1582), and Malon de Chaide are the brighter lights of this class of writers. Some of their books, like the *Guia de Pecadores* of Fr. Luis de Granada, the *Confessions* of St Teresa, Malon de Chaide’s *Conversion of the Magdalen,* have obtained a brilliant and lasting success beyond the limits of the Peninsula, and have not been without some influence on the development of mysticism in France. The Spanish mystics are not only remarkable for the depth or subtlety of their thoughts and the intensity of the divine love with which they are inspired ; many of them are masters of style; some, like Juan de la Cruz, have composed verses which rank with the most delicate in the language. A notable fact is that those men who are regarded as illuminati profess the most practical ideas in the matter of morality. Nothing is more sensible, nothing less ecstatic, than the manual of domestic economy by Fr. Luis de Leon—*La Perfecta Casada.* Lay moralists are very numerous in the 16th and 17th centuries. Some write long and heavy treatises on the art of governing, the education of princes, the duties of subjects, &c. Pedro Fernandez de Navarrete’s *Conservacion de Monarquias,* Diego de Saavedra Faxardo’s *Idea de un Principe Cris­tiano,* Quevedo’s *La Politica de Dios y Gobierno de Cristo,* give a correct idea of the ability which the Spaniards have displayed in this kind of didactic and preceptorial literature,—ability of no high order, for the Spaniard, when he means to teach and work out a doctrine, loses himself in distinctions and rapidly becomes diffuse, pedantic, and obscure. But there is a kind of morality in which he indubitably excels, namely, in social satire, which, under all its forms,—dialogue and dream in the style of Lucian, epistle after the manner of Juvenal, or pamphlet,—has produced several masterpieces and a host of ingenious, caustic, and amusing compositions. Juan de Valdes, the most celebrated of the Spanish Protestants, led the way by his *Dialogo de Mercurio y Caron,* where all the great political and religious questions of the first half of the 16th century are discussed and resolved with admir­able vigour and freedom. The king in the department of social satire, as in those of literary and political satire, is Quevedo. Nothing escapes his scrutinizing spirit and pitiless irony. All the vices of the society of his time are, in his *Suen,os* and many other little pamphlets, remorse­lessly placed in the pillory and cruelly cut to pieces. While this great satirist, in philosophy a disciple of Seneca, imitates his master even in his style of writing, he is none the less one of the most vigorous and original writers of the 17th century. The only serious defect in his style is that it is too full, not of figures and epithets, but of thoughts. His phrases are of set purpose charged with a double meaning, and we are never sure on reading whether we have taken in all that the author meant to convey. *Conceptism* is the name that has been given to this refinement of thought, which was doomed in time to fall into the ambiguous and equivocal ; it must not be con­founded with the *cultism* of Góngora, the artifice of which lies solely in the choice and arrangement of words. This new school, of which Quevedo may be regarded as the founder, had its Boileau in the person of Baltasar Gracian, who in 1642 published his *Agudeza y Arte de Ingenio,* in which all the subtleties of conceptism are very exactly reduced to a code. Gracian, who had the gift of senten­tious moralizing rather than of satire, produced in his *Criticon* animated pictures of the society of his own day, while he also displayed much ingenuity in little collections of political and moral aphorisms which have procured him a great reputation abroad,—*El Heroe, El Politico Fer­nando el Catolico, Oraculo Manual y Arte de Prudencia.*

Spanish thought as well as public spirit and all other forms of national activity began to decline towards the

close of the 17th century. The advent of the house of Bourbon, and the increasing invasion of French influence in the domain of politics as well as in literature and science, confirmed this decay by rendering abortive the efforts of a few writers who had remained faithful to the pure Spanish tradition. In the hands of the second-rate imitators of Calderon the stage sank ever lower and lower ; lyric poetry, already compromised by the pomp and gali­matias of Góngora, was abandoned to wretched rhymsters, who tried without success to make up by extravagance of style for meanness of thought. In a word, everything was suffering from anæmia. The first symptoms, not of a revival, but of a certain resumption of intellectual production appear in the department of linguistic study. In 1714 there was created, on the model of the French academies, La Real Academia Española, intended to main­tain the purity of the language and to correct its abuses. This Academy set itself at once to work, and in 1726 was able to commence the publication of its dictionary in six volumes folio, the best title of this association to the gratitude of men of letters. The *Gramatica de la Lengua Castellana,* drawn up by the Academy, did not appear till 1771. For the new ideas which were introduced into Spain as the result of more intimate relations with France, and which were in many cases repugnant to a nation for two centuries accustomed to live a self-contained life, it was necessary that fully sanctioned patrons should be found. D. Ignacio de Luzan, well read in the literatures of Italy and France, a disciple of Boileau and the French rhetoricians, yet not without some originality of his own, undertook in his *Poetica* (1737) to expound to his fellow- countrymen the rules of the new school, and, above all, the principle of the famous “unities” accepted by the French stage from Corneille’s day onward. What Luzan had done for letters, Benito Feyjoo (1676-1764), a Benedictine of good sense and great learning, did for the sciences. His *Teatro Critico* (1726-1729) and *Cartas Erúditas y Curiosas* (1742-1760), collections of dissertations in almost every department of human knowledge, intro­duced the Spaniards to the leading scientific discoveries of foreign countries, and helped to deliver them from many superstitions and absurd prejudices. The study of the ancient classics and the department of learned research in the domain of national histories and literatures had an eminent representative in Gregorio Mayans y Siscar (died 1782), who worthily carried on the great traditions of the renaissance ; besides publishing good editions of old Spanish authors, he gave to the world in 1757 a *Retórica* which is still worth consulting and a number of learned memoirs. What may be called the *littérature d'agrément* did not recover much lost ground ; it would seem as if the vein had been exhausted. Something of the old picaresque novel came to life again in the *Historia del Famoso Predicador Fray Gerundio de Campazas* of the Jesuit José Francisco de Isla, a biographical romance which is also and above all—to the detriment, it is true, of the interest of the narrative—a satire on the follies of the preachers of the day ; the history of Fray Gerundio is merely a pretext, as it were, for displaying and holding up to ridicule the eloquence of the pulpit at the sorry pass to which it had then been brought by the ignorance and bad taste of the Spanish clergy. Isla is known also by his translation of *Gil Blas,* a work which he professed to restore to his native country, trying to make out—unsuccessfully, of course—that Le Sage had no other merit than that of rendering it into French. The lyric poetry of this period is very pale and colourless when compared with its dazzling splendour in the preced­ing century. Nevertheless one or two poets can be named who were possessed of refinement of taste, and whose