



Summer 6-17-1929

Romanticism in the Novels and Legends of Gertudis Gomez de Avellaneda

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ROMANTICISM
IN THE NOVELS AND LEGENDS
of
GERTRUDIS GÓMEZ DE AVELLANEDA

A Thesis Submitted as a Partial Requirement
for the Degree of Master of Arts

Romance Language Department

by

Jean W. Mander

BUTLER UNIVERSITY

June 17

Nineteen Hundred Twenty-Nine



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INTRODUCTION

ROMANTICISM IN THE NOVELS AND LEGENDS

of

GERTRUDIS GÓMEZ DE AVELLANEDA

1. INTRODUCTION

Notwithstanding the adverse criticism given the prose works of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda by such men as Cejador y Frauca,- "Escribió¹ hermosas leyendas, pero como novelista es media", and Fitzmaurice-Kelly,- "As a novelist Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda is less notable",² I have found her novels and tales to be worthy of consideration. They are extremely romantic, some being full of the fantastic and grotesque, while others are historical similar to those of Sir Walter Scott. These romantic novels have a genuine and natural charm which makes them very pleasing to read. Most of them have been called "sentimental trash", but still they contain numerous qualities of Romanticism at its best. It will be my duty and pleasure to bring out these characteristics as Avellaneda portrayed them and thus prove that there is something more to her novels and tales than most critics believe.

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1. Cejador y Frauca - "Historia de la Lengua y Literatura Castellana" - Vol. VII, p. 289
 2. Fitzmaurice-Kelly - "Spanish Literature - a Primer" - Oxford Press 1922, p. 104

I shall do this by discussing Spanish Romanticism and the Spanish Romantic novel. After stating the facts of her life, an attempt will be made to give in some detail the substance of all her prose works. The opinion of critics will be quoted, and then I shall conclude this study with a statement of the qualities of Sra. de Avellaneda's romanticism and the tales in which each may be found.

I. ROMANTIC NOVEL IN SPAIN

(a) Qualities of Romanticism

In his introduction to Hartzenbusch's "Los Amantes de Teruel", Umphrey defines Romanticism as, - "Romanticism was a revolt against pseudo-classicism which means the extreme opposite of the prosaic or commonplace", and then he gives eight characteristic qualities.

First is subjectivity, which meant that the author expressed his own individual feelings and ideas, instead of someone's else. This, however, led to many abuses as well as the production of a few masterpieces.

Second is emotional appeal, which was a rebellion against restraint, such as logic or common sense. The Romanticist wanted to carry the reader off of his feet completely.

Spiritual awakening was a rebellion against the materialistic side of life. This was the reason for the melancholy and violent revolts in many works.

Next is the revival of Middle Ages and national traditions. In this they sought material in the Middle Ages which was a time of "unrestrained

feelings and emotions, of chivalrous adventure, of romance, of strong religious faith, of miracles and superstitions".⁴ The historical novel knew popularity at this time, and the whole movement had a patriotic significance for Spain. What an age for a wealth of material for these Romanticists!

Picturesqueness is another characteristic since these writers were attracted by the grotesque, the ugly mingled with the beautiful, the commonplace with the fantastic. In such as these revelled George Sand, the French novelist, Byron, the English poet, and Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, the Cuban dramatist, poetess, and novelist.

The next quality, given by Umphrey, is a love of inanimate nature. These strange Romanticists loved nature for her own sake,- in any of her moods. If these were violent or grandiose the greater was the Romanticists' admiration.

Freedom from rule and conventionality in literary form and technique is another big factor in this movement. The heavy cumbersome rules of Classicism were tossed to the four winds. The dramatist neglected the unities, the poet cast aside set rhyme schemes, no two novelists had the same ideas

4. Hartzenbusch - "Los Amantes de Teruel", p. XXIII

about the composition of novels.

The last quality is the richness in language which is apparent in all branches of this movement. Instead of restricting their vocabulary, the Romantists sought complete and effective self expression. "They used effectively highly colored, picturesque words and diction".⁵

Now that we know the attributes of this great literary movement, it is necessary to discover the source from which the Romantic novel entered the peninsula, and why it was so readily accepted by the natives.

(b) The Spanish Romantic Novel

González-Blanco says,- "El Romanticismo en España era un vegetal francés con injertos británicos, Es una planta que trajimos de la Galia a nuestro jardín de aclimatación; pero al venir de su tierra natal estaba ya veleada de británismo".⁶ This definition is splendid. Under Fernando VII nearly all the leading men of letters were liberally inclined, and thus they were forced to live in exile. They flocked to London and Paris, and when they returned in 1833, they were steeped in the romantic movement which had swept these other

5. Hartzenbusch - "Los Amantes de Teruel", p. XXV

6. González-Blanco- "Historia de la Novela en España"
Madrid 1909, p. 82

countries.

All critics agree that this trans-Pyrenean element was the most powerful in the composition of Spanish Romanticism. The two distinct sources, then, were the French Romantic novel and the historical novel of Sir Walter Scott. González-Blanco declares that this movement was nothing but an imitation of French and English authors.⁷ It is true that the first channel was a perusal of romantic translations. In 1830 Federico Moreno published his translation of Scott's novels, and these were followed by many poor imitations. The first one was "Gómez Arias", written in English by a Spaniard who was living in London. The first imitation of Scott, written in Spanish, was "Los Bandos de Castilla" by López Soler, who declared that he wished to apply Scott's method in the treatment of a Spanish subject. In the "Estrella" of December 1833 Scott was called "the Cervantes of Scotland" and was held in high esteem by the Spaniards.

Some attributed the renewed interest in national literature to Scott, Byron and Hugo. The only noteworthy imitation of Scott was Enrique Gil y Carrasco's "El Señor de Bembibre" (1844), which González-Blanco⁸ called "la mas bella novela de la época romántica".

7. Ibid

8. Edwin Bucher Williams - "Life and Dramatic Works of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda" - p. 12, note 16

Many considered it an imitation of Scott's "Bride of Lammermoor". Even Larra's "El Doncel de don Enrique" has the appearance of a Scott novel. These historical novels followed the manner of the English writer, but they took points from Spanish history. They were like "una vasta urdimbre de lances aspurados, abigarradas fisonomías y castellos en el aire, cuyo único objeto consistía en agitar violentamente los nervios, la sangre, y la curiosidad. Con tal de que la acción resultara interesante, haciendo asomar las lágrimas a los ojos, todo lo demás era accesorio ó inútil".⁹

The influence of the French Romantic novel produced more numerous, although even less important, imitators than the influence of Scott. It started with Mariano Cabrerézis' collection of translations of mediocre pre-romantic French novels. The pace was set by Eugene Sue, Alexandre Dumas and George Sand.

In comparing these two influences, Romera-Navarro says that the French current had a tendency to make historical background fantasy, while the English vein produced medieval reality with pictures of customs and types, even to the smallest details.¹⁰ "La segunda objetiva y meramente artística, produce en España las mejores novelas; la primera corriente, subjetiva y con

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9. Blanco-Garcia - "La Literatura española en el siglo XIX" - p. 373
 10. Romera-Navarro - "Historia de la literatura española" p. 500

tendencia antisocial frecuentemente el mayor número¹¹
de novelas".

With all due credit to these exiled men of letters, we must not forget that the native surroundings played a great part in this movement. Spain was always romantic, and thus this new kind of literary influence fit exceptionally well. The poetic verse which displayed Romanticism was the "romance", which had always been used in the peninsula. The first thing that this new movement did was to embrace again the "romance" and the romantic "leyenda". The Romantic was just the old chivalric bond resuscitated. It came from the same Germanic fountain, and it was born with the same spirit. Fit for children and uncultured people, the Spanish public became fond of it, the same as all European countries, and thus the movement was popular.

In spite of these three influences which I have discussed, we have such adverse criticism of the Spanish romantic novel as that given by Williams in his "Life and Dramatic Works of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda",¹² - "Nothing was produced that is even remembered today with the exception of the works of

11. Ibid

12. (These were translations and imitations of French authors.)



Fernández y González." Romera-Navarro agrees, but states it a little differently, - "no nos dejó el romanticismo ni una sola novela que puedo compararse con los grandes obras maestras que produjo en el resto del Continente y en Inglaterra".¹³

Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda was one of the imitators of these trans-Pyrenean novelists, as her novels "Sab", "Guatimozín", and "Espatolino" show. There is in her prose works - "un desbordamiento de pasiones y una exaltación ardente y continua, debidos en parte a los influencias románticas y en parte a las condiciones del sexo y quizá también a las del país en que vino al mundo y pasó los años de su infancia".¹⁴ By studying her life, we may learn the reason for these strange emotions.

13. Romera-Navarro - "Historia de la literatura española" p. 500

14. Blanco-García - "La Literatura española en el siglo XIX" - p. 374

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST PART OF THE SECOND VOLUME

II. BIOGRAPHY

Although there is some argument as to whether Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda was born March 23, 1814, or 1816, the former date is given the preference. Thus March 23rd, 1914, a celebration was held in Puerto Príncipe, commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of her birth. Of this Cuban town Mariano Aramburo y Machado says in his "Discurso", - "De aquella región de misterio que ni la ciencia ni la intención han sabido descubrir todavía, donde se reciben gratuitamente los dones con que al destino place adornar a cada criatura, traje la Avellaneda consigo fuego de amor en su corazón, alas de genio en su voluntad, soberanía de diva en toda su persona".¹⁵ Although born in Cuba, she came of pure Spanish stock on both sides of her family. Her father was her best friend during her infancy, and she mourned his death with elegy-like verses at the age of six years.

Little is known about her education, but it is believed to have been limited to home instruction, and what she learned from the reading of poetry. The first sign of her literary genius was her verses. However, her parents strongly objected to verse -

15. Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda - "Obras"
Vol. I, p. VIII. Habana edition.

writing, and under heavy pressure, she was forced to give it up. Never having found any companionship with children of her own age, and now being forced to give up her only pleasure, she became melancholy and pessimistic. She was still allowed to read poetry, and so, as a diversion, she began to translate French verse into Spanish. Her next interest was in the drama, and being forbidden to read them, she composed her own. Thus at an age when she should have been playing with dolls, Avellaneda was writing plays. Her first story was written at the age of eight, and was based on a Camagueyana tradition - "El Gigante de cien cabezas". From the very beginning her stories displayed her intense interest in the fantastic.

Scarcely a year had passed since her father's death when her mother married again, - this time Señor Escalada, a Spanish naval officer. After eight years of separation, due to the duties of Sr. Escalada, Avellaneda's mother complied with her husband's wishes and moved to the northwestern part of Spain. Before leaving the island, two months were spent in Santiago de Cuba, and there Avellaneda made her first verses which were favorably

received. Her poem "Al Partir", was written upon her departure from her native island, and into it she poured all her grief at leaving her beloved Cuba.¹⁶

They landed at Burdeos, and there she got her first ideas for "El Artista Barquero", one of her long novels. After residing in Cádiz, Seville, and Constantine, visiting friends and meeting men of letters, she moved to Madrid with her family in 1840. By her writings she won the admiration and esteem of many eminent men, - among them De Rivas, Espronceda, Zorrilla, and Gallego. A Spanish newspaper, "El Liceo", conducted a literary contest for poetry and la Avellaneda submitted two poems, - one in her brother's name, and one in her own name. The former won first prize and the other second place. The board of managers presented her with two golden laurel wreaths, and due to this she won the esteem of the Spanish queen.

In the capital she met Rocafort, a young man who loved her and for whom she cared, but her ideas, taken from this world of romanticism in which she lived, did not coincide with his and so the affair ended. Afterwards, she fell in love with a man who did not return her affection, Cepeda, and

16. At this time Avellaneda was described as a type most admired on the Island - tall, well-built, clear, dark complexion, with rosy cheeks, dark hair and eyes, and a sweet, melodious voice.

from this great disappointment came much of her best verse. In 1846 she married D. Pedro Sabater, more for heroic sentiment of duty than for love. He was a political personage in Madrid and an invalid. Shortly after the marriage, he died, and she spent the few months of bereavement in the convent at Burdeos, during which time she wrote sad elegies. In 1853 she was invited to try for a seat in the Academy, but the Academy decided against accepting a woman. Her great disappointment was shown in her novel "Dos Mujeres" which appeared shortly after this. In 1855 she married Colonel Domingo Verdugo Massieu who occupied a seat in the Cortes. Because of her husband's failing health, caused by a wound received in a duel with one of the queen's ministers, over a play of Avellaneda's, they took a trip to Cuba. Here she was enthusiastically received and solemnly crowned in Habana in 1860. Massieu died at Pinar del Río in 1863 and her brother, Manuel, took her back to Spain by way of America. While here, she visited the wonderful Niagara and was so struck by its beauty that she composed a poem of the same name. In 1868, her brother, whom she loved more than life itself, was taken from her, and it is said that this last grief

unhinged her mind. However, she was in a nervous condition, her sight began to fail, and she felt a great bitterness toward the whole world. She survived Manuel only five years, dying in 1873 at the age of fifty-nine. Some wanted her remains brought to Camaguey for their final rest, as it was claimed that she was Spanish to the core, in spite of her Cuban birth.

Her literary activity was strenuous, as she wrote poetry, dramas, and novels, but her fame rests on the first two. Her best known dramas are "Baltasar", which embodies the well-known biblical incident of the writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast, and "Alfonso Munio". Her poems were numerous. The best of them dealt with Cuba, her native land. Both her dramas and poems are romantic in treatment, as are her novels.

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CHAPTER III

III. EXAMINATION OF HER PROSE WORKS

The majority of the prose works of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda are legends based on fantastic tradition, of different countries. They translate the enchanted world of fables, symbolism and mythology. As one critic¹⁷ has declared that she was much better as a writer of legends than of novels, I shall deal with them first.

"La Dama de Ambota"

"La Dama de Ambota" is built around a Basque tradition, a story telling why the top of Mt. Echaguen bears a different name from the base. Sra. de Avellaneda visited the Basque country and in it picked up many traditions for her legends.

María Urracas, the beautiful daughter of a Basque gentleman, was heiress to his wealth and castle. However, a second marriage and the birth of a son, left María penniless, as it was the custom to disinherit the weaker sex. With her father's death, her brother D. Pedro assumed the leadership of the family. As time went on and María showed no preference for any young man, her friends began to concern themselves over her strange fits of

17. See note (1)

melancholy.

One day, during a hunt, her spirited mount ran away and carried her into a deep thicket. Her brother followed, as soon as he knew the danger, but, when neither had returned by nightfall, a band of hunters started a search in a blinding storm. The next morning María returned, alone, claiming that Pedro's horse had thrown him, and he had been killed. The search party found his body, but his heart was pierced by an arrow. Gossip prevailed, and due to her inheritance from her brother, María now had many suitors. In spite of her beauty, wealth, and suitors, María never smiled, and some peculiar illness seemed to be affecting her health. Doctors were unable to chase the shadow from her face, or make her understand that no one was persecuting her.

Her illness became delirium, and she constantly referred to her brother's death, claiming that he had fought with an unknown horseman and had been mortally wounded. Trying to escape this delirious dream, María got up from her bed and ran off into the stormy night. She was found at the bottom of Mt. Echaguen, dead. The popular belief was that she had

killed her brother, and that brooding over the act had caused her to take her own life.

The top of this mountain was named "Ambota", because, in the Basque language, it means - "allí arrojar", or the phrase "de allí fué arrojada". The Basques believe today that María's soul wanders among the thickets. Whenever clouds cover the top and the lightning flashes, every one prays, because they believe that they are signs, that the Dama de Ambota has escaped from her tomb and is foretelling fatalities.

"La Flor del Ángel"

This is another Basque tradition. "La Dama de Ambota" portrays powerful Basque grandes, while "La Flor del Ángel" gives us the pure customs of the mountain Basque - the nobleman Ondarra being a noble type.

Rosa loved her playmate, Felix Erlia, but he had the disfavor of her parents as he was poor. To get rid of the youth, Rosa's father gave him two years in which to acquire a fortune. If he were successful, he should return March 1st, the feast

day of Ángel Custodia, and Rosa would be his bride. If he did not accomplish the task he was not to return, and Rosa was to be given to any man her father might choose.

The day before his departure, the two lovers wandered along the river bank and there discovered "la flor del ángel" in full bloom. Felix told Rosa he was leaving for the New World in order to seek gold, and if he did not return on the set day she would know that he had died. Glancing at the flower, he discovered a bee sipping the honey, and comparing himself to the insect, he told Rosa he would be faithful to her as long as the bee would remember that flower. Every day after his departure, she visited the flower and always found the bee there. As she heard no word from week to week, she believed that the angels sent the bee in order to calm her soul. During the winter, she thought he had ceased to care, but when Spring came and the bee returned to the flower, she knew he was still faithful.

Antón Ondarra, a retired mariner in the village, loved Rosa, but she regarded him as a true friend and nothing else. One day they both went to

the wharf to welcome Felix's ship, as it returned. The captain informed the maiden that Felix had saved the life of a Jamaican settler and, as a reward, had been given the man's only daughter. The heartbroken Rosa returned to the "flor del ángel", but found the bee still faithful. Believing Felix unfaithful, she crushed the flower and the bee between her hands, but took the remains home.

Her grief caused her to promise to marry Ondarra, and the wedding arrangements were made. Too late she realized she had not waited the promised two years, but her word had been given to Antón. All through the winter she fulfilled her wifely duties, but she was never happy. The last day of February a terrific storm broke loose and, in the midst of it, Rosa believed someone to be calling her. After a sleepless night, she ran to the river, but saw no signs of a ship. Then she hurried to the angel bush and found the flowers were not blooming, but, beside the plant, stood Erlia, just as he had promised.

Felix accused her of being unfaithful while she tried to excuse herself by claiming that she had been deceived. The youth, noticing her

grief, forgave her when she showed him the crushed remains of the flower and the bee, which she kept in a locket. As a last request, he asked Rosa to place the trinket in his tomb when he died, and she promised.

Erlia, with his accumulated wealth, returned to care for the family who had taken him when he was an orphan. A short time later he developed tubercular trouble and died. Anton took his wife to the funeral and she fulfilled her promise, by scattering the dried flower over his grave. There she promised to join him in a short time, as her guardian angels had pardoned her. They had told her that, as soon as a plant with seven flowers appeared on Felix's grave and seven bees came there to feed, she would be taken to join her lover.

Each day after the first appearance of the plant, she returned to his grave. There she noticed that, when the first bee flew into the first half-open bud, it was unable to escape, as it became inseparably united with the flower. At the opening of the sixth bud, Rosa became ill, and the final rites of her church were administered. The next morning, at her request, Antón carried her to the grave, and,

as she clasped the seventh flower, her spirit fled and Ondarro picked up a corpse. Rosa was interred with Felix, and the flower on their grave received a new name, - "la flor de la abeja", because it no longer bloomed the first of March, but, instead, at the beginning of the month in which they were united in heaven.

"El Aura Blanca"

Padre Valencia was a religious old man of the order of St. Francis in Puerto Príncipe. Leprosy was prevalent in the town and no one would offer aid except the old padre, who frequented their homes. Finally he took a basket on his shoulders and went from door to door, begging money for a hospital. After a few years, an asylum was built, and, as long as he was at its head, numerous blessings fell on the place and many were cured.

After his death, a terrible famine came upon the town, and many were the beggars who appeared in the streets. They had to be fed, so the hospital no longer received donations, and it was barely able to keep going. Each morning the members prayed at the tomb of their benefactor for help. A flock of birds

would come to pick up the few crumbs, and the patients called them vultures, as they believed them to be waiting for their flesh. One morning there appeared an unknown bird. Cuban vultures had red, scabby heads, black wings, and hard eyes, but this new bird was white as a swan, from head to foot, and had the sweet melancholy eyes of a dove. The black vultures fled in terror, but the new bird became quite friendly and tame.

Now there was circulated the rumor that Padre Valencia had come back in the form of this white bird. The superstitious people wished to see for themselves, so the asylum charged an admission fee of a small amount. The money increased daily, as persons from all over the country flocked to the hospital. How long the bird stayed or when it went, no one knows, but they still claim that the old padre took care of his loved ones even after his death.

Sra. de Avellaneda wished to consecrate a legend to her native town and this was the result. "Tiene esta leyenda moderna el mérito de ser verdadero y de honrar la memoria de un varon justo, cuya caridad, traspasando los límites ordinarios de esta

virtud, entraba de lleno en la esfera del heroism si hemos de hablar en lenguaje mundano, en la de la santidad si adoptamos el tecnicismo de la Iglesia Católica".¹⁸

"La Montaña Maldita"

The criticism of Leopoldo Augusto de Cueto on this legend is sufficient, - "Es una de las más breves, pero la que encierra acaso entre todas más provechosa y severa enseñanza. La leyenda no razona, no analiza, no declama; siente y obra que oración, que tratado, que explicación dogmática puede anatematizar con mayor fuerza y energía la ingratitud filial que la tremenda catástrofe de la "Montaña Maldita".¹⁹

Several pages of the introduction are given entirely to description, minute and picturesque descriptions of the Swiss mountains in the dead of winter. Walter Muller, the illegitimate son of Marta Muller, had his home and property on Blumlislap, which meant "Montaña Florida". He had wealth and all his heart could desire, while his mother lived in poverty near his fruitful lands. He was kind and liberal to his servants, but he never thought of

18. Castillo de González - "Biografía de G. G. de Avellaneda" - p. 37

19. Cueto, Leopoldo - "Noticias literarias" - p. 410

helping his mother. Because of the circumstances of his birth, he looked on her with spite.

As the years went on Marta's health became poor and she decided to go to live with Walter. The night she appeared at his door, he was entertaining his neighbors, and her arrival interfered with his plans. When he discovered the reason for the visit, he ordered her to leave before dark, and he would pay her a certain sum of money. As the return journey would be too long and rough for her weary limbs, she asked permission to sleep in the stable until morning. At Walter's remark that he thought too much of his beasts, she lost control of her tongue and left him with this curse,- " ¡Maldito seas! ²⁰ ¡Malditas tus riquezas y la montaña que habitas!"

As she reached the bottom of the mountain a terrible storm broke loose and, in the midst of it, a heavy rumbling was heard. In the calm of the next morning, the people saw that "La Montaña florida" had been converted into a sad monument of ruin by an avalanche. Walter Muller and his property had been whirled from sight, but his mother was found, dead, near the ruins. Since then Blumlislap has never

20. "La Montaña Maldita" - Vol V, p. 641 - Habana edition of Avellaneda's "Obras"

bloomed and "la Montaña Maldita" stands a cracked rock, shrouded in perpetual snows, - "como si en lo adelante no fuese otro su destino que señalar hacia el cielo, para que ninguno olvide que allá reside el poder, vengador de todos los delitos que la justicia humana deja impunes."²¹

"El Donativo del Diablo"

ó

"La Velada del Melecho"

The night before a holy festivity Juan Bautista Keller, the richest stock-farmer in Meirivue, entertained in his country mansion with a feast. His daughter, Ida, loved by all the young men, refused to dance with anyone until the handsome Arnolfo Késsman appeared. From his hands, so white and smooth, it was known that he was not a worker in the fields, but instead a page to Count Montsalvens, a feudal lord of Helvetia. During the feast he sat near Ida and they conversed about a certain Count de Charmey, a wealthy young man who had offered to help Ida and Arnolfo, since her father was adverse to his attention. In the middle

21. Castillo de González - "Biografía de Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda" p. 36 Habana 1887

of the approaching storm Count de Charmey entered, and someone began to talk about the story of "la Velada del helecho" and how the devil sold for a price. De Charmey gave an example of a youth, who, following the advice of his old nurse, sold himself to the devil in order to acquire riches to gain the hand of his beloved.²² Késsman, upon hearing this tale, arose and went forth into the stormy night. He chose the "road to Eve" - the mysterious path in the story. Ahead, in the darkness, as the bells tolled the midnight hour, he saw a sinister figure.

After an absence of three days, Ida met Arnoldo at a dance on Mt. Mokesan. He had left the count's employment and was on his way to ask her father for her hand. He showed Juan Bautista his wealth, but refused to tell from whence it came. The marriage date was set for Ida's 18th birthday. Soon after the wedding, notice came that the Count of Montsalvens had been robbed, and because of the mystery surrounding Késsman's wealth, he was taken to prison. The robbery consisted of some letters and the Count, believing Arnoldo guilty of the theft, asked that they be returned. The youth confessed, telling how the devil asked for these

22. There was one belief that whoever took the devil's gold became his servant for life; another was that God made the devil do kind deeds in order to punish himself.

letters in return for money, and so he was imprisoned.

An interview between Montsalvens and de Charmey cleared up the mystery, as the latter was the devil who had asked Arnol'do for the letters. Upon the threat of de Charmey to expose information in the letters, the Count promised to free Arnol'do and clear him of all guilt. Baron de Charmey met Vessman upon his release, told him the contents of the papers and how he had saved the good name of Arnol'do's family. The papers also proved that Arnol'do and de Charmey were brothers, and so, like a fairy tale, - "they lived happily ever after".

Of this Rodríguez-García says, "He ahí un argumento que pudo servir para una ópera escrita según la moda de entonces"²³. It appeared in 1845 and is founded on a Swiss tradition. Mountainous countries have always been rich in fantastic legends. Things which appear natural to us are given a fantastic twist by the imagination of these pastoral people. "Así vemos en "La Velada del helecho" los puros y joviales costumbres de la Suiza, explayándose en risueños cuadros de amores, festivos y danzas, ligeramente oscurecidos por algún siniestro incidente,

23. Rodríguez García - "De la Avellaneda" p. 396

como conviene al fondo sombrío que les presta aquella abrupta naturaleza tan adecuada a la temerosa superstición de sencillos campesinos".²⁴ González also declares that the plot is too complicated and remains somewhat obscure. All the dialogues are made with the greatest skill, and details of little importance aid the action, but the key to the mystery is not given before the author wished to disclose it.

"La Ondina del lago Azul"

This is one of the most notable of her²⁵ fantastic novels. It is a Pyrenean legend, written during la Avellaneda's last excursion through the Pyrenees, and one of the prettiest of the series. "La Ondina del lago azul" tiene todo el espiritismo francés, habilmente combinado con la fina coquetría de ese pueblo alegre y simpático. Las bellas y poéticas descripciones de esta narración están envueltas en tan vaporoso idealismo. Gabriel es tan puro y tan soñador que "La Ondina del lago azul" parece feliz trasunto de "Espirita", esa filigrana de Teófilo Gautier".²⁶ Lorenzo, an old mountain guide, told this story to Avellaneda

24. Castillo de González - "Biografía de G. G. de Avellaneda" p. 32

25. Puchkin, the Russian poet, wrote a legend "Rusalka", which is the "Ondina" of Russia

26. Castillo de González - "Biografía de G. G. de Avellaneda" p. 35

and her brother when they found him weeping by the side of the deep blue lake.

Santiago had lost two sons and his wife in two years, and all that remained to him was a son Gabriel, a queer, handsome lad, who wandered through the mountains with a book of verse in his hand. When Lorenzo criticized him for not helping his father, Gabriel claimed that he wasn't of this world. He was searching for his ideal woman, whom he had seen in the evening twilight, and in the whiteness of the dawn. A rustling of the leaves caused both to look up and there, gazing down on Gabriel, were two blue eyes of soft beauty. Something startled the owner of them and she disappeared in a flash.

The next day Lorenzo started in the direction of the lake to tell Gabriel that his father had decided to send him away to school. There he found the youth on his knees, begging some unseen being to allow him to follow. Out of the silence a voice answered him, "The time has not yet arrived. Be content with seeing and hearing me". The voice was that of the water sprite of the lake. Moved by an unknown power, Lorenzo rushed toward Gabriel and

the sprite disappeared. The youth's disappointment caused him to turn on Lorenzo and shake him until he fell senseless. When the old guide recovered, no one was in sight and everything was quiet.

Many times Lorenzo returned to the lake and, once, while waiting, he fell asleep. Upon awakening, he saw, floating on the water, a barge manned by two ladies with streaming veils, while in the poop sat Gabriel and his water-sprite. As Lorenzo watched, the ship disappeared around a bend.

In the fall of the year Gabriel was absent for three days, and when found by the side of the lake, he refused to leave his post. Lorenzo was sent to beg him to leave and upon approaching the pool, the old man heard someone laughing, entreating, sobbing, and then, finally, a deep groan. Gabriel was unconscious on the ground, with blood streaming from his mouth. Lorenzo carried him to a near-by shepherd's home and, when the youth gained consciousness, the old man said that the water sprite ordered that he must not return until his health was better. From his cries in his delirium, Lorenzo learned that the water-sprite had not been there for three days and Gabriel thought she had left him.

Upon his recovery he was moved to his father's home. Santiago told him that Lorenzo had been deceiving him about the water-sprite, and that now he was going to take him to Tolosa for rest and quiet. At these words, Gabriel went insane and tried to escape. Seemingly on the road to recovery again, old Lorenzo was left to watch by his bed during the night. One evening he fell asleep, and, when he awakened, he found that the boy had escaped down the balcony by means of a sheet. Calling to Santiago, he hurried to the lake, but all they found was Gabriel's flute, lying on the bank, and they knew that he had joined his water-sprite.

Two years later, in Paris, Lorenzo saw a young lady returning from a hunt, whose eyes were identical with those of the water-sprite. Upon inquiring about her, he found that she was a widowed countess, who had spent some time in his part of the country almost three years before. Might this then not solve the mystery of the water-sprite?

"La Baronesa de Joux"

This legend of French origin has been somewhat debated. Doña Aereia Castillo says, - "Es un pavoroso cuadro del feudalismo en todo su barbarie"²⁷. Litjans says, - "Se hace notar por su desenlace trágico cuyo saber es el de los más acalorados delirios que produjo la fantasía romántica en sus días de mayor popularidad."²⁸ Castillo de González called it "un pavoroso cuadro del feudalismo en todo su barbarie, durante el siglo XII."²⁹ However, the legend is a marvelous painting, and one can almost believe that it was copied from an inferno.

Amauri, a young French Baron, oppressed by his father, threw all discretion to the four winds and entertained lavishly, after he had inherited this parental wealth. Always generous and kind, he gained the love and respect of his friends. In spite of friends and wealth he fell into a deep melancholy, from which not even his squire, Lotario, could arouse him. He wanted the most beautiful of all women for his wife, and he had found her in Berta de Luneville, who was pledged to the Baron de Monfacon. A family quarrel had cancelled the wedding of Berta and Aimer,

27. Rodríguez-García-"De la Avellaneda" p. 83

28. Ibid.

29. Castillo de González - "Biografía de G. G. de Avellaneda" p. 20

the baron, who loved each other devotedly. While Aimer was obtaining the necessary papers to straighten out the difference, Amauri asked for Berta's hand and was accepted by the parents. Aimer returned in time to see the wedding, and, overcome by grief and despair, he disappeared.

The happy honeymoon in the castle was short as Berta grew melancholy after hearing that Aimer had been killed in a crusade in England. Amauri, too, was far from happy, and, hoping to raise himself in his wife's estimation, he left on the second crusade.

Berta grew ill, and while the servants waited for the end, a singing troubador came to the castle. Thinking he might know something of Amauri, Lotario asked him to remain. This old man, with white hair and beard, appeared before Berta and told instead how Aimer Monfacon had escaped and was alive and well. Left alone with Berta for a moment, the troubador took off his beard, and there was Aimer in flesh and blood. The shock upset Berta, but, after recovering consciousness, she seemed improved, and the servants sent the troubador off with their blessings.

Soon after his departure, Lotario left the castle and no one knew the reason for his absence. He had gone to meet Amauri, on his way back from the crusade, to tell him that he had taken Aimer to the bridal chamber and thus dishonored Amauri. Knowing where Montfacon would go, the baron started in that direction.

The Baroness, hearing of her husband's return, had invited all the surrounding nobles to the de Joux castle for a feast in his honor. After the departure of the guests, her husband presented her with a box in which was the bloody head of Aimer. It was thought that the shock killed Berta, but the servants believed that her husband had closed her up in the castle and that Lotario had taken her food until she died. The following morning the servants found the headless body of a man in the cellar of the castle. From the bloody throat came this prayer,-

"Priez, vasseaux, priez à deux genoux,
"Priez Dieu pour Berthe de Joux".

"La Bella Toda"

An old dilapidated house, on one corner of a square in Bilbao, caused this story to be told—the house of "la bella Toda". An historical figure is falsified, however, and that is Isabel, the Catholic queen. Avellaneda attributed to her the unjust and cruel sentence of seclusion in a convent, which was given to Toda de Larrea. This sign of jealous vengeance is contrary to what history says in respect to the prudence and generosity with which Isabel dissuaded her rivals from the palace. Reduced to a simple narrative, this legend becomes too insignificant. It is strange that Avellaneda left it in such a state, being able to make an interesting novel of it.

Toda de Larrea's charms were so fascinating that she even made Ferdinand unfaithful. There was a child born of this madness, and Isabel ordered both mother and child to a convent in Madrigal. Years later a beautiful nun, known as "la monja angélica", received the garments of an abbess, and King Ferdinand de Aragón visited the convent that day.

"Los Doce Jabalíes"

"Los Doce Jabalíes" is another legend of the barbarous power and atrocious crimes of the feudal age. It is another tradition of la Plaza de Mercado in Bilbao.

One man, at the wedding feast of Elvira de Vezcaya and Juan de Avendaño, offered no congratulations, and he was Lazania, a young knight who loved Elvira. Lazania was a great favorite of Elvira's brother, Tello, the prince. Sometime later, Tello gave a feast and, as entertainment, offered to spear twelve boars that were in the ring. Elvira and her husband were invited as her brother's guests. As the prince tried to spear the animals, his horse took fright and he was injured. Avendaño wished to punish the horse, and his success angered don Tello. A whispered remark from Lazania calmed him, and he told Avendaño that he would reward him later.

That night three men demanded entrance to the young couple's room and, deliberately seizing Avendaño, they killed him in the presence of the young wife, and threw his body out of the window to the wild boars below. Elvira took her son and fled to a convent. The rumor prevailed that Avendaño

had returned in the night to behead the boars for his wife, but that they had attacked him and killed him.

"El Cacique de Turmequé"

This, an American legend, paints with an exact artist's brush one of the tumultuous pictures of the New World in which heroism and perversity struggled all the time. Avellaneda's great skill consists in bringing public incidents to form a plot of the finest texture. "The incomparable Estrella is a woman diabolically lovely, who, loving frenziedly, forgetting without knowing how and always enamored, arrives at a tragic end."³⁰

In order to settle trouble in New Granada, the Spanish queen sent Juan Bautista Monzón to quell the disorder. Due to his policies, two parties were formed - the Monzonistas and the Lopistas, the latter named after the former president. A member of Monzón's party was infatuated with a married woman, which fact provoked Monzón. The woman in question was Estrella, the wife of a Spanish sea captain. She was not a bad woman but just strange.

30. Castillo de González - "Biografía de Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda" p. 40

She had married because her husband was noteworthy, but, after two years, she despised him. Meeting Orozco she had made him believe that they were made for each other alone, and the young man had become infatuated. However, as all the other young women, Estrella was intensely interested in the Cacique de Turmequé, a young man of royal American blood, known by the name Diego de Torres. He very seldom appeared in public, but this made him all the more mysterious and interesting.

In order to help Orozco's wife, Monzón ordered the sea captain to a distant charge, and commanded that Estrella go with him. She was overjoyed when she found that the new destination was Turmequé.

Incognito, Orozco met Estrella many times, and once he discovered her making love to the Indian chief. Disclosing his presence, the two men fought as Estrella fled. Returning later she found no trace of either, except for a pool of blood on the grass in the garden. Monzón had been spying on Orozco, and he was informed that the youth had fought a duel with an unknown assailant, had been found seriously wounded by Diego de Torres and was now con-

valescing at the latter's home.

Now a rumor spread about that the Indians under the Cacique de Turmequé were planning to seize the government. Monzón sent his spy to interview the Cacique, who sent word that he would need Monzón's help. Orozco, although a prisoner, had a police system and he sent word that his men should seize Monzón's messenger and bring him the letter. It was discovered that the letter compromised both men, so Torres was imprisoned in his castle. The same spy, Roldán, took it upon himself to free de Torres, by taking him meat patties in which were concealed dangerous weapons. With Monzón's assistance, the Cacique was able to return to his people.

As soon as Estrella learned that Diego had returned to his people, she returned to her friend's home, in order to regain her strength. Many times she and the Indian met in secrecy, until her husband became suspicious. Sometime later, a servant told him of the whole affair and, in order to see his wife's reaction, he told her that de Torres had died in a shipwreck. The shock caused her death immediately, and after the proper period of mourning, the captain started out to settle with

Don Diego. Now, instead of finding him a chief, he discovered the Indian caring for the horses in the royal stable for a peseta a day. "¿Porqué vengarse el hombre, cuando la Providencia sabe de esta manera ³¹ volver por el ofendido castigando al ofensor?" - this was the bereaved seaman's philosophy.

This concludes the discussion of Avellaneda's legends, all built around traditions. Her long novels are few, and as a whole not so entertaining.

31. "El Cacique de Turmequé" - Vol. V Madrid edition-
"Obras de Avellaneda" p. 280

"Espatolino"

Among her long novels are some dealing with social problems. "Espatolino", the story of the Italian bandit, is a philosophical-social novel in which appears the problem of collective justice. Quoting from Dr. Arambura y Machado, - "El pensamiento artístico domina al pensamiento filosófica que luce secundariamente, y como natural consecuencia de la impresion por el arte causada. Con tal verdad y riqueza de colorido, con tanta energía y de modo tan magistral está hecho el retrato de aquel célibre bandido italiano, que en los primeros años del siglo alcanzó fama terrible por sus crímenes. Espatolino, criminal y escéptico, es una condenación de los deficiencias del Poder social; Espatolino arrepentido, creyente y castigo es un tributo de respeto a los rígidos principios morales".

This novel was reproduced in Habana by being printed in "La Prensa". In "Le Conte de Montecristo", Alexandre Dumas painted similar Italian bandits.

Rotoli, the Italian, and Dainville, the Frenchman, were discussing the Italian bandit who

32. Aramburo y Machado - "Personalidad literaria de Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda" pp. 190, 196

was head of a band of vagabonds near Rome. Dainville was accusing Rotoli of having received money from the bandit in order to pay his debts, but the Italian denied the reports. Biollecure, who was angry at Rotoli because the latter's niece refused to accept his attentions, claimed he had a letter which the Italian had written to Espatolino. Dainville also was enamored of Anunziata, and Rotoli had warned her that she had better accept him. Returning home, both men found Anunziata missing. Much upset, Rotoli claimed that Espatolino would be able to find her, and Dainville promised to forgive the bandit if he returned the maiden.

A youth, Pietro, was suspected of the kidnapping and, so he was thrown in prison at Dainville's command. His confession showed that he was a member of Espatolino's band, but he was not guilty of the crime. In fact, Anunziata had fled from Dainville, and had willingly joined a young man who had been courting her unknown to her uncle. She knew him only as Guiliano, but claimed she would love him no matter who he was. Every time he was on the point of a confession, an interruption occurred and so the deception continued.

Pietro was sentenced to death, but an old man, claiming to be the youth's father, came to Dainville and promised to tell where Espatolino could be found, provided that his son would be freed. The old man was really Espatolino in disguise, but Dainville did not know this until he received a letter from the bandit king.

Anunziata and Espatolino were very happy, but still the former was curious to know the life history of her lover. One day he told her the whole story. During his youth a certain Sr. Sarti had caused Espatolino to speculate and lose. This was his first cause for distrust, but the second followed shortly in the affair of his adopted sister, whom he loved passionately, with his best friend. In anger he fought Carlos and was cast into prison for wounding him. During his sentence he became a changed man, an avenger of the weak and oppressed. Upon his release, he found his family in desperate circumstances, and it was necessary to beg bread from door to door. His mother's death in the hospital at San Juan, and his father's death in prison caused him to join a band of robbers and swear eternal hatred to society. He never injured the poor, but was always after the rich. At the end of his confession,

Anunziata begged him to change his manner of living for her sake, and he promised, although it could not be done abruptly.

During his absence Anunziata had Pietro, her bodyguard, take her to Rome so that she might clear Espatolino's name, by offering the government money in her uncle's name. The note she left for the bandit king caused him to rush his band, disguised as workmen, to Rome, in order to find his wife. Anunziata discovered her mistake in hoping to help Espatolino, and, so, when the latter found her, they went to the house of a friend. There they awaited a letter from the government concerning his pardon. It came, but there was a condition with the pardon - Espatolino must turn over the entire band of vagabonds as an example. Of course he would not even consider such a thing until one of his faithful men told him that the band was planning to betray him.

Espatolino returned to his band for the last time and gave them money for a big feast. He was to have a meeting with Rotoli. The Italian, in order to get his confidence, told him that the government did not wish him to betray his men.

Espatolino, believing Rotoli was now a friend of his, handed him his guns as a sign of friendship and peace. Rotoli immediately called the gendarmes, and Espatolino was led to the banquet hall of his men. All were seized and imprisoned except Anunziata, whose uncle begged for her release. Some of the band received sentences of ten to twenty years, but Espatolino and ten of the bandits were sentenced to death. Anunziata visited her husband the night of his death, the next day she became insane and was confined to a hospital for the rest of her life.

This novel deals with an important social question, - the enduring of punishment and even death. "La novela tan atractiva ya por el asunto, subyuga además por el inimitable estilo con que está narrada."³³ We find places that contain fragments of eloquence, especially in the narrations of Espatolino. The moment before his death, when Anunziata told him of the coming of the child, was one of true atonement for the guilty man. Avellaneda portrays the Italian bandit as a person who "viene a representar la protesta del individuo sublevado contra la ley social, por considerarla ineficaz para reprimir el mal."³⁴ Her condemnation of capital punishment is sincere and ardent.

33. Castillo de González - "Biografía de G.G. de Avellaneda" Habana 1887 p. 19

34. Vidart - "La Novela de la edad moderna" - Vol. V, Madrid edition of her "Obras" p. 383

"El Artista Barquero"

O

"Los Cuatro Cinco de junio"

This novel of the French court in her century is sentimental, delicate, passionate and moving, - a melody of love. The story was inspired by an anecdote of Montesquieu, whose home Avellaneda visited on her first trip to Europe. Luis Vidart criticizes this prose work, - "El Artista Barquero" pudiere decirse que es un rayo de poesía que viene a iluminar la manchada memoria de Mme. de Pompadour.³⁵ Avellaneda has limited herself to showing how the corruption of flesh does not engender the corruption of spirit. Mme. de Pompadour carries to the end a heroic sacrifice, which exalts her in the reader's eye, and in which is shown that the sinner can arrive on occasions to heroism of virtue. In this novel, Avellaneda imagines something almost as the precursor of the makers of adventurous novels, the "novelones para cines", which fill entire columns in our newspapers today.

A young boatman of the Marseilles port, Huberto Robert by name, carried a stranger down

35. Vidart - "La novela de la Edad Moderna" p. 382

the river one day, and as the boy kept the boat moving, he unburdened his heart to the older man. He told that his desire was to be a landscape painter and an architect, that his father was in prison because his ship had been taken by pirates, that his family was in desperate circumstances, and that he loved the rich daughter of a merchant from the Spanish Antillas. When the stranger left, Huberto found a purse containing much money in his hand. He sought for his benefactor, but he had quickly disappeared in the crowd.

Josefina, the girl he loved, met him secretly, as her father opposed any attentions paid her by the youth. During one of these meetings, she told him of her life in Cuba and how her father was looking for someone to paint a shrine which he had built to commemorate an act of heroism. No one had been able to paint it to her father's satisfaction.

The next secret meeting was made impossible because Josefina's father discovered what was happening. There was a misunderstanding, and the two lovers did not see each other before Huberto had departed for Paris. This experience for the boy was

made possible through a mysterious letter, which informed him that an unknown benefactor had paid his expenses for two years' work under a great master in the capital. While there he studied particularly Cuban art. His first picture depicted his meeting with the unknown man at Marseilles. Mme. de Pompadour purchased the picture, and wished an audience with the artist. The audience was arranged for the next morning, and Mme. de Pompadour was so pleased with him that she presented him with a watch.

Before he had left Marseilles, Huberto had written Josefina a note in which he promised to return the next fifth of June. He kept his word, but no sooner had he arrived, than his master sent word for him to return immediately, as he was to be presented at the court of Versailles. This audience was very satisfactory as the king took him under his patronage and asked him to make a fountain, commemorating his love for Mme de Pompadour. After a short time, Huberto discovered that the marchioness loved him and he wished to leave her patronage.

At the crucial moment a letter arrived from his mother, telling him that Josefina was to be married the next month. The young girl had heard rumors of her lover and Mme de Pompadour, and she

believed that he no longer cared for her. Huberto wished to give her a gift, so he threw himself into his work and painted a masterpiece. After its completion he fell ill and dreamed that Josefina called to him to return. The marchioness, in disguise, visited him and heard him pour out his love for Josefina. After his recovery, Mme de Pompadour sent him back to Marseilles, promising to still be his friend should he return to Paris wounded to the heart.

By careful planning Huberto saw Josefina and hung his gift in her room. Her father was so pleased that he welcomed the youth as he was now an outstanding artist. However, the wedding must go on as he had given his word of honor to the young man's father. Huberto left the city to return to Paris, but as the coach was leaving, M. Caillard ran down the road calling to him that Monsieur S's father had objected to the marriage.

Huberto and Josefina were married February tenth, and Mme de Pompadour entertained lavishly in their honor. A few years later, Huberto discovered that his kind benefactor had been Baron de Montesquieu, who had died on their wedding day. The young couple paid tribute at his tomb for all his kindness. Mme de Pompadour lived nine years to watch the happily wedded life of Josefina and her famous artist husband.

"Dos Mujeres"

This novel, published in 1844, is believed to have been inspired by Mme de Staël's "Corinne". The spirit of liberty animates this one as it does "Sab". As in "Sab", she continued to explore the field of passion, but there is not the vigor and fire here as in her longer novel. This appears as the natural fruit of the epoch and of the circumstances in which (la) Avellaneda found herself when she was 28.

Aramburo y Machado says it is like Sand and yet it isn't. "Sand examina la cuestión desde un punto de vista menos elevado y su observación queda encerrada en horizontes menos amplios. Avellaneda trata con profunda filosofía y maduro conocimiento de las debilidades humanas, los pavorosos problemas que ocultos allá en el fondo de la sociedad conyugal asómanse diariamente a la superficie de ese lago tranquilo".³⁶

Vidart says, - "Indícase en "Dos Mujeres" que su autora había meditado largamente en esos oscuros problemas que se hallan en el fondo de la constitución de la familia. Se ocupó en pintar los dolores de los seres que se creen libres."³⁷ Some critics claim that George Sand wrote novels on

36. Aramburo y Machado - "Personalidad literaria de G. G. de Avellaneda" - p. 200

37. Vidart - "La Novela de la Edad Moderna" pp. 379-80

matrimonial subjects and that "Dos Mujeres" shows the influence of her works.

Don Carlos de Silva returned from school in Paris to discover that his cousin, Luisita, had grown into a charming young woman and, in fact, his idealized dream woman. After two weeks of courtship they were married and their life was one of saintly harmony, as Carlos gave up all social life because Luisita cared nothing for it. An interruption came in the form of a letter, which disclosed the fact that a relative had died in Madrid and Carlos was to go and collect the inheritance. The separation from his wife was a hardship, but he must carry out the request. His father wrote to two relatives, who were prominent in the court, asking that they show him around the capital. One was Elvira de Sotomayor and the other was known as the Countess de "S."

After his arrival in Madrid, Carlos found that he would be required to remain several weeks. Elvira de Sotomayor invited him to move to her home, and told him to entertain lavishly, whenever he so desired. She took him to many court functions and, at one of these, he heard much about Catalina, or the Countess de "S", who was known as the court coquette.

He despised her type and vowed that he would never have anything to do with her. When Catalina discovered that he said he could never respect a woman of her type, she decided to try and make him interested. By intricate plans, she got him to take her to various affairs and, in a short time, Carlos began to experience an infatuation for her. They discovered their love for each other, and although it was against Carlos' principles, as a man of honor, he could not withstand it.

Back in his home town, his wife had begun to notice the change in his letters, as he never spoke now about returning. His father finally took matters into his hands and insisted that Carlos return immediately, which orders the youth promptly disobeyed. Catalina had nursed him during an illness and, now, more than ever, he was deeply enamoured. Luisita finally went to Madrid to convince him that he should go back with her, but instead, he convinced her that she should return alone. However, upon questioning Carlos about Catalina, she was able to understand that the Countess de "S" was her rival.

About this time Carlos was named secretary to the Spanish Embassy in England, and he refused to

take his wife as her health was poor. Luisa discovered that Catalina was planning to go to London also, her excuse being - failing health. This was too much for the young wife, and so she went to see Catalina personally, told her how much she loved Carlos, and that she wanted him back again. She made the Countess realize that she had been doing a great wrong, and the latter wrote Carlos a letter before she retired that night. The same night, Carlos saw his wife and begged for her forgiveness, claiming that he needed her love more than anything. Early the next morning, Elvira called to tell Luisa that Catalina had committed suicide during the night, in order to free Carlos of her mysterious power. Luisa did not tell Carlos until they were en route for London. The shock caused him to become ill, but he vowed never to return to Madrid. Carlos climbed^b the social ladder in the English capital, and his beautiful wife was loved by his friends.

"Sab"

"Sab" is a Cuban novel, more interesting to us than "Dolores", "El Artista Barquero", or "Espatolino". This first novel is more Indo-American than "Guatimozín", and "El Cacique de Turmequé", other novels inspired by Spanish-American themes. "La Avellaneda gustaba pintar seres de excepción aunque de existencia posible, a la manera de un dramaturgo francés actual de los que más nos atraen. A uno de esos seres, a Sab, lo hace hacer Cubano, contemporaneo suyo, por lo que el libro nos lo pinta resulta uno de aquellos que ocupan un lugar intermedia entre la novela histórica y la de costumbres... el tema que en Sab se desarrolla tiene el mérito, si ese es uno, de no haber sido inspirado por los populares volúmenes de Miss Stowe sobre "La Cabaña del tío Tomás" pues estos fueron publicados entre 1850 y 1852 o sea once años más tarde que aquél".³⁸

Avellaneda does not confine herself to urging bread and good treatment for the slaves, but also asks equality of justice and social considerations. Sab is a character exceptionally generous, in love with a woman whom he can never call his, and

38. Hugo de Barbagelata - Introduction to "Sab" p. 11

whom he wishes to make happy at the cost of heroic sacrifices- even that of life.

In "Sab", "Guatimozín" and "Espatolino", our author enters protest against some of the conventions of society, and indulges, somewhat, in pessimism and misanthropy; while her attitude towards love and marriage occasionally suggests George Sand. Like Sand, she protested against conjugal slavery. Nicomedes-Pastor tries to classify "Sab",- "no es una novela histórica, ni de costumbres. Sab es una pasión, un carácter, nada más. Hay páginas magníficas, hay rasgos sublimes."³⁹ Avellaneda was occupied with telling the griefs and sorrows of a slave in her native island. She commenced it while passing through Lisbon, and many descriptions for it were taken from Seville, Granada, and Málaga.

The hero, Sab, was part African and part European, a slave held in high esteem by his master's family. Due to the influence of the senor's young daughter, who loved him as a brother, he had become educated and was a lover of good books. Carlotta, the young girl, was promised in marriage to Enrique Otway. The youth's family was considered wealthy, but there was a sign of decadence in their property,

39. Aramburo y Machado - "Personalidad literaria de Da G. G. de Avellaneda" p. 189

and so the match was made with Carlotta's father, who was known as the richest man in Puerto Príncipe. Carlotta saw in Enrique her ideal and loved him passionately. He, however, saw her only for her wealth, a fact which she never discovered until after their marriage.

One evening as he was about to leave her home and continue on his journey, a terrific Cuban storm could be heard in the distance. Fearing for his safety, Carlotta ordered Sab to accompany him. The slave, believing Enrique unworthy of her, found such an order distasteful, but he obeyed. As they rode along, the young man's horse stumbled and threw the rider, knocking him unconscious. The temptation to kill Enrique was strong within the mulatto, but, remembering Carlotta's, - "Take care of my Enrique, Sab", he carried him in his arms to the nearest village, where he was able to receive medical attention.

Sometime later, a trip was planned to the caves with Sab as the guide. The older people went in carriages while Carlotta, Enrique, and Sab led on horseback. Along the way, Sab told of a mysterious light in which the negros believed. They had seen it

recently and, according to tradition, meant that within a short time they would return to their own. The trip through the caves was one of excitement and pleasure.

On the return journey, Sab stopped to see an old negress and her grandson, Luis, who was very ill. The child loved Sab because he had at one time saved his life, and that of his dog, during a fire. While the slave was amusing the boy, Martina told Carlotta how much Sab had done for her in times of distress. The young girl's heart was touched by the story, and when she told her father, they pensioned the slave. He, however, would not accept the money, until Carlotta told him it was meant for the sick Luis.

Teresa, Carlotta's maid, alone knew Sab's passion for his young mistress, and in order to comfort him, she had given him a lock of Carlotta's hair in a bracelet. To her he poured out his agonized soul and then fled to the city. Later he returned to Martina's home contemplating suicide. The next day, Carlotta's wedding day, he sat down to write his master a letter, but at the exact hour that his young mistress was taking the marriage vows, he died of a stroke. Carlotta, saddened by Sab's death, retired to a convent for a short time.

Five years later, a nun, Sister Teresa, was dying of consumption in a convent, and she had sent for Carlotta. During these intervening years, the girl's father had died and she had inherited all of his wealth. She had wished to share it with her sisters and brother, but her husband forbade her that privilege. Many times she had fled from Enrique, realizing he did not love her but her wealth, and had visited her sister or Teresa at the convent. Now upon the nun's request, Carlotta again went to see her, knowing it to be the end. Teresa gave her the last letter that Sab had written, in which he returned the bracelet that Teresa had given him, and poured out his great love for her, his master's daughter. The news upset Carlotta, and after Teresa's death, she was seen to visit Sab's tomb many times. She returned to Puerto Príncipe, later, but from then her fate was unknown. Perhaps she buried herself in a nunnery until her death, but no one knows this to be true.

Chapter one is of the romantic savor of Scott, Cooper, Sand, and Mme de Staël. It is a short and vivid description of the place. Besides the landscape she gives an exact picture of the inside of

Señor de B's mansion,- the furniture simple but rich in design. Even the moon plays a romantic part, and then again, the sun casts bright shadows through the different rooms. Her picture of Carlotta is much as we would expect Scott to portray his heroines,- a graceful maiden of seventeen, with large beautiful dark eyes and a mass of flowing hair, which she wore in the fashion of "Goldilocks".

The action is far from swift, but it is offset by this description, which certainly never becomes monotonous, and by emotion, in which Avellaneda was most interested. Her understanding of the feelings of a person seems to have been one of her outstanding merits.

"Si comparais esta novela con "La Cabaña del tío Tom" observaréis al punto que ésta es más alegato que poema, mientos que "Sab" es una creación puramente artística; que la novela yankee es el vehículo que lleva a todas partes el generoso odio de su autor hacia la inhumana institución que pisotea la dignidad del hombre, mientras que la novela cubana tiene por base de sus méritas los bellezas de un carácter y los tormentos de una pasión individual. Ambas muestran la misma tendencia, pero el proceso psicológico es

destino en cada una; la primera se propone un fin trascendental; la segunda un fin puramente estético. Esta lo subordina todo a la belleza aquella todo lo pospone a la tesis. La obra de Miss Stowe va directamente a la reforma social; la obra de la Avellaneda se dirige resueltamente a la producción estética (En la una la novela es el medio y la forma; en la otra es la novela el fondo y el fin.) Ambas son abolicionistas; pero la una lo es porque así se propuso la autora que lo fuera, mientras que en la otra, el pensamiento sociológico aparece como derivación del fondo artístico que todo lo absorbe".⁴⁰

40. Aramburo y Machado - "Personalidad literaria de D^a G. G. de Avellaneda" pp. 188-190

"Dolores"

During Avellaneda's short stay in Habana, she wrote "Dolores". It is not a novel nor a legend, but just pages from a family chronicle. Castillo de González claims that it is her most beautiful prose work since, "La autora nos lleva a Valladolid⁴¹ y nos hace penetrar en la corte de Don Juan II." It is the pathetic history of Dolores and the terrible story of Doña Beatriz de Avellaneda. "Dolores fué el último poderoso destello del genio de la Avellaneda y si nada hubiese escrito antes, aquella obrita la hubiera colocado instantaneamente en el pequeño grupo de los grandes escritores formado por⁴² todas las nacionalidades."

In this sketch passion dominates pride, personified in the criminal arrogance of the Countess Beatrice. It is a domestic story, based on true incidents from the Avellaneda family, among whose illustrious ancestors there seemed to have been various victims of this idea of prevailing honor, in past times. "Puedo considerarse como un canto al progreso de la humanidad; pues después de leída fórmase la convicción de que los ideas de la Edad Moderna acerca

41. Castillo de González - "Biografía de G. G. de Avellaneda" p. 63

42. Ibid p. 66



del honor son sin duda alguna inferiores hasta a la teoría del interés personal, bien entendido, que es el más mezquino de los conceptos morales en nuestra época reinantes. Los que llaman buenos son los menos malos; los que se llaman malos son los menos buenos. ¿Dónde está la perfección? ¿En la tierra? ¡Ciertamente que no!"

43

At the baptism of a member of the royal family, Don Juan told Count de Castro that he had chosen a husband for his beautiful daughter, Dolores. A king's word was law, and although de Castro was not pleased with the choice of Rodrigo de Luna, he could do nothing but accept. The young man and Dolores had loved each other since the first meeting. Rodrigo had told the king about his love for Dolores, and this was the king's way of helping the young man and his affair.

The de Castros objected to de Luna because he was the son of a hated prime minister. This opposition caused Dolores much sorrow, but when her father found that his daughter loved the youth, he decreed that the wedding should take place. The mother, on the other hand, schemed with the family doctor to prohibit the marriage. A sleeping potion was given

the girl, and she fell into a sweet slumber. De Castro was told that his daughter had died and an elaborate funeral was held. Dolores, however, had been taken by her brother and put in the castle tower. Doña Beatriz - perhaps in remorse - lived in seclusion.

Six years later, through difficulties, Don Diego was compelled to leave the castle, but his wife refused to accompany him. Before his departure, an old duenna, María, disclosed to him the whereabouts of his daughter. Going to the tower he found Dolores, and the reunion, as described by Avellaneda, would stir the strongest heart. She begged her father to forgive Doña Beatriz and he assented.

Her lover, Rodrigo de Luna, believing his beloved dead, had consecrated himself to the Catholic Church. Upon discovering this, Dolores resolved to remain dead to the world and so she went to a convent. Several years later while Rodrigo, now a bishop, was holding mass on the supposed tomb of his sweetheart, a funeral was being held in the convent at Navarra for a poor nun, who was no other than Dolores.

"Guatimozín"

Guatimozín is the only real historical novel that she has written, and it has to do with the life and death of the wicked descendant of Motezuma, the last emporor of Mexico. Avellaneda sings of the glory of its martyrs, and gives praises to the unhappy heroism of the noble conquered Aztec. This attitude was quite different from the enthusiasm of the 18th century encyclopedists. In her collection of 1869, she included only the epilogue which was the only part she wished to have remembered.

"Guatimozín" does not excel in powerful description, nor does the story of the character stand out, nor even the personage which gives it its name - rather is it Hernán Cortes.

Due to Mexican superstition or prophecy, about the descendants of one of their lost forefathers returning to punish the tyrants, Hernán Cortes and his small band of men were welcomed royally in the capital. A tournament was held for the newcomers and, in return, Cortes displayed the military ability of his army. This display of tactics alarmed the royal family, with the exception of Motezuma's daughter, who had eyes for no one except a young Spaniard.

An audience between Cortes and the Mexican ministers gave the Spaniard considerable information about the laws of this strange people. At the news of an impending rebellion, due to the actions of the Spanish soldiers, the emperor asked Cortes to leave the country, but he refused. Instead Cortes, through trickery, took Motezuma prisoner, as a payment for the lives of some of his soldiers whom the Mexicans had killed. Of course the princes wished revenge, but the emperor accepted his lot as the anger of the gods. Guatimozín, a fiery young prince, tried to stir up the Mexicans, but they had listened to Motezuma's order.

His continued opposition to Motezuma's wish to be a prisoner caused the emperor to exile Guatimozín. His exile was short, as a council of nobles was called to discuss the buying of their ruler's freedom and the Spaniards return to their native land. Motezuma, hearing of the meeting, forbade such plotting and, at the objection of Guatimozín and his father to this order, he commanded them to be chained.

At this time Cortes had business with some Spaniards who had come over to take the Mexican ruins, and so he left a general in charge of the prisoners. This general considered himself authoritative, and began to take some of the wealth in the capital. A

skirmish followed and the Mexicans triumphed, but Cortes returned with his army and defeated the Mexicans. In the war that followed, Motezuma was hit by a rock and instantly killed. This disaster caused the Mexicans to flee through the streets.

Cortes promised to leave when the Mexicans had chosen a new king to his liking. The emperor's three sons had been imprisoned, and each wondered which of them wanted to be king. No agreement among themselves was possible, so the council of nobles elected Quetlahauca. His rule was short, due to an illness, and then Guatimozin was chosen. The new emperor dedicated himself to restoring the empire as it had been before the war, and he succeeded in making many enemy states now his friends.

Cortes had fled when Guatimozin was acclaimed emperor, but he soon returned to strike a hard blow. He had a new contingent of Spanish soldiers and some Mexicans from enemy states. This enlarged army was too strong for Guatimozin and again Cortes was victorious. To add to the Mexican disaster, the dreaded smallpox began to take its toll of hundreds of people. Even Guatimozin became a victim, and his unusual actions caused the people to believe he was going insane.

Cortes kept making new alliances with states that were on the verge of civil war. Giving Guatimozín one more chance, he offered peace again, but the youthful emperor claimed he would fight to the end. Villafañá, a traitor, tried to kill Cortes, but the plot was discovered, and Villafañá paid with his life. The next battle was withstood by the Mexicans and Cortes became worried. Once more he sent ambassadors to arrange a peace pact, but the Mexicans were now in arms. This battle, Cortes won, and he took many prisoners, among them the royal family. Guatimozín was tortured because he was unable to give the Spaniard any jewels, but his death did not occur for three years.

A minor thread running through the story is that of the love affair of Velázquez, the Spaniard, and Cacumatzín, the Mexican, for Motezuma's daughter, Tecuixpa. She had shown her preference for the former while the latter loved her passionately. In a combat, Velázquez was injured and died after Cacumatzín had carried him home to Tecuixpa. The Mexican now hoped to win the royal princess, but she announced her plans for marrying her uncle, who was chosen emperor after her father's death. His untimely end upset this arrangement, and the outcome of this minor story was left in doubt.

"Una anecdota de la vida de Cortes" and "La Mujer" are mentioned by some critics, but she did not publish them. Today, they may be found in volume V of the Madrid publication of her "Obras", but not in the Habana edition. The former seems to have been a fragment of "Guatimozín", as the name of that personage and Cortes appear in the story.

In the latter, "La Mujer", a series of articles dedicated to the fair sex, she brings out the fact that woman stands above man in moral and intellectual force if she so wishes. This also shows her bitterness against losing a seat in the Spanish Academy, just because she was a woman.

IV. OPINION OF CRITICS

"La señora Avellaneda es un eminente autor dramático, un ensigne poeta lírico, un notable novelista"⁴⁴ - so says Vidart of Avellaneda; and likewise do other critics agree. Aramburo y Machado claimed that her novels were popular because, "she cultivated the novel with the same disinterested object with which she discovered in her verses the secrets of her soul and translated to drama the greatness of history"⁴⁵. Being a woman she was interested in her sex, and it was a blow to her vanity to have been refused a place in the Spanish academy. "Vuelve con incisiva y vigorosa pluma por los fueros religiosos intelectuales, políticos,⁴⁶ y aún guerreros del sexo hermoso". She admired beauty and talent and was passionately fond of beautiful women. Her home was always open to them, but the literary men of the day were more prominent there. She believed, as did Pascal, that great intentions were born from the heart and memorable deeds from the sensibility of the heart. Woman's glorious privilege is that of yielding to sentiment. She is on a level with man in the sphere of ingenuity and art, and sometimes she could over-

44. Vidart - "La Novela de la edad moderna" Vol V. "Obras de Avellaneda" Madrid edition p. 385

45. Aramburo y Machado - "Personalidad literaria de G. G. de Avellaneda" p. 181

46. Cueta - "Noticias literarias" Vol. V "Obras de Avellaneda" Madrid edition p. 398

reach him in the aspirations of valor and energy.

The morality of her novels is frank, audacious, and sane, resulting from a sincere study of human nature. As for style alone, she deserves merit. "El estilo es conciso, noble y claro. Se adapta a maravilla así a la fantasía descripta como a la relación de los acontecimientos, a la pintura de los afectos delicados y a la expresión vehemente de la pasión y del entusiasmo. Su estilo tiene fisonomía propia."⁴⁷ Qualities which characterize most of her compositions are graveness, elegance of thought, abundance and qualities of images, and a versification, always harmonious. One of her highest qualities, however, was that of putting herself in ages or countries, foreign to her, moving in them as if her natural medium was in all places.

Her labor as a novelist is less personal than her other literary achievements and arouses less enthusiasm, but her novels are of some merit. "Impregnados todas ellas del espíritu romántico que dominaba a mediados del siglo; abundan en descripciones brillantes y caracteres magistralmente trazados, cosa bien natural, pues quien supo expresar con tan artística gentileza sus íntimas sentimientos en la poesía subjetiva y llegar

47. Gutiérrez - "Poetisas Cubanas" Vol. II "Revista de Cuba" p. 500

con tanta fortuna al teatro las pasiones humanas".⁴⁸

Very superior to her merits as a novelist are her qualities as an authoress of tales "en las cuales encuéntranse rasgos dignos de Hoffmann y la brillantez fantasmagórica propia del sentimentalismo popular que inspira estas creaciones."⁴⁹ She was always inspired by the reality in human life and took pleasure in reproducing the sentiments and passions. She has been called an artist of exuberant genius, and she was one of the few writers who realized the luster and majestic pureness of the Castillian language.

Avellaneda was dominated by a deep sentimental love, the love for man who somehow seemed to fear or distrust her. Her prose, and especially her poetry, fairly ring with the cries of this deep human passion which dominated her actions.

The resemblance to Scott comes in the marvellous descriptive passages and the fantastic plots of her legends. However, perhaps the grotesque and the unusual side of her prose works was influenced more by the French romantic novel than Scott. "Quatimozín," her only true historical work, was derived from the English historical type.

48. Aramburo y Machado - "Personalidad literaria de G. G. de Avellaneda" p. 205

49. Ibid p. 206

There is a similarity to Victor Hugo. Her novel "Sab" has a plot somewhat similar to his "Bug-Jargal". Just as Hugo protested against social standards in "Les Miserables", so does Avellaneda protest in "Sab". Hugo's imagination, shown by his myth-making faculty, was similar to hers. His love for the grotesque, the unusual, spiritual, tragic, or simply charming may be seen mirrored in her legends.

In her novel, "Espatolino", she re-echoes George Sand's pleas against the structure of society. Like the French writer, she protested against conjugal slavery and defended the infidelity of woman. She idealizes sentiment and puts love above all conventions, but not quite as much as Sand did. Both felt a hunger for true affection and never did they find the food. Like Sand, Sra de Avellaneda wrote what was in her heart, by inspiration, and thus she was original, lyrical and sentimental.

After all, Avellaneda, the novelist, is on a lower plain than Avellaneda the dramatist and lyric poet. She can charm us with her legends and short stories such as "La Ondina del lago azul" and "La Flor del Ángel" - in which she delights in the traditional, in symbolism and in matters appertaining to

the world of enchantment."⁵⁰

Perhaps the criticism of Fitzmaurice-Kelly would be a fitting conclusion to this chapter, - "Sra Avellaneda is too passionate to be dextrous, and too pre-occupied to be impressive - hence her novels have fallen out of sight. That she had real gifts of fancy and melody is shown by her early volume of poems and by her two plays; yet, on the boards, as in her stories, she is inopportune, or, in plainer words, is a gifted imitator, following the changes of popular taste with some hesitation,⁵¹ though with a gracefulness not devoid of charm."

50. J. D. M. Ford - "Main Currents of Spanish Literature" p. 215

51. Fitzmaurice-Kelly - "History of Spanish Literature" p. 375

V. CONCLUSION

CHAPTER V

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In the history of Spanish literature the name of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda does not occupy a prominent place as a writer of novels and short stories, and yet they contain many of the qualities of Romanticism. One of its primary characteristics is subjectivity or the expression of the author's individual feelings and sentiments. Avellaneda had always wanted true affection, and not getting it, it was only natural that she should pour all of her own passions into the characters that she drew. Any incident which she saw, which touched her heart, became often the inspiration for a story or poem. In "Sab", the grievous lot of the negro slave touched a sympathetic cord in Avellaneda. Again, the tears and the story of an old mountain guide gave her the plot for "La Ondina del lago azul".

Her traditional legends appeal to us because of their emotional side. Romanticists considered emotional appeal a rebellion against common sense and restraints of logic. In reading Avellaneda's legends we are reminded of the fairy tales of our childhood, and, if one likes fantastic tales, one may easily enjoy the unusual trend of the stories. In "La Ondina

del lago azul" we are reminded of the water sprites of Andersen's fairy stories. The Romanticist revelled in the exceptional; and, like him, Avellaneda wanted to carry the reader off his feet.

The Romanticist of this period was not interested in the materialistic view of life; again Avellaneda shows this characteristic. Since childhood she had lived in a make-believe world of her own, a world strangely spiritual. Extremely religious, she would naturally be interested in spiritual things, and many times she retired to a convent when the materialistic side of life became too harsh. Many of her prose works have signs of melancholy and longing.

As every legend is built around the national tradition of some country, we can readily see that she has another romantic qualification - an interest in the revival of the Middle Ages and national traditions. She has portrayed Cuban, Swiss, American, French and Italian, as well as Spanish beliefs. Some deal with religious faith, some with miracles, and yet others with chivalrous deeds. Her great historical novel, "Guatimozin", abounds in the last characteristic. "Espatolino", which is partly historical and partly sociological, portrays a well-known Italian bandit and his many escapades. "Sab" is a protest against the

national tradition of slavery which was a custom on her native island.

Avellaneda's ability to mingle the fantastic and the commonplace is easily noticed. In "La Montaña Maldita", we saw the hatred of an illegitimate son for the mother who bore him. We saw a beautiful mountain, under that mother's curse, become a barren, cracked, old rock that never grew vegetation again. Probably many a time a white bird has flown down into the yard of some monastery and no one has considered it unusual. Yet in "El Aura blanca" Avellaneda makes this particular bird the means of saving the suffering monks from starvation. In "Los Doce jabalíes" there is a mingling of the beautiful and the horrible in her study of the happy marriage of Juan de Avendaño, at the beginning, contrasted with the terrible ending when Avendaño was thrown into the animal's den. Avellaneda was splendid in her descriptions whether they were of people, places or incidents. One is never left in doubt about anything as her minute descriptions make things very clear.

The Romanticists had a great love for nature and Avellaneda was no exception. She liked to picture the beauty of nature, and then immediately contrast it with nature in revolt. Both "La Montaña Maldita" and "La Dama de Ambota" contain marvelous descriptions

of rolling thunder and flashing lightning. Many other of her novels might be mentioned in which she gives us a glimpse of nature in a quiet mood, and before the end of the story we have a violent picture of it. She truly loved and admired nature, second only to human beings.

In reading and examining her legends, we discover that many contain words from the native tongue of the country whose tradition she is telling. She used the Castillian language almost with perfection, an unusual thing for writers of her time. She expressed herself just as she felt, and as she was capable of various moods her diction varied. She knew how to use words which expressed the thought that she wanted to leave in the mind of the reader.

One will admit that she was a Romanticist, but perhaps one is still doubtful as to whether or not her prose works have any literary value. Personally, I believe them worthy of more distinction than they have received. Consider her style, descriptive ability, the unusual plot developments, and her character portrayals. Is not her style charming? Does she not tell her legends in such a way as to be interesting to the reader? Many of us are not too old to still enjoy fanciful things, and what could be more enjoyable

than "La Flor del Angel" or "La Ondina del lago azul"?

Her descriptive ability made her manner of writing pleasurable. Following in the footsteps of Scott and Sand she showed her exceptional ability to portray, not only persons, but events that happened around her. Her unusual control of vocabulary aided this. It seems to have been unlimited, and from the different countries in which she obtained her material, she often drew vernacular words. Although this makes the reading a little difficult at times, it shows that she was a keen observer of everything around her.

The plots of her legends are like fairy tales, but does this mean that they should be put aside as worthless? Far from it. They are fantastic and unusual, but handled by an artist. Avellaneda knew the exact moment in which to enlighten the readers concerning the dénouement of each story. The plots of her fairy tales are not as simple as one would imagine. In the longer prose works - especially the historical novels - we find complicated plots; but each is so well handled that we have no difficulty in keeping the trend of the intrigue.

She was a Romanticist in plot development, but she was somewhat of a Realist in her character portrayals. They were fanciful, make-believe persons into

whom she poured her own joys and sorrows; yet she pictured them realistically. There is nothing fanciful in her portrayal of the unselfish, old priest in "El Aura blanca", or the Cuban slave in "Sab". They become real to us - so real that we suffer with Sab and even shed a few tears over his untimely death.

We agree - do we not - that the prose works of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda are romantic and really of some literary value? Why then did they not enjoy national popularity? Could we not give as one reason that the people were more interested in foreign translations than in their own authors? Victor Hugo was gaining popularity in France, as was Sir Walter Scott in England. Translations of their works were eagerly awaited and examined by the reading Spanish public.

Perhaps we may account for her lack of popularity when we consider that the majority of her prose works was not published until the Romantic movement was on the wane. Realism, the next influence on literature, had entered in the works of the "Costumbristas" and then Fernán Caballero. The literary public was much more interested in these new masterpieces than in the old romantic ones. Always eager for something new, they readily accepted Realism, the conditions of the nation helping its cause.

From this study of Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda's novels and legends, we can draw the conclusion that had she written only prose, she would probably have been a distinguished and notable writer; but her merits as a poet have put her prose works in the background. There is no doubt but that both of these branches of her literary activity contain charm and simplicity and yet in her poems, she has put more of her personal sentiments and passions and less of the fantastic than in her novels and tales.

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