

This enthusiastic poetic inspiration is to be traced, however, in many strophes of the *Romancero Caballeresco* ;* in the religious melancholy pervading the writings of Fray Luis de Leon, as, for instance, in his description of the charming night, when he celebrates the eternal lights (*resplandores eternales*) of the starry heavens ;† and in the compositions of Calderon.

composed, has led me to read through the whole of this poem (which, unfortunately, comprises 42,000 verses) on two occasions, once in Peru, and again recently in Paris, when, by the kindness of a learned traveler, M. Ternaux Compans, I received, for the purpose of comparing it with Ercilla, a very scarce book, printed in 1596 at Lima, and containing the nineteen cantos of the *Arauco domado* (*compuesto por el Licenciado Pedro de Oña natural de los Infantes de Engal en Chile*). Of the epic poem of Ercilla, which Voltaire regarded as an *Iliad*, and Sismondi as a newspaper in rhyme, the first fifteen cantos were composed between 1555 and 1563, and were published in 1569 ; the later cantos were first printed in 1590, only six years before the wretched poem of Pedro de Oña, which bears the same title as one of the master-works of Lope de Vega, in which the Cacique Caupolican is also the principal personage. Ercilla is unaffected and true-hearted, especially in those parts of his composition which he wrote in the field, mostly on the bark of trees and the skins of animals, for want of paper. The description of his poverty, and of the ingratitude which he, like others, experienced at the court of King Philip, is extremely touching, particularly at the close of the 37th canto :

"Climas pasè, mudè constelaciones,
Gollos innavegables navegando,
Estendiendo Señor, vuestra corona
Hasta casi la austral frigida zona."

"The flower of my life is past; led by a late-earned experience, I will renounce earthly things, weep, and no longer sing." The natural descriptions of the garden of the sorcerer, of the tempest raised by Eponanon, and the delineation of the ocean (Part i., p. 80, 135, and 173; Part ii., p. 130 and 161, in the edition of 1733), are wholly devoid of life and animation. Geographical registers of words are accumulated in such a manner that, in canto xxvii., twenty-seven proper names follow each other in a single stanza of eight lines. Part ii. of the *Araucana* is not by Ercilla, but is a continuation, in twenty cantos, by Diego de Santistevan Osorio, appended to the thirty-seven cantos of Ercilla.

* See, in *Romancero de Romances Caballerescos é Historicos ordenado*, por D. Augustin Duran, Part i., p. 189, and Part ii., p. 237, the fine strophes commencing *Yba declinando el dia—Su curso y ligeras horas*, and those on the flight of King Rodrigo, beginning

"Cuando las pintadas aves
Mudas están, y la tierra
A tenta escucha los ríos."

† Fray Luis de Leon, *Obras Proprias y Traducciones, dedicadas a Don Pedro Portocarero*, 1681, p. 120: Noche serena. A deep feeling for nature also manifests itself occasionally in the ancient mystic poetry of the Spaniards (as, for instance, in Fray Luis de Granada, Santa Teresa de Jesus, and Malon de Chaide); but the natural pictures are generally only the external investment under which the ideal religious conception is symbolized.