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THE TRANSCRIPT

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A ROMANCE IN REAL LIFE.

A SPANISH STORY.

Don Cayetano Balboa, a respectable and
reputable merchant of Ecujia, in Andalusia,
had an only son, named Don Pedro, on whom
he bestowed a liberal education, and for whom
he subsequently obtained a post in the Health
office at Madrid. In this city the young
pedro, who was left in a measure his own
master at the early age of nineteen, formed
connections which deeply implicated his own
peace and that of his family. He was
of a generous disposition, but weak minded in
every respect, and easily biased by the arts
of designing persons. The half-medical char-
acter of Don Pedro's employment brought
him into intimate acquaintance with most of
the principal physicians and apothecaries of
Madrid, and with their families. Among
these whom he met in this circle was Donna
Catalina, the widow of an eminent chemist
who had been banished to Africa for partici-
pating in some political conspiracies, and who
ad, it seems, died in exile. At the period
of her husband's banishment, Donna Catalina
was very young, but her character had al-
ready fully developed itself; and what that
character was, may be in part imagined from
her confession which her husband made to
one friend before his departure, "that his
intense was endurable, because it freed him
on the bonds of his imperious helmate."

Donna Catalina was considerably under her
thirtieth year, and yet very beautiful when
he became acquainted with Don Pedro de
Balboa. Her wit and charms fascinated the
young Andalusian, and she in her turn, formed
to him a deep and ardent passion. In Cata-
lina's discarded and widowed state, there
was no obstacle to the formation of a mat-
rimonial alliance between them, and in all like-
hood a marriage would have ensued, but for
the discovery which Balboa made of Catalina's
violent and intolerant temper. Still, after
he advanced he had made, he could not easily
give up his imperious beauty. She had ac-
quired a power over him, and he found it
to be the outburst of her passion. At length
he found the means of withdrawing himself.
His father sent an express order for his return
some without delay, and as this injunction
could not be disobeyed, or trifled with, Pedro
went himself away from the company of Cata-
lina, and returned to the paternal mansion.

When Don Pedro reached his father's house,
he found that the old merchant had become
mad (probably from having heard of the
late of matters in Madrid) that his son should
marry and settle in life. He had even pro-
vided a match for the youth in the person of a
young and lovely cousin, whom Don Pedro, at
the period of his return, found resident in his
father's family. Nor was Pedro long in be-
coming captivated with the simple and amia-
ble character of his young relation, so unlike
that of the exchequeress who had formerly en-
chanted him. Every thing, in short, went on
as the father wished. But, meanwhile, the
dejected Catalina, alarmed at the prolonged
absence of her lover, wrote him letter upon
letter, beseeching him with his apparent in-
dignity, and begging him in the strongest and
most passionate terms, to return to Madrid.
By degrees, the tone of her letters changed

from reproach to menace, and the conclusion
of one of these epistles ran thus:—"Yes,
traitor! I now know why you went to Andalu-
sia, and I know why you remained there so
long." Alluding to Don Pedro's cousin, she
then continued, "But beware! for, with the
aid of the blessed Virgin, I will kill her, and
then I will kill you, and, lastly, I will kill
myself!" She then, with the same consist-
ency of spirit which other parts of her letter
betray, commends her lover to divine guard-
ianship, and signs "Catalina." This effusion
fell by accident into the hands of Don Pedro's
father, who opened it by mistake, and thus be-
came fully acquainted with the serious nature
of the ties which his son had contracted at
Madrid, of which he was, perhaps, but in
part aware. The result was that the old man,
desirous that his son should be extricated from
the connexion, fully, as well as honourably,
wrote to Donna Catalina, informing her of his
son's intended marriage with his own cousin,
and offering at the same time to settle on his
correspondent a respectable annuity, if she
would please herself to abstain from seeking
any further correspondence with Don Pedro.

The proud and passionate Catalina returned
no answer to this proposal, nor did she write
again to Don Pedro. Hoping that his letter
had made her give up all thoughts of the mat-
ter, the old merchant hurried on the match
between the cousins; and with that pliability
which formed a prominent part of his nature,
Don Pedro, also, was very willing to have the mar-
riage completed. Accordingly, a dispensation
from the church (necessary on account of the
consanguinity of the parties), was obtained,
and the nuptial ceremony was fixed for an
early day. When that day came, the rights
of the church were performed, and its blessing
pronounced upon Pedro and his bride—in
peace. But the parties had secretly left the
altar when a fearful and lamentable catastro-
phe took place. The newly married lady
was just leaving the portico of the church,
when she was met by some young ladies of
her acquaintance, who presented her with a
nosegay. She blushed at this mark of at-
tention, and raised the flowers to her face;
but she had inhaled their perfume but for a
very short time, when she instantly fell back
to the corpse in the arms of her husband. All at-
tempts to recover her proved ineffectual—she
was dead! The nosegay must have been
poisoned. It was sought for every where,
but it had vanished; in the first moment of
confusion, it had been entirely forgotten.

The young ladies who had presented the
flowers were first examined. They related
that they had received the nosegay from a
stranger, who was to have accompanied them,
but who had failed to keep her promise. Then
did the father of Pedro recollect the menaces
of Catalina. Eager to avenge his niece's death,
he applied to the minister of justice, and had
Catalina brought from Madrid. She was con-
fronted with the young ladies, and they all
recognized her as the person from whom they
had received the fatal nosegay. Catalina, on
her part, declared that she had not left Ma-
drid, and numerous witnesses were brought
forward to confirm her statement. The report
of the medical men tended to make the affair
yet more complicated. They declared that, on
opening the body, they had not found in the
organs of respiration any trace of the action of
poison. The brain they had found strongly
injected; but though such an alteration might
have been caused by violent narcotics, it was
also possible that it might have been the effect
of sudden proplepsy. Some of the physicians
denied the possibility of poisoning so sudden-
ly by means of a nosegay. The hydrocyanic
acid, they said, could alone operate with such
violence, but would have lost its power if ex-
posed for several minutes to the air; besides
which, this, as well as several other poisons
that they enumerated, would have been sure
to leave a trace behind. Other physicians, on
the contrary, maintained that we are but im-
perfectly acquainted in Europe with the science
of poisons, in which the Oriental and some
other savage nations, and made much greater
advances. The consequence of these contra-
dictory reports, and the positive evidence ad-

duced that she had not quitted Madrid, was,
that Catalina was ordered to be set at liberty.

While in prison, she had addressed several
letters to Don Pedro. "My affection for you
(she wrote) is the only cause of the persecu-
tion to which I have been exposed. I am in-
nocent, I am innocent!—but had I ever been
guilty, it would only have been because I loved
you too well; surely you will not forsake me!"
What ever may have been his motive,
Don Pedro, it seems, visited her while in prison,
and she succeeded in resuming her ancient
influence over him. Not satisfied with this
proof of her power, she succeeded, on her libera-
tion, in involving him in a lawsuit with the
family of his deceased bride, and was on the
point of persuading him to return with her
to Madrid, when his father once more inter-
fered, and, by a vigorous exertions of paternal
authority, prevailed on Don Pedro once more
to abandon all ideas of marrying her.
Catalina found an opportunity that very day
to enter the merchant's house, and the apart-
ment of her vacillating lover. She played off
all her arts of seduction, but in vain, for this
time Don Pedro proved firm in his purpose.
Gradually giving way to the violence of her
passion, "Dastard!" she exclaimed, "you
allow yourself to be fooled by the words of a
silly old man; but do not fancy that I am to
be outraged with impunity! I have not yet
forgotten how to take vengeance on those that
insult me! Know 'twas I that killed your
bride, and you also shall die!"
As she said this, she seized him by the
arm, and it was not without a feeling of
dread that he contemplated the altered coun-
tenance of the fury. He perceived that she
held in her fingers a pin which she had
drawn from her hair. He had scarcely no-
ticed this movement when he felt himself
pricked in the arm. "I have killed thee!"
she exclaimed, and rushed out of the room,
flinging away the pin with which she had
inflicted the wound. Don Pedro almost im-
mediately felt his head grow heavy and his sight
dim: he uttered a few faint cries; but be-
fore he had time to say a prayer, he fell sense-
less to the ground. The servants heard the
fall, and hastened to the room. A physician
was sent for, who succeeded in recalling him
to life. Don Pedro related what had happen-
ed. The pin was sought for and found, and,
on a chemical analysis, some traces were dis-
covered on it of the juice of a certain subtle
poison in which the native hunters of Spanish
America used formerly to dip their arrows,
to enable them to kill their game the more
speedily. The poisoned weapon had passed
through the several folds of Balboa's dress,
by which means, probably, a part of the ve-
nom had been rubbed off, for he recovered in
a short time. Catalina on being brought be-
fore the Alcades del Crimen, not only avowed
her crimes, but added, that her failure was
the only circumstance that she regretted. She
was condemned to the scaffold, and met her
death with firmness. Her husband's skill as
a chemist had of course given her the oppor-
tunity of acquiring that knowledge of poisons
which ultimately caused her own end.

This tale is taken, without the slightest
change of facts, from the records of the criminal
courts of Seville, where the trial of the un-
fortunate and guilty lady took place but a
short time since. However marvellous some
of the circumstances may appear, there can
be no doubt of the veracity of the relation,
though it is possible that Catalina, in compass-
ing her rival's death, may have contrived se-
cretly to conjoin more commonplace and ef-
fectual means with those to which the catastro-
phe is here ascribed, and was ostensibly
owing.

THE HEART'S FIRST IDOL.

BY MISS E. M. PHILLIPS.

Oh, God! It is indeed a desolate thing to
cast our love abroad, and find it nought!—
Night after night, to steal away from mirth,
and joy, and gay and thoughtless faces, to this
silent chamber, and gaze upon the cold stars,
and swiftly lose the pent up fountains of an
anguished soul, and weep!—ay, fast and bitter
tears, such as should seldom stain the cheek

of youth and womanhood. Oh, these are
doubts which rack a human heart beyond con-
trol; thoughts that to name, were possibly un-
just—to cherish, madness. It is a blessed
thing to be beloved by any human heart—a
pure and blessed thing. In all this false and
passing world, oh, give me love! My soul
can well repay, my being prize, the heaven-
born gift.

This is a happy home of mine, a peaceful
and a happy home! I treasure its hallowed
kindness within my soul. I feel, even now,
that my sweetest and brightest days are upon
me, and believe there can be no words so bitter,
bitter to pronounce, as

All beloved ones, fare ye well!"

Yet, forgetting the voices that still through
childhood and youth have been ever near and
kind, I sorrow for that which but yesterday
was an unfamiliar sound. From the faces of
kindred and friends, I would have turned
alone to one, whereon was written at last but
the passing sign of human affection. Oh, con-
stant, and warm, and pure, should be the love
to which a woman trusts! A few short words
the exclusive offering to us, among the many
of the heart's fleet homage; best and above all,
the silent language of the honest eyes—for
this cannot be feigned—that these should be-
guile us from our land and home! They tell
me it is idle to think of the past—the fair
and happy past! Yet there is some dearer
season in the life of all, when, though but for
an hour or a day, Hope smiling wears her
flowery crown, and happiness, undimmed as
heaven, seems with us and about us. Eagerly,
for chance, we then unlock the bosom's shrine,
to offerings, and increase all beauty and fran-
grance, worshipping as we behold, and trium-
phing as we measure them; and when these
our first felicities of mortal birth have met
their mortal end; when we feel that though
other joys may beguile, they cannot be like the
joy that is gone; why should we not turn alone
to Memory, which knoweth neither death nor
deception? I have listened to a voice that
seemed fondest and most blessed on earth,
and have repaid its professions with the
deepest and holiest affection of my nature.
I have watched among many, for
that one dear smile, which to woman soon
become so precious! I—But it is all past
and over! The day must come, when he
will look his last upon the being he has
loved and loved; when all that has passed be-
tween us, will be as though it never was
spoken. It would be wisdom, perhaps, to
strive with the weakness that governs and
misleads me. Now, ere the dark hour comes,
would it be wise to forget how, night and day,
I have clung to an earthly image, forgetting
in its presence that sorrow or shadow could
ever more arise, and in its absence remember-
ing only that it should again appear before my
craving eyes. But it is too late! Once have
I yielded up my life's devotion; once have I
dreamed the happy dreams of pure and stead-
fast love; and never again will the spirit thrill
to spells that are woven but to be severed. I
have known through him some bitter hours, but
all at last will end; and what matters it, in the
grave, whether they who sleep beneath were
blessed in their lives? I cannot forget, but
my memory shall be no sadness to others. The
friends who wish me well, and happy, shall
see me both cheerful and gay.

LATER FROM EUROPE.

The packet-ship *Toronto*, 3rd October from
Portsmouth, has arrived at New-York, bring-
ing dates a couple of days later than those for-
merly received.

The Queen was still residing at Windsor,
reviewing her troops every morning, and hold-
ing cabinet councils every evening in the
week.

The London papers are very severe on the
government of Louis Philippe, in regard to the
persecution carried on against Louis Napoleon.

The *Toronto* brought out sketches from
the Home Government for Lord Durham.
Nothing has yet been heard or seen of the
steam-ship *Liverpool*, which was to sail for
New-York on the 20th ult.