

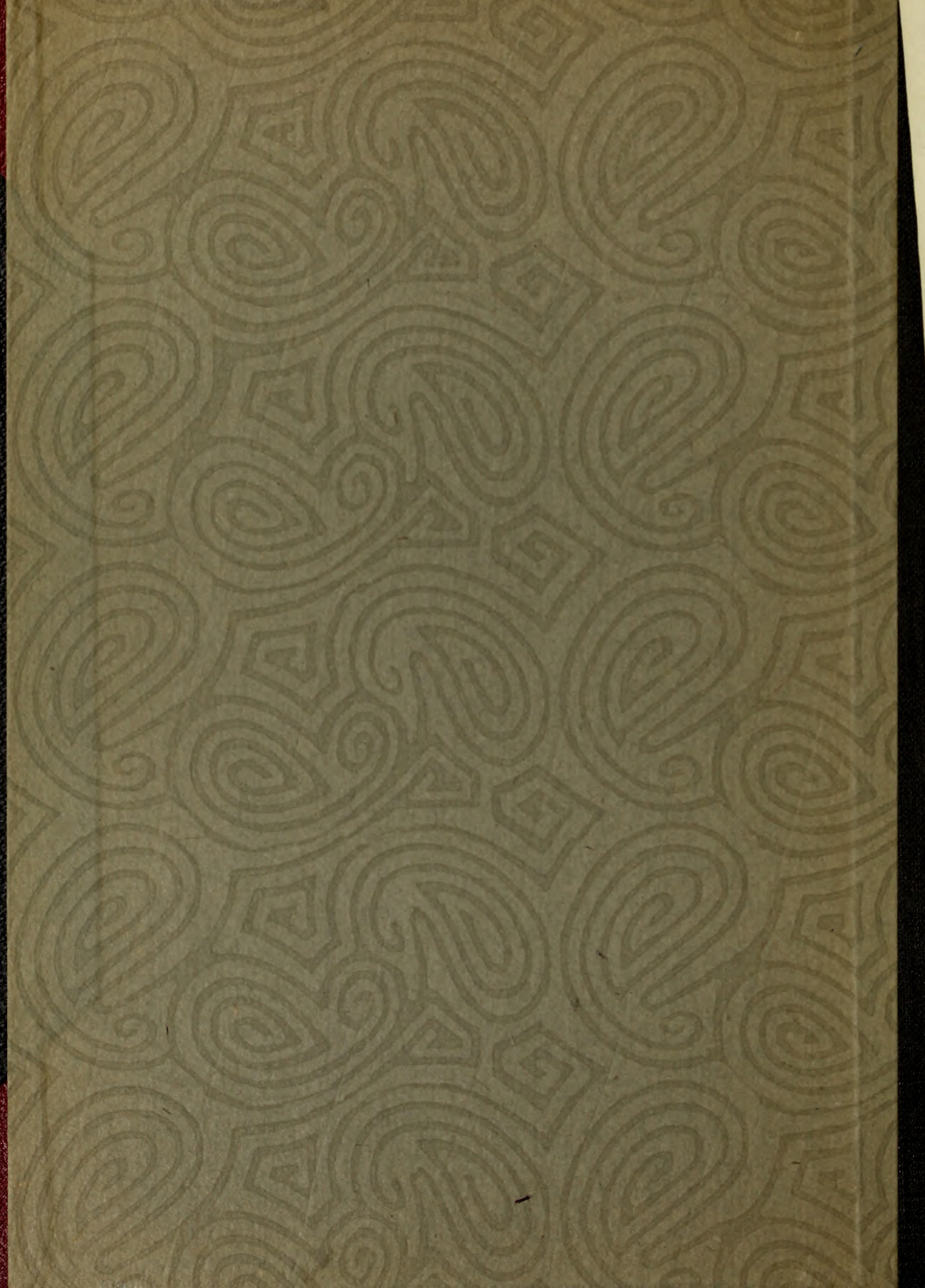
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History of "Lo teatre catala"

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G R A D U A T E S C H O O L

THESIS

HISTORY OF "LO TEATRE CATALA"

Submitted by

Edward Berge-Soler

(A. B. University of Barcelona-1896)

In partial fulfilment of requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts.

-1930-

Ser

REGISTRATION UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL

THESIS

HISTORY OF "LA TRINIDAD"

46937

Submitted by

Edward George-Soler

(A. S. University of Louisiana-1936)

In partial fulfillment of requirements
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A.M. 1931
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T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

I N T R O D U C T O R Y T O P I C S

TERRITORY AND PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTORY TOPICS

TERRITORY AND PEOPLE

LINGUISTIC AREA--The literary soil from which sprang or evolved the tongue that has given life to the modern Teatre Català covered a wider area than the present political region of Catalonia does.

In the days when glorious traditions were realities, Catalonia embraced Aquitania, Provença and Lo Roselló in France; Catalonia proper, Upper Aragó, the kingdom of Valencia and Balearic Islands in Spain; Sardinia, Sicilia and the kingdom of Naples in Italy.

From the Provençal, from the Mallorquín, from the Catalanian of the Middle Ages has blossomed the tongue of the modern Catalonia, and that has been used to form those powerful creations which fill "Lo Teatre Català" of our days.

The Catalanian poet Maragall has expressed better than anyone what the Catalonia of those days was. His poem runs with a true judaic fervor prophesizing a renovation of old glories which, I am afraid, will never materialize.

THE HISTORY OF THE

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Maragall says in his own tongue--
Jo no sé com pró un vent de profecia
corre sobre eixos monts d'ací i d'allà;
jo no sé com pró vindrà un dia
que el Pirineu regnarà.

Vosaltres els del mar cap a Baiona,
vosaltres els de Pau i d'Argelés,
vosaltres de Tolosa i de Narbona
i los del bell parlar provençalés
i tu Aragó més alt, i tu, Nabarra,
oh catalans que a l'altre mar sou junts,
alceu els ulls al mur que ara ens separa;
s'acosta el dia que serem tots uns.
Tots devallem de la mateixa alçada,
tots bevem l'aygya de les mateixes neus;
nostres cançons tenen igual tonada
i nostres crits desperten identics tornaveus.

which means

I don't know how but a prophetic breeze
blows over those mountains here and there;
I don't know how but a day will come
in which the Pyrenees will reign!
You, people from the sea towards Bayonne,
You, people from Pau and Arlais,
You, people from Toulouse and Narbonne
and those of the beautiful provençal speech:
and thou, upper Aragó, and thou, Navarre,

Catalans say in his own tongue--
 Jo no se com pu vent de proteccia
 vostra sobre aixos homes d'alt i d'alt;
 Jo no se com pu vindre un dia
 que el Tirineu regnaria.
 Vosaltres els del mar cap a Balona,
 vosaltres els de l'alt i d'alt,
 vosaltres de Tolosa i de Narbona
 i los del bell gentil provençal
 i lo Aragó nos alt, i lo, Navarra,
 en catalans que a l'altre mar son Junts,
 aixes els fills el mar que son ens separats;
 s'acosta el dia que venen tots uns,
 tots devallats de la mateixa alçada,
 tots sobre l'altre de los catalans nous;
 nostre ongon tenes igual tonada
 i nostre orla esperon téntes tornavents.

which means

I don't know how but a prophetic breeze
 blows over those mountains here and there;
 I don't know how but a day will come
 in which the Tyrians will reign;
 You, people from the sea towards Bayonne,
 You, people from the sea and Arles,
 You, people from Toulouse and Narbonne
 and those of the beautiful provincial speech;
 and you, upper Arago, and then, Navarra,

Oh, catalonians, who, the other sea have joined,
raise your eyes to the wall that now keeps us apart:
The day is nearing in which we shall all be one.
We all descend from the same heights,
We all drink the waters from the same snows,
our songs have all the same rythms
and our shouts awaken identical echoes.

It is almost idel to add that Maragall allows his inspiration to run away with him. Beautiful as the former is, it makes him fall into glaring inaccuracies. Bayonne and Navarre have, and never had, anything to do with Catalonis, racially or from a linguistic point of view.

THE CATALONIAN RACE--In the study of any literature it seems very important to have a clear conception of the people to whom the literature under investigation belongs. In speaking of a Catalonian race it must be understood that the term is used from an historic and not an anthropologic point of view. This distinction being made, it could be said that a national race is an ethnical product formed over a given territory, through the course of the times, by means of mixtures with other races and influences of the environments. Through this process, a special human specimen has been created, at the end of several centuries, which offers distinctive features of

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his own, differentiating him from the other branches of the human family. In this sense, Catalonia has a race all its own. Many legends have been offered regarding the first inhabitants of the Peninsula but the fact is the lack of a serious scientific backing makes it impossible to accept them as reliable documents.

As far as Catalonia is concerned, it is an established fact supported by the most competent authorities that the first link of the human chain in that corner of the earth were the Iberians. Avienus copied the memories of a Phoenician explorer who, as far back as 500 years before Christ, reached the Eastern shores of the Peninsula. According to this Phoenician explorer, there was all along the Mediterranean littoral from Murcia to the mouth of the Rhone, an indigenous nucleus offering all the characteristics of the Iberians. This testimony is the oldest evidence of the presence of the Iberians on the Catalonian soil.

The irruption that the Celts made into Spain, coming from the North, touched only part of the Northern Catalonia and this in not a very impressive manner. The crucible where Iberian and Celts met and clashed, and even

mixed, was in Central Spain. There rocked the cradle of the Celtiberians. Simultaneously with the appearance of the Celts, the Iberians had to suffer a double attack. On the North, they had to bear the brunt of a Ligurian invasion. With the Ligurian, the Iberians mixed extensively. On the South, they had to dispute with the Libian-Phoenicians. The fight, here, seems to have been stiffer, no mixture of races worth mentioning taking place, and with a subsequent loss of territory on the side of the Iberians. They lost all Murcia.

The warlike conditions, mentioned above, must have been the cause that decided the Celts to filter through Catalonia and not to establish any fixed abode in those turbulent lands. However, in spite of their brief stay, they left marks of their presence and the archeologist may, nowadays, witness the Cave of the Serge near Lleyda and the Sepulcher of the Turo de Vich, the latter dating from 656 B. C., according to the experts' opinion, both relics having all the earmarks of Celtic industry.

In their process of putting the house in order, the Iberians subdivided themselves into different branches, the two most important in number and the influence being the "alegerts"

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in the Northern Catalonia and the "edetans" in Valencia.

Three foreign invasions visited Catalonia, one yielding to the other, and none allowed to stay long enough to be considered as the main factor in the formation of national characteristics for the benefit of future generations.

The first invasion was that of the Phoenicians, occurred during the twelfth century B. C. The Phoenicians merely touched Catalonia since their most important trading centers lay in the South and center of Spain.

The second invasion came from a nation far superior to that of the Phoenicians, the Greeks. Those were bound to leave more lasting traces of their presence over the Catalonian soil than their rivals and other competitors had done. Among the colonies, the Greek founded in Catalonia, deserve special mention Emporium, today Ampurias, and Rode, today Rosas.

The Phoenicians found formidable rivals in the Greeks, and in order to see themselves rid of a ruinous competition, they called the Carthaginians to their aid. The latter entered Spain about 300 years B. C., and began to conquer the country for their own profit.

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The Carthaginians found a hostile reception in Catalonia and Valencia, on account of those two regions being two centers of a very pronounced Greek civilization. It has been said that Amilcar Barca founded Barcelona but no positive evidence of the fact can be advanced. Where the Carthagians enjoyed a better reception was in the Balearic Islands and there is no doubt that they founded Ebussus, today Ibiza. The Balearic slingers were a very important military unit in the armies Hannibal led across the Alps to fall upon Rome.

Before taking up the most important invasion for Catalonia, as far as their national and political aspects are concerned, and this is the Roman invasion, it is well to establish a clear idea of what an invasion meant to the invaded people in those times and how it was conducted by the invaders. On mentioning the establishment of factories or colonies by Phoenicians and Greeks on foreign soils, it must be borne in mind the social organization of those nations which was based upon the distinction between free citizens and slaves. This simply means that slaves were brought to the colonies

The Carthaginians found a hostile reception in Catalonia and Valencia, on account of those two regions being the centers of a very pronounced Greek civilization. It has been said that Antioch never touched Barcelona but no positive evidence of the fact can be advanced. There the Carthaginians enjoyed a better reception was in the Balearic Islands and there is no doubt that they founded Eusebia, Ithaca, and the Balearic Islands were a very important military unit in the Carthaginian fleet across the Alps to sail upon these.

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for those hard tasks which were indispensable for the good development of the new centers of trade.

Wherever the Greeks went, in their quest for new colonies, they brought along with them a large assortment of human samples belonging to the Asiatic varieties. All those racial elements contributed their mite to the formation of the future types, and there is no doubt that the persistent Mongolian streak that now and then is found around the spots where the Greeks ruled, is due to the importation of the enslaved toilers brought along by their masters.

About 200 years B. C. there started the Roman invasion, the one which should affect Catalonia so deeply, that it can be said that she is today the only genuine latin corner left in Spain. At the very onset of the invasion, there is a marked difference in the attitude taken by the different nuclei in the Peninsula towards the Romans. The tribes living in the Northeast and East of the Peninsula, according to Professor Altamira the most civilized, offered practically no resistance to the new invader. On the other hand, the rest of

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ized, offered practically no resistance to the
new invader. On the other hand, the rest of

Spain, barring a few spots on the South, displayed such a savage resistance that it took two centuries to the masters of the world to complete the conquest of the Spanish soil. To this war belongs the siege of Numantia which yields nothing in war-like paroxysm to that of Jerusalem by Titus.

It could be said that this attitude taken by the Catalonians of those times was a significative harbinger of the position held by this nation, later in History, until our days, and that they should mark her as an unity totally different from the rest of the Peninsula. The long Roman domination left deep imprints in the mind and soil of the primitive Catalonians. Even today, ethnically, some types of certain Catalonian counties have preserved the Roman features in all their purity. This is specially true in Rens, province of Tarragona. The entrance of the Romans in Spain marked a fifth invasion and that was of the Jews. In 136 A. D., they were expelled by Flavius from Palestine, and they established themselves in large groups along the coast of Valencia and Mallorca Island.

The sixth invasion was that of the Barbarians of Teutonic origin. It affected

little the national type, already formed, of the Catalonians. After so many centuries of Roman domination, they had little to fear about new foreign elements modifying the set specimen of the formed Catalonian.

Today the Catalonian type, going from the Pyrenees to the boundaries of Valencia covers the following racial ethnical gamma. In the mountains going down to the lowlands of Gerona, there prevails a mysterious Nordic type of blue eyes and blond hair; descending to the provinces of Barcelona and Lleyda, there is a prevalence of the Roman latin type, the Jewish being a moderate second until the plains and the city of Barcelona are reached; there the Jewish type increases and it is also found in numbers in the Balearic Islands.

On reaching the Province of Tarragona, the Roman type prevails in all its purity as it has been said before.

Here are some data taken from the statistics published every six years by the Institute Geografico y Politico de Espana, regarding the Catalonian nation of today, and belonging to the tables published in 1920.

Gray eyes, more than 19.5%

Blond hair, " " 15.5%

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 regarding the Catalan nation of today, and
 belonging to the tables published in 1910.

gray eyes, more than 10.00
 blond hair, " " 15.00

Dark complexion less 40.7%

The Dolicocephalic type prevails.

These figures served as data to over-zealous Nordics to include the Catalonians in the Nordic group for no other reason than they were the only group left in the Peninsula that is worth something, but the Nordic element in the Catalonian race is almost negligible.

CATALONIAN LANGUAGE--The language or languages spoken by the Catalonians before the Roman invasion command no room in this report. They most probably assimilated a considerable number of foreign words brought by the visiting races which established their quarters along the old Iberian littoral. The point of real interest is the radical transformation that the language of the Iberians underwent as soon as it felt the magic touch of the Latin.

It seems to have been a case of love at first sight on the part of the conquered with the harmony and beauty of the tongue spoken by her new masters. The cult for beauty has been very deeply rooted among the Catalonians of all times.

Latin became the general tongue in Catalonia. The remainders of the tongues

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst.

in relation to the matter mentioned therein.

I am sorry to hear that you are unable to attend the meeting on the 15th inst.

but I trust that you will be able to do so on the 16th inst.

as the meeting will be held on that day.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours faithfully,

J. H. [Name]

Secretary to the [Committee]

[Address]

[Address]

[Address]

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours faithfully,

J. H. [Name]

Secretary to the [Committee]

[Address]

[Address]

[Address]

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours faithfully,

J. H. [Name]

Secretary to the [Committee]

[Address]

[Address]

[Address]

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
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J. H. [Name]

Secretary to the [Committee]

spoken before the invasion were totally assimilated by the Latin. The linguistic latinization of the Catalonians was absolute.

The English philologist D'Olwer states that the Catalonian language is more than a daughter of the Latin. It is in itself the actual and local state of evolution of the vulgar speech of Rome (sermo plebeius) more or less influenced by primitive elements and foreign additions, filtered through the political and economical frontiers. At the beginning of the seventh century or thereabouts, the difference between Latin and vulgar speech was very well marked. It may be added that under the mantle of the vulgar speech grew some crops of new tongues noticeably estranged from the Latin.

It is a fact that about the middle of the ninth century the new romance language, which was bound to be known as Catalonian, offered a reduced number of mannerisms. Burgundians, Provencals, Catalonians and Italians could understand each other. This could not have been possible several centuries later when each of those five groups had their own different language.

With the growth and expansion of the romance speech, large linguistic groups were

spoken before the invasion were totally assimilated by the Latin. The linguistic domination of the Catalans was absolute.

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Romance speech, large linguistic groups were

formed in the territories occupied by the Barbarians. The political factor exercised a decisive influence in the formation of those groups mentioned above. Territories situated in the same state adapted a common tongue. This explains why Catalonia and Southern France had the same language as far as the thirteenth century.

The Provençal troubador, Listerón, who lived during the first third of the thirteenth century, arranges the different peoples of the Gaule in two groups according to their language, namely: Catalonians and French, including in the first group, Gascons, Provençals, Lemosins and Auvernans. Dante uses Provençal in his Purgatorio, Canto XXVI-140-7 and thought of Catalonia as being the center of "la langue d' Oc."

It must be understood that Catalanian and Provençal were not the same language. From the very beginning, these two sisters offered marked differences, in the lexicon, phonetics, inflexions and spelling, but in spite of all this, the two sisters cannot deny their common blood and belong to the same mother, "la langue d' Oc," as they say in Catalanian, "La Llengua d' Oc."

Today the Catalanian language is spoken in all Catalonia, Balearic Islands, Valencia, Rousillón, and the city of Alguer, Sardinia. When it is said that Catalanian is spoken in these lands it is not meant that Catalanian is the only vehicle of expression heard by the traveller.

In Catalonia, there is a large foreign population whose language is Castillian. The majority of this human sector, which in the large cities is rather important, lives in Catalonia because of the administrative requirements of the Castillian State. A phenomenon worthy to be mentioned happens to the Castillian families who go and establish themselves in Catalonia. All those who do it temporarily, because they are subject to their administrative career, come and go without learning a word of the Catalanian language. And it is obvious that it should be so. They serve a State hostile to the political aspirations of Catalonia, and influenced by the hostility of the master they serve, they take great pains in avoiding the use of an insurgent tongue. On the other hand, the Castillian families who go to Catalonia to establish themselves there for good, no matter what part of Spain they come from, become Catalanized very rapidly, and the second

generation knows Castillian for official purposes but Catalanian is used for all their daily intercourses.

In the Balearic Islands, the same state of affairs is true, only more intensified. The geographical nature of the island helps greatly to maintain and strengthen the resistance of the mother tongue against unwelcomed foreign encroachments.

The Valenciá, a variety of the Catalanian, is spoken in the farms and country, all the territory known under the name of "la horta." In the cities, the high society speaks Castillian and this example is followed by the wealthy classes which ape the manners and ways of the nobility. The industrial, producing and laboring classes speak Valenciá.

This state of affairs is due to the absence of a well organized group with defined regional aspirations. This omission seems to be on the way to mending and the literary liking for the regional tongue is being developed gradually by some good writers who are determined to restore the Valenciá to its old splendor.

In "Lo Rosselló," the lovers of the old tongue have been compelled to fight against

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...the ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...

In the ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...

The ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...

This ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...

In ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...
...the ... of the ...

the pressure of a Central State, far superior to that of Spain in every respect. Considering what it means to be a Frenchman and speak French in the world at large, one must really wonder how the Rosellonés has been able to resist the relentless attacks of the official language. And yet, in spite of it, the Rosellonés lives and not only lives, but since 1920, there is a persistent campaign among certain literary elements to bring the Rosellonés back to the importance it enjoyed once.

HISTORIC SURVEY OF CATALONIA UNTIL THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY--To understand intelligently a literature, the people to whom this literature belongs must be historically known by the student. To this principle obeys the following brief sketch of the Catalonia of the past.

The average student of Spanish History has a wrong idea of the way the Reconquest of the Spanish soil against the hosts of Islamism began. He is led to believe that the reconquest was initiated at Covadonga and this is not exactly true. Covadonga was only one of the many starting points from which the counter-offensive started to roll back the African wave. The

Catalonian Pyrenees was another. After the defeat inflicted upon the Arabs by Charles Martel, the former tried to intrench themselves in Catalonia. The Catalonians, weakly organized, offered an ineffective resistance in the Mountains of Montgrony, situated in the Catalonian Pyrenees. They needed outside help and this was given by the Franks who entered Catalonia during the eighth century. They helped to free the Catalonian soil from the Arab yoke, established themselves in the Northern part of the country and they founded the Marca Hispanica. This Marca Hispanica consisted of a federation of several counties and the Franks themselves appointed the Counts who should rule them. The counties of Pallars, Roselló, Cerdaña, Urgell, Ampurias, Barcelona, are the historical origin of mediaeval Catalonia.

These counties were dependent politically from the emperors of the Franks until 947. At that time, after the death of the Count of Barcelona, Wilfred the Hairy, they emancipated themselves from the imperial tutelage.

The County of Catalonia, "primum inter pares," obtained the hegemony upon the others and constituted the main nucleus of the nation. The Count of Barcelona was the Prince of Catalonia.

The following witness was called. After the
 direct testimony from the State of Illinois
 was given, the witness testified to having been
 present in Chicago. The defendant, usually
 present, of course, as a matter of course
 in the testimony of that party, testified in the
 defendant's favor. They needed outside help
 and this was given by the State and entered
 into the record during the direct testimony. This
 helped to show the defendant's help from the
 State, as mentioned previously in the testimony
 part of the report and that showed the same
 situation. This later witness mentioned the
 testimony of several witnesses and the State
 themselves specified the Court and stated this
 then. The names of Adams, Smith, Green,
 Hall, Brown, Jackson, and the defendant
 were of certain evidence.
 These parties were mentioned in the
 report from the report of the State and
 so. At that time, after the death of the Court
 of records, which was given, they mentioned
 themselves from the report of the State.
 The report of evidence, which was
 given, mentioned the testimony and the State and
 mentioned the main evidence of the report. The
 Court of Evidence was the State of Illinois.

Sure of themselves and of their own home grounds, the Count of Barcelona started the policy of the aggrandizement of their own kingdom, either by war or by treaties.

Count Berenguer the Great III (1096-1131) added Cardalés, Arlés and Provença to Catalonia, the latter by marriage.

Count Ramon Berenguer IV added Aragó to the above possessions by marrying the daughter of the King of Aragó (La Corona d'Aragó), official title that gave the Counts of Barcelona the title of king.

In the time of Peter I, Catalonia lost part of the French possessions in the battle of Muret in 1213. It was the result of a religious war in which Peter I was compelled to wage in order to defend the rights of his subjects of adopting the Albigensis creed against the combined policy of Rome and the French monarchy.

His son James I changed the foreign policy of Catalonia and yielded the South of France to Louis IX, King of the French. Lo Roselló was left to Catalonia. On the other hand, he opened a drive to the sea, to the Mediterranean. Valencia and the Balearic Islands fell into his hands, driving the Moors away from there. In the time of his son, Peter the Great, Catalonia expanded as far as Italy.

In war against the House of Anjou and Rome, he conquered Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica and Naples. The Catalonian Navy was all powerful, the mistress of the Mediterranean Sea. It was at that time that Roger de Lauria, the Catalonian admiral, said that the fishes would not dare to show themselves above the water, unless they could show the four bars of the Catalonian banner on their sides. To those days belong also the epic of the Catalonian expedition to the lands of the Greek Empire to help the Emperor against the turcs. They were led by Roger de Flor.

In a tragedy written by Guimerà upon this episode, he puts the following words in Roger de Flor's mouth--

Fills meus, carn de ma carn, raça
volguda

--nostre es el mon, duent el sol per
guia

--de cara al sol, mos almogavers sempre!

which means

My children, flesh of my flesh, beloved
race,

--ours is the world, carrying the sun
as a guide,

--let us face the sun, my man, always!

All these glories went up in smoke at the death

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 Empire to help the Emperor against the Turks.
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In a tragedy written by Calderon upon
 this episode, he puts the following words in
 Roger de Flor's mouth:-

This cause, born of my own race,
 will be
 --honour as it is, death as it is
 this
 --to care of and, now always happy!
 which means
 I will be, then of a life, beloved
 race,
 --ours is the world, conquering the sun
 as a guide,
 --let us face the sun, my own, always;
 All these glories went up in smoke at the death

of Martin I, the young, without leaving a successor to the Crown.

Nine electors, three for Catalonia, three for Aragón, and three for Valencia gathered at Caspe to elect the king. There were two candidates, Ferdinand d' Antequera, Castilian, and Count James d' Urgell, Catalanian. Among the electors for Valencia there was the friar Vicent Ferrer, a magnetic figure and agent of the Pope Benedict XIII, who had been born in Aragón and whose name was Pere de Luna. The friar Ferrer had taken upon himself the obligation to serve the interests of the Pope at Avignon who wanted the Castilian candidate be elected King of Aragón. The reasons for this interest was that Ferdinand had promised his help if he were elected king, to maintain the Pope of Aragón in his seat against the claims of the other Pope at Rome, who had been elected by the cardinals in order to defend the religious policy of the Kings of France.

The friar Ferrer carried his point, a foreign King came to reign in Aragón and the glories and lands won by Catalanian blood were lost by the Castilian pride.

CATALONIAN LITERATURE--Towards the middle of the tenth century, the Catalanian

of Berlin D. 100, 1000, without leaving a
 message in the house.
 The first, was for the
 cause for which, and some for the
 to be done for the cause. There was
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 him, and some names of the, 1000,
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 a 1000, 1000, 1000, 1000,
 1000, 1000, 1000, 1000,
 last of the 1000, 1000,
 1000, 1000, 1000, 1000,
 1000, 1000, 1000, 1000,

tongue had already attained that required growth which is essential to any language coveting the distinction of a literary reputation. It did not appear in writing, however, until much later. The oldest document written in Catalonian without the help of any latin word is the oath taken by the Count of Baix Pallars and his barons, in the last years of the eleventh century or the first years of the twelfth.

The Catalonian literature began in the road. The Catalonians heard their literature spoken and sung before they could read it on yellow parchment. The mouths of the Troubadours "los Trovaires" brought to Catalonian lands the warm songs of the sunny Provenca. It is said that when these wandering singers crossed the Pyrinees dropping their songs as they trailed along, the austere mountains smiled for the first time. The presence of the "trovaires" in Catalonia brings along the question of whether the Provencal literature influenced the Catalonian or it happened the other way about. It seems to be a question that can be solved to the satisfaction of the two groups holding the two opposite views. The

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first steps taken by the Catalonian literature were under the eye of her older sister, the Provençal. Later on, as the younger sister grew and developed, they influenced each other. When Provença was lost to Catalonia after the battle of Muret, its literature was robust enough to need help of no one and to extend its own influence to other literatures as for instance the Castillian.

The beginnings of the Catalonian literature were coarse and extremely free. That was due to the fact that the authors of the bálads and hymns were themselves the scum of the earth. The poetical legend that hangs around the travelling "trovaire" is absolutely inaccurate. The average trovaire was a jolly blackguard. Gifted with a vivid imagination and a certain ability to sing, he preferred the freedom of the high roads to the regulated life of the serf. Trusting to his wits to eke a living out of his vagrancy, he could not afford to nurture a very high standard of ethics. He would sing a hymn to the Blessed Virgin, on demand, after having robbed and may be murdered some poor wayfarer whom he had met on the path at night.

Rare were doubtless the occasions

first steps taken by the Galatians literature
 were under the eye of her older sister, the
 Proverbs. Later on, as the younger sister
 grew and developed, they influenced each other.
 When Proverbs was lost to circulation after the
 battle of Marston, the literature was written
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The beginning of the Galatians

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 was a jolly blackguard, filled with a vivid
 imagination and a certain ability to sing.
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 to the regulated life of the city. Travelling
 to his wife to see a living out of his vagrancy,
 he could not afford to nurture a very high
 standard of ethics. He would sing a hymn to
 the Blessed Virgin, on demand, after having
 robbed and may be murdered some poor wayfarer
 whom he had met on the path at night.
 There were doubtless the occasions

in which the Baron of the Castle, unless he was dead drunk, would allow the ladies of his wife's court to remain in the castle's hall to hear the love ballads that the minstrel was ready to sing for the meal and the night's shelter, which together with three or four pieces of money, the lord of the Castle felt in the mood to give him. Later on, when the feudal courts acquired more brilliancy and it was a sign of abundance and refinement to have a fixed minstrel in court, more than one found himself dangling at the end of a rope, his dead body knocking against the outside wall of the watchtower, simply because he had attempted or succeeded in doing that which he advised in his ballads. But this invasion of unscrupulous singers and rhymsters did much good to the Catalonian land. It proved to be an excellent literary fertilizer for the beautiful flowers that later on grew out of it under the care of the Catalonian writers' delicate hands.

Besides being good for the literature of the country on the coming centuries, those flocks of trovaires were also of great benefit to the people of their day. They brought to the common people of Catalonia a brand of free

and robust merriment that was bound to be the trademark of the keen sense of humor and ready wit that has characterized, and characterizes yet, the Catalonian people of all times. The trovaires of the first period were responsible for rescuing their fatherland from the religious gloom pending all over the world, and for keeping the Catalonia of those extensive boundaries one of the few bright spots of the world.

The joy of living was a common patrimony to all the subjects of the Kings of Aragón. It may be said that joy was not preserved without paying a high price for it. The tendency to make merry liberalized the Kings and subjects' points of view regarding many matters about which other States suffered no difference of opinion. This is why religious tolerance was an accepted fact although nothing was said about it. Had it not been so the Albigensian heresy would have not spread like a prairie fire as it did without the royal power and ecclesiastical dignataries doing anything to check it. But the price was paid in blood and loss of territory in Southern France, when the threatening conflict between Pope and King broke out. The defeat, however, did not change the national frame of mind in regard to religious tolerance.

The latter did not die out until Castilla imported its Inquisition, an institution which was always repellent to the average Catalonian mind.

The era of the trovaires lasted from the first counts to James II the Conqueror. It must be understood that as time went on, the trovaires improved in style, living methods, and moral standard, and that a "trovaire" was a poet with a fixed abode who chose to adorn himself with that title as a tribute to the glamour of the legend about the wandering rhymers who had preceeded him.

Ramon Berenguer IV attracted some trovaires from Provença to his court in Barcelona. These trovaires were charged with giving a certain literary atmosphere to the Catalonian Court. The first tangible result of the literary gathering was the appearance of the first complete book written in Catalonian. "Lo Llibre dels Usatjes." (The Book of Customs.)

James the Conqueror marks an epoch of great splendor for the Catalonian literature. He aimed at the creation of a genuine Catalonian literature and he succeeded in accomplishing his purpose. He set the example himself by writing a book of maxims and proverbs, entitled "Lo Llibre de la Saviesa." (The Book of Wisdom.)

This book shows signs of having been inspired by the works of the Jewish rabbi, Honan bern Isaac, who was a great friend of the King and wrote in very good Catalanian.

The efforts of the good King were seconded by a large array of full-fledged poets, juicy fruits from the seed of the first "trovaires." Vidal Besalú was the first philologist and preceptist of his time and left his good book "Dreita Maniera de Trobar." Second in importance is Cervera who has left to posterity his "Proverbs Rimats." Olivier, Servei and others cultivated the didactic and moral literature.

With the conquest of Valencia and Balearic Islands by James the Conqueror, a great center of Hebrew culture was formed in the Crown of Aragón. From the two points above mentioned, it radiated to all the kingdom and it specially consolidated in Barcelona, Girona, Toulouse and Perpignà. The most conspicuous figures in the movement were the rabbis Bon-Astank and Nauchman, who popularized the best works of Hebrew literature by means of the Catalanian language. The most important Catalanian translations of the Hebrew works saved to posterity are "Joch de les Estreles," (The game of the

starts), "Llibre dels Savis" (The Book of the learned men), and "Joch dels Escachs." (The game of chess).

But the figure that fills this period is that of Ramon Llull. He must be classified as a genius. He had been one of the most discussed mentalities of his time and he had come to this world much earlier than his writings would indicate was good for his peace of mind.

He was a profligate, a mystic, a philosopher, a theologian, a linguistic and he has even been half canonized, but his imagination, always at a blood-heat temperature, prevented him from being anyone of these in a complete manner. The trouble with Llull was that without knowing it himself, he had the soul of a great poet above everything else.

It is almost needless to say that legend has persecuted him and snapshot him in the most daring attitudes. Now it makes him enter the Cathedral on horseback, at Mass time, in relentless pursuit of a lady who strove to seek shelter in the house of God; and now, he is brought to a room, called by another lady who, on having Llull before her, proceeds to disrobe herself from waist up and displays before the relentless lover the flesh of a breast eaten up

by the ulcers of a cancer, at the sight of which Llull feels his heart touched by the Divine Grace, and repents. Such incidents are nothing else but feverish dreams of visionary poets who needed to rhyme lines about something. He himself denies these deeds later in a book that Abbé Le Meyner wrote almost under Llull's dictation, when the latter was in Paris. Le Meyner was the best friend, partisan and pupil Llull ever had in the world.

Ramon Llull was born about 1232 in Mallorca of a noble family and died in 1315, some say stoned by the mob in an hamlet in Africa because they did not want to hear him preach the Gospel, some say on a galley at the sight of Mallorca, returning from one of his missionary expeditions. His life offers many points of contact with that of the Russian writer, Tolstoi. Like him, he is a profligate in his youth, he marries young, he does not respect his vows of fidelity, and suddenly, impelled by a wave of mystic fervor he abandons wife, children and earthly cares and goes to shut himself in a convent to prepare his mind for the missionary duties he had imposed upon himself.

He married a noble lady of Mallorca in 1207. He had three children by her and she was compelled to ask the Crown to appoint a manager to administer the estates in 1275 because "her lord and husband had shown high and injurious indifference to her affections, that of their heirs and to the preservation of their earthly goods."

Llull himself tells how the change in his life was accomplished. He dictated to Le Meyner that one night, being in his own house and feeling inspired to write a poem to his lady love, he proceeded to write it when he saw before his eyes Christ nailed to the cross, floating in the room. He paid no attention to the apparition but it was persistent and did not vanish until he began to utter words of sincere repentance for his mischievous deeds. That very night he left home and went to shut himself up in a convent of friars in Mallorca.

In order to know Llull, one must read the book he dictated to Le Meyner. The title is "Vida Coétanea" and in it Llull bares his soul with such lack of reserve that it is very hard to reconcile it with all his other saintly ambitions.

His three aims in life were to propa-
Banda." They have an

gate the Christian faith among the Moors in Africa; the establishment of schools to teach the Arabic language and the fight against the pantheistic principles spread by Averoe and his pupils. The first thing he did, when he was already a friar, member of the Franciscan order.

Africa saw him several times and he preached vehemently among the infidels, trying to spread the good words of the Gospel. In his attempts to see the Arabic schools established, he was less successful at the beginning but he gained his purpose in the last years of his life. He visited Pope Boniface VIII in 1296 and 1309. Avignon saw him fighting for these schools, but without result. The Pope did not take interest in the project. When he was already old and his reputation established, he addressed the Roman College and he won his point.

The fight of Llull against Averroism comprises the most important of his works. His literary task, that is of real value, began after he had decided to devote himself to a religious life. The most notable in his group of poems are "Desconort" and "Cant a Ramon." They have an autobiographical value,

and in some passages the author reaches a real tragic sublimity, lamenting the failure of his life. As these poems were written in 1292 and 1299, it must be supposed that Llull must have gone through a period of discouragement in reviewing his past worldly life.

Of his works in prose, "Llibre de Contemplacions en Deu" and "Blanquerna" announce the philosopher and mark the end of his period of preparation to fight the heretic doctrines of the Arabian philosopher Averroes, who spread them from his corner in Córdoba, then the center of the Spanish caliphate. Finally, the work of his life appeared. He called it "Ars Magna." It is a system of philosophy in which the capital idea evolves the theory that the human mind tends to seek a single all-embracing knowledge, applicable to all sciences, with very ample principles in which are contained the particular principles of special sciences, as the essence of "the special" is absorbed by the essence of "the general."

In order to maintain this doctrine with success the philosopher strove to put aside argumentation as a means of carrying conviction to the would-be catechumen and

base the conversions upon the rational proof of the truths by revelation. His great aim was to invent an unassailable system of demonstration that could be used by all his pupils with equal success. He established his system with the support of three syllogistical methods, namely: the method of the superlative grade applied to God, that of the comparative grade applied to causes and, finally, the positive grade applied to effects.

In this book Llull's genius reaches his highest point. Lull did not know how to avoid the danger of falling, himself, into an unsuspected pantheism by the adoption of this system. His arch-enemy, Aymerich, was not slow in finding in Llull's theories the same elements of heresy that the latter tried to repeal in Averro's works, and Aymerich's evidence must have been rather convincing because he was successful in securing the act of excommunication from Rome against Llull. The excommunication, however, did not prosper. Catalonia with its king at the head raised in mass, protesting against the decision, and as Catalonia was not a very secure spiritual possession on account of the inroads made by Algibenism, and the Catalonian fleet was very real and

powerful in those times, the papal decree of excommunication was cancelled.

Llull remained undisturbed during the time the storm raged. Finally, he saw his enemy, Aymerich, exiled from the kingdom by royal decree. His philosophy must, per force, appear rather primitive today with his diagrams displaying a central idea of the Supreme God and the sixteen chambers representing the divine attributes or potentialities as he called them, corresponding to other sixteen chambers with the emblems of evil.

Bové says that Llull's philosophy is a mixture of mysticism and paganism. Littré states that there is nothing startling in the eyes of a modern philosopher. Even the Catalonian Bishop Torras i Bages finds that Llull has trodden dangerous grounds in his eagerness to demonstrate the Christian faith and applies to Llull the famous principle of Thomas Aquinas's, "ex verbi inordinate proleetur incurritus haerisis."

All this may be true but it is beyond doubt that Llull influenced his time deeply and became an European authority in the thinking world of those days. He taught in the

University of Paris; he formed a school of pupils and followers counting among them men like Vilanova, a thinker of later date, who ranked high among the philosophers of those times. Llull was also in Italy and some go as far as stating that the spheres and Empirean of Dante's Paradise can be traced to Llull's diagrams. Personally, I believe the theory untenable. After his death, his influence clung to life with the contumacy characteristic of its originator. It died gradually.

At the death of Llull, Catalonia was ready to enjoy all the literary advantages of the Renaissance. In Spain, it hardly made a ripple until late in the fifteenth century. This is easy to understand. When the Renaissance was already blossoming, Spain had still to achieve the Reconquest, which was not ended until 1491. Catalonia had not this problem on its hands. The average Catalonian citizen had enough to live on and he was in permanent contact with the foreign intellectual movements through the Mediterranean Sea and the Pyrenees. Spain had no cultural outlet. Therefore, with the reinforcement of the Renaissance, the Catalonian literary crop,

which was already large in quantity and good in quality, expanded still more, keeping all the time the wholesome Provençal taste.

It is to this period, more or less, that belong works like "Biblia Parva" (Elementary Bible), by de Tárrega, "Exercitació de la Pensa de Deu" (Exercises on the Thought of God) by Bewat Oliver, "Llibre del Christià" (The Book of the Christian) an encyclopedic work in 10 volumes by Frances d'Eximinis, The City of God by St. Augustine, translated in the XIV century, and excerpts of the Bible, long before Luther and many others had ever thought of translating it.

Raymond de Penyafort, Rubià and Bernat Metje were all followers of Llull. The hetherodox elements worked unmolested and were represented by Arnalt Vilanova, Turmedor and Servet. A descendent of Servet was burned in Geneva by orders of Calvin. The fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries can be considered the golden age of the Catalonian literature.

In 1323 the city of Toulouse renovated the tradition of culture by reviving the Consistory of "Els Jochs Florals." It consisted of the poetic school singing to God, fatherland

and love. King John I introduced the feast of the Jochs Florals into his Court, and the city of Barcelona inaugurated this feast of poetry which used to take place the first Sunday of May. The tradition was lost, but, revived in 1850. It was observed every year until the inauguration of the dictatorship by Primo de Rivera: refined intellectualism never prospers with the smell from the barracks.

This feast requires some months of preparatory work. The authors who aspire to the prizes send their compositions to a literary jury who have been selected the year before. There are three prizes offered and they are namely: a flower to the best composition singing to love: the gold ribbon to the best composition singing to the fatherland and the white seal to the best composition singing to the religious faith. The motto of the Jochs Florals is Fides, Patria, Amor. The first Sunday in May, the Palace of Llotja, built in the eleventh century, was profusely decorated with flowers and Catalonian pennants, the three red bars upon a yellow field. On the day of the feast, the three poets who had written the three best compositions, one to love, the other to fatherland

and the other to faith, were allowed to read their compositions before their king and received the prize from the hands of their queen, among the plaudits of nobles and courtiers. In 1850 Catalonia had no king, and the poet who had received the prize for having sung to Love the best, had the right to name the queen of the feast and lead her to the throne that she occupied during the time of the literary celebration.

The main feature in this feast of "gay saber" held in modern times was the speech of "the maintainer," who was invariably a conspicuous figure in some intellectual field of Catalonia. It was the chief mission of "the maintainer" to sing the past glories of Catalonia when it was an independent kingdom. With warm eloquence, he invariably succeeded in raising the patriotism of the audience to the white heat. After the feast was over the male audience would come out singing the hymn of war, "Els Segadors" written in the XVII century, in the year of the bloody Corpus Christi, when the Catalonian reapers killed their Castillian Governor, Count de Santa Coloma, (1640). This song, "Els Segadors" sung in the streets of Barcelona always brings about a charge of mounted gendarmes.

Going back to the fourteenth century, the Jochs Florals heightened the literary fever of the age and the Catalonian literature reached the pinnacle of its fame.

The conspicuous figure of this movement, at its early stages, was Guillèn Moliner who embodied the spirit of the new school in his "Lleys d'Amor," (Laws of Love). The Provençal influence was never lost in the Catalonian works of literature, but it must be mentioned that, as the fourteenth century was growing older, the sobriety in the expression and the sincerity in the feelings, these two characteristics of the Catalonian literature, began to take form and developed slowly but unhesitatingly.

The conquest of Naples, Sicily and Sardinia by the Crown of Aragó brought another influence to bear upon the Catalonian literature and this was the Italian. The Italian influence affected somewhat the sobriety of expression, some of the poets adopting the florid style coming from the Italian peninsula. Those who resisted this foreign element belonged to the didactic school, and among them, Pere March is the most important poet, whose works were

known outside of Catalonia. The Castillian poet, Marquis de Santillana, owes a great deal of his inspiration to Pere March's compositions.

But the group inspired by the Italian influence had the best poets; these were younger and more numerous. Besides, Alfons V had established his court in Naples, and it would have been very difficult to resist the influence of poets like Dante and Petrarca, especially when helped by the King's favor.

The first poet of Catalonia in these times and belonging to the group influenced by the Italian masters, more by Dante than Petrarca, is Ausias March. He was born in Valencia in 1395 and died in 1462. He gained his merited fame in the time of the Prince of Viana who was one of his best friends. He imitated Petrarca by writing his Cants D'Amor to a lady, Teresa Bou, with whom he fell in love--or he said he did--one Good Friday, seeing her coming out of church.

He was called the Provençal Petrarca. He wrote Cants, Lo Canconer D'Amor, Morals Espirituals, de la Mort.

He will never die. His lyricism is exuberant, filled with a tender erotism which emanates from his Platonic tendencies and his contact with the prophets from the Bible, especially Isaias and Jeremiah.

He influenced Castillian poetry to a very great extent, having been translated by Sotomayor. Later on, in the seventeenth century, Quevedo and Lope de Vega rendered *Ansias March* the tribute of their admiration. *Ansias March* and the Catalonian translation of the *Divina Comedia* by Andreu Fabra were the keys that opened the doors of the Castillian literature to the Italian influence. The Catalonian prose was growing all the time alongside with the poetical works but in a more deliberate and slow manner. The two main branches of the Catalonian prose were History and the Chivalry novels.

The first serious attempt to good fiction, although imperfect, was *Blanquena* by Ramon Llull. It was a piece of work relating the deeds of a good religious Christian in all the stages of life. Narratives in prose began

to grow in number as the fourteenth century grew older, and the Italian influence helped to bring about, with the Italian translation of De Camerone, the true Catalonian novel of those times. The masterpiece of these works is *Tirant lo Blanc* by Joanot Martorell. It won the admiration of Cervantes, who, of course, read the Castillian translation. It must be added to this *Los Treballs d'Hercol* by Enric de Villena.

Among the historians, stands first and foremost, Ramon de Muntaner who possessed a vigorous pen to narrate the deeds of Catalonian *almogavars*, (foot soldiers) in their expeditions through Italian lands and the Orient. The annals covering the deeds of the Crown of Aragó, and put down on parchment and paper by King James, Ramon Muntaner, Bernat Desclot and Bernat Descoll, are called the four patriotic gospels of Catalonia by the poet Guimerá.

The union of the Crown of Arago and Castile was the death-knell for Catalonian literature. The entrance of the House of Austria to preside over the destinies of Spain was a mortal blow to the tongue which was of necessity a bitter enemy to the absolute principles of government adopted by the Austrian monarchs. The revival of the Catalonian literature was not to take place until the first half of the nineteenth century.

T H E T E A T R E C A T A L A
(ITS BEGINNINGS)

THE RELIGIOUS THEATER--From their ancestors, the primitive Catalonians, the modern generations still keep their dances. La Sardana is the old Iberian dance. The great human wheel moving with cadence, with marked steps towards the right and left, can be seen still on the plains and valleys of Catalonia, every Sunday afternoon and holidays.

The swinging circle treads over the grass lightly to one side or the other, always keeping at a sacred distance from the venerable oak tree that stands in the center. No great effort of imagination is needed to draw those dancing figures back to the first ages and resurrect them with impassive priests and the beast for the sacrifice at the foot of the tree.

Lo Ball de Bastons has not yet died. It is a dance for men only and the stick has replaced the old swords, sacred emblem of the

war dances of the fighting tribes. Lo Contrapàs is a pompous dance smacking of the yet unknown minuet and hails from the Provençal Courts.

It is stated by some authors, among them, Pella i Forgas, that the Greeks appropriated the Iberian dances and introduced them in some of the plays that were mounted in the open theater that they built in their cities. The long dominations of the Greeks and Romans developed in the conquered race an everlasting fondness for the theater and art of dramatics.

The traditional classical dramas of the Greek Theater were played in Catalonia and Valencia, specially in Rosas and Sagunto. The Latin authors were also introduced by the Roman Empire to help shorten the period of assimilation. There is no doubt that the irruption of the Barbarians in Spain put a stop in Catalonia to a highly developed cultural state in which the theater played an important part.

The condition of revolt that prevailed for some time during the first period of the Teutonic invasion made practically impossible any attempt to continue the cultural

traditions of the conquered people. Little by little, however, the uncivilized conquerors yielded to the charms of a superior civilization and began to heed the demands for cultural satisfactions craved by the people they ruled. This change towards toleration of stage antics and rudimentary performances coincided with an improvement in the political conditions of the Catalonian State. The Arabian invasion had already been checked and the Count of Barcelona was already "primum inter pares."

The beginnings were rather slow and painful and like the French and Italian theaters, the Catalonian derived its life and inspiration from the Church. The drama of the crucifixion lent itself to theatrical possibilities on account of its poignancy and great tragic climax. The center of this interest is found in the sacrifice of the mass. The early lithurgy was rather simplified since the service could not be elaborated on account of political conditions prevailing against the Christians. At the beginning of the Middle Ages, circumstances were wholly favorably to the Christians, and the Church had the opportunity and leisure to elaborate and multiply the lithurgical services

for the benefit of the cult's splendor. The chant was introduced under the choral form in the canonical hours, the dialogue being made possible, later on, by the innovation of the antiphone in the service of the Eastern Mass. It spread to the Western branch of the church and in this way the long holy monologue of the mass was broken. In the great festivities, the Gospel, the Epistle, the ofertorium required different voices, The choral mass of voices responded to the invocations of the high priest--presbyter--and the religious pageant gained in dramatic power. The faithful's piety grew through dramatic interest, and special features of the sacrifice, specially from the Gospels, were staged in Latin for certain days in the year, chosen to commemorate episodes of the life of Christ. In those days of festivities the miracle was performed within the walls of the Church, on a scaffold conveniently elevated, on which the actors performed and spoke their parts. Even dignified dances were introduced in those episodes in which a joyful spirit pervaded the lines recited, on account of some miraculous achievement or some substantial victory of the Catholic faith over error or heresy. As a fine example of a tradition of

those times, preserved through the ages, it may be stated that even now a group of adolescents, all boys, attired in costumes of pages of the time of Isabella the Catholic, perform yearly a rhythmic dance before the Holy Sacrament, exposed in the main altar of the Cathedral of Granada, the day of Corpus Christi.

As time wore on, the faithful's interest in those sacred performances began to wane. There were two features in those dramatic attempts which might have been considered the causes for this gradual disfavor on the part of the audiences. One was that the lines were recited in scholastic latin and the other was that seldom, if ever, feminine roles were planned for, or in case they could not be avoided, were intrusted to a woman.

This lack of interest among the spectators produced another grievous inconvenience, namely: the behaviour of the congregation which fell sadly below what the sanctity of the temple required.

All these causes together compelled the Church to discontinue the sacred performances about the middle of the ninth century. This measure deprived the common people of the only occasion they had for a legitimate amusement.

Their want was keenly felt and timid and sporadic efforts were made to give outdoor performances of sacred episodes in the vernacular tongue.

Soon, those isolated attempts were protected by the ecclesiastical dignitaries themselves, and in 1263 Pope Urban IV went as far as ordering the street celebration of the festivity of the Holy Sacrament on Thursday of the Octave of Pentecostes.

Fragmentary information seems to point out that Barcelona and Gerona were the first organizing centers of the dramatic companies who started their artistic pilgrimages across the country. Many unsuccessful "trovaires" joined these companies and were the cause of the bad reputation the latter enjoyed almost from their inception. As times went on many were the sacred plays those companies could perform in their travels from town to town, since practically everyone had an author with them. Besides, poets and other writers of reputation, many of them of ecclesiastical rank, did not disdain to write for these histrionic workers. It is practically impossible to enumerate even a part of them, classifying them on account of their literary or dramatic merits,

but it is possible to mention those which seemed to have enjoyed greater popularity than others. "Lo Somni de Joseph" (The dream of Joseph), "L'Anunciació de la Verge" (The Annunciation of the Virgin), and "Bethlem i els tres reis", (Bethlem and the three wise men), seem to have been the real successes of the Catalonian religious theater during the thirteenth century.

Already in the latter part of the fourteenth century, 1380, Girona saw a real success in "Lo Misteri del Martiri del Molt Glorious Senyor Sant Esteve" (The mystery of the martyrdom of the most glorious Saint Stephen). This miraculous play was performed in the big square in front of the Cathedral and it was repeated for many years to come.

To the religious theater of the fifteenth century belong the following, "Barbeto", which had to do with some deeds in the life of a saintly man, known by his name, whose existence in real life is being doubted. This miracle was performed in Montserrat, in the square of the Abbey and its performances ceased when Philip the Second sent Castillian friars to Montserrat in order to compel the

Catalonian farmers to confess in a language foreign and repugnant to them.

Valencia contributed to the splendor of the Catalonian religious theater in a most remarkable manner. Of those which enjoyed most popularity, the following can be mentioned: "Jesuset de Sant Cristofor" (Child Jesus of Christopher the Saint) and "La Passio en Cobles" (The Passion of Our Lord in rhymes"). The author of the last play was a rather good poet called De Fenollar.

In the city of Valencia, there persists still now-a-days the fondness for the miracle-plays staged with the unnecessary simplicity of the Middle Ages. There is a day in the year, in the month of June, that Valencia celebrates the anniversary of her saint, Vincent Ferrer. He is a figure dear to all the Valencians. In this day, therefore, platforms are raised in the open air and third rate actors perform miraculous episodes taken from the life of the holy man, who, it seems, had been granted the special gift of performing many extraordinary deeds.

In the fifteenth century, the religious theater began to lose in popularity owing to the gradual importance that the profane theater was acquiring. And yet, Barcelona saw "Misteri de

lo rei Herod i la degolla" (The mystery of King Herod and the decollation of the infants). In Elche (Valencia) Burasot wrote the miracle "L'Assompció de Nostra Senyora" (The Assumption of Our Lady) It was the beginning of a remarkable success, because this miracle was given in August 15 th 1408, the day that the Catholic Church has set aside for the observance of this festivity and since then, every year, on the same day, this miracle has been staged.

The Profane Theater--The profane theater took longer in securing a sure foothold before the people at large. The cause lays in its source and nature. The religious theater was formed in the street and belonged to the masses. The profane theater was born in high places, in the palaces of the kings, and it took some time before it condescended to step down to the common people. But even then that gesture of self-abasement was not readily acknowledged by the common people. Accustomed as the latter were, to the simple and direct conflicts, emanating from traditions learned in their childhood and dear to their hearts, they enjoyed the religious theater because it fed them with dramatic

pabulum of easy assimilation. The first glimpses the masses had of the profane theater proved to be unintelligible to them and therefore stood away from it. This reserve began to dwindle when the profane theater democratized itself and reached down to that level where it could be met by the meager understanding of the great mass. This explains why the literary crop of the profane theater was rather small at the beginning although excellent in quality. The crop swelled as time went by when the theater took to the gross comedy and low-bred farce so well liked in the olden times by the vile Roman rabble. Then the street public entered into the spirit.

The profane theater began in the Provençal Courts. Pompous dances, the "bal de Provença" specially, were staged by the courtiers themselves and their noble ladies whenever some palace festivity was ordered by the king. Gradually, singers accompanied the stately steps of the dancers with their voices. This measure introduced another and this was the dance and mimic interpretation of ballads and love songs. This innovation was so exacting in its artistic requirements that professional talents were needed to do justice to the performance. The appearance

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of the professional good talents was met with great favor by those whose social position allowed them to nurture some sense of culture and art, and with their help, these productions became more and more elaborated, conforming thus to the demands of an intelligent stage production. The first achieved productions of the profane theater were seen in the pageants staged for the coronations and weddings of the kings. The original offerings of the theater were not of a literary nature. For performances solely literary, they relied upon the more or less perfect translations of the masterpieces of the Greek and Latin theaters. The home talent concentrated its efforts upon the composition of dances and mimic dramas.

In the thirteenth century, the three dances that gained favor of the public were "La Danca de la Mort" (The dance of Death) translated from the French by Carbonell, "La Danca de la Monja," (The dance of the Nun) by Lubuca and "La Danca del Mestre Joan de Vich" (The dance of the Master John of Vich) by Lubrica. Those two dances were performed for nearly one hundred years meeting always with the same favor in all the

squares of the cities and towns in which they were staged.

As has been stated before, not until the genuine Catalonian comedy appeared, the common people ceased from remaining aloof. This estrangement came to an end at the beginning of the fourteenth century, but the acquaintanceship period between the theater and the people was very slow and cautious.

"La Conquesta de Mallorca per lo Nostre Senyor lo Rei Jaume" (The Conquest of Mallorca by Our Lord the King James) written by Vilumara was a military subject that was seen in every city and village.

Another military play was "Lo Setje de Perpinyà (The Siege of Perpinyà) by Latories.

Of the comedies which overstepped the boundaries of the most elementary decency, titles could be given galore, but as their artistic and literary value are non-existent it seems, therefore, pertinent to omit them. There are, however, two authors belonging to this type of dramatic literature who cannot be ignored. One is Romanyà of Barcelona, the other is Pare Mulet (Father Mulet) of Valencia, although the latter belongs, strictly speaking, to a later period.

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Those two authors couple with their freedom of words and situations a highly developed stage instinct and a deep philosophical sense. They must have become acquainted with Bocaccio and Rabelais.

Romanya acknowledges his friendship with a Catalonian ex-rabbi, Navo-Oliveta whose poems "Canconetes de la Vella" (Little Songs of the Old Woman) have not reached posterity because it seems they were burned by the public executioner in the City Hall Square of Barcelona. That the Hebrew might have escaped the fate of his manuscripts seems to be an accomplishment beyond human understanding.

Romanya's masterpiece is "Garbirnargu," a complete play, far better in technique than his times could appreciate and actually required, picturing with a crafty hand the talents displayed by a lady of retiring disposition in securing her amount of joy in life without anybody suspecting it. The play could not be staged today in any theater without undergoing considerable expurgating.

The literary baggage of Pare Mulet is remarkable. His specialty is the playlet in one act and his types are taken from the

common people in the street. He is a realist, openly indecent often, never dull and one of the best comical talents Valencia has ever produced. His collection of playlets can be favorably compared to those that Le Sage gave to the theater of La Foire.

At the beginning, the lack of very fixed quarters and the social inferiority assigned by public opinion to the players were two serious difficulties and hindered the efforts of the actors and discouraged some intelligent ambitious writers to produce works for the stage.

A large part of the religious and profane plays were written by some member of the travelling groups, generally an extrovaire. The life led by those ambulatory troupes was a truly artistic calvary. They travelled from village to village in an open cart pulled by two famelic asses. The cart was open most of the time, and actresses and actors would pile in it and begin their bone-rattling trip through bad roads, in all seasons, with cold, heat, under rain or sun, always looking for pebbles or a handful of manure to dodge, according to whether the humor of the people was bad or good. The

uncertainty of where the next meal would come from was a fixed feature in the wretched life of those devotees to Thalia and on more than one occasion, during the good Summer days, the season of good vegetables, the troupe played poorly on purpose, in order to provoke a thick rain of raw edibles which never failed to materialize, expressing the disapproval of the audience. The players would pick up the booty, load up their cart with it and flee in a hurry from the village to the decadent gallop of the two bony asses which hoofed their way painfully because the knowledge of a happy self-riddance through suicide was barred from them.

Those troupes started with modest repertories. At the beginning of their existence, they had one play, dance, or miracle, and they represented it all the time. This arrangement solved the problem of the wardrobe, because one dress was all that was needed by every member of the troupe and they invariably wore it all the time. It was not strange, consequently, for the wayfarers of those times, to meet some of those carts in the roads, carrying a human load in which there could be

detected Death, the Angel, the Demon, the Jester, the Saint (man or woman), sometimes even the Blessed Virgin, all oozing out misery and displaying want.

The stage-settings, during the first times, was left wholly to the imagination of the audience. Later on, large canvasses, unevenly daubed, began to appear. As the performances grew in importance and audiences more liberally inclined, stage settings began to display more appropriateness in matter and details. Troupes grew liberal in improving them and in offering a variety of the same as their repertoires increased in volume. The wardrobes knew also a new era of a much needed renovation.

The Marquis of Villena, a good literary man who wrote along different lines of literature, invented a sort of a gyrating platform which could be adjusted upon the cart and be rotated according to the situations of the dramatic tale, showing the different spots where the conflict took place.

The large cities however were, finally gifted with permanent theatrical yards where regular performances were given. This reform was brought about by the custodians of

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the hospitals who, observing the popular favor the theatrical performances enjoyed, saw in this popularity a good source of income for their establishments. At the beginning, they rented yards, after they bought them. On them, they built play houses, which they kept on improving and remodelling according to what the ever-increasing requirements demanded.

The initiative of the hospitals had everlasting results in more than one way. For one thing, they originated the idea of the playhouse, the building exclusively for the theater. The oldest theater in Barcelona, until a few years ago, owed its existence to this arrangement and it was called for a long time "Santa Creu" (Holy Cross) changing later on to "Teatre Principal" (Principal Theater). It also regulated and improved considerably the social and economical life of the players, bringing into existence regular contracts and allowing those engaged in the theatrical profession to enjoy the pleasures of a fixed abode.

DECADENCE OF THE "TEATRE CATALA"--On touching upon this aspect of the Catalonian theater, it must be stated that the theatre being

only one part of the whole and the whole being the Catalonian Language, when the latter began to decline, the theater had to follow the same road downwards. The decline of the language was due purely to political causes, each of them of a rather complex nature.

These causes can be enumerated as follows:

(a) The extinction of the Catalonian Royal House. (b) The absolute monarchy. (c) The attraction of the Court in Madrid. (d)

The appearance of the Castillian language in the Catalonian literature. (e) The discovery of America.

With the death of Martin I disappears the last Catalonian king. The throne was left vacant and a Castillian king, a foreigner, sat on it. It is evident that this prince, Fernando de Antequera, reared up in principles absolutely foreign to the essence of the Catalonian ruling, could not look with sympathy upon the ideals and sentiments so hostile to his own. The tongue that served as a vehicle to the expression of these aspirations, he could not speak and he positively hated it.

With a king who came as an outsider, who looked upon the Catalonians as vassals and

not children, there could be no love on the part of the Catalonians for the enterprises of their new master.

The tendency to absolute principles of government which was brought about by the Renaissance and was accepted by the European States, at the beginning of the Modern Age, was bound to be of dire consequences to those States that kept their old privileges within the new political organizations. The absolute monarchy was not satisfied with political unity and began to work for political uniformity, and the consequences were that the State within the union that was nearer to the throne began to lay plans in order to assimilate the other states, absorb them and impose upon them its laws, its tongue, its customs and even its thoughts.

That is what the Castillian State did in Spain backed by the absolute monarchy. The attraction of the Castillian Court played havoc with the national soul of Catalonia. It is a fact that after the union of the Crown of Arago with that of Castile, the only Court in Spain was the Castillian. The Court of Barcelona having disappeared, the brilliancy

of the palatial life emigrated to Castile. Philip II decreed Madrid the capital of Spain and that town became the only courtier center of the kingdom.

The prestige of the Royal Court was high in those times. The Catalonian nobles, artists and writers felt soon the attraction that Madrid exercised upon them. This attraction was a very powerful agent of denationalization among the Catalonians.

This was the breach through which the Castillian language began to exercise its ascendancy that it had never enjoyed before.

The frequent long visits to the Court by the nobility and educated classes created among them the conviction that Castile was better than Catalonia and that the Castillian language was far superior to that of Catalonia.

The immediate consequence of this state of affairs was the more and more frequent use of the Castillian language by the Catalonian writers. This is specially true among the Valencians. This evolution towards the Castillian language began gradually during the sixteenth century, and Joan Boscà, who signed himself Boscán, was the first Catalonian poet who wrote some of his

poems in Castillian. It was the seventeenth century, however, that witnessed the full invasion of the Castillian language in the fields of the Catalonian literature. The poems that were read in the social gatherings of the Catalonian nobility were written in Castillian.

In the eighteenth century, the historian Pujadas began to write his General Chronicle of Catalonia in Catalonian but the influence of the denationalizing tendencies was so strong that he wrote the second part in Castillian.

At the beginning of the same century, when the Catalonians were in open war against Philip V, the writer Felix de Penya wrote the Annals of the War in Castillian and the proclamation of the rebel chieftains warring against the Castillian troops were written in Castillian, the mother tongue of the enemy.

The discovery of America was the last straw. That event that put a new world in the hands of Spain, was a fatal blow to Catalonia. Catalonia was a Mediterranean nation. She had the source of its wealth in the commerce of that sea. The great avenue of the ocean having been opened, the Mediterranean lost its commercial importance and yet this blow could have been less severe in its results,

if Castilla had not forbidden the Aragonians and Catalonians to trade with the New World under penalty of death.

This indefensible measure was the undoing of Castilla. Had the Catalonians been allowed to go and trade with America, they would have done it in an intelligent manner, organizing a system of exploitation based upon an active commerce. The Castillians were never real colonizers. They could conquer with the sword and convert with the cross but they did not know how to keep what they conquered with work. In spite of all those conditions mentioned, which conspired against the Catalonian nationality and ill treated the Catalonian language so much, the theater defended its existence heroically. It was no longer the red fire that warms the pride of a race, but there were enough embers left yet that refused to be put out, giving hopes for brighter times to come.

Tenacious writers, devoted sons to their mother tongue, concentrated those efforts to keep those embers burning low but sure. There were few in number but persistent in their effort. In the seventeenth century, the most popular figure was the clergyman Vicens Garcia,

known better under the title of Rector de Vallfogona. Although he had paid his tribute to the Castillian muse his feelings of fidelity to his own mother tongue had not been extensively damaged. His main efforts were devoted to lyric poetry and to some rather free poems which gave him the popular reputation that his memory enjoys yet nowadays. He contributed to the theater with a religious play, entitled "Comedia de Santa Barbara."

Francesch Fontanella, a poet very much influenced by Petrarca wrote a light comedy, entitled "Lo Desengany" (The disillusion) and a patriotic play was produced by an anonymous author entitled "La Entrada del Marques de Velez i Assolt de Montjuich" (The entry of Marquis of Velez and Assault of Montjuich). The title can give a fair idea of the nature of the play, and it is easy to see that the author wanted to play safe, when Castillian troops were quartered all over Catalonia.

During the eighteenth century, the life of the Teatre Català is still more

difficult and slow. The abject submissiveness of the Catalonians of those days to the new House of Bourbon that began to reign in Spain, is almost unbelievable and makes one doubt that they are the descendants of those subjects that had kings like James the Conqueror and Peter the Great. Against the marked indifference and often hostility of their own kin, there were still pens which wrote in Catalan for the theater. The majority of the plays were patriotic and only the rabble was interested in them. In 1700, the patriotic fever still running high, the following plays were given; "La Fugida del Duc D'Anjou (Philip V) and "Lo Setje de Barcelona" (The Siege of Barcelona). There was, in these sad times, the happening of a remarkable literary event and that was the performance of the sacred drama in five acts "La Passió y Mort de Nostre Senyor Jesucrist" (The Passion and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ) written by a friar called Anton de Sant Jeroni. The rhymes of this play are so spontaneous and fresh, they appeal so much to the meek hearts, that the success and popularity of the drama was extraordinary from the very beginning,

and it never abated. Nowadays, they play it yet in a goodly number of country towns during the days of the Holy Week.

THE RENOVATION OF THE TEATRE CATALÀ--

The renovation of the Teatre Català came as a direct and important consequence of the rebuilding of the Catalonian literature, that is to say, of the restoration of the Catalonian language to the prestige that was due to it. Those who initiated the first organized efforts towards a resurrection of a Catalonian literary movement what they really did was to prepare the ground for the political nationalist movement that had to startle the politicians in Madrid with the force of its momentum, at the beginning of the twentieth century.

This movement carrying in it the seed of the Catalanism started with the romantic Catalonian School. It must be stated, however, that the Catalonian romanticism did not draw its inspiration from France as the Castillian romanticism did. The Catalonian romanticism sucked its life from Walter Scott, Schlegel, Shelley, Schiller and the Italian Manzoni. That movement was a true case of Europeanization, the spiritual reintegration of Catalonia to Europe. Those romantics started their movement by founding a Review called "El Europeo" (The European) and it lasted from 1820-1823, the first period of

Constitutional government in Spain. The absolutism was triumphant again in 1824 and as the Catalonian romantics were liberals, were prosecuted and the publication of the review suspended. It can be seen, therefore, by paying attention to the dates that the romantic movement started in Barcelona much earlier than it did in Madrid.

When the Constitutional Government was established again in 1834, the second period of the Catalonian romanticism came to life, and their review was called "El Vapor" (The Steam). In it, they wrote the first apostles of the cause, Piferrer, Milà i Fontanals, Aribau, and Rubió i Ors. It was in this review that Aribau published his famous Oda a la Patria written in Catalonian, this work making his memory immortal in Catalonia. It has to be remarked that Aribau wrote this ode in Catalonian because those lovers of Catalonia did not dare to write in Catalonian since they thought they served their cause better by writing in Castillian.

There was one among them who had real vision and religious faith in the vitality and future life of the Catalonian language, and this man was Rubió i Ors. He started the publication of Lo Gayter del Llobregat. For several years

Rubió i Ors was left alone in his efforts, his companions persisting in the use of the Castilian language to proclaim his Catalanian ideas. But finally the ice of timidity or indifference was broken and between 1850 and 1860, Rubió i Ors began to count with some followers. In the preface of his second edition of *Lo Gayter de Llobregat* (1860) Rubió i Ors wrote encouraging words, and far from lamenting his loneliness in the task of writing Catalanian poetry, he stated that many were those who followed his example.

It was about that time that the idea was conceived of renovating the tradition of *Los Jochs Florals*. The iniciator was Anton de Bofarull. The City Hall was favorable to the idea and the "*Los Jochs Florals*" were restored in 1859. With the restoration of the *Jochs Florals*, the literary catalanism was permanently established.

After 1860, there began to appear the Catalanian papers. The first paper was called "*Un troç de paper*" (A piece of paper). The musician Clave made the people sing the popular Catalanian music organizing the choral masses that nowadays are singing organizations that the musical world knows and admires. And it was in 1860 that *Lo Teatre Català* began to be organized.

REORGANIZATION OF LO TEATRE CATALÁ. The beginnings of lo Teatre Catalá were not easy. The efforts of those who wanted to start it were received with marked hostility by the Government in Madrid. They first rejected the idea. They relented gradually, however, and they granted the permission to have Catalonian plays staged provided that there would be about four or five characters who would speak Castillian. The result of this idiotic measure was that the Castillian characters were always those who attracted the indignation or the ridicule of the audience. This restriction did not last very long. The authorities in Madrid had a rare period of lucidity and granted full freedom to the Catalonian theater. The first play that was staged with all the characters speaking Catalonian was "Tal farás tal trobarás," ("As you do, it will be done to you"). It was a drama in three acts and in verse, written by Eduart Vidal i Valenciano.

The play met with instant success and set a good encouragement to other would-be authors to follow his example. This they did and along the same lines. Barring a religious play by Antoni de Angelón entitled "La Verge de la Mercé" (The Virgin of Mercedes) and Don Hoan de Serrallonga" by Victor Balaguer, all the other dramatic productions followed

the was "Tal farás tal trobarás" pointed out.

La Verge de la Mercé was a well intentioned play of the glories of the patroness of Barcelona. Don Joan de Serrallonga was the adulterated account of a bandit's life who was the terror of the province of Barcelona during the XVII century.

The school introduced by Tal faras tal trobarás had its strength in its simplicity. This play with the others that followed formed a theater that was above all sincere and realistic. Romanticism had no room on the Catalonian stage. The authors went to look for dramatic material to the well-to-do farmer or to the little boss in some trade when they wanted to treat city matters. The few chosen who moved in rich society, on account of name or wealth, were seldom brought out on the stage and invariably with not a very happy hand. The first Catalonian authors did not feel society because they did not belong to it. They belonged to modest families of the middle class and had an irresistible sympathy for humble folks and for those who lived in the farm (la masia) and in the mountains. Generally speaking, the early Catalonian dramatic authors wrote plays as a side-line, his main means of earning a livelihood being some position in a business house or in some lawyer's office.

The characteristics of the first plays, as far as technique is concerned, was simplicity in the plot, the presence of one or two villains and the final reward given to virtue. The triumph of virtue was always bestowed upon the two young lovers who finally were allowed to marry. The octosyllabic lines were the favorite form of those authors. They either used the assonant lines or the rhyme.

Besides *Tal Farás tal trobarás* by Vidal i Valenciano already given, mention must be made of "*La Romeria de Requesens*" (The pilgrimage to Requesens) by Calvet, "*La Fals*" (The Sickle) by Pelau Briz, "*La Flor de la Montanya*" (The Flower from the Mountain) and "*La Clau de Casa*" (The key of the homestead) by Conrat Roure, "*Lo Full de Paper*" (The Sheet of Paper) by Pere A-Torres, "*Cor de Roure*" (Strong Heart) by Pico i Campmany. These plays formed the nucleus of the high dramatic nebula.

The debt of money, the obligation being always in the hands of an unscrupulous character, the victims being the lovable persons; the thirst for money that pushes the unfaithful servant to murder the master, the deed having generally been committed when the curtain rises

in the first act; at times, a conflict of political ideas, the action being placed during the civil war (1831-1838) the liberal ideas getting always the upper hand upon those held by the hopeless reactionary minds, such were the favorite themes exploited for dramatic purposes.

A remarkable feature in this early modern theater is the absolute absence of any attempt to put before the audience's mind the thought of the political revindications Catalonia had a right to demand. It is a clear sign that these literary men who had launched the movement for a Catalonian literature were guided only by their romantic love for tongue traditions, art and the soul of the people but had not even dreamt of any political movement of regionalist tendencies. The word "Catalanism" had not been coined in those days.

In the lighter vein, that theater showed very clever creations, above all, in one act plays. One of the best comedies of those days was "La Teta Gallinaire" (Teta the chicken seller) by Camprodon, a perfect play, rather serious. In the frankly comical line, there were hundreds of clever productions,

which lasted the brief period of time their authors had written them for, and often longer. The dramatic authors were exceptionally lucky in securing the cooperation of a phalanx of good actresses and actors that no one could have suspected they were available for use.

Putting aside good intentions and looking impartially at the intrinsic merits of these plays, it may be stated that three quarters of the success the undertaking obtained was due to the players.

Of the first group of these players, there are three names that will never die in the memory of the Catalonians, as far as a Catalonian theater exists, and they are Francisca Soler, Lleó Fontova and Iscle Soler. This woman and these two men filled the Catalonian stage with their talent. They felt and understood the Catalonian soul and through their art they educated two generations of Catalonians to love the land where they had been born.

This last actor, Iscle Soler had a long artistic life and worked on the stage until 1908. When Barcelona began to be a cosmopolitan center of theatrical culture, Iscle Soler won the admiration and respect of many of his foreign colleagues. The Italian

actor, Ermete Novelli, paid, in public, a glowing tribute of genuine respect to the talents of Iscle Soler.

The first attempts to stage Catalonian plays were disconnected, lacking a well directed plan. This was due to the fact that the initiators of the idea did not possess artistic quarters. At the beginning, the Catalonian productions were given twice or three times a week, with groups of artists who performed for the rest of the week in plays written in Spanish. and the unlucky authors were compelled to seek shelter in the Odeon Theater and the Circo Theater, whenever the management of these two playhouses felt magnanimous enough to give the poor Catalonian plays "a chance."

These difficult beginnings were a blessing in disguise, because of the sort of dramatic art and kind of public that made possible the existence of these two playhouses.

The school of art that these theaters cultivated, belonged to the old fashioned melodrama. Less than six acts to a play was inconceivable. Eight, ten and even twelve acts were the customary dose given to their audiences, free of any artistic sophistication.

"The Orphan of Bruxelles," "The daughters without a mother," "The Factory's Keeper," "Max, the dumb Shepard" and the famous "The hump-back," and other stage aberrations were translated from the French and the good liberal Catalonians, grandfathers of the present generations, enjoyed them thoroughly.

To rescue this misguided mass of citizens, belonging to the working and lower middle class, and divert their artistic preferences through better channels was the self-imposed task of those pioneers. After a hard up-hill pull, they won the fight. The patriotic mission of those paladins bore through the skulls of the citizens and their better artistic instincts got the upper hand. The love for their mother tongue, the love for the past and unsuspected glories of their fatherland, the revulsion of a nationality in them, slumbering but not dead, made possible the establishment of the Teatre catala as a permanent institution. The playhouse destined to be its headquarters was the "Teatre Romera" situated in the typical Barcelona street, "Carrer del Hospital."

Later on, in the early nineties there was public enough to fill two and sometimes three Catalonian theaters in the city,

but the classic homestead of the Catalonian stage, among the "Barcelonians" has always been the Romea Theater. And yet the name of the Theater was purely Castillian because it was named after the best actor that Madrid enjoyed during the second third of the nineteenth century.

The beginning of the Romea Theater is closely connected with the appearance of the first figure of great magnitude in this literary field, and this is the play writer, Frederick Soler, known also under his popular pseudonym, Serafi Pitarra. He used his own name to sign his serious plays and the pseudonym to sign the farces, parodies, and comical plays of his first period.

Soler's work is immense on account of its scope and results. It must be treated from three different points of view--length, artistic value, and national achievement. By using the adjective national, it must be understood that it is applied to Catalonia and things Catalonian. Another point to be clearly understood is that although the writer of this thesis signs the second half of his family name as the dramatic author did his, no relationship of blood existed between the two

families and all the possible praises, which may materialize, will not be formulated with the intention of enhancing the reputation of the writer's family. The artistic period of Frederick Soler goes from 1864 to 1893, the year in which he died. From 1865 to 1882 he reigned supreme in the field without any other aster of first magnitude trying to dispute his supremacy. Then, Angel Guimerá appeared.

Frederick Soler was born on Hospital Street, son of a modest family. After some years of defective schooling, characteristic of those days, at the hands of the Fathers belonging to the order of Pious Schools, he followed his father's footsteps and applied himself to master the intricacies of watch making. The store was situated at Escudillers Street and he kept its management until 1880. The humble store was a center of reunion for all those followers of Soler who considered him as the real founder of the Catalonian theater, and as such he has gone down to history.

Soler started his dramatic career at 15, as an amateur actor with some of his friends in several centers of ^{re} Recreation of ^{re} Amusement, which were La Paloma, (The Pigeon), Taller Rull, (Studio Rull), La Gata (The

Female Cat), and La Baldufa (The Whipping-top). As can be judged by the titles of these recreation centers, refinement was not their conspicuous fault. For these centers, Soler wrote his first dramatic attempts. They were productions in one act and in verse, their chief object being to obtain the Rabelasian laughter from the audience. And in this, they succeeded. To this group belong "La Butifarra de la Llibertat" (The Sausage of Liberty) and Las Píldoras d'en Holloway" (Holloway's Pills) this being the name of a very well known laxative in those days. Both plays are short episodes of the African war that was going on in those times (1859-1860). The central figure was General Prim, born in Reus, near Tarragona, and the idol of the Catalonians even nowadays. By means of the sausage and the laxative, General Prim obtained two decisive victories from the Moors. Soler paid tribute to his merry youth and wrote two other pieces, openly pornographic, which were staged behind locked doors and in the presence only, of a few initiated. One was Don Jaume (King James) and the other, "Pere lo Grand" (Peter the great). In justice to Soler, it must be said that afterwards he always regretted that he had ever written those two plays.

The success of *La Butifarra de la Llibertat* made him cultivate this aspect of playwriting and his prolific pen wrote them quicker than they were represented. This period covers from 1860 to 1866. In this year, he gives to the Odeon's his first drama in three acts and in verse. *Las Joyas de la Roser* (Rose's jewels). Its success was overwhelming and put Soler at the head of the Catalonian playwrights. Soler took advantage of the occasion and forming a complete company of good actors and actresses, he took possession of the Romea Theater already mentioned. The Catalonian theater was, then, instituted as a permanent center of culture.

From that year, 1866 to 1878, Soler cultivated the Catalonian play, along the lines of the Moratinian school. In 1878, Echegaray was on his trail of glory to the summit of his career with the success of *El Gran Caloto*. The rays of light shed by that glory fascinated the Catalonian author and fell under the detestable influence of the Spanish playwright. This lasted until 1886, the year in which his rival Guimerá scored

a resounding success with the tragedy written in hendecasyllables, entitled "Mar i Cel" (Sea and Skies).

The efforts of Soler trying to fight against the true genius that Guimerá was, cover the last period of the former's life. He died broken hearted because he could not succeed, in 1895. His life, as it is seen, was long and typical of a great literary figure. He began fighting against difficulties, he knew success and glory stayed with him for a long period: jealousy blinded him about his own powers and defeat and diminished popularity embittered his last days. Death indemnified him for all those sufferings. His burial was magnificent and his monument stands in Theater Square. His memory will never die. Humanity is always very kind to great mentalities when they are no more.

His number of plays, counting tragedies, dramas, comedies, farces, parodies and plays in one act come near to two thousand. He certainly is second in the list after Lope de Vega. From an artistic point of view, Soler had failures and difficulties

from the very beginning. He showed a great facility to rhyme, but he was very careless in the choice of his words and as the subjects and characters of his first plays were decidedly vulgar, the language could not be called over refined. This vulgarity aroused the ire of the purists. Camprodón and Angelón were most bitter in their attacks. Soler defended himself by stating that he was writing his plays as the Catalonian people spoke. "Catalá qu'are's parla."

The plays which contained the objectionable language came under the group that their author labelled as "Poetical Hiccoughs" and it must be stated that they were nothing else, but people laughed with them until their sides ached. The idea that generated this type of play accused originality in the author. He took the best models of romantic and patriotic dramas, written in Spanish and converted them into parodies of one or two acts at the most, the comical note being most intensified in the same passage where in the original play the dramatic conflict reaches its climax. In this way, "El Trovador," romantic drama by Garcia Gutierrez is converted into Lo Cantador. The supreme cry of anguish

of Leonor when the Count and Manric go out to fight a duel is "Don't kill each other, you dunces!" The most remarkable in this list of plays are "Ous del Día" (Fresh Eggs) from Flor de un Día, ultra-romantic drama by Camprodón; "La Vaquera de la Piga Rossa" (The Dairy Maid with the Red Mole) from La Vaquera de la Finojosa by Ariza; "Lo Boig de las Campanillas" (The Crazy man of the Bells) from El Loco de la Guardilla by Narciso Serra and "L'Esquella de la Torratxa" (The Chimes of the Hut) from la Campana de la Almudaina by Juan Palou.

The last two poetical hiccoughs are worth mentioning because in the first one Soler puts himself in the scene as an answer to those who criticized him for cultivating this kind of literature. By mentioning the fact that "El Loco de la Guardilla" is a delicate thought about Cervantes and his poverty, it may be easily seen that modesty was not one of Soler's strong points since in the parody his own personality took Cervantes place. Cervantes ends the play by saying,

of his low.....Y la ingrata patria no vió
of his virtues, que Cervantes no cenó
the choice of his al concluir su Quijote.

(And the ungrateful country did not see
that Cervantes did not eat
on finishing his Quijote).

Soler makes himself say under his pseudonym
Pitarra,

.....Y per tot qui vulga escoltar
diran que'n Pitarra la va errar
escribint 'ls singlots poetics.

(And for anyone who wants to listen,
they will say that Pitarra made a mistake
in writing the poetical hiccoughs).

L'Esquella de la Torratxa was the key that
opened the doors of a real theater to Soler. This
parody was accepted and staged by the Odeon Theater in
1864.

In taking Soler's more serious work, one
sees at once that his most valuable contribution to
the Catalonian theater was during the first period.
It was during these years that Soler assured the
existence of the Catalonian theater by his tireless
effort. Besides, his work was sincere because he was not
yet subject to foreign influences which distorting
his personality, compelled him to force the engine
of his inspiration and poetical scope. The facility
of his verses, the simplicity of his themes, and
the choice of his episodes were all combined in

such a note of strong sincerity, with such complete absence of painful effort that the favor of the audience was won over in no time. Soler's theater appealed to the simple minds of the meek who have an unconscious liking for everything that is humble and beautiful. Soler served them that. Moreover, Soler had another masterful trick. He had surrounded himself with a group of players, to whom he studied constantly. The names of some of them have already been given. These players formed a family more than a troupe. Year after year, they were the same ones. They loved their task, not only because they cultivated their art but because they did it in their own mother tongue, and knew that by staging their author's plays, they did more than entertain audiences--they helped in making fatherland.

Soler was keenly aware of this situation and he made the most of it. In planning his plays, in writing his lines, he held before his mind the players he knew so well and he made his characters "fit to order" the player. The result was that Soler's plays

such a note of strong sincerity, with such complete absence of painful effort that the favor of the audience was won over in no time. Coler's theater appealed to the simple minds of the week who have an unconscious liking for everything that is genuine and beautiful. Coler served this best. Moreover, Coler had another essential virtue. He had surrounded himself with a group of players, to whom he studied constantly. The names of some of them have already been given. These players formed a family more than a troupe. Year after year, they were the same ones. They loved their task, not only because they cultivated their art but because they did it in their own proper leisure, and knew that by playing their author's plays, they did more than entertain audiences--they helped in making the theater.

Coler was keenly aware of this situation and he made the most of it. In planning his plays, in writing his lines, he held before his mind the players he knew so well and he made his characters "fit to order" the player. The result was that Coler's plays

were much better performed than they were written.

The writer of these lines enjoyed some of these productions in the early nineties, and when he read later on Soler's plays, he could not understand at first how he could have been so much impressed by them. Reasoning and news-gathering gave him the key to the mystery.

The technique of these plays looks childish nowadays, and the dramatic effects were rudimentary, looking at it from the point of view of the stage of today. It is impossible to give the list of all the plays Soler wrote in this period of his artistic life, but the most important follow: "Las Joyas de la Roser" (The Jewels of Rose); "Las Euras Del Mas" (The Ivy of the Mansion); "La Dida" (The Wet Nurse); "Lo Timbal del Bruch" (The drum of Bruch); "Senyora y Majora" (Lordess and Mistress); "Lo Rector de Vallfogona" (The Rector of Vallfogona); "Los Segadors" (The Reapers); "La Rosa Blanca" (The White Rose); "L'Apotecari d'Olot" (The Apothecary of Olot).

These plays embrace different periods of history, diversified themes; patriotic, anti-

to appear younger, if you will it so--
castillian, avarice, crime, simple love affairs,
and war episodes, even purely entertaining
purposes, but all goes wrapped up with a strong
mantle of good Catalanism that injected in
the Catalonian theater a healthy dose of
lasting vitality. second period of his life as a
playwriter. Here is a sample from the drama and
"La Dida" illustrating why the audiences
surrendered to Soler. scene. he required a
good tragic It is the capital scene between the
nurse who had reared a girl and the latter's
step-mother. The nurse says at the end of a
long narrative: Catalonian theater sees the
starting car Ah, no, no, Antonia, cregueu
actors, also Tot potser en aquesta vida!
inspired by Semblar rica, ben vestida! new type
of play that Semblar jova si voleu! to write.
the Fins podreu, amb molts perills, as
and sometimes semblar reina duhent corona al he
tried to let pero ser mare una dona star build-
ing and hold no mes potser tenint fills!
oliver. The trouble laid in the novel he tried
Meaning to initiate, Schegarey. The latter was yer-
Scott Ah, no, no, Antonia, you may believe me--
at all all may happen in this life-- see, but
to appear as a rich person, richly dressed--

to appear younger, if you will it so--
even too, with many dangers--
as a Queen, wearing a crown--
but for a woman to be a mother--
it cannot be but having children.

Meek hearts like this.

In the second period of his life as a playwriter, Soler modernized his technique and refilled his box of tricks but he lost in sincerity and stage honesty. He required a good tragic actor for his forced situations, and he could not find one among the players he had with him from the beginning. It is in this period that the Catalonian theater sees the starting career of one of its best tragic actors, Theodor Bonaplata. He was the man who, assisted by the old timers, staged the new type of play that Soler felt in the mood to write.

Soler could handle the tragic climax and sometimes go one better than the model he tried to imitate, but he did not master building and holding the road leading to this climax. The trouble laid in the model he tried to imitate, Echegaray. The latter was perfectly at home with the "absurd" and he worked at it ad absurdum with an amazing ease, but

Soler could not do it, because the latter, professionally speaking and in spite of all his other defects, had a large amount of dramatic common sense and therefore could not successfully imitate Echegaray.

His successes were noisier but not so lasting, and between new productions, he had to fill the gaps by falling back on the good plays of his first period, of which the good Barcelonian public never tired.

The two most remarkable plays of this period are "Lo Monjo Megre" (The Black Friar) and "Lo Dir de la Gent" (Gossip). The first play has a German theme and it deals with Schwartz, the inventor of the powder, in a legendary manner. Characters are anything but human, the play is filled with lines of cheap anti-clericalism and the only bright feature is the brilliancy of his verses. Soler kept this gift unimpaired until he died.

"Lo Dir de la Gent" is a happy exception of this period. It really shows how much Soler had improved and how much better he was than the new plays he wrote allowed him to appear. The play is a comedy and is inspired in "El Gran Galeoto." The ravages of

irresponsible gossip are masterfully drawn out and the victim, a young girl, is finally vindicated, providing for a happy ending, to which Soler owed so much popularity.

Fate reserved Soler a severer trial and this was his rivalry with Guimerá. This episode was bound to be the bitterest test in his artistic life because Soler recognized himself that he was fighting against a man who was superior to him as a poet, a playwright and a thinker. Guimerá was a real genius and Soler was only a playwright.

At first, Soler did not suspect the real value of Guimerá, although he had already shown his mettle in the volumes of verses he had published. The real secret was that Guimerá was too modern for Soler, and the latter could not understand him. This was the reason why Guimerá's entrance into the Romea Theater was relatively easy. He delivered his tragedy "Mar i Cel" (Seas and Skies). Soler read it and aside of being a tragedy written in hendecasyllables, he could not see the tremendous power of the work. Bonaplata took the leading role and the play was an event. It overran Catalonia and reached Spain, Italy and Germany. Soler never forgave him. He had to grant that

that size of success had never presided over any of his plays.

From that moment on, he meant to defend the Romea Theater against Guimerá's invasions and that originated another Catalonian theater in Barcelona, the rival of Romea's and this was Teatre Novetats (Novelty Theater). In this fight, Soler showed himself meaner than he really was. After *Mar i Cel* he allowed only another play by Guimerá, "*Rey i Monjo*." (King and Friar), in his theatre. After this play, the rival could not go back to Romea's until after Soler's death.

Soler showed he could not fight against Guimerá. In his tragic drama "*Barbarossa*," Soler wants to show that he could deal with pirates as well as Guimerá had done in his *Mar i Cel*. In the attempt, he showed a very patent lack of cultural preparation, indispensable to understand the greatness of a tragedy and treat it accordingly. His heroic hendecasyllables are rather timid, and in a similar theme, as it is the love of a Moorish pirate for a captive Christian damzel, Soler cannot restrain himself from seeking relief of high tension by contrasting serious with comical situations.

The success of Barbarossa was due to the sympathy of the faithful adherents to the Romea Theater and to the interpretation of the leading role given by a new tragic actor, Enric Borràs, who later on came to be one of the leading figures not only of the Catalonian but of the Spanish theater as well. Soler was not deceived by the friendly reception his tragic drama had obtained and he made up his mind to give up heroic themes and use his hendecasyllables for matters more suitable to his temperament.

Going back to his eight syllable verse, Frederick Soler wrote a drama in three acts, entitled "Batalla de Reynas" (Battle of Queens) which gave the author a genuine success just like those he used to score in his first times, but more so.

The play goes back to the fourteenth century and deals with the fight of Queen Violant and Queen Mary. History is not accurately observed but it is the most literary drama written by Soler and although written in Catalonian, it obtained the prize of La Real Academia Espanola, given to the best play of the year.

This gave him a new lease of life, because about that time Soler's heart was giving him some trouble. Then, he sprang a surprise upon his public. He gave to the theater a biblical tragedy in six acts "Judas de Kerioth." Almost all of the tragedy was written in hendecasyllables, some fragments being done in eight-syllable verses. The Bishop of Barcelona sprung a surprise upon Soler by excommunicating him. Impartial minds stated their opinion that that excommunication was really uncalled for.

More than a drama, Judas is a dramatic poem. Soler reaches the height of good literature in this work.

He follows as faithfully as possible the biblical narrative about Judas Kerioth and his deed. It may be that something can be said about the feelings that Mary of Magdala inspires in Judas, but it is pointed out in a veiled form. Soler did not seem to be much affected by the excommunication, since it was rumored that he was preparing a drama in six acts entitled "Jesus." These rumors started just when everybody knew

that Guimerá was working on a tragedy in five acts, entitled "Jesus de Nazareth."

The literary world in Barcelona was keyed up, waiting for the end of that dramatic Marathon. The two theaters, Romea and Novetats were working feverishly. Bonaplata was to play Jesus in Romea; Borrás in Novetats. The latter theater had the advantage of being more modern and possessing a better equipped stage. Soler Rovirosa, the celebrated stage painter, was painting the new settings for the tragedy of Guimerá. Alarma i Moragas, his rival, was painting those of Soler's. Masks were lowered and both theaters chose the same night for the first performance. And Guimerá won. His success was the tribute paid to a genius. Soler's success was a tribute of respect paid by the faithful guard. And even fate took upon itself the privilege of playing a joke upon poor Soler. The Bishop of Barcelona excommunicated him for the second time, and let Guimerá go unmolested, when as a matter of fact "Jesus of Nazareth" by Guimera was the more hetherodox of the two, or better still, frankly irreligious.

Soler could not resist this defeat and died shortly afterwards, in 1895.

He had also cultivated the writing of poems and he had been made Mestre en Gay Saber in the Jochs Florals of 1875.

After 1868, the cluster of authors who were writing for the theater was considerably increased in number. It would not be worth while to mention them all, but among them there were four who cannot be ignored, and those are Arnau, Llanas, Feliu i Codina and Vilanova.

Arnau excels in painting the middle class of humble social aspirations, springing from the trades and making their living in Barcelona or in the towns nearby. He knows the shore people very well and his comedies, generally in two acts, are faithful pictures of the life in these villages, full of color and motion. He is a better psychologist than Soler although he does not display the facility in writing that the former does. His standard work is "La Mitja Taronja" (The better half). Llanas is more modern. His plays are written in prose and show that their author has travelled further than the Pyrenees. His work suffered from the idiosyncrasies of his character. He did not know how to live without being in debt and with the firm purpose of never paying back the money he owed. This unhappy frame of mind

interfered somewhat with his work because the creditors, and they were always legion, could not bring themselves to accept this point of view.

This is the only reason why his literary baggage is so small, although excellent in quality. It amounts to about a dozen plays. The most important are "L'Orgull del Jech" (The pride of the overalls) and "Lo Sí de las Noyas" a translation of Moratin's *El Sí de las Niñas*. His plays depict also the humble classes of Barcelona, but with better mastery in the arrangement and technique of the play and with more truth, since the plays are written in prose.

Feliu i Codina wrote several plays in Catalanian. He was not popular because he showed radical tendencies. Then, he went to Madrid and wrote in Spanish. There, he obtained remarkable success and was one of the best authors they had.

In Catalanian, his most important plays are "Lo Pubill" (The heiress's husband) and "Lo Nuvi" (The Bridegroom). Both attacked conservative institutions and traditions very dear to the heart of the average Catalanian family.

Emili Vilanova developed his ability cultivating the one act plays which were called in Spanish "sainetes." The street is his favorite spot, the different storekeepers and neighbors of the adjoining flats taking part in the action. The play which brought him fame was "Qui Compra..... Maduixas!" (Who Wants Strawberries) the cry of the woman vendor in the streets of the city during the months of May and June.

Mention must be made of Jaume Piquet, who flourished from 1872 to 1890 and wrote about 200 one act plays. As a general rule, these plays were highly seasoned and were played in the small theaters in the suburbs.

Until the early nineties, the Catalonian theater was a conservative institution. It could not be called a theater of tendencies or ideas. It limited itself to foster the love for the mother tongue. It painted the mind and habits of the Catalonian people in all their social stages with fondness and accuracy. The leaders of that theatrical movement cared only for the beauty of their artistic task, and they did not even suspect that they were carrying through a political seeding that was bound to blossom out later in such splendid fruits.

The political group led by Almirall was working since 1878, but they had never considered the theater as an efficient tool of political

propaganda to instill the germ of catalanism in the masses. And yet, that was what took place during this period, educating the people to go and hear about their own emotions and conflicts in their mother tongue and from an exclusive Catalonian point of view. This explains why, when Guimera brought forward his theater of ideas for approval, he found the people ready for the innovation and Guimera's success was quick and of a permanent nature.

The fruits were gathered between 1898 and 1910 when the political education of the catalanistas reached the highest degree of intense activity. The spectacle of a full grown Catalonian theater, known and respected abroad, and preaching the new word home, proved to be a powerful friend to the leaders who were at the head of the political movement. Such an event could never have materialized, had it not been for the long and unsuspected work of preparation that had preceded it.

Angel Guimerá was born in the Canary Islands in 1849. His father was a Catalonian and his mother an Islander. The family came to Catalonia when Guimerá was still an infant and they settled in Vendrell, a country town not far from Barcelona. He was educated in the School of the Fathers Escolapios (Pious Schools) and began

to write poetry in 1872. His first compositions were published in a modest magazine called "la Gramalla" (The Gang). In these compositions, Guimerá showed that he was a real poet. His first serious work was a very long poem which he submitted to the Joches Florals Committee in 1875 and earned the golden ribbon. It was a patriotic poem and was entitled Indibal and Mandonius. In 1877, he was proclaimed Mestre en Gay Saber in the Jochs Florals of that year, winning the three prizes of Amor, Patria and Fides in the same year. He collaborated in "La Renaixensa", first a fortnightly review and later on, a daily paper, and he took active part in the political meetings of the Catalanist party. He was a religious lover of the Catalonian tongue and when he was elected President of the Barcelona Atheneum, the speech of thanks was said in Catalonian for the first time.

It is not, however, under these different activities that Guimerá will be studied here. It is only as a dramatic author that his personality will be examined.

When Guimerá began cultivating the dramatic art, he was already well known as a good poet, in fact as the first poet of the land and he had to his credit two or three volumes of poetry. He showed in these volumes that his genius felt perfectly at home with the majesty of the hend-

ecassyllables. Therefore, to adjust the latter to the requirements of the tragic dialogue held no terrors for Guimerá.

Two markedly distinct periods must be considered in the dramatic career of Guimerá. The first period, from 1879 to 1894, is that of the romantic realist poet. The second period, beginning in 1895 and until the last years of his life, is that of the modern play writer who writes in prose to make his gospel more intelligible to the masses--to the people at large.

At the sunset of his life, he surprised his admirers with two or three tragedies in which he reaches the energetical inspiration of his younger days in a fragmentary manner.

The tragedies of Guimerá are eminently interesting as revealers of the poet's personality. The German and French romantic influences are most marked, but only as helpers in the conception of the conflict. Beguiling as these schools were, they possessed no seducing powers strong enough to overwhelm the strong realistic, rather nationalistic, temperament of Guimerá.

In this way, as one follows the robust hendecassyllables marking the development of the tragic conflict, he feels the intensive fight between the romantic idea, resisting to be tortured

into the forms of rude, primitive lines, which are reeking with savage and unpolished beauty.

The world of figures belonging to Guimerá's tragic realm, reaches homeric proportions. Begotten in a paroxysm of romantic exaltation, these beings are compelled to feel with the asperity, characteristic of the greatest Greek bard. And the Roman Gala Placidia, the Moor pirate of Mar i Cel, King Dagobert of L'Anima Morta, and all the others--monks, jesters, maidens, kings and knights--they all hate, love, kiss, kill or die with a sublime roughness, without humoring their agonies with Gallic sugary meticulousities.

The first production given by Guimerá was in 1879. It was his first tragedy "Gala Placidia." The figure of the Roman woman is masterfully drawn and her betrayal to her matrimonial vows and the bloody expiation that ensues, left the audience aghast. The reaction was quick in coming under the form of a brutal success. The occasion consecrated the talents of a new Catalonian actress, Carlota de Mena, the best actress that the Catalonian Theater was bound to have from 1879 to 1903.

Afterwards, year by year, Guimerá gave L'Anima Morta, Lo Fill del Rey, Rey i Monjo

and Mar i Cel.

L'Anima Morta (The Dead Soul) is above the level of the best romantic drama of the French theater, according to William G. Archer. It was translated into German, Russian and Italian. Ermete Novelli made it one of his best creations.

Lo Fill del Rey (The King's Son) is the drama of the jester. In this tragedy, the French influence is in plain evidence, and the tragedy happens to be the weakest in dramatic fiber that Guimerá has ever produced. It won a success also.

Mar i Cel (Seas and Skies) made Guimerá. It is doubtful if such a modern tragedy has been equaled anywhere, in the nineteenth century. It made Guimerá become an European figure, and happened in 1886, when the thinking world at large did not know and did not care whether there were people writing in the Iberian peninsula. Russia, Germany, Italy, Bulgaria even, saw Mar i Cel. It was one of the greatest triumphs of the actor Bonaplata. Enrique Gaspar translated into Castillian and Rafael Calvo, a very good Spanish actor, forced Madrid to acclaim Guimerá.

Rei i Monjo deals with the calvary of

Ramir II, the Aragon's King monk.

Afterwards, Guimerá wrote La Boija (The Crazy Woman). The conflict is modern although the tragic hendecasyllables are the vehicle of expression. Guimera was getting ready to jump into the field of the modern drama in prose.

Besides what has already been stated about Guimerá's tragedies, mention must be made of the form. Guimerá had the epic gift of chiseling a thought, a feeling, even a shout soberly and deeply, leaving it on the stage for the audience to gather it.

Here are a few samples. Gala Placidia wants to show her deep contempt for the man she really loves.

Quin oratje aixeca eix gra de pols,
a ma pórpora emballutada?

What wind lifts this grain of dust
to my velvety purple?

Blanca in L'Anima Morta talks
about her past love.

---Y, pesanta m'obrían mos ulls tancats
la carn molsuda de'ls seus llavis.

---And, heavily, opened my closed eyes
the meaty flesh of his lips.

Zadir, the pirate of Mar i Cel berates

the Christians and says--

Mes que voleu esperar d'un a gent

que te l'odi unit al perdo! L'anyell al tigre!

Lo punyal i la creu tot d'una peça!

But what can you expect of a race

that joins hate to forgiveness!

the lamb to the tiger!

The dagger and the cross welded in

one piece!

And, finally, the blasphemous shout of

defiance of the nun in Rei i Monjo, glorying

in her sin

---De ma carn i mon cor, s'aixeca'l desijt

per l'hom que vencé dintre mon pit lo Deu etern!

---From my flesh and heart rises the

desire for the man who defeated the

eternal God in my heart!

In 1894, Guimerá wrote the first play in prose. Maria Rosa, La festa del Blat and Terra Baixa are the three dramas of the Masses. They came one after the other. To them, later on, La Filla del Mar was added.

These four plays deal with the humble, those who work with their hands, who do not know

how to read and write. They show how they defend themselves against social injustices, against exploitations from those who have more, and, at the same time, how they love and hate among themselves, and are good and humble and pay. All this world of meek beings finds a warm spot in Guimerá's heart. He paints them as they are, as they talk, in their different trades, and the local color of these plays is legitimate art. Marai-Rosa is the woman who kills the second husband she loves and wants because she discovers he has allowed her first husband to be condemned for the death of a man he was responsible for. La Festa del Blat is the odyssey of an anarchist. The first night of that play came too early after the throwing of two bombs into the pit of the Opera House, killing about twenty-six people of both sexes and all ages, belonging to the wealthy classes. This memory proved too much for the audience when they saw that Guimerá made the dying anarchist give his last breath in the grandparent's bed at the old farm. The last act did not succeed in riding the storm, it sunk. It happened not because it was bad but because it was too good. La Festa del Blat means the Wheat Feast.

Guimerá was plainly compensated for this partial failure with Terra Baixa (Low Lands). It was the repetition of the success of Mar i Cel, only more so. Terra Baixa has literally gone around the world. New York has seen it in Martha of the Lowlands. The Metropolitan has heard it sung in German with the opera Tiefland and a French composer found inspirations in it for another opera. Even Paris surrendered, the unassailable Paris, and saw Terra Baixa given by Antoine.

Manelich, the hero of the play, has his statue erected in the Park of Montjuich.

Terra Baixa is the tragedy of the wild shepard, who innocent and primitive, comes from the hills to the lowlands, and, unintentionally, redeems the fallen woman with his strong and loyal love. "La Filla del Mar" (The Daughter of the Sea) is a passionate drama among fishermen and their women.

Of a sudden, Guimerá turned to society and wrote "Aygua que Corre" (Running Water) and Arran de Terra (Just above the Earth). The first play is the theme of the triangle among wealthy people in Barcelona. The

second play is the story of a woman of a doubtful reputation who does lots of good around with the wealth acquired in her profession. The figure of the woman is masterfully drawn and foreign actresses fell in love with it, but although the action of the play is placed in Barcelona, the woman is not Catalonian. It is not meant that women of this type do not exist in Barcelona. They exist but they are still too primitive and do not possess culture enough to render their trade so attractive as Guimera's heroine does. The Italian actress, Italia Vitaliani, made a true creation of the character.

But society plays without a theme to prove or an idea to defend did not satisfy Guimera. It must be stated, besides that, Guimera did not feel so well at home with those higher up as he did with the common people.

In 1906 he gave his first social play. L'Eloy is the title and it is a savage attack against the marriage institution in Spain, and therefore in Catalonia, advocating the need and the advantages of divorce. It

met with a great and unexpected success, unexpected because Barcelona is very conservative. The second social play was "La Reina Jove" (The young Queen). She is a queen of an imaginary kingdom who falls in love with the leader of the revolutionary party and abdicates in order to secure him. The country goes socialist. In real life, the socialist leader would have become a monarchist and maybe the lover of the queen. The argument is simply absurd and dull but Guimerá's stagecraft was masterful and the play was a powerful attack on the monarchy. The play was given in 1911. The third play was "Jesus que torna" (Jesus comes back). It is an attack against war and militarism. At the end, the soldiers, out of their own accord, fire upon Jesus and kill him, who, dying, says the beautiful words, "I shall always come back!"

"La Farça" (The Farce) is a play exposing the rotten methods which the Spanish Government uses to rob, deceive and exploit the people at large for the benefit of a small minority. As can be seen the Spanish Government is no different from any other Government. There is a remark in this play that cannot be overlooked. Guimerá puts it in the mouth of a

successful politician. He says, "The pity is that I have offered my resignation as an honest man and nobody has accepted it yet." And the last social play was "Cor de Nit" (Heart of the Night). In this play, Guimerá attacked religious belief and the idea of Church in general. He was excommunicated by the ecclesiastical authorities.

During his long period of almost twenty-five years of writing plays in prose, he broke out here and there with a few tragedies. Camí del Sol already mentioned in this thesis, (On the Road of Sun), "Las Monjas de Sant Ayman," (The Nuns of Saint Ayman), a Catalonian legend very similar to the Miracle staged by Morris Gest, and Euda D'Uriack, an episode of the crusades were some of them. He wrote two plays in one act and one monologue called "Mestre Olaguer." This monologue has the strength of a thousand political programmes in favor of Catalanism. The monologue is said by the last defender of a barricade in Barcelona, against the Castillian troops, sent by Philip V in 1716. He is surrounded by Catalonians already dead and tells of his love for the Catalonia of old times. He himself is an old man. He boasts of the

barricade still being untaken. Suddenly, cries and noise are heard. The Castillian troops are approaching. Shots are heard and Mestre Olaguer is hit and falls to die. At that moment, the cry is heard from inside, "Viva Felips V." Mestra Olaguer answers with his last breath, "Visca Catalunya, Lladres! (Long live Catalonia, robbers!) The audience always went wild.

Angela Guimera is dead now. Catalonia crowned him in life, in the city of Barcelona in 1921. Catalonia will keep his memory forever. Guimera is the greatest mentality that Catalonia has ever produced up to now, for the Catalonian Theater.

Mention must be made of a refined temperament who felt like writing for the theater during a period of three years and suddenly abandoned the task. This is Miquel Pin i Soler and he wrote from 1891 to 1895. He spun his plays and most probably stopped his delicate task because he thought that the audiences were not worthy. His best plays are "Sogra i Nora" (Mother and Daughter-in law), "La Tia Tecleta," (Little Aunty Tecla) and "Amor per Vendre" (Love to sell). The last is the best constructed play, written in refined Catalonian and dealing with the well-to-do.

THE MODERNS--About 1893, the literary world of Barcelona began to get some hints about the existence of a certain man called Ibsen who was making his living amid the foggy latitudes of septentrional Europe. The first complete notice Barcelona received from Ibsen was the Doll's House. It was a complete translation by Carles Costa and was staged by Carlota de Mena. The remarkable fact about this translation by Carles Costa was that the ending of the play suffered no alterations as had happened in Germany and Austria and no official impediments obstructed the performances of the play. It must be stated that the play scored only what the French people call "un success d'estime." The importance of the event was only realized among the literary and intellectual elements of the city, the public at large assisting at the performances but being impervious to the tremendous social upheaval the author champions in his play. The reason for this indifference, on the part of the Catalonian people towards a play that had aroused such heated controversies in all centers of European culture, was due to the fact that the average spectator missed the point. He found the behavior of Nora odd, and men or

women kept their equanimity of mind for they were positive that no Catalonian woman would ever think of adopting such a resolution. They were right. It was too early.

"The Ghosts" was the second play by Ibsen that Barcelona got acquainted with and it came via Italy. The Italian actor Ermete Novelli offered it to the public in the Municipal Theater. The Ghosts did not pass unnoticed. In the first place, the play itself is strong enough to arouse the dead. In the second place, the theme of the play hit the fathers of the family, and many of them felt that that play brought the bitter truth home. The discussion was heated and persistent, but the performances went on. In Spain, and therefore in Catalonia, there is no censorship. The attitude of the general public, however, is of no consequence to the subject of this thesis. What is really important to know is what influence these modern tendencies exercised on the Catalonian Theater.

Ibsen's plays came in fast either through foreign dramatic troupes, especially Italian, or by translations, very well made. The Ghosts, Doll's House, The Enemy of the people and the Master Builder are the ones that

appear during the first flash. These translations were made from the Italian, English, or German, with the help of scholars familiar with the mother tongue of the translated author. The translators were really literary men.

After Ibsen, came Bjorson with the translations of *The King*, *Beyond Our Forces*, *The Failure* and a few others. "*Beyond Our Forces*" was a theatrical event. It proved to be the most revolutionary and irreligious theatrical document that Barcelona had ever seen. After the presentation of Bjorson, the doors remained ajar, and the modern thinkers from all over came in galore. Sudermann was initiated with his *Magda* and *The Joy of Life*. *Magda* was first performed by Sarah Bernhardt, and afterward by Margarida Xirgu in Catalanian. Margarida Xirgu is today the first actress in Catalonia and Spain. Maragall translated Hauptman's "*The Lonely Souls*" and "*The Weavers of Silesia*," by the same author, were translated by Carles Costa.

Maeterlink was known first by "*The Intruder*" and "*The Interior*." Afterwards, the newer pieces came as he wrote them. Of the

French authors, Mirbeau, Fabre and Curel were the favorites. "The Bad Shepherds" by Mirbeau and "The Golden Bellies" by Fabre were enthusiastically received.

From Italy, The Catalonian theater knew translations from D'Annunzio. "The Dead City" obviously was the favorite. The Italian dramatic casts led by Ermete Novelli, Theresa Mariani, Italia Vitaliani and the greatest actor, Ermete Zacconi, acquainted the Catalonian public with Rovetta, Giacosa, Praga, Bracco and others. Eleonora Duse was the chief interpreter of D'Annunzio's plays. It is evident that this invasion of modern thought and new processes in the technique of stagecraft could not help but influence strongly the young playwrights of the Catalonian Theater. Ibsen alone had influenced the theaters of all the nations. Catalonia could not be an exception.

Another aspect to bear in mind is the processes through which this influence was brought about. The modern word assumed several literary disguises to reach the "elite" first, the anonymous mass afterwards. In the names mentioned above, there are representatives of

the realistic, naturalistic, symbolistic and even impressionistic schools, the impressionists being the harbingers of the futurists.

The period of literary deglutination and assimilation of the new product among the Catalonian pens brought confusion to their minds. This period of uncertainty was of short duration and light was being made gradually. When it illuminated brightly the literary field of the Catalonian theater, it was seen that three groups had been formed, namely: the naturalist, the symbolist, and the eclectic. The first two groups were rabid partisans. The first had as their God, Ibsen, and their prophet Ignasi Yglesias. The second group's God was Maeterlink and their prophet, Adriá Gual. The third group were believers of the idea but iconoclasts as far as personalities were concerned.

The remarkable aspect of the foreign invasion was that the Catalonian Theater did not lose its individuality. It assimilated, it conceded, it accepted new moral and social ideals and threw aside old ones, but it did all this from a catalonian point of view, and the

new product, elaborated by the young playwrights, was above all, Catalanian.

And this extraordinary feat was possible, thanks to the early task of Soler and his followers, a detail that at the moment seemed to be overlooked. Later on, justice recovered its privileges.

Ignasi Yglesias is the most important personality of the generation that started to make itself known at the end of the last century. He was born near Barcelona about 1862 or 1863. His education was very scanty and he had to make up for its deficiencies later on. His fight for recognition was bitter. He had to fight the indifference of the public for a youngster with no backing of any kind, and he had to fight the hostility right at his home, from his own parents, who kept a modest blacksmith shop and could not see anything good coming from their son writing such anti-christian plays. Yglesias overcame all these difficulties by sheer pluck. His first play was written when he was nineteen. He did not get recognition until he was thirty-six in the Romea Theater.

Yglesias sticks to his role of apostle of the humble classes in all his plays.

He is an avowed socialist and he glories in it. It must be remembered that to be known as a socialist in Spain in the nineties was as dangerous as it is now to be known as a "Red" in the world at large, outside of Russia.

What stirs the sympathy of the audience is the sincerity of the author in his theories, whether it is free love, or capitalism or shots below the belt against religious belief. This sincerity backed by a remarkable talent for playwriting made Yglesias the first figure in the realistic group of the young crop.

He is a past master in the art of drawing the city worker. He does not know the country so well. He seldom brings the people from the mountains down to his plays. Whenever he attempted the silhouette of a well-to-do man or woman he failed utterly. He could not draw a world he had never been in. This he himself granted. Therefore his man with a fur coat or woman with silk skirt, preaching socialism, were absolutely false characters because substantial incomes do not beget ardent socialists.

The first play he wrote was "L'Argolla"

(The Strangling Rope). It was given on a Sunday afternoon after an eleven act melodrama in Spanish. Yglesias's drama had four acts --all for one and a half peseta. Those were the good times! Not a single paper mentioned the play next day. Afterwards, there came the long pilgrimage Yglesias through theaters of third and fourth order, delivering his plays to casts that absolutely murdered his productions. He was known by the nickname of "Ibsen of the Suburbs" but nothing discouraged him. He had to print a new play, called "Fructidor" (Fruitful). It was a drama in four acts, very well constructed, consisting of a complete defense of free love. The fact that the play was published by the house "L'Avenç" a modernistic publishing house, helped him to break into the circle of Barcelona. Four years later, he had the satisfaction of seeing a play accepted and performed in the Romea Theater.

It is impossible to give a list of all the plays written by Yglesias. Of those produced before he was admitted to the theaters of Barcelona, nothing is know and he himself did not even attempt to publish them.

In some of the plays, like "Foch Follet" (Will-o-the-Wisp), for instance, he had the delicacy of a poet who could not write poetry, and in other cases he exhibited the brutal paw of a naked realism like in his play "La Resclosa" (The Dam).

He went up step by step to the big success. He began with Foch Follet, a gray drama, about the intimate tragedy in a city family of moderate means. It deals with the suspicion of the mother-in-law that the woman who married her favorite son, now dead, had been unfaithful to him with his other brother. La Resclosa discloses the love and passion of a rich painter for the daughter of a farming couple. They just leave the village.

After these two plays, Yglesias produced "La Mare Eterna" (The Eternal Mother). It is a paenthistic play. The eternal mother is the earth. It never dies and we do not die because we remain with her.

This play shows a pronounced maturity in the author. He has read more, and what is more important, has read better. His god, Ibsen, would have been satisfied with his devotee.

A poet teaches his mission of worship to the earth among farm-hands, and finally, he dies consumptive on a beautiful autumn night. It is a beautifully thought out play heralding the masterpiece.

It came with his drama "El Vells" (The Old Men). It is an ardent plea for the old human refuse, thrown out of the mines and factories because it does not pay to hire them any longer, and the poor refuse is not lucky enough to die. The third and last act of the play reaches the highest degree of tragic sublimity.

The play had a run of one hundred twenty-three consecutive performances. This speaks volumes in favor of the play, in a city like Barcelona. Los Vells went to Madrid and across the frontier.

Everything that Yglesias produced after Los Vells was good but never commanding the required qualities to repeat the success. He knew more and kept himself in check, fearing to allow his defects too much loose rein. In doing this, he improved his stagecraft but chained down his genius, and, in the long run, he suffered for it. This does not mean that success did not come his way again since he

tasted it several times, but it was not the success Guimerá knew after his Mari Cel.

Besides, a very interesting phenomenon happened in Yglesias' personality. He changed into a conservative writer shortly after he was married. The influence of his wife, with whom he was very much in love, seemed to be irresistible, and "Las Garces" (The Herons), "La Noya Maca" (The Pretty Girl) and others showed that Yglesias was open to conviction. His followers never forgave him.

He died in 1926. It is impossible to write about the Catalonian theater without mentioning Ignasi Yglesias. He was the head of the realistic school and has left a complete theater, all his own.

Adriá Gual was the head of the symbolists. Gual's dramatic baggage is of reduced proportions, the number of his plays not reaching a dozen. He was not a popular playwright. He was too aristocratic for the masses, and he never courted them.

His plays were always presented on special occasions, organized by the modernist group, of which he was the head.

His best works are "Lo Silenci"

(The Silence), "Misteri de Dolor" (Mystery of Grief), and "Animes que Parlan" (Souls that Speak). The chief purpose of these plays is to lift the veil of the conflict only halfway and let the audience guess the other half. The characters speak symbolically and the action develops along the course of the play, in a subdued manner, avoiding explosions, and ignoring matter-of-fact reasons and ways to justify the actions of the characters.

Those who have read L'Intruse, L'Interieur et Les Aveugles by Maeterlink may form a rather accurate idea of what is the theater by Gual. This theater was called "Lo Teatre Intim" (The Intimate Theater).

It is a world of silent tension, suffocated emotions, well guarded hates, and self contained loves. Even joy must be colorless. The voices sound always choked with tears. The main objective of this theater was to impress the audience with the fact that everything that happens on the stage was out of the ordinary and that every word and action of the characters, even the blowing of a nose, hid an inner meaning too precious to be revealed in plain words. And the most wonderful part of it was that the audience, as a general rule, was ready to grant that it had been impressed in this way, before the first half of the play had been acted.

But in spite of this frame of mind on the part of the public, the latter was ready to concede that there was a constant note of poetical beauty, of refined art in everything Gual wrote. Some of his plays are so deeply screened in the smoke of mystery that it is materially impossible to tell where the dramatic conflict lies. The tragic results are beautiful and impressive but the true cause bringing about the catastrophic climax cannot be diagnosed. It is like watching an explosion from a distance. The devastating effects can be appreciated but the nature of the destructive element which has released its forces cannot be stated.

This is particularly true of his play "Silence," his first production, the production that labelled his name for exportation to the foreign literary centers. In this play, the ravages of deep set grief in a human heart have been uncannily observed and yet the spectator does not honestly know what has brought that state of mental agony to the leading character of the play.

Gual is the man who knew how to fabricate pungent art with a master hand. Nobody could equal him. He died in 1923. Belonging to either of these two schools there were several authors whose names must be mentioned, not because their merits justify it, but because they happened to write some plays.

For the symbolists, Creuhet, Casademunt and Riera may be mentioned. Crehuet wrote a drama in one act "La Morta" (The Dead Woman) which revealed a promise that did not materialize. On the side of the realists there were Folch i Torres, Folguera and Pous i Pages. The first mentioned wrote well constructed plays but he lacked vision, and it was a pity, because with that requisite he would have been a true genius.

In the group of the eclectics, the towering figure was and at the present moment still, is, Santiago Rusiñol. Had he been born in England he would have been a serious rival to Bernard Shaw.

When he began his literary career, he had already established his European reputation as a painter. His landscapes are a riot of color and light, the chief note to be observed in them being the ease of the brush under the guidance of the master's hand.

His "Gardens of Spain" are reputed as a collection of the best canvasses to hang on the wall of a real connoisseur's abode and consequently they are disappearing gradually.

He became known at the time Zuluoga and Sargent did. The three were fast friends and they spent their youth in Paris when it was still a residence fit for a real artist.

His literary career started about 1893 with a monologue entitled "L'homme de l'orga" (The man of the hand organ.) Before going further, it must be stated that Rusiñol did not limit himself to writing plays. He wrote books, mosaics of his genius, which cover all the literary gamma, from the most intricate symbolism to the most brutal naturalism. His career as a dramatist began with plays in one act. The first play he produced in "Lo Teatre Intin," managed by his friend Gual, was "Alegría que Passa" (The joy that passes by.) The joy is caged inside of the four walls of a big dilapidated wooden box that is placed upon four wheels and is pulled along the dusty roads, from village, to village by a squalid looking, resigned old horse. Inside this box, they live, travel and sleep, a fifth or sixth rate circus athlete, a dancing girl, his mistress, and a clown.

They reach a slumbering out of the way village. The clown and the woman awaken

desires of independence and free life that were dormant in the breast of one of the young men in the village. The dream vanishes when the dirty wheeled box goes away to the main road and disappears in the distance. This play is a masterpiece.

Another of these one act plays worth mentioning is "Lo Jardí Abandonat." (The Abandoned Garden.) It is the same theme as given in L'Alegria que passa, against a different background. In another one act play, entitled "Los Irresponsables" (The Irresponsibles) he puts in the mouth of the conservative and well-to-do old citizen the following anathema, addressed to the poets of the village, "In the name of the full bellies, I declare you crazy!" Rusiñol appeared as a full-fledged dramatic author before the Catalonian public, when he gave his first three act play. The title was "llibertat" (Liberty). After that in the order they are given came "L'Eroe" (The Hero), "Lo Mistic" (The Mystic), "Lo Pati Blau" (The Blue Yard), "La Mare" (The Mother). It is in these plays that Rusiñol is seen at his best. His corrosive sense of humor has nothing to envy that of Bernard Shaw.

In "Llibertat" one sees what happens to a poor negro boy, brought by a rich Catalonian to his native village and left to the care of the liberal authorities of the same village, when the rich man goes back to America.

In "L'Eroe," Rusiñol makes a drastic satire of the army and what it stands for. It places the action in a Catalonian village and the arrival of the hero, the son of one of the families, ruins the family on account of the bad habits the fellow acquired in the colonial wars. The play drops bombs along its trail like "It is much better to be a soldier than a criminal; you can do everything a criminal does and you never go to jail for it."

The play was performed only once--the night of the first performance. The officers of the garrison bought practically all the tickets for the second performance, and the management withdrew the play. It is easier for the Spanish Army to win victories over a dramatic author than to win over the Moors in Morocco!

In the play "Lo Mystic," Rusiñol brought to the stage the figure of the greatest

Catalonian mystic poet, who, as a mystic, ranks with Teresa de Jesús and Juan de La Cruz and his name is Mossen Cinto Verdaguer (Father Cinto Verdaguer).

For once, Rusiñol did not succeed altogether in his endeavor. He wrote a beautiful play but the character, meaning to impersonate Mossen Cinto, already dead, was absolutely false. Rusiñol had to resort to his poetical imagination in order to construct an interesting play, but in order to do this he could not be faithful to the last days of the priest poet. They were bitter days because of a serious case of discipline with his bishop, residing in Vich, combined with the enmity he inspired in the Jesuits, but this episode was purely a case of ecclesiastical discipline and not dogmatic. The proof of it was that Mossen Cinto was never excommunicated and never had the license to celebrate mass revoked, only suspended.

The last years of the poet were bitter, but he suffered the persecution without whimpering. Finally, the bishop of Barcelona incorporated him to one of the parishes of that city.

Rusiñol wrote a play attacking the Church and, as a dramatic author, he had a

perfect right to do so if he felt like doing it, but he had no right to adulterate the religious personality of a priest in order to fulfill his purpose.

The play is beautiful and it was one of the greatest personal triumphs of the actor Borrás.

One of the lines of "The Mystic" says, "What I like the most about my enemies is that I can forgive the evil they do to me."

"La Mare" is the life of self abnegation of a painter's mother, so that her son may become an artist. Both fail.

Some of Rusiñol's plays have been translated into Spanish, Italian and French. A detail that is rather picturesque is that "L'Eroe" the anti-militarist play was translated into French by Leo Daudet.

The last group that must be mentioned is that of the Futurists. The most prominent are Puig i Ferrater, Sinió and Recasens.

Their plays are vigorous, absolutely raw and without unity in plan. Juicy fragments, built around the main character, pass episodically before the eyes of the audience that feels absolutely exhausted, after the performance is over.

Puig i Ferrater's main work is "La Dona Lletja" (The Homely Woman).

By means of a personal cunning she succeeds in winning over all the men who come in contact with her. In Paris, this play had a great success.

Recasens's most celebrated work is Lo Cego. It is the account of a married man, who, as soon as he loses his eyesight, is betrayed by his wife and everybody laughs at him because he is powerless to revenge himself.

Sinió's strong point is to picture clerical subjects as perfect specimens of abhorrence to the human race. This is the group that prevails nowadays.

PRESENT CONDITIONS--The Catalonian theater just now goes through a period of retarded activity. It began during the world war, not because of the world war, but because of political conditions created in Catalonia.

It seems to be a phenomenon, which almost never fails, that when one nation reaches to the point of gathering the political fruits she has been fighting for, the two branches of national literature which suffer the most, are the theater and the novel.

France offers a good example. The

French Theater, before the French revolution, was an active and powerful weapon attacking everything that the French revolution was bound to eradicate from the face of France. As soon as the French revolution was a fact, the French theater began to languish in spite of the efforts made by some well-intentioned citizens.

In England, Cromwell brought to victory the cause of the people. The theater disappeared. To say that Cromwell and his Puritans suppressed the theater is to beg the question, because if there had not been Puritans enough wanting the theater suppressed, this measure would have never materialized.

In Catalonia, the political concessions that the Central Government was granting to the Catalonian party began to be remarkable in 1911. But, the Catalanista party was not satisfied with them. What the Catalanistas wanted was a full programme of administrative, judicial and literary autonomy. They did not add political autonomy because they did not wish to frighten the government. Besides, having the first three mentioned granted, the Catalanista would have known how to secure the fourth for themselves.

At any rate, the negotiations went on from 1911 to 1913, first with Canalejas

who was murdered by a syndicalist; second, with Romanones, who resigned the Premiership before he had time to come to an agreement with the Catalanistas, and finally with Dato, the premier of a Conservative Cabinet. It was Sanchez Guerra, then Minister of Interior, who in December 1913 extended the Royal Decree granting the desired autonomy to Catalonia.

It was the moment of the triumph. The moment of a mysterious and sudden love between Madrid and Barcelona. This political accomplishment of regional dreams, which had been deemed beyond the pale of realization ten years before by everyone who knew how to use his head, was fatal to the theater.

Youth likes to fight but likes better still to enjoy the spoils of victory. These spoils were ready to be given by the first Catalonian Cabinet presiding over the destinies of La Mancomunitat Catalana.

Pens were dropped and soft jobs were taken. Politics contaminate every idea, no matter how beautiful it is.

The Catalonian theater remained almost alone. Only the old writers and an exiguous minority of young faithful did not desert it. From the actors, the best of them, like Borrás and Margarida Xirgu, were triumphing on

Castillian and South American stages.

The old authors had already given the best in them and only Guimerá, the old Guimerá, worked to keep the theater alive.

The Romea Theater, the old institution, was running at a loss for the first time in its history, and if it did not close its doors, it was due to the generosity and patriotism of a millionaire of Barcelona.

Translations of Shaw, O'Neill, Guitra and others began to appear. "Desire under the Elms" scored a resounding success. These translations together with the first efforts of the futurist group gave a promise of better times, and then came the military dictatorship of Primo de Rivera. This was a fatal blow to the theater and literature in general. There is nothing so antithetical as the idea of Army and the idea of Culture. Primo de Rivera destroyed the Mancomunitat Catalana, but now he is gone.

The road has to be travelled all over again by the Catalonian patriots. The love for Catalonia is still throbbing. Intellectual weapons are required again, and no doubt, the present group of futurists will show the road to travel to coming mentalities in order to

rebuild the Catalonian theater.

There are signs that a period of fighting for the revindications of Catalonia is approaching and the Catalonians know that the theater is an efficient weapon. They will not overlook it.

The Catalonian language spoken in Catalonia today comes from the old Provençal, Gascon and the vulgar latin used in Catalonia. The human stock from which the Catalonians sprang was entirely Iberian. The Iberians were strongly influenced by the Greeks and Romans. The latter left such deep imprints in the conquered people that Catalonia is the most important latin center in Spain today.

2. The Arabian invasion went as far as Poitiers where the Arabians were defeated by Charles Martel. In their retreat, the Arabians attempted to secure a foothold in Catalonia but, with the help of the noble Franks, the Catalonians succeeded in expelling the invaders from their lands.

These noble Franks established themselves in Catalonia as a nation and this was their origin. The period of the Counts began with Wilfred the Baldy (848) and ended with Berenguer the Great III (1161). With Ramon Berenguer IV who became King Alfons I of Arago, begins the monarchy

S U M M A R Y

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- B. The Arabian invasion went as far as Poitiers where the Arabians were defeated by Charles Martel. In their retreat, the Arabians attempted to secure a foothold in Catalonia but, with the help of the noble Franks, the Catalonians succeeded in expelling the invaders from their lands.

Those noble Franks established themselves in Catalonia as a nation and this was their origin. The period of the Counts began with Wilfred the Hairy (947) and ended with Berenguer the Great III (1131). With Ramon Berenguer IV who became King Alfons I of Aragó, begins the monarchy

known as the Crown of Aragón. Peter I lost the Provençal Catalonia and James I conquered Valencia, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily and Naples. The Catalonian monarchy and the life of the Catalonian nation came to an end when Ferdinand married Isabel of Castile.

C. The Catalonian literature had its beginnings with the troubadours. The troubadours originated in Provença and they brought their ballads to Catalonia. Counts and Kings encouraged the growth and cultivation of literature.

With Ramon Berenguer IV, literature began to take body and authors produced their first books written in Catalonian. The kings themselves, like James the Conqueror wrote books and cultivated poetry. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, Ramon Llull filled the first place in the literature of the times. He was a poet, a writer, a philosopher, and a missionary. He fought the doctrines spread by Avorro and his pupils. He preached the gospel in Africa and died in Mallorca where he had been born.

In 1325, Toulouse renovated the literary feast of the Jochs Florals. King John adopted the feast for their Court, and Catalonian poetry entered into a period of remarkable activity.

The first poet of their times is Ausias March. He was called the Provençal Petrarca. He was very much influenced by the Italian school and he was the writer who brought the Italian influence to the Spanish literature.

- D. The first steps towards histrionic aspirations are found in the religious and war dances prevailing among the Iberians. The Greeks and Romans brought their dramatic masterpieces to the conquered people. The high artistic instinct of the latter knew how to appreciate this innovation and from that time dates the fondness for the theater that characterizes the Catalonians of all times.

After the Teutonic invasion had subsided and the Arabian danger had vanished there began to appear the first theatrical efforts. The source of their inspiration was drawn from the liturgical poetry of the Church.

At first, miracles and biblical episodes, specially taken from the life of Christ, were staged inside of the churches. After a period of time, professional troupes took up the task of carrying these episodes from village to village. The theater became very religious, popular with the masses and even nowadays certain religious plays are still performed.

Religious plays were always written even when the Catalonian literature had reached the low ebb of adversity on account of the Spanish political centralization.

The profane theater took longer to go down to the masses. It began in the palaces of the kings and nobles, under the form of pageants, dances and mimic dramas. About the thirteenth century, plays were already given and the theater offered a robust life which was cut off at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The theater together with the rest of the Catalonian literature led a languid life until the revival of the Catalonian intellectualism.

E. From 1834 to 1850 Catalonia witnessed a revival of a literary life in which throbs the aspirations of the Catalonian people. The first play performed in Catalonian was "Tal farás tal trobarás." Other Catalonian authors follow. The first steps of the modern Catalonian theater were very uncertain and difficult on account of not having a playhouse of its own. On the other hand a powerful help given to the success of the first Catalonian plays was the excellent crop of Catalonian actresses and actors that sprang wholly unsuspected.

The real maker of the Catalonian Theater was Frederick Soler (1830-1896). He wrote parodies,

comedies, dramas and tragedies. His dramatic crop reaches near the two thousand mark.

The dramatic career of Soler has three periods.

The first period (1866-1878) the most valuable from an artistic point of view. Free from foreign influences, he wrote the genuine Catalonian comedy.

The second period (1879-1888) he worked under the influence of the Spanish dramatic author,

Echegaray. He wrote violent dramas without reaching the melodramatic note of horror that Echegaray could attain. The third period (1888-1896) he tried to write tragedies and biblical dramas in his fight against Guimerá. He failed in his attempt and died.

He is considered the founder of the modern Catalonian Theater.

A cluster of second rate authors accompanied Soler in his endeavours.

F. Angel Guimerá (1849-1922) is the first tragic author of Catalonia and Spain and one of the best in Europe.

Two periods are to be observed in the artistic life of this author. The first period (1879-1894) is the period of his tragedies. They carried his name all over Europe. His second period, from 1894 until his death is the

period of his problem plays in prose.

Two outstanding works of Guimerá are known in all the literary centers over the world, and these are "Mar i Cel", a tragedy, and "Terra Baixa", a drama. He is the genius of the Catalonian Theater.

- G. From 1893 to 1902, the Catalonian theater was influenced by the foreign thought, but it did not lose its individuality. The Norwegian authors with Ibsen at the head came to Barcelona. Symbolism was studied in Maeterlink and decadentism in D'Annunzio. The Italian realism came with the Italian dramatic troupes that visited Barcelona so often and they still do. In the same way, the intellectuals of Barcelona became acquainted with the French modern dramatic works of the best authors.

Two fields appeared in the Catalonian theater-- the realistic field with Iglesias and the symbolistic field with Adriá Gual.

- H. Ignasi Iglesias (1863-1926) introduced the modern play with socialistic tendencies. He was the apostle of the working classes and he must be considered as the most important figure in the dramatic crop during the first decade of the twentieth century.

His best success was "Els Vells", a drama in three acts. It is a generous play championing

the rights of the old workingman when he is discharged because he cannot do any more work.

Adrià Gual was the leader of the symbolist group. He was the founder of the "Teatre Intim," where young authors found an excellent occasion to become acquainted with the public. The dramatic works of Adrià Gual are limited in number and of excellent quality. He exaggerates the obscurity and the mystery their characters display to hide their feelings and emotions. His best play is "Lo Silenci". Among the eccletics, the most conspicuous figure is Santiago Rusiñol. Rusiñol, besides being an excellent dramatic author, is also a painter. His sense of humor is crisp and corrosive and has many points of contact with Bernard Shaw.

He has several successes, and among the best are "L'Eroe", "La Mare", "Lo Mistic", and above all, "L'Alegria que passa".

- I. The last group to be mentioned is the futurists. The most prominent are Puig i Ferrater, Sinió and Recasens. Their plays are incomplete but very vigorous. They are characterized by a brutal realism and the most important work of this group is "La Dona Lletja" by Puig i Ferrater.

J. With the triumph of the political programme of the Catalanistas, the theater entered into a period of indifferent abandonment on the part of the public and authors.

The military dictatorship brought the suppression of the Catalonian liberties. It seems that a period of struggle is about to begin and with it the Catalonian theater will recover the life and importance it is entitled to enjoy.

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