

imitation of their works ; a few others again were drawn aside into the well trodden paths of translation from the Latin and Greek classics, but the lyrical style of poetry, the form most simple, sincere and natural, retained its ascendancy and continued to be what for the last two centuries it had been : the most popular vehicle of poetic expression. The ballad of the 13th century was however, naturally different from that of the 15th, in some respects inferior to it, in others far superior. As regards polish, the latter certainly must stand first. In regard to the true profound Christian sentiment, it is the earlier ballad that deserves the palm. In the 13th century every great historic event, every marvellous tradition has its popular ballad ; patriotism is a theme better liked than sentimentality. The '*Cid*' has scarcely become "a glorious memory"—he is still almost a being of the present, whose exploits are daily recounted by his enthusiastic countrymen, and whose deeds, as they pass from mouth to mouth, seem tinged with a deeper and a more glorious taste. In the 15th century religion and patriotism are second to love ; the ballad, despite all

external proofs to the contrary, is surely in its decline— for sentimentality (not sentiment) is a great weakening element, to be sure. The national poem of the '*Cid*,' the great ballad of Spain, which, interspersed as it is with many popular traditions, had been growing and unfolding for the last two centuries, now received the final polish and remains to this day the monument of Spanish chivalry, the monument of the possibilities of human honor, and human virtue. The religious ballad had no longer the earnest simplicity of the first devotional lyrics ; faith remained, but faith clouded by the artificialities and effeminacies of court life. The genius of Calderon was needed to revive the soul of Spanish poetry. It was at this time, as the ballad was losing its simplicity and therefore its excellence, that in accordance, with what Emerson would call "the law of compensation," Spanish literature began to attain the lofty position it now holds in the world of letters. Cervantes succeeded the gay and courtly versifiers of the reign of Juan II and gave to the world that melancholy counter-part of the *Cid*, the immortal *Don Quixote* of whom more anon.

DON.

THE SPANISH ARMADA.



THREE hundred years ago occurred an event fraught with consequences of the greatest importance in history. Philip II., for reasons which we propose to discuss, sent a large fleet to attempt the invasion of England ; his purpose was defeated and since then England has been singularly free from such attacks. Why Philip acted in this way has become amongst historians a controverted question. There is much truth in the saying that the history of Europe for the past hundred years has been a vast conspiracy against the truth. It is very difficult to give an explanation of this. It seems that some men think it their peculiar office to change the past a thing which even an omnipotent God cannot do. What were Philip's motives I shall endeavor to set forth in this short

essay, but at the very outset my readers must not think that this is written as an apology for Philip and the many actions he performed in the course of his long career. One cannot conscientiously defend the cruelties practised by Philip in Spain and the Netherlands. Philip was an enemy of political and religious liberty. The Duke of Alva was delegated his representative in the Netherlands, and for many years this man vested with all the powers of an absolute ruler used all his power to crush the people of Flanders, and his greatest enemies were the Flemish Catholics. As a testimony of this, witness the judicial murder of the Catholic Count Egmont, and of the two noble Catholic brothers of the family of Montmorency, Counts Hoorne and Montigny. It is a remarkable fact that the only noblemen who suffered death as a penalty for the defence of their country were Catholics ; William of Orange and his brother would