By degrees the picaresque romance was combined with the novel of Italian origin and gave rise to a new type,— half novel of manners, half romance of adventure,—of which the characteristic example appears to be the *Relacion de la Vida y Aventuras del Escudero Marcos de Obregon* (1618), by Vicente Espinel, one of the most genial and best written works of the 17th century. To the same class belong almost all the novels of Alonso Gerónimo de Salas Barbadillo, such as *La Ingeniosa Helena, Don Diego de Noche, El Caballero puntual,* &c. ; Luiz Velez de Gue­vara’s *Diablo Cojuelo* (1641), the model of Lesage’s *Diable Boiteux ;* and Francisco Santos’s highly popular pictures of life in Madrid, *Dia y Noche de Madrid* (1663), *Periquillo, el de las Gallineras,* &c. On the contrary, the novels of Tirso de Molina (*Los* *Cigarrales de Toledo,* 1624), Perez de Montalban *(Para Todos,* 1632), Maria de Zayas *(Novelas,* 1637), are more in the manner of the *Novelas Ejemplares* of Cervantes, and consequently of the Italian type. Among the so-called historical romances one only deserves to be mentioned,—the *Guerras Civiles de Granada* by Gines Perez de Hita, which deals with the last years of the kingdom of Granada and the insurrection of the Moors of the Alpujarras in the time of Philip II. *Don Quixote,* the masterpiece of Miguel Cervantes de Saavedra (1547-1616), is too great a work to be treated along with others ; and, besides, it does not fall strictly within the limits of any of the classes just mentioned. If it has to be defined, it may be described as the social romance of 16th and 17th century Spain. Cervantes undoubtedly owed much to his predecessors, notably to the picaresque romancers, but he considerably enlarged the scope of the type, and, what had as yet been done by no one, supported the framework of the story by a lofty moral idea. His main purpose was, as we are beginning to realize, not to turn into ridicule the books of chivalry, which were already out of fashion by his time, but to show by an example pushed to absurdity the danger of *hidalgism,* of all those deplorable prejudices of pure blood and noble race with which three-fourths of the nation were imbued, and which, by the scorn of all useful labour which they involved, were destined to bring Spain to ruin. The lesson is all the more effective as his *hidalgo,* although ridiculous, was not put beyond the pale of the reader’s sympathy, and the author condemns only the exaggeration of the chivalrous spirit, and not true courage and devotion when these virtues have a serious object. The same thing happened to *Don Quixote* which had happened to *Guzman de Alfarache.* After the publication of the first part (1605), Cervantes allowed his pen to lie too long idle ; and so it occurred to some one to anticipate him in the glory of completing the story of the heroic deeds of the knight of La Mancha. In 1614 a second part of the adventures of Don Quixote made its appearance—the work of a certain Avellaneda, a pseudonym under which people have sought to recognize the inquisitor Luis de Aliaga. Cervantes was thus roused from inactivity, and the following year gave to the world the true second part, which soon effaced the bad impression produced by Avellaneda’s heavy and exaggerated imitation.

The stage in the 17th century in some measure took the place of the romances of the previous age ; it is, as it were, the medium of all the memories, all the passions, and all the aspirations of the Spanish people. Its style, being that of the popular poetry, made it accessible to the most illiterate classes, and gave it an immense range of subject. From the books of the Bible, the acts of the martyrs, national traditions, the chronicles of Castile and Aragon, and foreign histories and novels, down to the daily in­cidents of contemporary Spanish life, the escapades and nightly brawls of students, the gallantries of the Calle

Mayor and the Prado of Madrid, balcony escalades, sword thrusts and dagger strokes, duels and murders, fathers befooled, jealous ladies, pilfering and cowardly valets, inquisitive and sprightly waiting-maids, sly and tricky peasants, fresh country girls,—all are turned to dramatic account. The enormous mass of plays with which the literature of this period is inundated may be divided into two great classes—a secular and a religious, the latter again subdivided into (1) the liturgical play, *i.e.,* the *auto* either *sacramental* or *al nacimiento,* and (2) the *comedia divina* and the *comedia de santos,* which have no liturgical element and differ from a secular play only in the fact that the subject is religious, and frequently, as one of the names indicates, derived from the history of a saint. In the secular drama, classification might be carried almost to any extent if the nature of the subject be taken as the criterion. It will be sufficient to distinguish the *comedia (i.e.,* any tragic or comic piece in three acts) according to the social types brought on the stage, the equipment of the actors, and the artifices resorted to in the representa­tion. We have (1) the *comedia de capa y espada,* which represents any everyday incident, the actors belonging to the middle class, simple *caballeros,* and consequently wearing the garb of ordinary town-life, of which the chief items were the cloak and the sword, and (2) the *comedia de teatro* or *de ruido,* or again *de tramoya* or *de aparencias (i.e.,* the theatrical, spectacular, or scenic play), which prefers kings and princes for its *dramatis personæ* and makes a great display of mechanical devices and deco­rations. Besides the *comedia,* the classic stage has also a series of little pieces subsidiary to the play proper : the *loa* or prologue, the *entremes,* a kind of interlude which afterwards developed into the *saynete,* the *baile,* or ballet accompanied with singing, and the *zarzuela,* a sort of operetta thus named after the royal residence of La Zarzuela, where the kings of Spain had a theatre. As to the dramatic poets of the golden age, even more numerous than the lyric poets and the romancers, it is rather difficult to group them. All are more or less pupils or imitators of the great chief of the new school, Lope Felix de Vega Carpio (1562-1635); everything has ultimately to be brought back to him whom the Spaniards call the “ monster of Nature.” Among Lope’s contemporaries, only a few poets of Valencia (Gaspar de Aguilar, Fran­cisco Tarrega, Guillem de Castro (1569-1631), the author of the *Mocedades del Cid* (from which Corneille derived his inspiration), formed a small school, as it were, less subject to the master than that of Madrid, which was bound to merit the applause of the public by copying as exactly as possible the manner of the great initiator. Lope left his mark on all varieties of the *comedia,* but did not attain to equal excellence in all. He was especially successful in the comedy of intrigue *(enredo),* of the *capa y espada* class, and in dramas whose subjects are derived from national history. His great and most incontestable merit is to have given the Spanish stage a range and scope of which it had not been previously thought capable, and of having taught his contemporaries to find dramatic situations and to carry on a plot. It is true he wrote nothing perfect : his prodigious productiveness aud facility allowed him no time to mature anything ; he wrote negligently, and, besides, he considered the stage an inferior department, good for the *vulgo,* and consequently did not judge it worthy of the same regard as lyric or narrative poetry borrowed from the Italians. Lope’s first pupils exag­gerated some of his defects, but, at the same time, each, according to his own taste, widened the scope of the *comedia.* Antonio Mira de Amescua and Luis Velez de Guevara (died 1644) were successful especially in tragic histories and *comedias divinas.* Fr. Gabriel Tellez (1570-