genuine purpose of using verse, and dramatic verse, to promote a religious and even a theological end, should differ from them in essence as well as in form. There is room however for both kinds in the wide empire of Poetry, and though Dr. Newman himself would be the first to cry shame upon me if I were to name him with Calderon even for a moment, still his Mystery of this most unmysterious age will, I believe, keep its honourable place in our English literature as an impressive, an attractive, and an original production"--pp. 109, 115.

I may mention that the volume containing Belshazzar's Feast, and The Divine Philothea, the Auto particularly referred to by Sir F. H. Doyle, has been called Mysteries of Corpus Christi by the publisher. A not inappropriate title, it would seem, from the last observations of the distinguished Professor. A third Auto, The Sorceries of Sin, is given in my Three Plays of Calderon, now on sale by Mr. B. Quaritch, 15 Piccadilly, London. The Divine Philothea, The Sorceries of Sin, and Belshazzar's Feast are the only Autos of Calderon that have ever been translated either fully, or, with one exception, even partially into English.

D. F. MAC-CARTHY.  
74 Upper Gardiner Street, Dublin,  
March 1, 1870.

\* AUTOS SACRAMENTALES: THE DIVINE PHILOTHEA: BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.  
Two  
Autos, from the Spanish of Calderon. With a Commentary from the German of Dr. Franz Lorinser. By Denis Florence Mac-Carthy, M.R.I.A. Dublin: James Duffy, 15 Wellington Quay, and 22 Paternoster Row, London.



+ LECTURES DELIVERED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD, 1868. By Sir F. H. Doyle Bart., M.A., B.C L., Late Fellow of All Souls', Professor of Poetry. London: Macmillan & Co., 1869.

## THE TWO LOVERS OF HEAVEN.[1]

### INTRODUCTION.

IN the "Teatro escogido de Don Pedro Calderon de la Barca" (1868), at present in course of publication by the Royal Academy of Madrid, Calderon's dramas, exclusive of the autos sacramentales, which do not form a part of the collection, are divided into eight classes. The seventh of these comprises what the editor calls mystical dramas, and those founded on the Legends or the Lives of Saints. The eighth contains the philosophical or purely ideal dramas. This last division, in which the editor evidently thinks the genius of Calderon attained its highest development, at least as far as the secular theatre is concerned, contains but two dramas, *The Wonder-working Magician*, and *Life's a Dream*. The mystical dramas, which form the seventh division, are more numerous, but of these five are at present known to us only by name. Those that remain are *Day-break in Copacabana*, *The Chains of the Demon*, *The Devotion of the Cross*, *The Purgatory of St. Patrick*, *The Sibyl of the East*, *The Virgin of the Sanctuary*, and *The Two Lovers of Heaven*. The editor, Sr. D. P. De La Escosura, seems to think it necessary to offer some apology for not including *The Two Lovers of Heaven* among the philosophical instead of the mystical dramas. He says: "There is a great analogy and, perhaps, resemblance between "*El Magico Prodigioso*" (*The Wonder-working Magician*), and "*Los dos amantes del cielo*" (*The Two Lovers of Heaven*); but in the second, as it seems to us, the purely mystical predominates in such a manner over the philosophical, that it does not admit of its being classified in the same group as the first (*El Magico Prodigioso*), and *La Vida es Sueno* (*Life's a Dream*)". *Introduccion*, p. cxxxvii. note. Whether this distinction is well founded or not it is unnecessary to determine. It is sufficient for our purpose that it establishes the high position among the greatest plays of Calderon of the drama which is here presented to the English reader in the peculiar and always difficult versification of the original. Whether less philosophical or more mystical than *The Wonder-working Magician*, *The Two Lovers of Heaven* possesses a charm of its own in which its more famous rival seems deficient. In the admirable "*Essay on the Genius of Calderon*" (ch. ii. p. 34), with which Archbishop Trench introduces his spirited analysis of *La Vida es Sueno*, he refers to the group of dramas which forms, with one exception, the seventh and eighth divisions of the classification above

referred to, and pays a just tribute to the superior merits of *Los dos amantes del cielo*. After alluding to the dramas, the argument of which is drawn from the Old Testament, and especially to *The Locks of Absalom*, which he considers the noblest specimen, he continues: "Still more have to do with the heroic martyrdoms and other legends of Christian antiquity, the victories of the Cross of Christ over all the fleshly and spiritual wickednesses of the ancient heathen world. To this theme, which is one almost undrawn upon in our Elizabethan drama,--Massinger's *Virgin Martyr* is the only example I remember,--he returns continually, and he has elaborated these plays with peculiar care. Of these *The Wonder-working Magician* is most celebrated; but others, as *The Joseph of Women*, *The Two Lovers of Heaven*, quite deserve to be placed on a level, if not higher than it. A tender pathetic grace is shed over this last, which gives it a peculiar charm. Then too he has occupied what one might venture to call the region of sacred mythology, as in *The Sibyl of the East*, in which the profound legends identifying the Cross of Calvary and the Tree of Life are wrought up into a poem of surpassing beauty".[2] An excellent German version of *Los dos amantes del cielo* is to be found in the second volume of the "*Spanisches Theater*", by Schack, whose important work on *Dramatic Art and Literature in Spain*, is still untranslated into the language of that country,--a singular neglect, when his later and less elaborate work, "*Poesie and Kunst der Araber in Spanien und Sicilien*" (Berlin, 1865), has already found an excellent Spanish interpreter in *Don Juan Valera*, two volumes of whose "*Poesia y Arte de los Arabes en Espana y Sicilia*" (Madrid, 1868), I was fortunate enough to meet with during a recent visit to Spain.

The story of SS. Chrysanthus and Daria (*The Two Lovers of Heaven*), whose martyrdom took place at Rome A.D. 284, and whose festival occurs on the 25th of October, is to be found in a very abridged form in the "*Legenda Aurea*" of Jacobus de Voragine, c. 152. The fullest account, and that which Calderon had evidently before him when writing *The Two Lovers of Heaven*, is given by Surius in his great work, "*De Probatis Sanctorum Vitis*", October, p. 378. This history is referred to by Villegas at the conclusion of his own condensed narrative in the following passage, which I take from the old English version of his *Lives of Saints*, by John Heigham, anno 1630.

"The Church doth celebrate the feast of SS. Chrysanthus and Daria, the 25th of October, and their death was in the year of our Lord God 284, in the raigne of Numerianus, Emperour. The martyrdom of these saints was written by Verinus and Armenius, priests of St. Stephen, Pope and Martyr: Metaphrastes enlarged it somewhat more. St. Damasus made certain eloquent verses in praise of these saints, and set them on their tombe. There is mention of them also in the Romaine Martirologe, and in that of Usuardus: as also in the 5. tome of Surius; in Cardinal Baronius, and Gregory of Turonensis", p. 849.

A different abridgment of the story as given by Surius, is to be found in Ribadeneyra's "*Flos Sanctorum*" (the edition before me being that of

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