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LYRICS ***

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MODERN SPANISH

LYRICS

_EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION, NOTES AND
VOCABULARY_

BY

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PREFACE

The present volume aims to furnish American students of Spanish with a convenient selection of the Castilian lyrics best adapted to class reading. It was the intention of the editors to include no poem which did not possess distinct literary value. On the other hand, some of the most famous Spanish lyrics do not seem apt to awaken the interest of the average student: it is for this reason that scholars will miss the names of certain eminent poets of the _siglo de oro_. The nineteenth century, hardly inferior in merit and nearer to present-day readers in thought and language, is much more fully represented. No apology is needed for the inclusion of poems by Spanish-American writers, for they will bear comparison both in style and thought with the best work from the mother Peninsula.

The Spanish poems are presented chronologically, according to the dates of their authors. The Spanish-American poems are arranged according to countries and chronologically within those divisions. Omissions are indicated by rows of dots and are due in all cases to the necessity of bringing the material within the limits of a small volume. Three poems (the _Fiesta de toros_ of Moratín, the _Castellano leal_ of Rivas and the _Leyenda_ of Zorrilla) are more narrative than lyric. The _romances_ selected are the most lyrical of their kind. A few songs have been added to illustrate the relation of poetry to music.

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The editors have been constantly in consultation in all parts of the work, but the preparation of the _Prosody_,

the Notes (including articles on Spanish-American literature) and the part of the Introduction dealing with the nineteenth century, was undertaken by Mr. Hills, while Mr. Morley had in charge the Introduction prior to 1800, and the Vocabulary. Aid has been received from many sources. Special thanks are due to Professor J.D.M. Ford and Dr. A.F. Whittam of Harvard University, Don Ricardo Palma of Peru, Don Rubén Darío of Nicaragua, Don Rufino Blanco-Fombona of Venezuela, Professor Carlos Bransby of the University of California, and Dr. Alfred Coester of Brooklyn, N.Y.

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NOTES

VOCABULARY[a]

[Transcriber's note a: The vocabulary section has not been submitted for transcription.]

INTRODUCTION

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I

SPANISH LYRIC POETRY TO 1800

It has been observed that epic poetry, which is collective and objective in its nature, always reaches its full development in a nation sooner than lyric poetry, which is individual and subjective. Such is certainly the case in Spain. Numerous popular epics of much merit existed there in the Middle Ages.[1] Of a popular lyric there are few traces in the same period; and the Castilian lyric as an art-form reached its height in the sixteenth, and again in the nineteenth, centuries. It is necessary always to bear in mind the distinction between the mysterious product called popular poetry, which is continually being created but seldom finds its way into the annals of literature, and artistic poetry. The chronicler of the Spanish lyric is concerned with the latter almost exclusively, though he will have occasion to mention the former not infrequently as the basis of some of the best artificial creations.

[Footnote 1: The popular epics were written in assonating lines of variable length. There were also numerous monkish narrative poems *_(mester de clereçia)_* in stanzas of four Alexandrine lines each, all riming *_(cuaderna vía)_*.]

If one were to enumerate *_ab origine_* the lyric productions of the Iberian Peninsula he might begin with the vague references of Strabo to the songs of its primitive inhabitants, and then pass on to Latin poets of Spanish birth, such as Seneca, Lucan and Martial. The later Spaniards who wrote Christian poetry in Latin, as Juvenius and Prudentius, might then be considered. But in order not to embrace many diverse subjects foreign to the contents of this collection, we must confine our inquiry to lyric production in the language of Castile,

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which became the dominating tongue of the Kingdom of Spain.

Such a restriction excludes, of course, the Arabic lyric, a highly artificial poetry produced abundantly by the Moors during their occupation of the south of Spain; it excludes also the philosophical and religious poetry of the Spanish Jews, by no means despicable in thought or form. Catalan poetry, once written in the Provençal manner and of late happily revived, also lies outside our field.

Even the Galician poetry, which flourished so freely under the external stimulus of the Provençal troubadours, can be included only with regard to its influence upon Castilian. The Galician dialect, spoken in the northwest corner of the Peninsula, developed earlier than the Castilian of the central region, and it was adopted by poets in other parts for lyric verse. Alfonso X of Castile (reigned 1252-1284) could write prose in Castilian, but he must needs employ Galician for his *Cantigas de Santa María*. The Portuguese nobles, with King Diniz (reigned 1279-1325) at their head, filled the idle hours of their bloody and passionate lives by composing strangely abstract, conventional poems of love and religion in the manner of the Provençal *canso*, *dansa*, *balada* and *pastorela*, which had had such a luxuriant growth in Southern France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. A highly elaborated metrical system mainly distinguishes these writers, but some of their work catches a pleasing lilt which is supposed to represent the imitation of songs of the people. The popular element in the Galician productions is slight, but it was to bear important fruit later, for its spirit is that of the *serranas* of Ruiz and Santillana, and of *villancicos* and eclogues in the sixteenth century.

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It was probably in the neighborhood of 1350 that lyrics began to be written in Castilian by the cultured classes of Leon and Castile, who had previously thought Galician the only proper tongue for that use, but the influence of the Galician school persisted long after. The first real lyric in Castilian is its offspring. This is the anonymous *Razón feyta d'amor* or *Aventura amorosa* (probably thirteenth century), a dainty story of the meeting of two lovers. It is apparently an isolated example, ahead of its time, unless, as is the case with the Castilian epic, more poems are lost than extant. The often quoted *Cántica de la Virgen* of Gonzalo de Berceo (first half of thirteenth century), with its popular refrain *Eya velar*, is an oasis in the long religious epics of the amiable monk of S. Millán de la Cogolla. One must pass into the succeeding

century to find the next examples of the true lyric. Juan RUIZ, the mischievous Archpriest of Hita (flourished _ca_. 1350), possessed a genius sufficiently keen and human to infuse a personal vigor into stale forms. In his *_Libro de buen amor_* he incorporated lyrics both sacred and profane, *_Loores de Santa María_* and *_Cánticas de serrana_*, plainly in the Galician manner and of complex metrical structure. The *_serranas_* are particularly free and unconventional. The Chancellor Pero LÓPEZ DE AYALA (1332-1407), wise statesman, brilliant historian and trenchant satirist, wrote religious songs in the same style and still more intricate in versification. They are included in the didactic poem usually called *_El rimado de palacio_*.

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Poetry flourished in and about the courts of the monarchs of the Trastamara family; and what may be supposed a representative collection of the work done in the reigns of Henry II (1369-1379), John I (1379-1388), Henry III (1388-1406) and the minority of John II (1406-1454), is preserved for us in the *_Cancionero_* which Juan Alfonso de Baena compiled and presented to the last-named king. Two schools of versifiers are to be distinguished in it. The older men, such as Villasandino, Sánchez de Talavera, Macías, Jerena, Juan Rodríguez del Padrón and Baena himself, continued the artificial Galician tradition, now run to seed. In others appears the imitation of Italian models which was to supplant the ancient fashion. Francisco Imperial, a worshiper of Dante, and other Andalusians such as Ruy Páez de Ribera, Pero González de Uceda and Ferrán Manuel de Lando, strove to introduce Italian meters and ideas. They first employed the Italian hendecasyllable, although it did not become acclimated till the days of Boscán. They likewise cultivated the *_metro de arte mayor_*, which later became so prominent (see below, p. lxxv ff.). But the interest of the poets of the *_Cancionero de Baena_* is mainly historical. In spite of many an illuminating side-light on manners, of political invective and an occasional glint of imagination, the amorous platitudes and wire-drawn love-contests of the Galician school, the stiff allegories of the Italianates leave us cold. It was a transition period and the most talented were unable to master the undeveloped poetic language.

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The same may be said, in general, of the whole fifteenth century. Although the language became greatly clarified toward 1500 it was not yet ready for masterly original work in verse. Invaded by a flood of Latinisms, springing

from a novel and undigested humanism, encumbered still with archaic words and set phrases left over from the Galicians, it required purification at the hands of the real poets and scholars of the sixteenth century. The poetry of the fifteenth is inferior to the best prose of the same epoch; it is not old enough to be quaint and not modern enough to meet a present-day reader upon equal terms.

These remarks apply only to artistic poetry. Popular poetry,--that which was exemplified in the Middle Ages by the great epics of the Cid, the Infantes de Lara and other heroes, and in songs whose existence can rather be inferred than proved,--was never better. It produced the lyric-epic *romances* (see *Notes*, p. 253), which, as far as one may judge from their diction and from contemporary testimony, received their final form at about this time, though in many cases of older origin. It produced charming little songs which some of the later court poets admired sufficiently to gloss. But the cultured writers, just admitted to the splendid cultivated garden of Latin literature, despised these simple wayside flowers and did not care to preserve them for posterity.

The artistic poetry of the fifteenth century falls naturally into three classes, corresponding to three currents of influence; and all three frequently appear in the work of one man, not blended, but distinct. One is the conventional love-poem of the Galician school, seldom containing a fresh or personal note. Another is the stilted allegory with erotic or historical content, for whose many sins Dante was chiefly responsible, though Petrarch, he of the *Triunfi*, and Boccaccio cannot escape some blame. Third is a vein of highly moral reflections upon the vanity of life and certainty of death, sometimes running to political satire. Its roots may be found in the Book of Job, in Seneca and, nearer at hand, in the *Proverbios morales* of the Jew Sem Tob (*ca.* 1350), in the *Rimado de Palacio* of Ayala, and in a few poets of the *Cancionero de Baena*. page xvi

John II was a dilettante who left the government of the kingdom to his favorite, Álvaro de Luna. He gained more fame in the world of letters than many better kings by fostering the study of literature and gathering about him a circle of "court poets" nearly all of noble birth. Only two names among them all imperatively require mention. Íñigo LÓPEZ DE MENDOZA, MARQUIS OF SANTILLANA (1398-1458) was the finest type of *grand seigneur*, protector of letters, student, warrior, poet and politician. He wrote

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