THE MADRID NOVELS OF PEREDA

by

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ABSTRACT

José María de Pereda (1833-1906) lived most of his life at his house in Polanco, in Santander Province on the Cantabrian Coast. The greater part of his novels and stories are set in the towns and villages of this province, but throughout them, he was conscious of the influence that Madrid and its customs was exerting on the traditional way of life in the small centers of provincial society. His awareness of this social force is most clearly expressed in three long short stories and two full-length novels, Pedro Sánchez and La Montalvez, in which the principal setting is the Spanish capital city. These novels have never received the critical acclaim that is their due, because of the desire of many critics to judge them by non-literary criteria. This thesis studies Pereda's presentation of the historical background to the novels and his analysis of various aspects of Madrid life, especially the political system, the press and the attitudes of fashionable society to love and sex, to education and religion. His ideas on the aesthetics of art and on Spain's literary heritage give rise to certain trends in his narrative style; this and the technical accomplishment of the two full-length novels, is discussed at some length. A final section analyses his creation of characters and situations, and his treatment of themes in these two novels, in order to show that the real measure of his success is the host of characters, whom he made human and artistically credible.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

The Theme of Madrid in Pereda's Novels

The Five Madrid Novels

*Suums Cuique*

*La Mujer del César*

*Los Hombres de Pro*

*Pedro Sánchez*

*La Montálvez*

Chapter 1: The Historical Background to *Pedro Sánchez*  
24

Chapter 2: Pereda's Literary Opinions and Technique in the Madrid Novels  
49

Chapter 3: Politics and the Press in Pereda's Madrid Novels  
78

Chapter 4: Society in Pereda's Madrid Novels

  Fashion

  Love

  Education

  Religion

Chapter 5: The Themes and Characters of *Pedro Sánchez* and *La Montálvez*  
137

Conclusion  
191

Bibliography  
197
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Y este culto local de Pereda, que lo ahogó, enroscándose a él como una boa constrictor, lo ha seguido aniquilando después de muerto. Al él debemos los tópicos de los manuales y el que exista una tan extraña desproporción entre las afirmaciones de la crítica "oficial" de Pereda y la realidad de su influjo en la novela moderna. No se encuentra nunca su nombre bajo la pluma de los novelistas que hoy trabajan y crean, lo que no deja de sorprender, si la suscitada crítica y los susodichos manuales tuvieran razón. Hoy ya, que Pereda se nos aparece como definitivamente pasado, el daño es irremediable; pero hubo un tiempo en que no lo era, en que el novelista, neurosis o no, asistido por una más comprensiva--o más rigurosa--crítica, más aguda, más alerta, hubiera podido cumplir plenamente la gran promesa que fue. La frase histórica de que Castilla--más exactamente, toda esta espaciosa y triste patria nuestra--hace sus hombres y los gasta, podría tomar un sesgo más sombríamente dramático en el caso de Pereda. A Pereda, aquella agria Castilla cántabra lo gastó sin hacerlo.

JOSE F. MONTESINOS
INTRODUCTION

Many attempts have been made to classify the works of José María de Pereda. The first was that of Augusto Charro Hidalgo y Díaz, and many critics since have similarly attempted to categorise Pereda's novels. They have immediately discovered that this is an unrewarding, if not impossible, task. At first glance it may not appear so, for Pereda's production is not large by any standards; but the difficulties occur once the categories have been decided upon, and an attempt made to assign the novels to these categories. A critic could, for example, call the novel Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera a political novel, a regional novel, a humorous novel, a costumbrista novel or a thesis novel.

Because it is impossible to place Pereda's novels into mutually exclusive categories, any significant classifications can be made only by concentrating on a theme which is common to several of them, and by discussing these novels with regard to their theme. Then, instead of having five categories, each of which contains a fifth part of his novels, any novel may be assigned to four or even five of these classifications, and consequently any category may be comprised of all, or most of, the novels.

The two largest groups which result from such a thematic division of Pereda's works are the regional novels--which include all but La Montálvez--and the thesis novels--which
include all but Sotileza. Such differentiation of the author's writings by a comparison of their subject matter would produce smaller and more clear-cut divisions. One of these would be that of the Madrid stories, whose action, or a large part of it, takes place within the Spanish capital. This group has never been studied in detail, nor has it received the critical acclaim that it deserves.

The five novels whose setting is Madrid were written at different periods of Pereda's life. The dates are not without significance, for they reveal the author's continuing preoccupation with the metropolis. The five novels, and the dates of their first publication, are:

1864, Suum cuique
1870, La mujer del César
1871, Los hombres de pro
1884, Pedro Sánchez
1888, La Montálvez

The theme of Madrid in Pereda's novels

It can be argued that assigning of Pereda's works to watertight compartments is purely arbitrary, since the theme of Madrid runs through the majority of his novels. It would be an immense task to document this motif in the whole of his production, but a brief outline of it would be in order at this point.

The first appearance of the theme is, in fact, Suum cuique in his first collection, Escenas montañesas. This
short novel will be studied in detail, as will the next two developments of the theme in the collection Bocetos al temple (the two novels La mujer del César and Los hombres de pro).

He followed this collection with another of shorter pieces entitled Tipos trashumantes, which was to be his first venture into anti-Madrid writings by default. This approach was to become a favorite with Pereda from this point on in his development. He achieves it either by describing the virtues of the Montaña and then revealing the disruptive force of the sophisticated ideas of the capital or he describes the faults and the ridiculousness of the madrileños by contrast with the sane and healthy country people.

It is this technique of negation and contrast which supplies the solution to the apparent paradox in Pereda's novels. Pereda's production was paradoxical since he only composed five novels set in Madrid, and yet the well-worn theme of Menosprecio de Corte y Alabanza de Aldea is evident in everything he wrote. Pereda had an almost guilty preoccupation with the Court and consequently the reader must always supply the first half of the phrase (Menosprecio de Corte) to his thoughts on any work that praises the pastoral ideal (Alabanza de Aldea).

These two aspects of Pereda's technique can be found in many of his novels about life in the mountains of Santander. The two early thesis novels, Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera and De tal palo, tal astilla are constructed in accord with this method. The former describes the impact of
revolutionary Madrid politics on a small community in Santander province. Similarly De tal palo, tal astilla is concerned with the clash between old-fashioned religion and "new-fangled" Madrid atheism. His first novel, El buey suelto... had gone one stage further. It attacked the ideas expressed in Balzac's Physiologie du mariage and Petites misères de la vie conjugale, which were, by implication, Madrid Society's ideas on marriage, since Madrid so often aped Paris.

The five novels that form the central part of Pereda's publications, and which are his greatest achievements, make a strange contrast with his earlier and later books, and with each other. Three of the five simply describe the Montaña, its life and its beauties, and show a world completely free from the evil influence of the metropolis. In the two intervals between writing them he produced the five works which deal most specifically with the Corte, in the following order:

1882, El sabor de la tierruca
1883, Pedro Sánchez
1885, Sotileza
1888, La Montálvez
1889, La puchera

These five form a strange group, since three are free from anti-Madrid satire and the other two comprise its most complete manifestation.

His last three novels, Nubes de estío, Al primer vuelo, and Peñas arriba are all thesis novels, as his earliest ones
had been. Two of the three reveal Pereda's view of madrileños in the Montaña, in a similar vein to Tipos trashumantes. Nubes de estío contains many of Pereda's most vitriolic attacks on the treatment of the provinces by the capital, especially the chapter entitled "Palique"; and some critics have seen the "summer clouds" as the veraneantes themselves. The similarity between the thesis of this novel and that of the somewhat idyllic Al primer vuelo, a fact caused by the composition of the two within the same year and from the same ideas, makes the latter seem far worse despite its bucolic charm. Peñas arriba, so often claimed as Pereda's masterpiece, now appears to present a rather forced thesis, in which the madrileño Marcelo is converted to a love of the Montaña.

Thus it can be seen that the theme of the praise of the country and the despising of the capital can be found in the majority of Pereda's writings. Even the so-called Escritos de juventud (1858-79) contain many political articles which attack the government. Madrid is a major theme, whether it be by negation (as in El sabor de la tierruca, La puchera), contrast (Peñas arriba, Nubes de estío which are manifestations of Alabanza de Aldea), or by a direct satirical attack (La mujer del César, La Montálvez which are manifestations of Menosprecio de Corte).
The Five Madrid Novels

Suum Cuique

This was Pereda's first excursion to Madrid, and was also his very first story, as opposed to sketch, scene, or cuadro. It was included in his first publication, the Escenas montañesas of 1864, which was the biggest step forward in Spanish realism since the publication of La gaviota by Fernán Caballero in 1849.

Suum cuique is a very simple story with a double action. It has a minimum of characters for it revolves around the figures of Don Silvestre Seturas and an unnamed pez gordo from Madrid who is always referred to as Don Fulano de Tal.

The two men require a certain amount of attention for they are the prototypes of important stock figures in Pereda's fiction. Like many nineteenth century novelists, Pereda gave names to certain of his characters to emphasize their personalities. Dickens is the prime example with Count Smolstork, Lords Dedlock and Verisopht, and Captain Cuttle. Galdós was to use the same sort of symbolism with Teresa and Santiago Ibero, Don Benigno Cordero, Angel Guerra and many others. Pereda was not given to using symbolic names with such frequency, but there are occasions when he does so. It is sufficient to mention the stubborn Don Roque in Nubes de estío, Angel and Luz in La Montálvez, and Don Serafín in Pedro Sánchez as examples of protagonists with meaningful names; and such secondary figures as the "prickly" Leticia Espinosa and the aristocratic Sagrario Miralta and Manolo
Casa-Vieja. The symbolism in *Suum cuique* reveals Don Silvestre's pastoral origins and nature.

Don Fulano de Tal is the first appearance of a *pez gordo* in Pereda. This character will be developed in later novels, but here is the primitive original of such "great" men as Don Augusto Valenzuela (*Pedro Sánchez*) and El marqués de Casa-Gutiérrez (*Nubes de estío*). In this first airing he is, indeed, the harassed man of the world who has little or no time to rest from his problems, but he is a very kindly, benevolent soul. He has no malice in him, but, being human, has many faults. Pereda satirises his faults constantly. What is, perhaps, much more surprising is that Pereda satirises Don Silvestre far more harshly than Don Fulano de Tal.

Don Silvestre is the last of a long line of rather single-minded *hidalgos*, who have carried on a pointless and ridiculous *pleito* for many years. This aspect of his character is stressed by Pereda at all times, although he does allow that "Silvestre no carecía completamente de sentido común" (I, 262). The later analysis of Silvestre's character will reveal that he suffered from a Galdosian *monomanía*.

Don Silvestre is another original for later characters, since he is marked by a benevolent and virtuous if somewhat boorish nature. His adventures in Madrid are amusing, but the humor is based on the old device of setting a countryman's lack of polish against the niceties and finery of society. The character, first seen here, will later be developed as Ramón (*La mujer del César*) and Pedro Sánchez.
Suum cuique in its anti-Madrid ideas also prefigures the later development of Pereda's novels. This novel must always be taken into consideration when discussing the city/country theme in Pereda. The country is never idealised. Pereda is at great pains to describe the Montaña and its beauties but his novels always remain realistic. Pereda never doubts for a moment the virtues of the country over the city for him, but he has no patience with the pastoral ideal of the countryside in which fair shepherds make chaste love to beautiful shepherdesses, under cloudless skies, with flocks that never wander.

Don Fulano meets with many discomforts in the country. Perhaps the most famous of these occurs after Garcilaso has been invoked on account of his "tiernas églogas" and Don Fulano has been described as reading "cualquiera de los poetas, desde Gonzalo de Berceo hasta el último bucólico de nuestros gacetilleros y romancistas," (I, 279). Pereda drives home the false impression given of the country by these poets by quoting two pastoral stanzas and exclaims "¡Y dirán las almas de prosa que la poesía es una quimera!"

The sequence is carefully prepared in order to make the reader's and Don Fulano's disillusionment greater. This comes when Don Fulano, thinking he hears Galatea approach through the bushes, goes to investigate and discovers "en lugar de los cabellos de la ninfa...atropellando las enmarañadas árgomas, madreselvas, espinas, zarzas, juncias y ortigas,
las afiladas astas de un novillo de cuatro años," (I, 279-80). He does not stop running till he reaches Don Silvestre's house.

Montesinos has pointed out that these ideas were old-fashioned by 1864, but does reveal that Pereda was concerned with the reality of the country, not with an idealisation of it. Montesinos has developed a theory about Pereda's realism, which is clearly revealed in *Suum cuique*. Pereda's novels are an uneasy mixture of idylls—in their totality—and of Realism or even Naturalism—in their details. Pereda's view of life was that the country was preferable to the capital, but it was still the lesser of two evils. He could see the faults of the countryside and constantly attacked the vices of its inhabitants.

Cities, after all, contain more people, and provide mathematically a greater possibility for evil. Pereda never lost the vision of the country he had in *Suum cuique*, and both his own house at Polanco, and the Casona of Peñas arriba had many civilised alterations made to accommodate the sophisticated Pereda and the madrileño Marcelo. Pereda was never able to forget the advantages of progress and Madrid, despite his hatred of its faults.

*La Mujer del César*  
This, the second of Pereda's sallies from the Montaña, has much in common with *Los hombres de pro* and follows *Suum cuique* by six years. It also has two heroes, but, unlike the heroes of *Suum cuique*, they do not both suffer discomfiture
as the novel progresses. On the contrary, there is a tendency for the very strict moral to be emphasized by Pereda, and the moral judgments of one of the heroes are supported by the author rather too fully. Far from suffering discomfiture, he is shown as being a paragon.

The novel concerns two brothers, Ramón and Carlos. Ramón has remained in the Montaña, Carlos has become a successful Madrid lawyer. The description of Ramón, which opens the novel, brings to mind Silvestre Seturas, and one characteristic is stressed by Pereda: "ni de su aire ni de su rostro podía deducirse que fuera un palurdo..." (I, 533). Another similarity which has a bearing on the action is that both men are large and powerful.

Ramón is to be the hero of the novel, yet his brother really provides the central action in it. The contrast between the two is continually stressed, but despite what has been said about the extreme perfection of the countryman, it is the city-lawyer, Carlos, who is described as "más idealista y más fino" (I, 538). Pereda is once more throwing into relief the true nature of the countryside, which he does not idealise, for his realism stresses both its beauty and shortcomings.

Despite the over-emphasis on the virtue of the montañés, what has escaped most critics is the fact that he is not the only virtuous character in the story. Carlos and Isabel, his wife, are shown to be both honest and honorable, even though he is a little "blind" and "la veta de Isabel era la
ostentación" (I, 539). As such they provide the originals for Pedro Sánchez (who is "blind") and his first wife Clara (who is ostentatious), although the later novel develops the characters much more fully.

There are wicked and vicious people in Madrid, but Pereda gives a reasonably balanced picture of society for there is a mixture of vice and virtue in the main characters. He may appear to be censuring the whole of Madrid Society very severely, but, given the facts, criticism must be tempered accordingly. Pereda's two most severe attacks on high society occur in this novel and in La Montálvez, and both are built around beautiful women and the attempts that are made on their honor.

Another trait of many of Pereda's thesis novels, revealed by Suum cuique and La mujer del César, is that he has a tendency to use a proverb or saying as a basis for a novel. Suum cuique exemplified the idea of "to each his own," La mujer del César the importance of "appearing and not just being virtuous," just as De tal palo, tal astilla illustrated the idea of "a chip off the old block" or "like father, like son," and (unusually) El buey suelto... [bien se lame] attacks the idea that the "unyoked [i.e. unmarried] steer does well for himself."

Much of the plot and the theme of the story will be dealt with later in more detail, but the conclusions drawn from the theme must be treated with caution. Although it may appear somewhat old-fashioned in its exhortation to women
to stay at home and look after their husbands and families, it was very much in line with the ideas of more liberal novelists.

Montaigne had, perhaps, been most influential in his advocacy of domestic pleasures and a return to the simple values of the home. These ideas were absorbed and reasserted by the greatest nineteenth-century novelists—Balzac, Dickens, Galdós—and also the majority of Spaniards. Fernán Caballero had, predictably, subscribed to this thesis, but so had other Spanish novelists of such diversified political and philosophical backgrounds as Alarcón, Coloma, Palacio Valdés and Clarín.

Because of this nineteenth century trend, care must be taken in assessing Pereda that one is not blindly prejudiced against him. He described life as it really was and sought lasting values among its many false allurements. He had a tendency to over-moralise, something he shares with many other writers.

_Los hombres de pro_6

This novel has similarities to _La mujer del César_ for it prefigures themes in Pereda's later novels, and part of it can be seen as the immediate precursor to _Pedro Sánchez_. The themes that are treated in some detail in this book are amplified in _Pedro Sánchez_ in very much the same way as those in _La mujer del César_ are expanded in _La Montalvez_. 
Los hombres de pro is a much more complex work than either of the two earlier ones. Suum cuique had a certain plot development but consisted essentially of the contrast between two extended sets of scenes; the first showed the perils of life in the big city, the second described the disadvantages of country life. La mujer del César was likewise a series of scenes which set in relief the vices of the capital, but it had a more complex plot structure which held the scenes together. Los hombres de pro is a further advancement in narrative technique, for the emphasis is now on the story itself, and the costumbrista scenes are used to fill in the details of the stages of the story.

It also contains, large autobiographical elements, as do the two-full-length Madrid novels (Pedro Sánchez and La Montalvez). Pereda's use of these elements is rather like Dickens' in David Copperfield and Great Expectations, for he describes the heroes in situations similar to those he himself had experienced, but he creates autonomous heroes whose life as a whole is completely different from his own. In Los hombres de pro, for example, the political campaign which Don Simón conducts is modelled closely on Pereda's own political campaign, but the characters of Don Simón and Pereda are totally dissimilar, as are the developments in their lives after the campaign is over.

The novel has a greater variety of scenes than the earlier ones, which had either a single setting (Madrid in La mujer del César) or a double setting (the country and
Madrid in Suum cuique. Los hombres de pro has a triple setting which prefigures all the later developments in Pereda's fiction. The first stage of the story is set in a mountain village, a setting which was to be Pereda's favorite and was to be expanded throughout his later creative life. Thus he uses it for his second long novel, Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera, and develops it in El sabor de la tierruca and La puchera, using it finally in his last long novel, Peñas arriba. The second stage occurs in provincial towns, one fairly small, the other the provincial capital. This setting was also to be developed in later novels. The last of the Bocetos al temple (Oros son triufos) is set in Santander, as are Sotileza, Nubes de estío and his last short novel, Pachín González. The third stage of the novel involves Madrid, and this will be developed in the two novels Pedro Sánchez and La Montálvez.

In many ways Los hombres de pro is closer to Suum cuique than to La mujer del César, for the latter tends to satirise Madrid Society and to set up Ramón, the montañés, as a symbol of virtue. Although the other novels also attack Madrid, the provincials are shown as having considerable faults as well. It has been noted that Pereda satirised Don Silvestre more than Don Fulano de Tal. In the same way he also exposes the faults of Don Simón, his wife and daughter, who are the main representatives of the Montaña.

This novel, despite its faults, is Pereda's first real attempt to construct a complex plot. It suffers from being
too episodic, as do many of his novels; Pedro Sánchez having been compared to Lesage's *Gil Blas*. *Los hombres de pro* is similarly picaresque—in its widest meaning—in construction.

He was to achieve a far greater unity in his narrative technique, especially in *La Montalvez*, although he never achieves the painstaking complexity of such a novel as Dickens' *Our Mutual Friend*, in which it seems the removal of one tiny thread would cause the complex fabric to disintegrate.

Pereda's novelistic technique will be analysed in greater detail later. No critic, with the possible exception of Montesinos, has paid much attention to the technical excellence of many of Pereda's novels, nor has the influence of his technique on later writers, including Galdós, been taken into account.

*Pedro Sánchez*

"La mejor novela de Pereda." "La perla de la colección de Pereda." "Aquella gran hazaña de novelista que le ponía a par de Galdós." Despite the enthusiastic critical acclaim that *Pedro Sánchez* received, the novel has been the subject of more controversy than any of his other novels, with the exception of *La Montalvez*. The reasons for the contentiousness were very different, however. The later novel was criticised because of its subject matter, *Pedro Sánchez* for the way it came to be written.
In her famous book *La cuestión palpitante*, Emilia Pardo Bazán took Pereda to task for his regionalism. In what are probably her most famous words she described Pereda's art as "huerto hermoso, bien regado, bien cultivado, orreado por aromáticas y salubres aires campestres, pero de muy limitados horizontes." These words have been quoted by every critic of Pereda since; but very few have done more than accept them. Menéndez y Pelayo took them as a compliment, for he says "aquel huerto etc...; como dijo de perlas, Emilia Pardo Bazán." Jean Camp, in his worthy but atrociously edited thesis on Pereda, has pointed out that la Pardo Bazán's criticism is neither accurate nor totally justified. In her attack she goes on to say: "jamás intentó estudiar a fondo los medios civilizados, la vida moderna en las grandes capitales, vida que le es antipática y de la cual abomina." Her remarks are not fully justified for two reasons: Pereda had already written three novels about life in Madrid; and she suggests that he is not civilised and hates all aspects of modern city-life, which is patently a complete exaggeration of Pereda's real attitude to large cities and to progress.

The bitter polemic which took place between the two novelists has been dealt with in great detail by the majority of critics. The various writings of la Pardo Bazán are collected in her book *Polémicas y estudios literarios*, which includes Pereda's *Las comezones de la señora Pardo Bazán*. In order to understand the issue fully, it is necessary to read Chapter XIII of *Nubes de estío*, entitled "Palique."
this chapter there is a great deal of criticism of the Madrid press and there is a description of La cuestión palpitante in very disparaging terms, which nobody has mentioned directly, but which must have caused the argument between the two novelists, (II, 884).

It may be taking matters to extremes, but it is possible that the inquisitive and "prickly" Leticia Espinosa could be a parody of the Condesa de Pardo Bazán, since Pereda stigmatises the latter for her comezones, and her "prickly" nature has been attested by her contemporaries. 15

Perhaps the only good to come of this controversy—which improved the reputation of neither of them—was that Pereda was directly stimulated to write Pedro Sánchez, and later, indirectly to write La Montálvez.

Pedro Sánchez makes a slight development from the technique of Los hombres de pro, but still retains the essentially picaresque construction. The character of Pedro himself is far more complex than Don Simón, but the novel is still held together by the figure of the hero. The autobiographical narrative form was to provide Pereda with a model for the complexity of technique of La Montálvez.

La Montálvez

La Montálvez was written at a time when many social problems were under heated discussion. Several had attracted public attention; all were principally concerned with sexual ethics, but, by implication, also with the whole fabric of
society. Among these problems were sexual morality and virtue; a resulting problem of the que dirán, of the escándalo; the retribution for sins—the biblical "reaping the whirlwind;" and the difficulties of the education of young women. Pereda had already approached the theme in La mujer del César in 1870, but received its greatest publicity with the publication of Alarcón's El escándalo in 1875.¹⁶

Valera was to add to the problem with his somewhat immoral and disillusioned Pasarse de listo in 1877. Other novelists also dealt with some of these problems in the following years: El marqués de Figueroa in La Vizcondesa de Armas, Antonio Flores in Fe, esperanze y caridad, Martínez Villergas in Los misterios de Madrid and Ayguals de Izco in a very popular novel María, o la hija de un jornalero.

In 1888 La Montávez appeared and in the next ten years three more important novels were to deal with the theme: Pequeñeces by Luis Coloma in 1890; Palacio Valdés' La espuma in 1891 and in 1898 Valera's Genio y figura.... This was the most Peredian of all, since Valera not only supported much of Pereda's thesis but chose the proverb for the title: "Genio y figura hasta la sepultura." This last novel was the only one to develop the education theme as fully as El escándalo and La Montávez. These themes will be dealt with later in far greater detail, but it is necessary to give the background to the controversy over La Montávez at this juncture. This began with a great furor over the morality, or lack of it, in the novel. Because of the accusations that
the novel was immoral, it probably gave Pereda the greatest heartache, for it had been the novel he had hoped the most from, and it was the one that he was to despair of, and virtually disown.

The critics have classed Pereda as being a mere observer, who only describes in great detail what he sees. The same critics were just as quick to seize on the inaccuracies of his picture of High Society in Madrid. "Los mismos que con tenacidad habían aconsejado a Pereda a que dilatase el campo de la observación, fueron los primeros en aplicar el lente microscópico y el espejo multiplicador de doce caras a los lunares de La Montalvez." One wonders whether Padre Blanco had Emilia Pardo Bazán in mind when he wrote this.

These arguments, like those as to whether Pereda was a naturalist or a realist, now seem not only petty but irrelevant. The same reasons that make Pereda's Montaña novels excellent material for sociologists and/or anthropologists, make La Montalvez less useful for such scientists, but in no way negate its value as fiction.

La Montalvez is the novel that poses most clearly the question of what one is looking for in a work of art, and more especially in a novel. Reading the criticism of this novel, one is struck by the fact that the majority of critics are not looking for fidelity to art, in the Aristotelian sense that everything that happens must be realistic because it is artistically necessary, but they are concerned with judging how accurately Pereda paints the customs, the habits, the life
of Madrid society. His inaccuracies and shortcomings are carefully highlighted; his fiction is ignored. Literary criticism is not concerned with the accuracy of physical details, but with the truth and harmony of the people described. Pereda's work has been debased to the level of a "documentary" on life in the Montaña "como si se tratara de un aduar de Marruecos o de la isla de Annobón." He began writing with the idea of correcting the false picture of the Montaña that was current (this was very similar to the purpose of Mesonero Romanos in Escenas matritenses). He was never allowed to forget that he was a regional writer.

The Madrid press, headed by Emilia Pardo Bazán, was intent on attacking Pereda for his failings in his description of the daily life of the Madrid aristocracy. On the other hand, the Montaña faction, headed by Menéndez y Pelayo, was intent on shutting Pereda in, intent on keeping him inside his huerto. Neither critical approach is honest: The first group based its judgments on a very elementary criticism of detail, the latter based its comments on how well Pereda described the life of the Montaña. It is the same criticism stood on its head. It is because of these two schools of thought that Pereda has been shelved, why he has been pigeon-holed as a minor, regional novelist. It is because of the Montañista school of criticism that generations of readers have been subjected to Peñas arriba, which may be a great "document" on the wild beauty of the Montaña, but document and novel are not the same at all.
The greatest of all Pereda's regional novels is undoubtedly Sotileza. Despite the brilliance of the "photography," however, it is the drama of Sotileza, of Andrés, of Cleto and Muergo that lifts this from being merely a picture of life in one region of Spain. Pereda's writing was at the height of its powers when he wrote this novel. I cannot accept the idea that his creative powers then plunged to their nadir with La Montálvex, soared up again for La puchera, plunged again for Al primer vuelo and Nubes de estío and then achieved a shattering climax with Peñas arriba. I believe that what was so inconstant was not his creative ability, but rather his recreative ability. In Pedro Sánchez, Sotileza and La Montálvex he is concerned with the dramatic possibilities of human conflicts. To a lesser extent this is also true of La puchera, but although he manages to set the jewel off beautifully in Sotileza, this beautiful setting is missing from the Madrid novels, and it was this setting that most critics were concerned with.
FOOTNOTES

Introduction


2. "Don José María de Pereda", in Revista Contemporánea (15 April 1884), pp. 345-6.

3. All quotations to Pereda's works are to the following edition: José María de Pereda, Obras completas (2 volumes), ed. José María de Cossío (Aguilar: Madrid, 1954). The reference here is to I, 47-200.


5. It was published first in the Revista de España (1870, XVII, 18-39, 180-199, 556-587); then it was re-published with Los hombres de pro in 1876 under the title of Bocetos al temple, for which Pereda wrote a third novel Oros son triunfos. This was similar to the others in its satiric criticism of city life and the power of money, but was unlike them in not being set in Madrid. When Los hombres de pro was published separately in 1884, as Volume I of Pereda's Obras completas, the two remaining novels were published as Volume VIII along with Tipos trashumantes, a few years later.

6. It had, if anything, a more complicated history than La mujer del César. It was written in 1871 and dedicated to La Revista de España, who turned it down. Then, as far as can be ascertained, it was published in La Reconquista in the early part of the following year. In 1876 it was republished as the longest of the Bocetos al temple (along with La mujer del César and Oros son triunfos). In 1884 it was split off from the other two novels and published separately as the first volume of the Obras completas. In this edition it has a long prologue by the young Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo.


15. Montesinos, p. 281, says "nadie le podía sufrir, ni Clarín, ni Menéndez y Pelayo, ni Pereda, ni Valera mismo, aunque más transigente."

16. This was the most popular nineteenth-century Spanish novel; it sold 40,000 copies in its first three months.


19. It would be like tearing to pieces H. G. Wells' *The First Men in the Moon*, *The Time Machine* or similar romances, because they are inaccurate in the light of modern scientific research. Whatever their failure in this way, they remain humanly "true."

20. As for example in J. M. Cossío, *La obra literaria de Pereda* (Santander, 1934).
THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO PEDRO SANCHEZ

Before calling Pedro Sánchez an historical novel, it is necessary to define what is meant by the adjective "historical" in this context. During the nineteenth century two types of historical novel were written: One described events that had taken place centuries earlier, the other related things that had occurred within living memory. Sir Walter Scott is the best example of the first trend, and he had many followers, such as Larra, Espronceda and Cánovas del Castillo. Disraeli is an example of the second group, but his contribution was dwarfed by that of Galdós in Spain.

Both sets of writers document the customs and habits of the people of the period they are describing and relate their lives to specific historical events. The essential distinction between the two is that the first group received information through literary means, by reading contemporary documents and reports; the second group discovered facts by human means, by either knowing personally the period about which they were writing or by questioning someone who did.¹

Three of Pereda's novels can be dated exactly because they deal with actual events. Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera deals with the effect of the Revolution of 1868 on a rural community. Pedro Sánchez is set in the early fifties in Madrid, and describes the Revolution of 1854. Pachín González chronicles the effects of the explosion on board the Cabo
Machichaco in Santander harbor on November 3, 1893. More than 600 people were killed and more than 1,000 injured in this disaster. Three other novels can be tentatively dated: Los hombres de pro occurs about two years after Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera as does Peñas arriba, and the Revolution of 1868 occurs between the two parts of La Montálvez.

Although the latter recreates the high society of the period, it is not as carefully linked to historical events as Coloma's Pequeñeces is to the reign of Amadeo I.

Pedro Sánchez and Los hombres de pro also contain large elements of autobiographical detail. The first relates Pereda's sojourn in the capital at the time he studied there, the second describes his political campaign, and to a lesser degree his succeeding experience in the Cortes. There are autobiographical elements of less importance in Suum cuique, La mujer del César and La Montálvez, but they are not closely connected with specific events. As such they become autobiographical impressions rather than details of Pereda's life.

This section will deal mainly with Pedro Sánchez since it contains the majority of historical information. An attempt will be made to show how Pereda describes most of the elements of society within the historical background. This section will concern itself with his introduction of living politicians and writers into the novel.

Los hombres de pro does not require much comment at this stage, since the majority of its issues are more relevant to the theme of politics. The electoral campaign described
here was that which Pereda undertook in 1871, when he was elected Carlist deputy for Cabuérniga. He seems to have done this more out of duty than political ambition, and appears not to have been in complete agreement with the Carlist party. What is certain is that he remained in Madrid for only a short period. This autobiographical detail comprises the whole of the historical interest. One can thus link the political campaign and the scenes in the Cortes not only to a period but to a specific year. But because there are no political or monarchical events described, the value of the novel must be more as a history of Pereda rather than as a history of Spain.

Pedro Sánchez is a completely different matter. This novel is historical, not only because it is set in a very definite dated period, but because it describes historical events in detail. Pereda went to Madrid in 1852 to study mathematics prior to joining the artillery. He found that he did not like mathematics, however, and spent most of his time in cafés and at the theatre, and generally living a carefree student's life. When events took the turn they did—the Revolution of 1854—he wandered the streets, satisfying his own curiosity. Pereda took a great interest in Madrid at this time, and Pedro Sánchez reveals his continuing fondness for the life of the capital. But at the end of 1854 he returned to Santander, disillusioned with mathematics, with politics and with Madrid.
This novel is one of the few eye-witness accounts of the occurrences in Madrid which led up to the Revolution of 1854. The only other novel dealing with this event is Galdós' *La revolución de julio* and accompanying novels of the fourth series of the *Episodios nacionales*. Galdós' novel was written in 1903-4, and it is probable that Galdós used Pedro Sánchez as source material, since Pereda was witness and Galdós was not even in Spain at that time. The comparison with *La revolución de julio* is appropriate since there are similarities between Pedro Sánchez and the *Episodios nacionales*. Both Montesinos and Cossío have discussed these similarities. The comparison is primarily based on the technique used by both novelists. Galdós had created the heroes Gabriel Araceli and Salvador Monsalud, and both of them symbolised the Spanish people. Pedro Sánchez is another such symbol of the Spanish, for his fortunes undergo changes at the same time as the nation's. This comparison is only made once explicitly by Pereda, but it is implicit at all times: Pedro says "entre tanto el gobierno de la nación andaba tan desatinado como lo había estado el mío." (II, 176)

Other characters represent similar things in Galdós' novels as in Pedro Sánchez. In the second series of the *Episodios nacionales*, the hero, Salvador Monsalud, is torn between two women who represent two ideas of Spain—Jenara and Sola. Similarly Pedro finds his affections divided between Clara and Carmen, Clara standing for the aristocratic, opulent and corrupt Spain of the *polacos*, and Carmen
representing the honest, homeloving bourgeois Spain of the liberals. The fathers of the two girls also represent the same visions of Spain. What is most disconcerting in the novel is that Pereda gave his support to the same ideal of Spain as Galdós had. Pedro, like Salvador, is seduced by illusions of grandeur and marries the representative of a "traditionalist" system, but both find real happiness with a simple, honest, hard-working and level-headed woman.

In the final reckoning, however, there is one essential difference between the symbolic endings of the second series of the Episodios nacionales and Pedro Sánchez. Although the ending of the former is much lower-pitched than the triumphant close to the first series, Galdós manages to salvage some hope for the future and he lets the reader infer that Salvador and Sola will be happy. The end of Pedro Sánchez on the contrary is very pessimistic, for Pedro loses everything that has meant anything to him—even his enemies los Garcías. There is a possibility that Pereda is being ironical about the liberals, but it is much more probable that it stems from a pessimism about life in general.⁴

These abstract ideas on history are not without relevance here, but the second method which both novelists used was to give their symbolic dramas about Spain in a detailed historical background. It is this background which makes this type of historical novel so rich in interpretation. If they were simply figures who stood for certain qualities or institutions, and they fought and loved, argued and hated, and
finally came to a moral conclusion, the novels would be nothing more than medieval morality plays. On the contrary, these novels are enriched because the main characters symbolise actual events and take part in the same events. They have dealings with the people who influenced history and, at times, influence it themselves.

To ascertain the way Pereda uses this historical background, it is necessary to gather the information he gives us about the period and relate it to its context.

One historical fact that Pereda makes certain the reader is aware of is that the period he is describing is one of change. There are many occasions in his writings when he introduces this element, but none is so clear as in Pedro Sánchez: The whole novel describes the changes in Spain. The reader is made aware of this very early in the novel, for Pedro is concerned with the effects that trains and summer vacationers from Madrid have had on his native province. He describes the old customs of the Montaña and then introduces the train which is personified and appears almost as a devil incarnate exercising a magic power over nature. "Hasta que, de repente y como por reflujo de lejana tempestad, alañáronse los montes, alzáronse los barrancos, taladráronse las rocas y llegó el bufido de la locomotora a confundirse con el bramar de las olas al estrellarse en la antes desierta ociosa playa." (II, 10)

This use of the train is a skilful introduction for the figure of Valenzuela. Valenzuela is modelled to a large
extent on Salamanca, and the name of the latter came to be associated with the railroads in Spain. The most explicit linking of the two men occurs when Valenzuela's house in Pedro Sánchez is nearly sacked, and it was, indeed, Salamanca's house that was sacked in reality. Pereda was aware that his creation would make his readers think of Salamanca, and therefore he links his representative of the corrupt administration, Valenzuela—Salamanca, with a symbol of the ideals of that administration, the railroads.

Pereda's evocation of the old, and his love of stage-coaches, are part of the similarity that exists between him and Dickens. Both were noted for their realism and their Romanticism (in Pereda this is exemplified by the idyllic nature of certain novels). Both were also traditionalists in a certain sense, for they tried to find and keep what was good in the old traditions (as, for example, Dickens' love of Christmas).

The fact that the novel takes place at a time of change is reiterated in the first chapters, and is evident from the events in the later stages. Pedro's father, a symbol of an almost perfect "paternalism," is himself aware of this change, although he never appreciates it fully: "Una insinuación..., de mi padre, sobre la corrupción de los tiempos y los peligros de la juventud ociosa en los pueblos, por falta de medios o valedores." (II, 29)

The change is made most clear by Valenzuela, its representative, and the origins of the new life are identified.
This is one of the few moments when the influence of Madrid over the provinces is stated in no uncertain terms. "Y para entonces...trasformado completamente este pueblo, porque llegará hasta él, un día no lejano, el movimiento de la nueva vida que comienza a extenderse desde el corazón a las extremidades de la Península." (II, 30)

The new historical background is built up very slowly from tiny pieces of information which blend to form a composite picture. The first mention sets the novel within the reign of Isabel II, for Valenzuela is sitting "debajo de un retrato de la soberana." (II, 61) The comment does not have any great significance for the novel, although it does give the reader some indication of Valenzuela's politics; but it is surprising that this is the only reference to the queen, towards whom Pereda, as an ex-Carlist deputy, could not have felt much affection. His passing up of the chance to inveigh against Isabel is an example of his open-mindedness.

It is not the purpose of this study to give the history of the period, and so only indications will be given of the way he mentions real persons and events.

When Pedro visits the Dickensian de los Trucos' family, Don Magín talks about the financial activities of Bravo Murillo ("las economías de Bravo Murillo", "el mismo día en que fue nombrado Bravo Murillo presidente del Consejo" (II, 70)). This is the first mention of any historical figure in the government, except for the Salamanca-like figure of the fictional Valenzuela. It is not really surprising that the
first politician mentioned by name should be another representative of the group which was trying to change Spain. Pereda's attitude toward these figures is naturally somewhat ambiguous, since Bravo Murillo honestly tried to improve Spain but only succeeded in corrupting it.

It is Matica, often Pereda's oracle, who indicates that Valenzuela's days are numbered. Pedro had already mentioned with hindsight "la borrasca que reinaba en la mar de la política española" (II, 82), but Matica centers the reader's attention on the fact that it is Valenzuela (and what he stood for) who is to bear the brunt of this storm: "¿Usted no sabe que los días de Valenzuela están contados, porque los gobernantes a cuyo amparo vive y medra se tambalean ya?" (II, 90)

The other characters with whom Pereda sympathises are the Balduque family, and it is Don Serafín who will assume a heroically defiant role and who is a major factor in the development of the historical background. The heroism of Don Serafín is very similar to that of "el gran capitán" and Don Benigno Cordero in Galdós' Episodios nacionales. It is this element of his character which enables Pereda to use him to advance the historical setting, for he awakens Pedro one day with the cry "¡Mueran los pillos!" and introduces him to the liberal paper El Clarín de la Patria.

Within a few chapters following this, Pereda introduces many ideas that were important, as for example the Constitution of 1837 (II, 95, 98) and the Milicia Nacional (II, 95, 98, 120);
many important figures, such as Espartero (II, 95, 98, 136, 137, 138, 155), O'Donnell (II, 109, 116, 155), Olózaga (II, 95); as well as men and events that were connected only with this revolution, Armero, Concha, Infante, Brigadier Hore (II, 109), Lara (II, 117), Blaser (II, 118), Brigadier Buceta (II, 119); Zaragoza (II, 109), 30 June (II, 117), 19 July (II, 131).

As mentioned, Don Serafín introduces Pedro to El Clarín de la Patria, for which Pedro will work. There are indications that this paper was based on El Murciélago, which is mentioned by name once (II, 111). This paper must be taken as a semi-historical symbol of the liberal press of the time. Pedro, as noted, is a symbol, and his destiny is closely linked with Spain's. The parallel between the two becomes evident when Pedro's first article is published:

_Ni César más resuelto y decidido al otro lado del Rubicón, que yo ufano, cuando lei, conmovido, en la sección de 'Variedades' de El Clarín de la Patria, el primer parto de mi ingenio que había merecido los honores de la imprenta._

_Aquel mismo día cayó el Ministerio, (II, 100)._

A similar thing had happened on the occasion of the first political upheaval, following which Pereda had got his job at the Clarín.

Pedro represents the liberal aspirations of the people, and as such he is at variance with the "official" view that Pereda supports only traditional ideals. The destiny of Pedro improves during the revolution, until finally he controls history and assumes a position of importance. Pereda then tracks his downfall, which is involved, as is Spain's, with the neo-polacos. The conclusions to be drawn from this
symbolism are complex, for it is possible that Pereda saw Pedro's view of life, the Galdosian liberal view, as the lesser of many evils, and, since he knew that the traditional way of life was doomed, he preferred the simple sincerity of Pedro, of Don Serafín and of Don Santiago Núñez (La Montálvez) to the extremes of either Valenzuela or the radical Redondo.

Although Pereda has been branded a traditionalist, his attacks were on the corruption of the aristocracy. He was the chronicler of changing times, and almost an historical prophet. He was not a supporter of the Marxist doctrines of 1848, but he was just as far from the adoration of the aristocracy of Bismarck's Germany. It was because he stood between two extremes that Pedro was allowed to succeed and then to succumb to the rife corruption.

Pereda was still intrigued by the political machinations of the capital thirty years after they had finished. As is evident from the fact that he wrote five novels about Madrid, Pereda's interest in the capital never waned. He had for it a peculiar love/hate relationship, which was increased by his great friendship with Galdós. Pereda went to Madrid in 1852 with great hopes, and returned two years later, disillusioned. His novels on the metropolis reveal his continuing interest in it, and this is especially seen from his great interest in the literary scene which was essentially based in Madrid at the period of the novel.
The historical background is filled out far more and far better by his literary commentary than by his treatment of the political themes. This is, however, understandable, since it is relatively easy to create fictional politicians but not fictional writers. It will be found, because of this, that the information on actual writers is more detailed and interesting than that on the political figures, who are analysed at greater length in the section of Politics and the Press.

The first aspect of literature which he introduces the reader to is the theatre. It must be borne in mind that Pereda, like many other nineteenth-century novelists, wanted to be a playwright; his first published work was a collection of five plays, which were not well received. Despite his failure, he maintained his love of the theatre, and was assured of the superiority of both the theatre and poetry over the novel, although history proved otherwise in the nineteenth century.

Pereda's interest in this genre was not limited to its literary content, but took in all aspects of the live theatre. He gives the reader some information on the best-known actors of the day: Julián Romea, Joaquín Arjona, Mariano Fernández, Teodora Lamadrid, Calvo, los Osorios, "el viejo Guzmán" and "la Palma." He also gives the reader information on where the various actors worked: el príncipe Pío; teatro de Variedades (Lamadrid, Arjona); los Basilios (la Palma and Guzmán); el del Príncipe (Arjona, Lamadrid, Calvo, and
los Osorios); la Cruz, Variedades e Instituto (II, 5509, 105).
However, interesting this information may be, it gives little or no indication of the real state of the theatre at the time.

There are also a few comments on the social aspects of the theatre, but this was such a commonplace in the nineteenth century as to need no elaboration:

Observe que casi todas las damas de copete y la mayor parte de los caballeros distinguidos veían con la misma indiferencia que la familia Valenzuela lo que ocurría en el escenario, y que cuanto más nutrido era el aplauso que arrancaba al sencillote público un arrebato apasionado de Teodora Lamadrid, más se acentuaba el desdén en las gentes principales. Andando el tiempo, me persuadí de que la moda impone a sus esclavos exigencias verdaderamente inconcebibles. (II, 58).

Pedro has a completely different concept of the theatre, although he had never been inside one before, and pronounces with great conviction that "el teatro es escuela de moral y buenas costumbres." (II, 55) There may be an ironical turn to this phrase, for Pedro is quoting a favorite newspaper; it is more probable that this forms part of Pereda's literary credo and that he was satirising what had become of the theatre, an institution which should be for the edification of the public.

Pedro's general attitude to the contemporary drama is summed up when he compares it to the theatre of the Golden Age:

No estaba tan boyante el teatro español, como en aquel siglo de colosales ingenios, en las humildes calendas a que me refiero; mas no por ello me merecían menos respeto y admiración los escasos poetas que sostenían la patria escena con sus creaciones. ¡Cuán exiguo era el número de estos, y qué escaso el positivo valor de la mayor parte de las obras!
He then amplifies this with a truism that could be applied to all the types of contemporary literature:

Lo que más abundaban eran las traducciones y arreglos del francés, (II, 63).

Pedro goes on to give a long description of the dramatists who were writing at the time, and who made the theatre more flourishing than the novel, "ya que no por la cantidad, por la calidad de los poetas." (II, 105) It is rather ironical that the majority of the playwrights he mentions are remembered today mainly because there were no better at the time, and none are considered of great literary value. His list is almost complete, but he does not mention "otras producciones mas efímeras, ni mencionar otros poetas de menor cuantía." (II, 105) The information that Pedro gives the reader about these authors is noteworthy, but such details can be obtained from a history of literature--although his own contemporary reaction to the drama is stimulating. The most rewarding of all his information concerns the lesser theatrical genres. His critical account of the "Andalusian" theatre and the *Zarzuela* is of immense value for a history of the theatre of the period.

Aun se representaba...algo del género andaluz, puesto de moda años antes por el actor Dardalla...Yo alcancé a ver todavía El corazón de un bandido [drama romántico muy afamado] en el Instituto, y el Tío Canayitas en el del Circo...popularísima zarzuela...de Franquelo y Sanz Pérez...como casi todo lo que se representaba y se había representado del mismo abominable género.

El teatro de moda era el Circo, de la plaza del Rey, donde Salas y Caltañazor habían encontrado una mina de oro con la zarzuela...y se estrenaron...
He follows up this account of the popular theatre with a short mention of the foremost critics of the day, and of the writers of theoretical treatises on the theatre, whose ideas had most influence at the time. 

Pereda's least concern was with lyric poetry, for which he felt neither the affection he did for the theatre, nor the ability he had for the novel. It is Matica who makes the only criticism of lyric poetry, and since it is spoken by this impartial critic, it is safe to assume that his view is Pereda's:

De líricos tampoco andábamos sobrados, pues los buenos, o estaban ausentes de España o dados a la política, o tenían enfundado el laúd; y de los malos no quiero hablar, aunque mucho me habló de ellos Matica para ponérmelos por ejemplo de lo abominable y vitando. (II, 66)

The third literary genre that Pedro reviews is the novel. This was probably the most useful of all, since there are few novels of the period which contain discussions of the contemporary attitude to the genre. It is even more valuable, as it was written about a time when the Spanish novel was in the throes of a revival. Pedro Sánchez is set less than five years after Fernán Caballero's La gaviota, and so chronicles another period of change in Spain and a change that was closely identified with its "industrial revolution." The novels of the early part of the century
had been Romantic imitations of Scott, but they were to give way to the realism that began with Fernán Caballero.¹⁶

The most influential novels during the latter part of the first half of the nineteenth century were those of such French writers as Soulié, Sue, Kock, Dumas, and Hugo. The only other novelists who seem to have had much vogue at the period were Scott and Richardson, and Goethe. Pereda mentions only Richardson of these, but he mentions the French novelists many times. It was Scott who had started the fashion for the historical and the fantastic, but it was the French who exacerbated the faults of their mentor, and who produced the majority of the "thrillers" of the day. Pedro was a bad judge of novels in his youth and he gives his only criterion for the novel at the time:

¡Ah los argumentos!...Las sorpresas, lo desconocido..., lo inesperado, las anagnórisis, que dino el pedante: ¡sobre todo, las anagnórisis! (II, 65).

This is very typical of the "thriller" to this day, and although the use of tragic admiratio and anagorisis may be perfectly acceptable on the stage, it lacks verisimilitude in the novel.

Pereda was one to satirise very severely the things of which he did not approve. His attack on French pseudo-academic writings in El Cervantismo is probably the most violent, and is one of the funniest pre-Borgesian parodies of the over-serious, stuffy and worthless world of academia. His final suggestion is that soon the critics will decide El Quijote must be a translation from the French, for no
Spaniard of the time could write! (I, 1311-1319). In the same series, *Esbozos y rasguños*, he satirises the popular novels of the day. Once again, in *Las bellas teorías*, he gives the ingredients for a novel. His recipe seems valid for our own times, for it has been said that the two ingredients for a best-seller today are sex and violence:

Si fuera una novela patibularia, incendiaria, forajida parricida, o adulterina... ¿No podría usted [introducir] en él siquiera un par de frailes cínicos, una ramera virtuosa, un bandido filantrópico, un banquero ex presidiario, una marquesa adultera..., cualquier cosa así? Porque con un título ad hoc, verbigracia: *El cráneo del monje, La caverna del crimen, Cien generaciones de adulteras, El puñal y el hisopo*, le daríamos a luz con éxito seguro. (I, 1217).

When one looks at this attack, however, one wonders what Pereda’s reaction to his own satire would be, after writing *La Montalvez* which does deal with a criminal banker and an adulterous marchioness. Even the title, *Cien generaciones de adulteras*, has some relevance to the problem of the inheritance of sin and guilt, which forms one aspect of his own novel.

Pedro does mention the most important French novels, but he makes no further critical judgment, after the one quoted above, except to say that "no era yo otra cosa que un glotón insaciable sin pizca de paladar." (II, 59) This statement tends to give the reader the impression that all the novels he lists were not very good. His testimony, for he is merely repeating Pereda’s own experience in Madrid, is valuable once again as an eye-witness report of the fiction that was being devoured in vast quantities at the time.
En la novela imperaban las traducciones del francés; y eran los autores preferidos Víctor Hugo, Dumas, Jorge Sand, Sue, Paul de Kock y Soulié (II, 103)

Todo Paul Kock andaba por allí; lo más crudo de Pigault-Lebrun; lo selecto de Dumas y Soulié; El judío errante, a la sazón objeto de los más terribles anatemas de la censura eclesiástica, y Nuestra Señora de París, prohibido también por el Ordinario, (II, 51).

He also reads Los tres mosqueteros and Paul de Kock's Zizina. His list is virtually complete, for he includes all the best-known authors, and it is noteworthy that the pronouncements of the Inquisition seem to have relatively little importance for Pedro.

Perhaps the greatest evidence of the popularity of these novels is that the best of them continued to be read in the twentieth century. On the last occasion that he lists the popular French novels, three titles, at least, have survived the passage of years. The Three Musketeers and The Count of Monte Cristo are still extremely popular (as is Notre Dame de Paris) and the aging prostitute in Camilo José Cela's La Colmena was avidly reading Los misterios de París. This was a fact that Pereda was to be unaware of; but what he does emphasize, yet again, is that the "thrillers" that were popular and that delighted him.

Titulábale la novela La enferma del corazón, y a pique me puso su lectura de padecer yo la misma enfermedad que la heroína. De El judío errante, Los misterios de París, Los tres mosqueteros, con todas sus consecuencias; El hijo del diablo, El conde de Monte-cristo y otras que por entonces imperaban en el gusto público, no necesito decir hasta qué extremo me emborrachaban. (II, 65-6)
After dealing at some length with the French, Pedro turns to the Spanish novel which "tenía pocos cultivadores, y no abundaban los lectores que preguntaban por ella." (II, 103) Of all the novelists, only one is now worth dealing with in detail. This is, of course, Fernán Caballero. Pedro gives the reader a fairly comprehensive view of the novel which is extremely valuable since most of the novels have long since disappeared, and this is one of the very few contemporary accounts which give a detailed critical summary of the position of the novel in the early 1850s. It must be remembered that the only other writer of real merit who had begun publishing seriously was Trueba, about whom Pedro makes some surprising remarks;

Alarcón's first major contribution, El final de Norma, appeared in 1855.18

It is sufficient to mention the historical facts that "Fernán Caballero acababa de publicar Clemencia, después de haber adquirido fama con La gaviota en 1849..." (II, 103), for Pereda's treatment of contemporary novelists will be discussed in greater detail in the section on Literature. What is at issue here is merely the novels published in the early fifties.

In Pereda's earliest writings one can find other references to the literature of the time. In an open letter to the Santander newspaper, La abeja montañesa, which Pereda sent from Paris, he gives his opinion on the French attitude to Spain, and on the state of affairs in Spain itself. The
letter is dated January 12, 1865, and there had been no significant change in the Spanish novel since 1854, with the dubious exception of Alarcón's first romantic novel (El final de Norma) and Pereda's own Escenas montañesas. On the French attitude to Spain he says "el embustero Dumas...se nos viene enseñando...que para juzgar a un país lo que menos falta hace es conocerlo a fondo." (I, 93) This was perhaps an understandable reaction from such a castizo Spaniard as Pereda; who must have found the modern tourist's idea of Spain, which was just beginning, somewhat unpalatable.

His letter also discusses, among other things, Spanish painting and the French theatre, but it is his assessment of the faults of the contemporary Spanish novel that is most intriguing since he had produced, the year before, the book which was finally to mark the break between the old and the new types of novel in Spain:

¡Cuánto me aflige ver que sólo como una rareza se encuentran los autores modernos españoles en estas librerías, una de las tentaciones más irresistibles de París! Desgraciadamente para nosotros, hay que convenir en que no tiene la culpa de ella el desdén de los franceses. (I, 100)

The quotation also serves to stress a point about Pereda which seemingly has been ignored and which formed an important part of his personality. This was his delight in such a place as Paris. The bookstores were one of its most irresistible temptations; he does not say its most irresistible temptation, nor it only temptation. Pereda may have remained a city hater, but it was an ambivalent love/hate relationship.
Pereda's greatest love in life was literature, and although it may have its inspiration in the country, the place where it flourishes is the city, especially the metropolis. It may be an unpalatable fact for many people, but the great centers of literature have been Athens, Rome, London, Paris, Madrid..., the capitals of their respective empires. Pereda recognized this fact, and, try as he would to fight it, his interest had to remain in the literature of the Corte. For much the same reasons he remembered the details of his stay in Madrid in 1852-4 and was able to reconstruct the period and the place so well. Pereda's problem was that he was attracted to certain aspects of Madrid, of which he approved, as well as being torn between the simultaneous attraction and repulsion of the capital and of the individuals who inhabited and characterized it.
FOOTNOTES

Chapter 1

1. As, for example, Galdós, who questioned Mesonero Romanos about life in the early years of the century, in order to gain background material for his earliest Episodios nacionales.


4. The ending seems to indicate the immense debt that Baroja owed to Pereda. Pedro Sánchez is the model for César o nada.

5. See, for example, Raymond Carr, Spain 1808-1939 (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1966), p. 245, who mentions this paper.

6. See Section on Politics and the Press.

7. The polacos was the name given to the corrupt government of Bravo Murillo, which was removed from power by the Revolution of 1854. The neo-polacos were those polacos who reappeared in positions of power after the revolution.

8. The only novelist who successfully turned playwright was Galdós. Many, including Alarcón, Alas and Dickens, failed.

9. Compare Frances Burney, Evelina, letter 20 "Do you come to the play without knowing what it is?" [Mr. Lovell] "O yes, Sir, yes, very frequently: I have no time to read play-bills; one merely comes to meet one's friends, and show that one's alive." This is perhaps the best known example of this attitude.

10. See J.F. Montesinos, Introducción a una historia de la novela en España en el siglo XIX, (Castalia: Madrid, 1966), with reference to the novel of this period.

11. The following are the dramatists Pedro mentions, including his criticism of both plays and playwrights:

1. "El mismo" Manuel Breton de los Herreros (1796-1873)
author of Marcela and the poem La desvergüenza (II, 79, 105)
2. Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch (1806-1880) who wrote "comedias tan delicadas como Un sí y un no" (II, 105).

3. Antonio García Gutiérrez (1813-1884) "no olvidaba del todo a la musa que inspiró El trovador", although he later stigmatises him for writing a zarzuela, which he describes as an "abominable género," called El grumete (music by Arrieta) (II, 105).

4. Manuel Tamayo y Baus (1829-1898) who "trepaba a la más alta jerarquía del imperio dramático con su tragedia Virginia" (II, 105).

5. "El pequeño" Ventura de la Vega (1807-1865) who had a great success with El hombre de mundo (II, 59), although he, too, had taken to writing zarzuelas, such as El marqués de Caravaca (music by Barbieri), (II, 77, 105).


7. "El doncel," Adelardo López de Ayala (1828-1879) "todo un ingenio de la Corte del buen Retiro, conservado de milagro desde el siglo diecisiete para honra y gloria del muy prosaico en que usted y yo [Mática y Pedro] vivimos." He had been successful with Un hombre de estado and Los dos Guzmanes, but his Ríoja had not been received too well, (II, 78, 105).

8. Tomás Rodríguez Rubí (1817-1890) had produced De potencia a potencia, as well as La trenza de sus cabellos, Borrascas de corazón, "pero sobre todo El arte de hacer fortuna, una de las más lindas y mejor contadas comedias del teatro moderno," (II, 77, 105).

9. Luis de Eguzillaz (1830-1874) was a newcomer, and his comedy Verdades amargas had been "ruidosamente aplaudida" and he had great success with both Alarcón and El caballero del milagro, (II, 105).

10. Narciso Serra (1830-1877) "emulaba los donaires de Bretón" in his La boda de Quevedo, (II, 105).

11. Juan de Ariza (1816-1876) who wrote "comedias muy agradables" (II, 105).

12. He finally mentions two plays which were "traducciones...importantes," Sullivan (II, 105) and Adriana (II, 56, 105).

12. Writing in La España were "el entonces ya sabio y respetado" Aureliano Fernández-Guerra (1816-1894) whose pen-name was Pipí and Eugenio Ochoa (1815-1872); and in El Heraldo Manuel Cañete (1822-1891), (II, 105-6). Both Ochoa and Cañete were partly responsible for the revival of interest in the Golden Age drama, which Pedro also relates (see section on Literature).
13. Pedro says he knows of the following works: Nicolás Boileau's (1636-1711) Arte poética which he describes as "reflejo de otro de Horacio" which was known as the Epistola a los Pisones and which was inspired, in turn, by Aristotle's Poetics. He also knew that some of Molière's works were adaptations of others of Plauto, he called all swindlers Tartuffe and knew a little of Corneille's Horace.

14. Pedro's own review of lyric poetry is similarly very concise. Of the good poets he says: El duque de Rivas, Zorrilla, Villegas y otros poetas de nota, andaban fuera de la patria, o calladitos en su pueblo o a la sombra de un destino [the Duke of Rivas was appointed premier in 1854].

And of the bad ones he says:
La Avellaneda, la Coronado y García de Quevedo publican [sic] tal cual lucubración romántica de tarde en tarde. El surtido de poesías de los pocos y malos periódicos literarios que existían corría de cuenta de los Larrañaga, Vila y Goyri, Ribot y otros de quienes no me acuerdo o no quiero acordarme, (II, 104-5).

15. This was unlike earlier Spanish novels, Don Quijote, for example, or such nineteenth century English novels as Jane Austen's Northanger Abbey.

16. The Aguilar publishing house have produced an excellent collection of these early nineteenth-century historical romances: Antología de la novela histórica española (1830-1844) ed. Felicidad Buendía (Aguilar: Madrid, 1963) which contains novels by López Soler, Cosca Bayo, Espronceda, Larra, Escosura*, Villalta, Cortada y Sala, Martínez de la Rosa*, Estébanez Calderón, Gil y Carrasco. Other such novelists are Trueba y Cosío, Ayguals de Izco, Navarro Villoslada, Avecilla, Pastor Díaz, Fernández y González...

It would be intriguing to compare the different roles that realism and fantasy played in the development of the English and the Spanish novels during the nineteenth century.

*Of these two Matica says:
"El anciano" Francisco Martínez de la Rosa (1787-1862), "no quiero ofender la ilustración de usted ponderándole sus muchos, grandes y ya gloriosos talentos."

And "El malicioso y risueño" Patricio de la Escosura (1807-1878) "el hombre que brilla lo mismo cultivando la política que el teatro, que la historia, que la novela," (II, 77).
17. For details of translations of novels into Spanish see the list of them in Montesinos*, Introducción, pp. 154-257.

18. The novelists Pedro mentions are as follows, his critical comments on novels and novelists have been retained:

1. Francisco Navarro Villoslada (1818-1895) author of Doña Blanca de Navarra "una novela excelentísima al modo de las de Walter Scott" (II, 103).


4. Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda (1814-1873) authoress "El—no recuerdo que—de Monfaucon." Both of the latter authoresses are disapproved of by Pedro for their Romanticism. (II, 104).

5. Antonio Flores (1818-1865) who had published a novel which has been regarded as a model for La Montalvez, called Fe, esperanza y caridad,* "abundantes en cuadros curiosos y no mal pintados, pero atestados de lugares comunes de novelón por entregas. Vale mucho más que esto su galería de cuadros, Ayer, hoy y mañana" (II, 104).

6. Antonio Trueba (1819-1889) "el mejor y más fecundo cuentista de cuantos se pasean en España, y el autor más traducido a extrañas lenguas." This latter fact is certainly amazing. He was author of El libro de los cantares. Trueba is best remembered for his ill-judged and disastrous prologue to the first edition of Pereda's Escenas montañesas. (II, 104).

7. Wenceslao Ayguals de Izco (1801-1873) "se había propuesto ser el Eugenio Sue de acá, y no quiero decir como lo lograba." (II, 104).

8. Antonio de Hurtado (1825-1878) had been awarded a Prize by the Real Academia for his Cosas del mundo.* (II, 104).

9. Patricio Escosura (1807-1878) author of El patriarca del valle (II, 104). Matica's judgment of this man has already been quoted.

10. Juan de Ariza (1816-1876) published Un viaje al infierno, " sátira del Madrid de entonces, en que había muchos anagramas demasiado traspantes"* (II, 104).

11. Diego Luque de Beas (1828-1890) who was still young and had written La dama del Conde-duque,* "bien pergeñada y con mucho sabor de época." (II, 104).

It will be noted that many of these novelists have already been mentioned either as poets or as dramatists, which reveals something about the way the novel was still regarded in Spain.

*These are all possible models for Pereda's La Montalvez.
Throughout the Madrid novels, there are many references to writers who were not contemporaneous with the action of Pedro Sánchez. This section will attempt to give an over-all view of Pereda's criticism and mention of other writers. It will also discuss his treatment of themes which these authors suggested to him and which are suggested in turn to the reader. These men of letters to whom Pereda refers are both earlier and contemporary writers.

The second part of the section will deal with certain of Pereda's stylistic devices and will analyse how he put his literary ideas into practice. It will, especially, discuss the narrative techniques that he employed in the two long Madrid novels, Pedro Sánchez and La Montalvez, both of which are of considerable structural complexity.

First it is necessary to see whether Pereda makes any clear-cut statements on the nature of art and literature. There are occasions in the Madrid novels when he makes far-reaching pronouncements on the nature of poetry. The first occurs in Suum cuique, and this sentence must be kept in mind when deciding on the importance of reality in his writing: "dejaría la poesía de serlo si los poetas cantaran la verdad una sola vez en su vida." (I, 277) Here
is one of the clearest statements of his artistic beliefs: although he valued the truth, he still thought that art should give it an aura of enchantment.

This conflict is seen even better in Pedro Sánchez when he is creating the characters of Pedro himself and of Clara. Clara, the clear-sighted one, represents those who desire the truth at the expense of all else. Her immense ability to see the essentials of things and to act according to an unemotional and coldly calculating logic is to be her staple characteristic:

Me encanta la verdad, y jamás la hallo en los copleros, en su afán de vestirla de arlequín y medirla por silabas. Ya no se hacen versos más que en España... y en Turquía. (II, 28)

Pedro's reaction is immediate. He reflects, I believe, Pereda's own view of the situation, and his belief in a poetic form of the truth becomes evident. The quotation also reveals Pereda's belief that truth and nature could be improved by art and literature. It similarly shows his opinion concerning the nature of women, who ought to be more "soulful" and less concerned with the "naked truth" than Clara:

Confieso que me gustó poco esta sinceridad en boca de una mujer tan joven; porque entendía yo, por instinto natural, que para elevación del alma, singularmente la de la mujer, hay mentiras necesarias y hasta indispensables, como son las del arte en cuanto tienden a embellecer la Naturaleza y dar mayor expansión y nobleza a los humanos sentimientos. (II, 28)

Pereda was not given to theoretical speculations on the nature of art and is probably unique among nineteenth-century novelists, Spanish particularly, in that the only critical writings on literature or art he left are those which part of
an artistic creation. Where he does pass judgment on literature it is often for an artistic purpose, such as the antibucolic humor in *Suum cuique*, or it comprises part of a character creation, such as Pedro's criticism of Fernán Caballero. There are certain main areas of criticism which are of considerable significance: the pastoral, Fernán Caballero, Alarcón's social novels, the Spanish Golden Age theatre and Cervantes. Each of these will be dealt with here.

The pastoral was evident most strangely in *Suum cuique* and this is the only principal section which deals with this subject. There are mentions of this theme in both Pedro Sánchez and *La Montalvez*. The two quotations are a little puzzling, since they reveal the dichotomy in Pereda's own adherence to the bucolic ideal. In *Pedro Sánchez* he says:

> Todo era allí patriarcal y amoroso como una égloga de Garcilaso. (II, 69)

The terms he uses to describe Nica Montalvez's vacation cottage are less melifluous, for it was

> no como la choza rústica y grosera de los idilios, no tanto. (II, 515)

Pereda's novels themselves fall within a broad definition of the pastoral theme and therefore any discussion of this genre would have to include the majority of his novels. Since this section is destined to deal with his literary references, it must be limited to other pastoral writers.
The other novelist whose works fall into the broad definition of pastoral is Fernán Caballero. In a short story entitled El tirano de la aldea (Esbozos y rasgunos) Pereda includes a quotation from Fernán Caballero's Simón Verde to condemn "los más malos, los más venales, los más tiranos y los más opresores de los hombres." (II, 1263) Pereda was referring to the corrupt secretaries of the Ayuntamientos in the villages. This story tends to disprove the traditional idea that Pereda was simply an exponent of the evils of the city and the virtue of the country. What he does show is that there is less opportunity for evil in the country, but that evil, if anything, can be far worse in the country than in the city. This exemplifies Pereda's concern with satirising the vice that he saw in Madrid, rather than with satirising Madrid merely because it was a big city.

He is normally very concerned with the little figures of daily life and in the same story he feels unable to cope with the great passions: "Las grandes pasiones...que constituyen la vida en los grandes centros de población aturden al hombre pacífico y sedentario." (I, 1261-2) But although he was to repeat the same idea in Pedro Sánchez, he was to portray these very passions in the novel. As ever on this theme, Pereda's attitude varies from moment to moment, which makes any definitive analysis of his bucolic theme impossible.

Pedro Sánchez, after having become literary editor of the Clarín, passes judgment on Fernán Caballero's Clemencia.
Although these criticisms are intended as part of the character creation of Pedro, they are written from Pedro's point of view as an old man and so must be taken as being Pereda's own opinion of the novels. His criticism is built up in the following way: First he attacks the prevailing taste of the time which "por resabios románticos" preferred "el amor empalagoso e inverosímil de aquella sensible y lacrimosa heroína, al ridículo y extravagante inglés, y las inaguantables escenas a que este punto da lugar." (II, 103) The reasons he attacks these aspects of the novel are very clear, for, after all, this was exactly the type of literature that Pereda was reacting against when he wrote his Escenas montañesas. He goes on to say that what will give Fernán Caballero's novels lasting fame was "precisamente de estar llenas de vulgaridades..." (II, 103) which was, he says, "la migad de [su] ingenio." (II, 103) Pedro then gives examples of what he considers to be the excellent qualities of the novel, and which the public had despised as vulgar and inelegant "los sabrosos pasajes y cuadros llenos de color y de verdad, en los cuales entran, como figuras de primer término, don Martín, don Galo Pando, la Marquesa, la Coronela y la tía Latrana." (II, 103-4) There is a great deal of truth in these statements for the Dickensian Coronela and the Galdosian Galo Pando are certainly two of the most remarkable creations of the period.

When Pedro reveals the content of the review he had written for the Clarín, it becomes a brilliant example of Pereda's
use of dual-reality, which is strongly ironic. He creates, in Pedro, the type of over-confident, self-opinionated young man he despises and then cuts him down to size, through Pedro's own revaluation of his earlier opinions. He attacks Fernán because she was "un pertinaz propagandista de ideas reaccionarias." (II, 107) He attacks the novels on several counts (note the ironical juxtaposition of the first two) since Fernán did not give them "interés laberíntico, ni unidad, ni fondo"--as they were "repletos de charranadas andaluzas." (II, 107) Pedro's last attack on them is supremely ironical, for he has become a chico de la prensa which were the bane of Nubes de estío, for Fernán "era de los de afuera..., porque es de saberse...que no se podía tener talento en España más que en Madrid." (II, 107) The reader's reaction to these comments is left fairly open, until Pedro himself brings everything down to earth with a succinct closing remark: "Por fortuna, nadie me hizo caso." (II, 107)

This critique of the novels of Fernán Caballero reveals an attitude of Pereda's which has not been fully explored. He satirises the Madrid press, because it will not accept novels by regional writers such as Fernán Caballero and Pereda himself. His anti-Madrid ideas are not constant, but what he is doing, in my opinion, is exaggerating the regional novel in order to make the Madrid press take notice of it. The more they protested their open-mindedness, the more regional he became; after all, such regional novels as Sotileza have a universal drama but a regional setting. How he would have
developed without the stimulus of Emilia Pardo Bazán, and Menéndez y Pelayo, will never be known, but it is fair to say that her comments in La cuestión palpitante produced not just Pedro Sánchez and La Montálvez but, by reaction, Peñas arriba.

The other contemporary novelist whom Pereda had in mind at certain moments was Alarcón. It seems clear that the problems of morality and honor preoccupied the nineteenth century as much as they had the seventeenth. It is in La Montálvez, which seems to be a reworking of the themes of El escándalo, that we find the majority of the evidence that Pereda had Alarcón in mind. There does not exist, unfortunately, any documentary evidence that he was thinking of Alarcón, as there does to show that De tal palo, tal astilla was a reply to Galdós' Gloria, for example. This makes it difficult to prove that his use of the word escándalo was a conscious reminder, but if not it would mean that Pereda's vocabulary was limited in the concluding chapters of the novel.

Perhaps this is most apparent when Angel describes his novel to Nica and Luz, for in the same paragraph that he states very concisely the point at issue in La Montálvez itself he talks of his heroine (who is very like Nica), and mentions that "el público llevaba una cuenta minuciosa de todas esas prodigalidades amorosas, aunque la pródiga pensaba que nadie se las veían." (II, 527) The next sentence puts forward the ideas of the novel. Then the next two sentences state that "Tuvo también una hija...guapa y parecía muy buena."
Por de pronto, se había educado de muy distinta manera de la madre: lejos de ella y del ruido de los escándalos." (II, 527)

The repetition of the words, prodigalidad and pródiga at such a short interval make them stand out, and when he later interpolates the word escándalos in a phrase that is also made to stand out because it is split from the main sentence by a colon, and although consisting of nine words, has no verb. This signifies that Pereda sets down very succintly the theme of his own novel—and of Alarcón's—and framing this clear-cut exposition he emphasizes two words grammatically, both of which are titles of novels by Alarcón.

In the final twenty pages of the novel, he repeats over and over again the idea that Nica has been the cause of escándalo:

¡Cuánto perdía con aquel silencio mío, que era la declaración de los escándalos de su madre! (II, 551).

¡Y todo aquel estrago era obra mía; de mis maldades, de mis escándalos! (II, 552).

Mi soñada felicidad, que sólo consistía en que jamás turbara la de Luz el ruido de los escándalos de su madre. (II, 556).

¿Que testimonios desean para creer que si escandalicé como mujer deshonesta, puedo edificar como arrepentida? (II, 556).

Jesús no pidió tanta penitencia a la cortesana arrepentida, y había escandalizado más que yo. (II, 557).

De todas las mujeres malas era la peor la madre desjusticida y deshonesta, porque sus escándalos dañaban también a sus hijos. (II, 562).

All of these quotations are stressed both by their content and their position in the prose. The last time he uses the word is in the very last sentence of the novel, in the
stated purpose of the book. The emphasis is immense and I cannot accept that Pereda did this unconsciously, since every time he uses the word it stands out from the text:

No creería nunca bastante barrida de gusanos la consciencia sin entregar los escándalos de mi vida a la abominación de todas las mujeres honradas. (II, 567)

The fact that Pereda was conscious of the denouement of Alarcón's novels (El escándalo, and La pródiga to a lesser extent) will be of significance to gain a fuller understanding of his ideas on society. This influence must be borne in mind in that section (Spanish society in the Madrid novels) which deals with the social interpretation of the novels about metropolitan morality.

Among his references to "classical" Spanish literature are some historically revealing ones to the theatre. The following passage from Pedro Sánchez is very interesting, for it gives an eye-witness account of the esteem in which the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century theatre was beginning to be held in the 1850s.

Vi varias comedias del teatro antiguo, y leí muchas más, y hasta hubo a las manos...los inapreciables Orígenes de Böhl de Faber, en una hermosa edición de Hamburgo; con lo cual, los nombres de Naharro, Lope de Rueda, Juan del Encina, etc., me fueron tan queridos como los de Lope de Vega, Tirso, Moreto, Rojas y Calderón. (II, 63)

It is reassuring to know that the earlier dramatists were becoming known, but Pereda's omission of Ruiz de Alarcón is puzzling since the majority of early nineteenth-century critics placed him with Lope, Tirso, Moreto, Rojas and Calderón as being one of the six major playwrights of the Siglo de Oro.
His statements on the Golden Age drama really belong to the historical review of literature at the time, were it not that he makes use of at least one Golden Age theme—that of the so-called "Calderonian" honor-drama. In La mujer del César he makes Carlos, the apparently cuckolded husband, utter these words:

En cuestiones de honra propia no delego mis poderes en nadie; que yo soy la ley, el juez y el ejecutor, y que no abrigue usted la más remota esperanza de que este compromiso pueda terminarse como tantos otros lances mal llamados de honor. (I, 575)

Pereda was very concerned with the contemporary preoccupation with honor. He turns Carlos into a nineteenth-century Don' Gutierrez, (El médico de su honra), in search of the restoration of his honor, who arrogates to himself all the prerogatives of God. 3

As with the great majority of Spanish writers, Pereda is much concerned with Cervantes, the majority of his references being to Don Quijote; he does, however, refer to Galatea in the anti-bucolic sequence in Suum cuique (I, 279). The young Pedro Sanchez, when discussing his own first literary efforts, reveals an attraction to both Quijote and the pastoral, for he says "¡Poco me dieron que hacer y que escribir los amores de Grisóstomo y Marcela!" (II, 11) He had already by this point stressed his knowledge of this book while describing his early reading: "Con leer a menudo...el Quijote... cobré señalada afición a la amena literatura." (II, 8) He further remarks "es decir, que me he limitado a seguir mi canto llano y no meterme en contrapunto'que se suelen quebrar de sotiles', como diría el buen maese Pedro." (II, 26)
These merely reveal Pereda's knowledge of Cervantes' novel but there is no transcendental meaning behind them, although the Peredian hero is often Quixotic. Don Silvestre is portrayed explicitly as a modern Quijote. He is characterized as a man whose head is turned by politics and who would probably take on the world were it not for his pleito. The original description of Silvestre is also reminiscent of the opening paragraph of the Quijote. In the section on Politics and the Press he will be compared to the "knight of the doleful countenance," and in order to appreciate this the following direct comparison must be borne in mind:

No tardó en sucederle a Seturas con los artículos de fondo algo parecido a lo que a Don Quijote le sucedió con los libros de caballerías...Su Dulcinea era la Patria; sus encantadores, los enemigos políticos del periódico. Faltábale a su carácter la esencia romancesca que había en el de Quijano, el Bueno; de otro modo, le hubiera costado muy poco hacer de su peludo cuartago un Rocinante y, olvidado de su pleito, salir en busca de aventuras hasta romperse el alma con los verdugos de la perseguida Patria (I, 265).

This is the most definite comparison, but his other heroes have Quixotic traits. Ramón in La mujer del César is very similar to Silvestre in build and in his reaction to the metropolis, but his "madness" takes another form, for Ramón "takes on" the world and tries to improve it, as, for example, when he "cogió al vizconde...y...le sacudió las dos bebetadas más sonoras que ha oído el presente siglo." (II, 563) The tone is exaggerated like the parodied chivalric novels, but the attitude of Ramón is precisely what is termed "quixotic."
Pedro Sánchez is the amalgamation of these two men. He, like them, is large and powerful, his head is turned by Valenzuela, and he is "blinded" by politics and his own apocryphal view of the world. Like Ramón, and unlike Silvestre, he attempts to take on the world. This comparison is made first by Pedro himself, "encauzóse, pues la gobernación de mi insula." (II, 167) Whether consciously or not he identifies himself with Sancho at the stage of Don Quijote when Sancho's quixotification is almost complete. The comparison is reinforced shortly after, when Pedro and Clara have a tremendous row which is the breaking point in their marriage; in the heated exchange, she accuses him of having "ridículos pujos de caballero andante." (II, 175)

This comparison can influence any interpretation of the novels, since Pereda prepares one for the eventual disillusionment of Pedro and his complete loss of faith in his ideals and in himself. In all the novels it adds an extra level to the meaning and an extra dimension to the heroes. Although his use of this double reality is not completely original, he is one of the first to look back to Cervantes in order to add a symbolic overtone to his fiction. This is an attitude he shared with others, especially Galdós and the Generation of 1898.

* * * *

There are aspects of Pereda's narrative technique that are obvious to every reader; there are others that never seem to have been discussed at all. This is especially true of
one mannerism of expression, and since no critic has commented upon it some of the more obvious examples of it are given below. He has a trick of not saying exactly what he means, and then correcting himself. This is very noticeable all through his writing, but the examples given here are from the Madrid novels, and a few of the later collections and novels:

**Pedro Sánchez (II)**
...el juez...amigo particular del regente de la Audiencia del territorio, muy emparentado—el juez, no el territorio—con...(11).

**La Montálvez (II)**
...no se cuenta por años, sino por siglos, como para los monumentos de los Faraones.
Hacia aquellas fechas—no las de los Faraones—fue cuando...(497).

**Esbozos y rasguños (I)**
La mia—es decir, mi familia, no mi cometa...(1237).

**Dijonos, no el Cíclope, sino don Bernabé, qué libros necesitaba...(1282).**

**Nubes de estío (II)**
don Roque intímó con la familia del prócer y vio que su hijo (el del prócer) entraba en su casa (en la de don Roque) como Pedro en su casa. (843).

...le dije, no a la langosta, sino a la cocinera...(972).

**Al primer vuelo (II)**
Su hijo, es decir, el del relojero...(999).

This mannerism is used by Pereda for humorous effect, as aspect of his writing which ought not to be lost sight of as he is not the over-serious, unsmiling character that he is often made out to be. In contrast, he was a man who made a joke out of most things. Florence Williams, in a thesis on Pereda's humor, has done some valuable documentation and shown how humor was one of the mainstays of his writing from beginning to end. 5
He used humor even at tense moments; in La mujer del César, Ramón is visited by the two seconds of the man whose face he punched the night before, and they declare that they seek "Lo que es natural que se le ocurra después del suceso de anoche." (I, 566) Ramón "pricks the melodramatic bubble" by saying "Pero como lo más natural en ese caso sería un dentista y yo no lo soy..." (I, 566) Similarly, at the climax of Los hombres de pro, Simón and Juana discover that all their plans and dreams have come crashing to the ground. Their reaction at this dramatic moment is to faint "formando los dos cuerpos en el suelo un solo montón—y no pequeño." (I, 703)

Another aspect of his humor was a debt that he owed to Dickens, which may have been direct—his knowledge of English literature was good—or indirect through his friend Galdós. His creation of a family in Pedro Sánchez owes much to the English novelist's style. One of Pedro's friends has a novia, and Pedro goes along with his friend to engage her sister's attention. The family owes much to such Dickensian families as the Jellybys or the Micawbers, and like the former has a strange name—de los Trucos. The father's name is Don Magín. Needles to say, he is fat but is also "muy corto de vista, de brazos y de cuello." (II 69) His wife is Doña Arcángeles, but she is "para ángel...demasiado maciza." The daughters are Trinis and Luz, the latter is "un tipo de vestal romana." (II, 71)

Further evidence of this type of humor is the introduction very shortly before of a character called Agamenón,
which is the nickname he had been dubbed for always starting a sentence "Hágame... [usted el obsequio de]..." (II, 68)
The humor may have often become caricature, but it was always present in his works. Any interpretation of his novels ought to be made with the probability that his tongue may have been in his cheek, which will seriously influence any approach which accepts Pereda as being less than human, as as if everything he wrote was dour and unsmiling.

Pereda's narrative technique can be criticised for its waywardness. He is an omniscient narrator in the majority of the novels, but he does pretend that the characters are real people and so he invites the reader to come with him and then explains how he knows the facts. The best examples of this are in La Montalvez. At the beginning of the second part of the novel he describes a conversation between Manolo Casa-Vieja and his friend Ballesteros, which gives all the relevant details of what has happened between the two parts of the novel. After they have finished he says:

Todos los informes dados por Manolo Casa-Vieja a su amigo Paco Ballesteros sobre lo ocurrido a los personajes de nuestro relato, desde que los despedimos en el último capítulo de la primera parte de él, era la pura verdad. En los Apuntes autógrafos, que me sirven de guía constan también, aunque en otra forma menos interesante, por descolorida y difusa. (II, 481)

Shortly after inviting the reader into Nica Montálvez's house he says:

Así estaban las cosas, con un pasito más que luego conoceremos, al invitar yo en los comienzos del capítulo precedente al lector amable y pío a que me acompañara al nuevo domicilio de la marquesa de Montálvez. Reproduzcole la invitación, y puesto que no la desaira, vamos adentro con todas las cortesías y comedimientos del caso. (II, 488)
Later while confessing that he does not know the details of her abandoned life in Madrid, he says:

Quien pudiera sacarnos de la duda eras su doncella; pero ni la conozco, ni existe, que yo sepa, la historia de su vida y milagros. (II, 507)

This realist approach is typical of the narrative technique which Pereda abandoned only in three major novels. Pedro Sánchez and Peñas arriba have first-person male narrators, and certain parts of La Montalvez have a first-person female narrator. This, although not unprecedented, was something of a virtuoso technical performance. Dickens had used it in Bleak House, which shares with Pereda's novel the multiple-focus technique. Esther and Nica keep diaries and they are used on occasions to add depth to the story, but neither is a continuous narrative like Great Expectations or David Copperfield, Pedro Sánchez or La Montalvez. Sherman Eoff⁷ has compared the novels of the two writers because of a similarity of attitude between them, but it is curious that both produced two semi-autobiographical novels with male first-person narrators, and another novel which contains large sections from the journal of a woman. The reasons for this partly first-person structure are the same in both cases. Montero⁸ gives part of the original draft of the beginning of the novel, which was written by "Nica herself," but which Pereda was unable to continue. Similarly, Geoffrey Tillotson says "though Dickens does manage to convey the simplicity of Esther...he cannot keep it up."⁹
Pereda's technique has many precedents, including Cervantes, who placed Cide Hamete Benengeli between himself and the reader. A novelist achieves three things with this. He is able to pretend better that the story actually happened; it allows him to place the responsibility for the events in the novel on somebody else, whether it be the narrator (Pedro, Marcelo, Nica) or the characters themselves; and it puts the narration more distant from author and reader and enables both to be more objective.

The Madrid novels begin at a very low technical level. Suum cuique is nothing more than a pair of contrasted scenes which are extended, but basically still only cuadros de costumbres. Pereda does show considerable virtuosity at this level, for his development of the Latin-school leitmotiv is impeccable, but, despite this, the novel remains fundamentally static.

La mujer del César has just one setting, but this enables a slightly more complex plot to be interwoven into the cuadro. The details of the trick played on Isabel by the Viscount are admirably worked out, as is the denouement. Pereda had progressed from showing several of the inconveniences of Madrid, then comparing them with those of the country; now the boorishness of Ramón is used for more than humorous effect, and his personality motivates the action of the climax. In Suum cuique, Pereda related anecdotes about the reception of Silvestre in the capital, in La mujer del César, the inconveniences expedite the plot.
Despite the rather grotesque caricatures of *Los hombres de pro* the novel is much better balanced and Pereda is moving towards a more psychological drama. The appearance of Ramón and Silvestre was found ridiculous and amusing in Madrid, but although Simón C. de los Peñascales lacked neither the money nor the position to put on a good appearance, he was still found ridiculous because of his personality. The novel contains severe criticism of Madrid, it is true, but it provides little evidence to show that Pereda had a pathological phobia of Madrid. Indeed it is Simón who is censured most strongly in this novel, as don Roque will be in *Nubes de estío*, and nobody could make that novel proof of Pereda's hatred of Santander. The madrileños may not be angels, but the montañesas have an excess of faults. Don Roque and Simón both find self-knowledge at the end of their respective novels and withdraw from the societies in which they have made fools of themselves.

*Los hombres de pro* shows a great advance in Pereda's technique for there are three main sets of scenes (*aldea, villa, and Corte*) and the greed and the social and political ambitions of the three characters drive them from village to town to Madrid. The sequence of chapters which are set in the provincial town is carefully developed. The second chapter describes Simón's apparent success in local politics, but his success is based on his ridiculous behaviour which amuses the others at the political meeting. Chapter III deals with his wife's social failure, and the next chapter relates their
daughter's lack of success with the other children of the town. Because of Simón's apparent success he wants more and greater political acclaim. Juana and Julieta, because of their complete lack of success, thrust upwards in society hoping to be accepted. In the traumatic moments when Simón's financial and Julieta's social ruin become known, all three realize that their glory was ephemeral.

Another technical innovation in Los hombres de pro is the introduction of autobiographical sequences, which take the form of a political campaign, and some incidents of the ensuing political session. One of the characters he met on the campaign he introduced for the first time into his fiction in this novel, as Don Recaredo. Both Don Recaredo, and his house, will reappear in later novels under different names. In Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera he will become Don Roman Pérez de la Llosía and the house will be in Coteruco. In Peñas arriba, he will become Don Celso and the house will be the Casona at Tablanca. Don Recaredo will himself reappear in this latter novel.11

Another interesting figure is that of Don Jeromo Cuarterola, or as he is better known, Don Zambombo. This is a man who owns a country tavern and whose background is very similar to Don Simón's, and it does seem that Don Zambombo is the sort of man that Simón might have become if he had not attempted to improve his social position. He provides a further example of Pereda's use of double reality, or the possibility of it, which adds more levels of meaning to the
story. He enables the reader to see the disaster that Simón makes of his own life but he also shows the way in which a tavern-keeper can become bestial and animal-like. There is also a note of satire about people with eternal pleitos and in this way Don Zambombo becomes a reincarnation of Don Silvestre.

Pereda’s use of double reality is one of the most interesting aspects of his technique. As will become more and more apparent, each of his heroes is paralleled by another level of actual or literary existence. Don Silvestre and Pedro become a new version of Quijote. In La Montalvez, the novel written by Angel provides the most interesting use of this dual reality. The concept that one man has at least one life is exploited by many Spaniards: Unamuno, especially in El otro; Baroja in Camino de perfección and El árbol de la ciencia; and Azorín in La voluntad, Antonio Azorín and Confesiones de un pequeño filósofo. Perhaps the closest parallel, however, is Ramón Sender in Crónica del alba, for his hero Pepe García is the "other reality" of Ramón José Sender García; Pedro Sánchez is the other reality of José María Pereda (is Pedro a near anagram?) Sánchez. What makes the similarity even greater is the fact that both descend from Don Sancho Abarcas.

The later developments in the novel Los hombres de pro are all closely connected with the theme. It is the social ambition of Simón that makes him become hopelessly involved with Arturo; it is political ambition that forces him to
deliver a hopeless speech in the **Congreso**, which is about everything and about nothing, and which makes him the laughing-stock of Madrid.

The great step forward made by this novel is the development of characters which produces the events that form the novel. His technique had advanced considerably from **Suum cuique**, which was merely the portrayal of two stock characters and how they reacted to the events which happened to them; the characters in no way caused these happenings. In much the same way, Ramón is an observer of Madrid customs, and although he may control them, none of the occurrences spring directly from his character.

**La mujer del César** was a great improvement on **Suum cuique** in this aspect, despite the static character of Ramón. There are scenes which simply portray the amazement of the montañés at life in Madrid, just as Silvestre's amazement had been revealed. The satire in these scenes is, surprisingly, directed as much against the countrymen as against the city customs. Events are shaped by the characters of Carlos and Isabel, so that **La mujer del César** provides a halfway point between the static characters and scenes of **Suum cuique** and the scenes produced by the character of the hero in **Los hombres de pro**. The married pair, Carlos and Isabel, shape the action by their contrasting personalities. She loves high society and being ostentatious within that society, he abhors it and leaves her to do as she likes, and has complete faith in her. It is this lack of responsibility by both partners
which produces the dramatic conflict. Certain of the episodes, such as the dance, the duel and the happy denouement, involve all three protagonists, but the plot does not involve the hero, Ramón, directly, only indirectly as Carlos' brother.

Pereda's technique improved over the following years, as he tried out new ideas. He managed to combine such facets as the thesis exposition of *De tal palo, tal astilla* and the landscape painting of *El sabor de la tierruca* in three novels of great technical skill. These were Pedro Sánchez, *Sotileza* and *La Montalvez*.

Pereda used the first-person narrative with remarkable efficacy. He had ventured occasionally into this form in his *Escritos de juventud* and *Tipos trashumantes*. The article, from the former, called *Correspondencia pública* is a letter from "Pepe" Pereda to the *Abeja montañesa*, which, naturally, is in the first person. *Correspondencia privada* is similarly in the first person, but the protagonist is female, and the article provides evidence that she was the prototype for Nica Montalvez. *Un joven distinguido* from the second series of articles is the only other example of first person technique prior to Pedro Sánchez.

The technique has been tried many times, and its virtues and shortcomings are well known. Defoe is probably the earliest novelist to develop this form; by 1722 when he finished *Moll Flanders* he had achieved the perfection of the autobiographical novel; which relates events with incredible clarity,
while allowing the reader to judge of the hero's true character. It is with amazement that one reads Robinson Crusoe, Captain Singleton and Moll Flanders and realizes that, although the apparent concern is with events, in reality the object of the novel is the development of a complex character. The reader follows the creation of the new personalities of Robin Crusoe, Bob Singleton, and watches Moll's character apparently undergoing repentance. This trait of allowing the narrator to relate things and give his own opinion, while enabling the reader to see the truth, was developed most effectively by Maria Edgeworth in Castle Rackrent and by Thackeray in Barry Lyndon. The Spanish novelists had not developed this technique so highly, with the possible exception of Galdós in his enigmatic Second Series of Episodios nacionales, until Pereda changed all the prevailing ideas about his writing with Pedro Sánchez.

To create such a delightfully naive character would have been impossible in a third-person narration. His heroism, goodness, greatness and honesty were too idealised to be accepted easily, but at the same time they were so intermingled with his short-sightedness, prejudice, naiveté, ambition and downright stupidity as to make it even more difficult for third-person reportage. Pereda was thus able to use his dramatic abilities to create a character through the words he utters. The reader can see clearly the characters of Clara and Carmen, yet Pedro, who is describing them, is blind to their true worth: The reader knows how Valenzuela will act, yet Pedro
does not. The only characters of whom his judgment seems sound are Don Serafin, Quica and Matica.

Technically, Pedro Sánchez is consummate; with Sotileza it marks the high point of Pereda's linear narrative technique. Pereda adds layers of significance and frequently reality assumes a duality, which does not detract from its basically straightforward, first-person narrative form. Sotileza, despite the enigmatic character of its eponymous heroine, is a similar masterpiece of straightforward, linear narration.

After these two novels, Pereda published La Montalvez. Literary criticism has hidden many of its merits beneath a smoke screen of trivialities concerning its criticism of Madrid society. La Montalvez does not succeed completely, but it is technically one of the most complex Spanish novels written in the last century, although not nearly as difficult as twentieth-century novels were to become.

La Montalvez is the only novel of Pereda's which is divided into parts. The first deals with the childhood of Nica Montalvez, the second with that of her daughter, Luz. The first charts the moral downfall of a young girl; it shows how her whole upbringing destined her to failure. The second charts the physical downfall of another young girl; her upbringing was the exact opposite, but it still destined her to failure. Pereda was concerned all his life with education and upbringing. This was one of his major themes and he is surprisingly modern in his ideas.
The novel has this dual reality of Nica and Luz, yet it is the character of Angel which provides the most profound dualities: Comparison is made, through Angel, of the love of mother and daughter; the parents of Angel and Luz are contrasted; and Angel's novel provides a literary duality that is unprecedented among Spanish novels and foreshadows Confusio's *Historia lógiconatural de España*, which, in turn, is the proof of Aristotle's dictum that "art" is more real than "history." Angel is present as the ideal man, the ideal husband; Luz is the perfect woman, the perfect wife. The characterisation of both is supremely romantic and Pereda is possibly parodying the romanticism of Alarcón. It is even possible that the multiplicity of the potential endings to the novel are a parody of Alarcón's *El niño de la bola*, in which the author provided a Christian and a Romantic denouement which he hoped would satisfy all his readers. Pereda determines that there can be only one solution, which is the most satisfying since it is aesthetically "necessary." Angel's character is built up by Pereda in a way that suggests he was not too serious when portraying him. Once again it seems that Pereda was using a literary convention for semi-humorous ends.

There is an abundance of dual characters in the novel. Nica and Luz are the good and bad aspects of the same reality; the one is destroyed directly by her mother, the other indirectly. Angel and Pepe Guzmán are two sides of the same coin. Pepe's judgment and taste are highly praised, as are Angel's, but both men destroy their loved ones. Nica and Doña Ramona
are the two intensely maternal mothers; one is blinded by prejudice, the other by pride and passion.

The most unusual manifestation of the dual reality in the novel is provided by the novel-within-the-novel being written by Angel. It parodies the novel containing it and adds depth to the conception of La Montálvez. Angel cannot resolve how to end his novel, but Pereda is never in doubt; he makes Angel choose his love for Luz rather than his filial duties despite apparent moral strictures. The fact that Pereda builds into his novel another novel, which mirrors it, is one of the most original parts of La Montálvez: It mirrors the action, but distorts it. It makes the reader look far more closely at what he is reading, makes him reconsider the facts, makes him more keenly aware of the problems being examined.

Pereda was in many ways like Elizabeth Gaskell, and Walter Allen's comment on the latter holds good for Pereda:

It was, in a sense, a virtue in [her] that she did not know her place as a novelist, and very imperfect as Mary Barton and North and South are, it is on these that her reputation mainly rests.13

In the same way, Pereda, having achieved new perfection in Sotileza, was to move outside the sphere in which he was completely in command to attempt something that he may not have been fully equipped to tackle.

The other intriguing facet of this novel is the use of two types of narration, or possibly three. It has been noted how Pereda uses the Apuntes to reveal his heroine's thoughts
and how she, much different to Pedro Sánchez, is able to judge character well. It has also been noted that Pereda uses an omniscient third-person technique, and is fond of using the conversations of his characters to portray events, the first chapter of the second part, for example, which forms a third narrative style. The three styles provide a much more richly orchestrated narration, and enable the reader to see the events from more than one perspective. It also provides an excellent example of character building through a protagonist's own words. Nica is an enigmatic and intriguing personality whose downfall is brought about because, despite her ability to judge others, she cannot judge herself. She knows she ought to set a good example for Luz, but her desires overcome her morality. Rather like The Tenant of Wildfell Hall, it is a gripping vision of moral depravity which is displayed from within as well as observed from without.

La Montálvez is not the most successful of Pereda's novels, but it is by far the most radical in its experimentation. There are faults in construction and of detail, but the main problem, as envisaged by Clarín, is that it is too short. There are many occasions when scenes could have been analysed more deeply. There is no real account, for example, of Nica's school in Paris—it is mentioned, never described; the three girls, Nica, Leticia, and Sagrario, present an embryonically fascinating situation, but the promise given is never fully exploited.
It was the genius of Pereda which made him strive "hacia afuera" despite having proved in Pedro Sánchez that he could leave the Montaña. In La Montalvez he revealed that he had the talent to write novels of originality and of European significance but having twice demonstrated his genius, it was only to be brought back, tied-hand-and-foot, to his huerto "como dijo de perlas, Emilia Pardo Bazán." Pereda tried very hard to break away but he was not to succeed, despite the evidence of his dazzling talent. He did not and does not succeed, but "Pereda no fracasa; lo fracasan; lo hacen fracasar Menéndez y Pelayo, Escalante, Quintanilla, Las Catacumbas, la bandera blanca y roja de la matrícula de Santander, ¿qué sé yo? Lo fracasa ser--horrible dictu--profeta en su patria. Todo ello unido a sus circunstancias económicas y, sin duda, a rasgos de carácter hicieron--siglo XIX español, según la fórmula de Ortega--un aldeano de quien debió ser un gran señor."
1. See the Introduction.

2. Pedro declares that, although from a distance it is the high mountains and great people who are attractive, when one gets close one finds they are "triste por escabrosa y árida." In contrast what really attracts one at close quarters is the "más insignificante de éstos y otros mil detalles." (II, 20)

3. The vogue for this type of hero is most clearly seen in the magnificent tragicomic don Víctor in Leopoldo Alas' La Regenta and in Pérez de Ayala's Tigre Juan/El curandero de su honra.

4. Abalanzóse [Don Serafín] a mí [Pedro] y me abrazó por el pecho, por no alcanzar sus brazos más arriba (II, 49).


10. See Section on Education.

11. The house was actually in Tudanca and the original of Don Recaredo/Roman/Celso was an ancestor of José María de Cossío.

12. See Section on Education.


14. M. Menéndez y Pelayo, Prólogo to Los hombres de pro, 1917, p. LXXV.

POLITICS AND THE PRESS IN PEREDA'S MADRID NOVELS

In Spain in the nineteenth century the political novel was of much more importance than it was, for instance, in England. The only truly political English novels of the period are those of Benjamin Disraeli, and his successor H.G. Wells. Other novelists only dealt with politics as a social force, as in The Parliamentary Novels of Anthony Trollope, which are not essentially political but are concerned with the social side of politics, just as his Barsetshire Novels had dealt with the social aspects of religion. Nearly all the major Spanish novelists, on the other hand, wrote books with a political setting: Valera, Alarcón, Pereda, Galdós, Palacio Valdés and Coloma are very concerned with politics; Leopoldo Alas is one of the few who does not dissect the political scene; both he and Emilia Pardo Bazán are more inclined to approach the politics of religion and the Church.

This phenomenon was probably occasioned by three tendencies that were strong in Spain: Spaniards tended to write novels that had a recent historical background (English historical novels, with the important exception of Disraeli's, were set in preceding centuries.) This may have been caused by the involvement of Spanish novelists in politics; Galdós, Pereda and Alarcón were deputies, Valera was a diplomat (English novelists, with the exception of Disraeli, were not
involved in public life.) Spanish politics were still very much dominated by civil strife and monarchical troubles (English politics were much more concerned with social problems.1)

Alarcón shows some aspects of day-to-day politics in La pródiga, just as Estébanez Calderón had in Don Opando, o Unas elecciones (Escenas andaluzas), and both of these were to be absorbed in Valera's Juanita la larga. This novel contains the best description of the workings of the Andalusian Cacique system. Although Galdós had preceded them, he was concerned with a different aspect of politics—Madrid politics. Both Pereda and Palacio Valdés (Riverita/Maximina) were to follow the same lines as Galdós, as were Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja a few years later. Pereda, ironically, did not attempt to portray the Carlist wars and all his political novels deal with the liberal parties rather than with his own party. It was to be Valle-Inclán and Unamuno who were to pursue this tack, probably without the authority that Pereda had. This brings into question how closely he adhered to the Carlist party, and it seems from the evidence of Pereda himself that he was not such a rabid traditionalist as is often believed. In what apparently is an unique interview, Boris de Tannenberg quotes, in French, what Pereda said to him with regard to politics. It is worth quoting at length since it is most illuminating of Pereda's politics:
Par opposition aux attaques contre la foi,...est devenue de mode parmi nous une sorte de mysticisme exalté, une exagération religieuse, qui fait, à mon avis, le plus grand tort à la religion. Lors de la première guerre carliste, en 1835, il y avait un parti qu'on nommait les apostólicos, des exaltés qui auraient presque voulu le rétablissement de L'Inquisition. Aujourd'hui on les appelle les intègres, les purs, par rapport aux plus modérés, les mestizos. Tenez, moi, je suis bon catholique, mais je ne crois pas qu'il soit nécessaire de se faire une religion de sacristain...Pas plus qu'en politique je ne voudrais le retour pur et simple de Philippe II...Philippe II lui-même, s'il revenait, transigerait avec le siècle...Il ne supprimerait pas les chemins de fer et le télégraphe, bien sûr...Ce qu'il abolirait, par exemple, c'est la liberté de la presse, le parlementerisme...Voilà ce qui nous tue...Oh! ne défendez pas le libéralisme; le libéralisme est le contraire même du caractère espagnol. Et puis, tenez, ne parlons plus de politique...La politique, je n'en fais plus; le peu que j'en ai vu m'a dégoûté, écoeuré...Je suis passionné pour les idées, mais j'ai perdu la foi dans les hommes [my stress]...Suis-je carliste aujourd'hui? Je ne puis dire; je suis catholique, voilà tout...J'ai vu le parti carliste à l'oeuvre: il y a eu, lors de la guerre, une sorte de gouvernement, avec des ministres...eh bien! C'est fâcheux à dire, mais c'était les mêmes rivalités, les mêmes ambitions mesquines, les mêmes divisions intérieures que chez nos adversaires...Voilà la vérité bien triste...Les hommes se ressemblent toujours [my stress] Je suis très pessimiste...²

This is not the usual idea of Pereda, as exemplified by Gerald Brenan: "Pereda...was one of those hidalgos whom el Greco had painted, and his opinions matched his looks, for he hated large towns, foreign customs, and everything modern. [my stress] In politics he was a Carlist."³ Brenan's cynical version does not tally with Pereda's own remarks, but then Brenan's account of Pereda seems based on Peñas arriba, and following the tradition of Hannah Lynch,⁴ he bases his arguments on selected novels. She
extolled the greatness of Pereda's regionalism but never mentions that he wrote Pedro Sánchez and La Montálvez because they were not easily absorbed into her theories.

There is often a great proximity between the press and politics, and Pereda's own statements bear out this idea. Attacks on politics are found in all the Madrid novels with the exception of La mujer del César. Each novel will therefore be dealt with in turn as far as it relates to politics, the press and also to high finance, which is closely connected with politics. One has only to remember the figures of Salamanca and of Bravo Murillo to realize this; in three novels there is a definite connection established between finance and politics and these are exemplified in the financial aspirations and disasters of Simón in Los hombres de pro, in the marqués de Montálvez (La Montálvez), and in the corruption of the province which Pedro Sánchez governs. Perhaps the greatest creation in this field is that of the marqués de Requena by Palacio Valdés in La espuma, who is evidently based on Salamanca. The other aspect of finance is that offered by Don Santiago Núñez (La Montálvez) who is probably the Peredian equivalent to Don Francisco Torquemada; although Galdós first created this character in 1884 (La de Bringas), he did not write the first of the Torquemada series until the year after La Montálvez was published.

Pereda's first story to deal with politics is Suum cuique, where it is seen at its most simple level. The contrast is made between the view that Silvestre gains of politics from
the press, and the reality of the state of both which he soon discovers once he is in Madrid. It has already been seen how Don Silvestre had had his head turned by the *artículos de fondo* of the paper that he read. There is a further criticism of this paper, for it makes Silvestre dissatisfied with the *Montaña*. The net result is that Silvestre wants to see Madrid, and, after discovering that Fulano de Tal is his old school friend, he has an excuse to go to Madrid. "Hizo la pirueta porque hallaba un amigo de campanillas que, sirviéndole en el pleito, le proporcionaba motivo para ir a Madrid." (I, 267)

His attitude to politics whilst in his village is amplified:

> En su afición era ciego y testarudo, y estaba tan encarrilado en la senda del periódico, que hubiera creído insultar a la razón dudando una sola vez de sus declamaciones...y...al hablar de política con sus amigos, resolvía todas las cuestiones citando las palabras del diario, y con el apoyo de éste, reñía con cuantos le contradijesen. (I, 265)

It is evident that these two sections of life are set up in the mind of Silvestre as being complementary and infallible. His brain is turned by these *artículos de fondo*, and, according to Pereda, he becomes a Don Quijote who thus attacks the politics of the period, and the press which assists the corruption of politics and glorifies the ideals set forth by the politicians.

Silvestre arrives in Madrid with all the hopes of finding a utopia, but he finds the exact opposite. His inconveniences in Madrid are endless, but even in the realm of politics he
discovers that nothing is what it seems. He meets the editor of his favorite paper and his disillusionment probably echoes Pereda's own when he arrived in Madrid:

¿Es decir que aquel periódico que yo leía en un lugar constante fe está escrito por este hombre, y aquellos artículos en que tanto se clamaba por el orden, por la moralidad, por el bien de los pueblos, eran dictados por un anarquista cínico y desmoralizado? ¿Conque esas palabras de humanidad, filantropía, compañerismo, religión, hogar, derechos, lejos de ser una verdad en semejantes periódicos, son una burla sacrílega, un insulto a Dios y a los hombres, una explotación innoble de la pública buena fe? (I, 271)

Shortly afterwards, now doubting the press, he investigates politics:

Siendo la política su caballo de batalla...fuése al Congreso, donde esperaba oir aquellos discursos que, impresos [my stress] le admiraban, y aquellos hombres que, pronunciándolos, le parecían semidioses o criaturas de distinta naturaleza, forma y color que el resto de la Humanidad. (I, 272)

The close link between the two is emphasised by the placement of the word impresos, and Pereda had prepared the reader for Silvestre's bewilderment since Silvestre discovered that all political papers "Decían de sí propios lo mismo que el del cirujano de su lugar escribía de sí mismo y de su partido, es decir, que eran unos santos, al paso que renegaban de todos los demás." (I, 272) Silvestre approached parliament with a somewhat ambivalent attitude. He still believed that the politicians were demi-gods and yet he knew that the papers were not to be trusted:

Mas; ¡oh desengaño!, en el palacio de las leyes halló de todo menos discursos. Presenció...disputas acaloradas, y encontró en los diputados unos hombres de talla común, que tenían el mismo prurito que los periódicos: la inmodestia de decir cada uno de sí propio, coram populo,
lo que todos los demás les negaban: que eran lo mejor-
cito de la casa, y de lo poco que en virtudes cívicas
y hasta domésticas se encontraba por el mundo. (I, 272)

Poor Silvestre is so baffled that he asks if there might not
be "dos Congresos de Diputados en Madrid..." (I, 272), but of
course there is not. It leaves him with a difficult problem
to solve: Whence do all the beautiful speeches come? At
last he discovers the conspiracy of the press and the politicians:

Cuando supo algo de lo que pasaba en la Redacción del
Diario de Sesiones, "Cáscaras"--dijo--"pues con un buen
redactor también habría oradores en el concejo de mi
pueblo." (I, 272)

As can be seen from what Pereda said to Boris de Tannenberg,
his own parliamentary experiences reinforced those of Silvestre,
which he described in 1864 long before he was deputy, but
after his Madrid experience of 1852-4. Even so, this section
must represent the young Pereda's own reaction to, and
disillusionment with, politics and the press when he arrived
in Madrid in 1852. From the account of Ricardo Gullón it seems
that Pereda was optimistic when he arrived in the metropolis.
But after two years the atmosphere of the capital--political,
literary and social--so appalled him that he left with all
his illusions shattered. 5

It is in Suum cuique that these ideas are stated in the
most straightforward manner and because of this extended
quotations have been given which reveal Pereda's views on
the relationship of politics and the press. Because the sit-
atuations clarify an attitude that exists throughout all five
novels about the politics of the capital, these will be used as a point of reference for the other four novels.

In *La mujer del César*, Pereda describes the columns of Lucas Gómez, the "gossip-columnist":

> Para aquel hombre todo se subordinaba a las leyes del buen tono: hasta la muerte, pues al gemir sobre la fresca tumba de una dama noble, no recordaba sus virtudes, ni las fingía siquiera, sino que inventariaba sus roperos, sus joyas, sus carruajes, sus admiradores y un talento para brillar en aquel mundo que perdía en ella el mejor de sus atractivos, el más espléndente de sus astros. *(I, 561)*

Pereda was trying to emphasize that the press was just as wrong-headed regarding social and moral matters as it was in political affairs, and also that its literary ideas were much the same. His attitude was consistently that the press distorted everything, lauded what was hollow and worthless and paid little or no attention to things of value.

One finds these ideas in *Los hombres de pro*, where they have become much more personal and harrowing. Simón's patron, a colonel who becomes a general, is a motif which runs through the first part of the story, keeping the reader aware of the political scene without involving him in it directly. As the story develops Simón attends an hilarious meeting in the *Casas Consistoriales*. This is not essentially political nor is it set in Madrid, but it is a good example of the ridiculous speeches and the insulting behaviour that Silvestre found in parliament. It must make any alert reader think back to Silvestre's comment, just quoted, that with a good editor there would also be orators in his own village council. This
overtone is subtly introduced and is not stressed, but it exists.

The novel develops and the Peñascal family move to Madrid. It is here that Simón's political ambitions are stressed:

Su entretenimiento favorito era el Congreso, y...rara era la sesión que él no presenciara desde la tribuna pública. No se habrá olvidado que Simón era muy dado a la política y a la elocuencia. Por eso buscaba allí una buena escuela en que nutrir sus inclinaciones... (I, 648)

Simón's ambition, fostered by his regard for his colonel, now general, makes him follow politics, much as Silvestre had, but there is an essential difference: Silvestre had been disabused when he saw what parliament was really like; Simón was taken in by it.

Some critics, Montesinos amongst them, have viewed Pereda as being unfair because he makes his heroes liberals and then caricatures them. In this novel, on the contrary, Simón belongs to a right-wing party:

Ya no es hombre que ama las situaciones eminentemente liberales, porque en ellas cada uno puede hablar de cuanto le acomode, aunque no lo entienda; al contrario, es apasionado defensor de los Gobiernos de orden, que sin negar al tiempo las libertades que le corresponden, sostengan a cada uno en su esfera, y no alimente, en ciertas clases, insensatas ambiciones. (I, 651)

Pereda is, of course, being very ironical, since this last, which Simón despises, is exactly what characterises him. It can also be held that the novel as a whole is not merely a satire on politics in general but on traditionalist (Carlist) politics specifically. This irony becomes most apparent when one learns that Simón's protector, the upholder of law and
order, had just been exiled to the Philippines for his part in an abortive pronunciamiento. The irony is that Simón looks to the general as a demi-god, and yet this very general has just revolted against the established government. (I, 649)

In chapter VIII the satire on the traditionalists is taken to extremes, for the party which picks Simón as its candidate is portrayed as a very anti-liberal party and there is a hint—because of Pereda's own Carlist background—that he intends it as a caricature of the Carlists. His portrayal is far from affectionate. If Galdós or Leopoldo Alas had portrayed the traditionalists like this they would have been harshly criticised because "temieron por sus casas, por sus campos, por sus fábricas, por sus tesoros, es decir, su Dios, su patria, su alma." (I, 653)

Chapters IX and X are a description of contemporary Spanish politics and the power of the caciques in la Montaña. The political corruption is stressed on many occasions:

El sujeto ese vende vino y tabaco, razón por la que no hay vecino que no le deba algo, como no le hay del Mayorazgo que no le deba a éste por razón de arrendamiento o de préstamo..., o de otra cosa peor. Así se ejercen en los pueblos las grandes influencias, y con este criterio se hacen siempre las elecciones. (I, 659)

Pereda's criticism of the system is very harsh and yet it is sometimes very subtle: Simón is seeking the support of one of the caciques, Don Zambombo, and to convince him he says "los hombres de mi posición nos lanzamos esta vez a la lucha, resueltos a que sea una verdad el sistema representativo." (I, 661) He is asserting his belief in the ideal of
representative government and seeking the support of someone who has just been described as one of the best examples of the corruption of that system through the power of money.

Pereda makes many more attacks on a system which was not typically Spanish, for contemporary English politics were dishonest as well. Pereda does regret the whole parliamentary system; but since he must accept it, he looks for political honesty within the system. This marks the essential difference between Pereda and the liberals: They often had a blind faith in the efficacy of universal suffrage, of democracy. Pereda could not believe in political honesty, upon which democracy must be founded, and thus he could not support democracy.

These ideas about the electoral process itself are taken farther by ideas he puts forward about the parliamentary debates. He paints a typical scene, like the one Silvestre witnessed, and makes one of the deputies sum it up like this:

-- ¡Estúpidos! [El público] ¡veinte veces nos han visto hacer lo mismo, y todavía no se convencen de que todo ello es una farsa!...El país va al abismo...Esto es una farsa...atrévase usted [a decirlo], aquí que no nos oye la patria...[Todo esto del Parlamento] Es una calamidad. Aquí no hay más que ambiciones personales, con las que es imposible todo gobierno.
-- ¿De manera que si esto, que es notoriamente malo, se suprimiese...?
-- ¡Jamás!...¡Yo soy muy liberal!
-- Oh en cuanto a eso, también yo! --replicaba [Simón], contoneándose, y hasta mirando con cara de lástima al primer tradicionalista que...pasara...
-- ¡Vivir sin Parlamento es vivir fuera del siglo, caer en la abyección!
-- ¡Y en la ignorancia! [sic] (I, 680)
This passage shows Pereda's disgust at the dishonesty and immorality of politics. It also shows Simón's change of ideals when talking with a liberal—for he is a traditionalist deputy. The mention in this passage of traditionalists by name is significant since it reveals that Pereda was tending to class people as either liberal or traditionalist and is making clear, once again, that Simón, who is not a liberal, is a satiric portrait of a traditionalist.

Pereda's satire in this section has become double-edged. He is attacking the democratic system of representative government by revealing its misuse by the autocratic parties. Pereda, far from being the rabid Carlist that Brenan tries to paint him, was first and foremost an artist who maintained his dispassionate view of the world. He disagreed violently with the liberal devotion to universal suffrage because he could see that in the hands of both political parties, and especially the traditionalists, it was worthless. His satire is far from simple, and the nuances of political criticism that have been suggested above are quite complex and delicately suggested.

The final political section of the novel involves Simón's speech and the disastrous beginning and end of his oratorical pretensions. This follows in the line of humorous political speeches that have been presented earlier in the novel and in Suum cuique. It also makes the reader aware once more of the conspiracy of the press which makes the best of political incompetence. There is a great deal of irony in the contrast
between the way a speech is reported by papers of opposing political opinions:

Simón dejó sobre la mesa [de la Redacción del Diario] todo el discurso tal como se lo había corregido Arturo cuando aún era su amigo... Al otro día... leyó su discurso en el extracto de la sesión y se admiró al ver qué bonito estaba. (I, 698)

In another paper Arturo, who had written the speech, calls it:

Una verdadera monstruosidad en la forma y en el fondo. (I, 680)

These are the ideas about the political system that Pereda sets forth and which he is to reinforce in Pedro Sánchez.

The concluding lines of Los hombres de pro makes clear many of Pereda's beliefs concerning Madrid and politics.

El mal no está en que, por casualidad, salga de un mal tabernero un buen ministro, o un gran alcalde, o un perfecto modelo de hombre de la sociedad; la desgracia de España, la del mundo actual, consiste en que quieran ser ministros todos los taberneros y en que haya dado en llamarse verdadera cultura a la de una sociedad en que dan el tono los caldistas como yo. (I, 705)

Here the reader has clearly expounded the faults of Simón and Pedro Sánchez, and other Peredian characters. He is stressing what novelists of all political creeds were to stress in Spain: The importance of being the right man for the right job, and of not letting ambition make one strive upwards to where one becomes out-of-touch and inefficient.

There is an amusing anecdote in Los hombres de pro which must reflect Pereda's own experiences as a deputy:

Recibía por docenas y cada día las cartas de sus amigos y electores, y en todos ellos le pedían algo..., desde un destino hasta un sombrero; desde una
recomendación para el otro mundo hasta la colocación de una nodriza (1). Porque a un diputado se le considera en su distrito capaz de los imposibles, y, por ende, se le cree y se le hace el mejor y más barato agente de negocios de Madrid. (I, 680)

What does make the reader recognize that this is taken from personal experience is the fact that it has a note (1), which simply says "Histórico," which does do much to illustrate the way that deputies were regarded at the period of Pereda's political adventure.

Pereda attacks politics in two ways in Pedro Sánchez: His attacks on the liberals are levelled at Pedro's association with the press, and he opposes the opportunism of the polacos, represented by the Valenzuela family. He was much fairer in his ideas on the liberals than he is often given credit for. He approaches many figures cautiously and one finds that the only good characters are liberals. Don Serafín is the idealist liberal, who dies for his beliefs, and Pereda never detracts from the glory of his heroism although he lets the reader see the futility of his actions. Matica is the other positive figure he portrays, and he, too, is a liberal. It is the traditionalists, the supporters of the status quo who are condemned and painted in very unsavory colors, especially the Valenzuelas.

Although Pedro is influenced by the Balduques, he marries into the Valenzuela family, and he discovers that his quixotic idealism does not help him against the unscrupulousness of Clara and Pilita. He becomes the governor of an Andalusian province and he delegates his responsibility to a secretary;
finally he discovers the chief of police, "tiene puestos a contribución a todos los criminales y a todos los viciosos de la ciudad." (II, 173) Pedro is astounded when he realizes what is happening, for the newspapers "declaraban que jamás, ni aun durante las más inmorales administraciones, había habido en aquella capital un desgobierno más completo, una falta más absoluta de policía y pública moralidad." (II, 173) This is one further corruption of the political system in Spain, and it is merely a continuation of what Valenzuela had been doing for years in Madrid:

> El señor de Valenzuela es un caballero que, si el Código civil rigiera en España por igual para todos los españoles, estaría hace años arrastrado treinta libras de cadena en un presidio, con otros muchos personajes que también gastan coche a expensas del Estado. (II, 87)

The last Madrid novel contains the bulk of his treatment of finance. This centers on the Marquis of Montálvez, who like Don Simón is deceived; Don Mauricio Ibáñez, the figure of the great financier; Simón, the Marquis' steward, who swindles him; and Don Santiago Núñez, the money-lender. They may not be all directly political, but they have some political overtones.

In La Montálvez, Part I, Chapter XI, revelations are made about the Montálvez fortune, which is tottering, and the character of Simón is introduced. It is made clear that although Simón is pilfering from the marquis, the marquis is being defrauded by Don Mauricio:

> Los grandes desembolsos que le han costado...los negocios emprendidos en compañía de don Mauricio Ibáñez... (II, 433).
He is another Peredian creation who can be taken in by an unscrupulous politician: Don Simón was taken in by the minister; Pedro by Valenzuela; the marquis by Don Mauricio. Although Pedro had no money to lose, all three are deceived because of their vanity, and two lose their fortunes to politicians. This is another of Pereda's strictures of politics, that there are too many opportunists who will "fleece" the unwary who fall into their clutches. Valenzuela and Don Mauricio Ibáñez are manifestations of the same figure, which is one of the stock nineteenth-century figures. Dickens created one of the greatest in the figure of Merdle in *Little Dorritt* (whose wife "piques herself on being society" significantly.) Ibáñez plays a minor but important role in the novel, being Nica's husband, but he does not appear in the second part, except in retrospect:

Fue a parar adonde van todos los pícaros gordos que juyen de la justicia de su patria: a los Estados Unidos. (II, 480)

Most of his criticism of politics is closely related to financial affairs; this reaches its culmination in *La Montalvez*. In this latter novel one finds that the marqués de Montalvée, the father of the eponymous heroine, is very much a reincarnation of Don Simón C. de las Peñascales. If the reader looks back to this figure he will find that "no era...tan tirolés en negocios como en política." (I, 692) Despite his knowledge of finance, however, he is tempted by the minister with the bait of a title. The succeeding episode relates his ultimate downfall because his ambition is even more powerful than his
mercantile abilities. His political and oratorical aspirations were doomed, so were his social aspirations; both are directly caused by his financial failure since the minister reveals Arturo's social position which accelerates his oratorical failure and causes Julieta's elopement with Arturo.

The second character is Simón, the marquis' steward. He is a reincarnation of Don Sotero of De tal palo, tal astilla and is reminiscent of Don Acisclo of Valera's Doña Luz. Whether the latter, which was written in 1879, provided Pereda with a model for De tal palo, tal astilla in 1880, is uncertain. Simón is the other traditional financial swindler—the petty swindler, who makes himself rich at the expense of his master—his behaviour is described by Manolo Casa-Vieja:

Estaba su caudal [del marqués] mermado en lo más jugoso y medio en quiebra el resto...en manos de un administrador que se pasaba de listo y de aprovechado. (II, 479)

None of these figures are exceptional, but they represent another facet of society which is corrupt. In this aspect they are linked to all other rogues that abound. Pereda was writing a contemporary history of society and within each category one finds that people are much the same. Among all sections of society he finds that people are corrupt, ideologically or financially. There are exceptions, but he finds that the majority of people are either rogues or "fools" (tontos). The fools often gain self-knowledge, but lose money, prestige, reputation and integrity.
Pedro Sánchez is foolish and "blind." When he learns of his deception by Clara, both emotionally and financially, he says:

Sólo dominado por una preocupación semejante podía yo estar tan ciego...que no viera lo que tenía delante de los ojos. (II, 172)

Díle las gracias, prometiéndole que no le pesaría de haberme arrancado la venda de los ojos. (II, 173)

His secretary tells him that he was to blame because he (Pedro) had placed "ciega confianza" (II, 174) in the secretary. Once before he himself had given indication of his own blindness, when he talks of "la ceguedad de mi pasión—" (II, 158) on his wedding day. When Pedro discovers the adultery of Clara with Barrientos, the scales finally fall from his eyes; significantly, he says, he "arrojaba [cuanto hallé] a ciegas sobre el ladrón," (II, 185) thus stressing that he was, and had been, blind to it all.

Simón Cerrojo de las Peñascales is similarly foolish. He, like Pedro, finds self-knowledge, but he is branded as "estúpido" (I, 696) and "ignorante ridículo" (I, 699) by Arturo. In contrast, the marquis never gains self-knowledge but is called "un padre tonto" (II, 478) by Manolo Casa-Vieja. These are probably the three men who are deceived most readily by Valenzuela and Clara, by the minister and by Don Mauricio Ibáñez and Simón.

In Pedro Sánchez, Pereda's disapproval of the literary press in Madrid is evidenced by the ideas which are set out as the policy of El Clarín de la patria. These attitudes
are expressed in a satirical form and Pereda manages to convey a wider impression of the editorial judgments of the Madrid press than simply its views of literature:

Comience usted por dividir las obras que examine en dos grandes grupos: las de nuestros amigos y las de los otros. Entiendo por obras de nuestros amigos las comedias, las novelas, los folletos, cuanto publiquen los hombres de nuestras ideas o de nuestra amistad íntima...; y entiendo por obras de los otros las que publiquen los enimigos de la Libertad.... (II, 102)

The ideas are then amplified and Pedro is told how to praise the works of the former, minimizing faults and exaggerating what is good, but it is the method of attack on the "enemies of Liberty" that Pereda is satirising most harshly, for Pedro and his colleagues are precisely those chicos de la prensa against whom Juan Fernández was to be so bitter in the "Palique" of Nubes de estío.

In Pedro Sánchez the reader can also find various miscellaneous statements generalising about the press. Pereda presents the chief editor of El Clarín, whose name is Redondo, and he goes on to describe his personal appearance:

Aunque se preciaba de esmerado en el ornamento y atavío de su persona, atrasaba mucho, pero mucho en el reloj de la moda imperante. Achaque era este muy común en los hombres de sus mismas ideas. ¿Y si atrasaran sólo en el vestir y afeitarse!...pero no es de extrañar; ocupados en predicar el progreso, se olvidaban de practicarlo. (II, 96)

As with many of his diatribes, it can lead to a generalisation about journalists, but also one on the character of liberals of Redondo's type. Shortly after describing the editor-in-chief he describes editorial policies regarding news; having enumerated the staff of the paper, he recapitulates with the
following words:

Estos hombres, más otro inofensivo redactor de tijera, a cuyo cargo estaban las noticias de provincias y del extranjero. (II, 97)

He captures the utter disdain that Madrid had for what was outside its own immediate horizons, and, by juxtaposing the provinces and the rest of the world, Pereda drives home his satirical invective. Although he does not mention any of the events of the outside world, he would have been aware of them, and he does this merely to emphasize the inanity and incompetence of the Madrid press. One must therefore ask whether Pereda's view of these aspects of life is completely negative. It is most definitely not: Pereda portrays many people within Madrid society as being humanly good. They may be naive, or may have other faults, but any writer who can balance his negative characters with very positive ones cannot be regarded as totally prejudiced.

His positive, good characters are Don Serafín Balduque, Carmen and Quica, and Matica in Pedro Sánchez. Don Serafín forms part of the political scene as an empleado; Carmen is the counter-balance to Clara; Matica represents the press. The financial rogues are counter-balanced by Don Santiago Núñez and his wife Doña Ramona Pacheco. Objections may be raised, since these latter were not from Madrid, but neither were the Valenzuela family nor the Montálvez family nor were Pedro and Don Simón.

Pereda was to look for, and find, the greatest source of good in Don Santiago and his wife in La Montálvez. Any
society that can produce such a man is not without hope. Don Santiago is a money-lender, but, unlike the traditional money-lender, he only charges six per cent interest. He is the representative of the positive force of finance and industry within society; his timidity and low interest rate are in harmony with his attitude to society. Don Santiago is a bourgeois of the highest calibre and as such is a mainstay of the society in which he lives. Pereda was, indeed, to look for the simple, lasting values in society and he was to find them in the lack of ambition and the patient productivity of Don Santiago. In many ways Don Santiago is the counter-balance to Simón, but he also represents one of the forces which counter-balance the great rogues such as Don Mauricio.

Don Serafín and Matica are the other figures who represent the positive values of life in Madrid. They counter-balance the bad impression given by the other semi-political and journalistic characters. Don Serafín stands for the idealisation of politics; he may be naive and may suffer martyrdom, yet the very futility of his actions provide the hope that the existence of such an idealist may save mankind from becoming as cynical, opportunist and corrupt as the Valenzuelas and the Ibáñezes. Matica represents the good taste and judgment possible within society and the press. He has his faults, but he is Pedro's mentor and guide; if all men were like Matica then there would be hope for mankind. They can be seen as being representatives of virtues, which are doomed to failure because of too much naïveté or too much sophistication:
Only the blind fools succeed, but they only find frustration—Pedro Sánchez and Nica Montálvez have material success in life, but they are doomed to physical and moral frustration, the latter in Madrid, Pedro in the Montaña.

When one looks back at Pereda's ideas on politics and the press there are certain general conclusions that can be made regarding the two institutions separately and as part of a complex social fabric which was beginning to fray noticeably. Through the years he stayed true to his original thoughts on politics. What is unusual is to note that, if anything, he becomes more liberal in later years; this is most surprising since, as a rule, men become less and less so. What does not change is his lack of belief in the effectiveness of democracy because of his self-confessed pessimism and because of his own complete lack of faith in man and man's ability to progress morally.

His tirades against the press are most astringent since it is often the press which forms public opinion. He inveighs against it on three main issues—literature, politics and society—the three major aspects of Madrid life that he visualises as corrupting the attitudes and morals of Spain. Fundamentally, his criticism can be summarised in one word—hypocrisy. This was what Pereda satirised all his life, whether in Madrid or in Santander, in the city or in the country. His dislike of Madrid can be readily understood when it is realized what he found Madrid stood for, and how he found the majority of madrileños.
He was not being original or extreme when he accused the politicians of dishonesty. "Get thee glass eyes;/And like a scurvy politician, seem/To see things thou dost not." His diatribe against high society is no more unusual, and of course the press has always been the target of much censure. Why then was Pereda's morality so bitter for the society of Madrid to take? He was no less scathing about Madrid than Galdós, but Madrid appealed to the latter while it repulsed the former. There is a feeling that Pereda was intransigent, and this is reinforced by Galdós' own picture of him in his prologue to El sabor de la tierruca, but what is perhaps not fully realized is that Pereda was totally honest and sincere, but not intolerant.

His views were not shared by many people. But although he would not change them, nor allow himself to be swayed by things he did not approve of, this did not mean he would not allow his opponents to air their views. It is this tolerant sincerity that made the friendship of Pereda and Galdós so durable, that made his friendship with Leopoldo Alas firm, and which made his friendship with Alarcón impossible and with Palacio Valdés difficult. Montesinos remarks that the latter never made any real critical comment on Pereda but "No nos extraña. Palacio no pudo aceptar a nadie a su lado, envidioso y egocéntrico como era..."

One can thus look to Pereda's invective on the literary scene and realize that much was caused by his own disillusionment with Madrid and especially by his feeling that writers
were not sincere. He was also looking for something genuine and spontaneous in the dramatic, poetic and novelistic fields. All he found, however, was a preoccupation with appearances, whether they were insincere romantic gushings, or the suspense of plots and anagnorisis.

Naturally, Pereda had a vested interest in promoting costumbrismo, since this was his own speciality, but his novels had developed considerably from the series of sketches that Bell, for example, claimed they were:

A further weakness was the slightness of his plots. His books were really always a series of cuadros de costumbres more or less closely strung together. Despite accusing Pereda of such a fault, Bell was able to say that Galdós was "the greatest Spanish novelist of the Nineteenth Century after Pereda."
1. This is clearly shown by some of the most memorable dates of the century: in Spain these were invasion (1808, 1823), revolutions (1848, 1854, 1868), civil wars (1833-40, 1860, 1870-3); in England they were the Corn Law (1815), Trades Unions (1824 onwards), First railway (1825), the Reform Bills (1832, 1867), Factory acts (1833) and Postage (1840).


5. R. Gullón, Vida de Pereda (Madrid, 1944)

6. See, for example, Disraeli's Coningsby. In this there is much talk of "rotten boroughs" and Mr. Taper and Mr. Tadpole have differing ideas of how to win elections: The one worships "Registration" (juggling the number of the electors) the other a "Good Cry" (a meaningless catch-phrase that will win votes through emotion).

7. This comment on the U.S.A. being Pereda's great prejudice: "los Estados Unidos, depósito imenso de todos los grandes ladrones del mundo." (I Oros son triunfos, p. 616)

8. His irony is reinforced by what was happening in the world: 1848, Publication of the Communist Manifesto and resultant revolutions throughout Europe; the abdication of Louis Phillipe and the fall of Metternich; the California Gold Rush; 1849, the fall of Venice and the siege of Rome; 1850, the rise of Cavour; 1851, the first submarine cable; the Australian Gold Rush; 1852, the start of Napoleon III's reign; 1853-4, the beginnings of the Crimean War and the troubles in British South Africa.

9. "lo vulgar, lo grotesco, lo carnalmente brutal le solici-
taba" (II, 44).

10. William Shakespear, King Lear, Act IV, Sc VI.
11. As Bell says: "He was not intolerant, he could see two sides of a question, his tolerant remarks about the religion of the English contrasts with the rabid intolerance of George Borrow in Spain." Bell, p. 40.


13. Bell, p. 41.

14. Bell, p. 60. The stress is mine.
SOCIETY IN PEREDA'S MADRID NOVELS

Pereda's novels deal with society as a whole, but the Madrid novels have a much more specialised concern with high society, or el mundo, as it is often called. Within the metropolitan novels, Pereda has already been seen to have shown a great interest in certain aspects of society at large, and he himself emphasizes the relationship between the various strata of life in the capital; he compares, for instance:

Un literato de nota, un personaje político [y] una mujer de historia. (II, Pedro Sánchez, p. 66)

Las eminencias de la política, los Cresos de la Banca... las lumbreras de la literatura...[y] la flor y nata del mundo elegante. (II, La Montálvez, p. 413)

Todo Madrid, lo más cogolludo de la aristocracia, de la Banca, de la política, de las artes y de las letras. (II, La Montálvez, p. 414)

Pereda, himself, thus distinguishes between the various categories of society, but his criticism of all these parts is very similar: He can see that they suffer from the same dishonesty, hypocrisy and hollowness. To further demonstrate this, it is necessary to discuss four aspects of social behaviour within the capital. These are fashion, which has a certain bearing on the second topic, which is love, which will deal with the whole spectrum of relationships between male and female; education, which does have some bearing on the formal educating of young men, but which will be primarily concerned with the upbringing of young girls, and their
attitudes to the question of love; and finally religion, which is also connected to the problem of education, but with regard to the divine not the social.

Fashion

In *La mujer del César*, Pereda links the defects of the society of the Corte to its desire for clothes and fashions, jewels and finery.

Nada más natural que fuesen las grandes vidrieras y los caprichos de las artes suntuarias el especial ornamento de la capital de España, centro del lujo, de la galantería y de los grandes vicios de toda la nación. (I, 533)

This statement on the first page of the novel is to prepare the reader for Pereda's continual diatribes against the evils of ostentation.

Carlos is not influenced very much by the great world, but exists alongside it; Isabel, his wife, was brought up in high society and Pereda says simply, "la veta de Isabel era la ostentación." (I, 539) This is an essential part of her character and she is in many ways a precursor of Nica Montálvez. Perhaps it is illustrative of Pereda's growing pessimism that Nica can find no hero to save her, as Ramón saves Isabel; indeed, the irony is increased, for the almost perfect man, Angel, destroys Luz as effectively as Pepe Guzmán had destroyed her mother.

Other major characters are the Marqueses del Azulejo and Frasco Pérez. Although all three are characterised by their continual absorption in the mutations of fashion, it is the latter who is the most "original" in this sphere.
This is one of the first appearances in Spanish fiction of the fop, the dandy, and he constantly referred to as a tître, perhaps best rendered into English as "dummy," since he is nothing more than a tailor's dummy. He manages to get the attention of the public by his unusual name, Frasco, which is short for Francisco. He keeps this attention by his "mil originalidades" (I, 547) which Pereda recounts at length. These are typified by sending his dress shirts to be washed in Andalusia and ironed in Paris: "En fin todo se contaba de él, menos que hubiese dado jamás unos calzones viejos a un pobre." (I, 547) This is Pereda's harshest censure of the evils of fashion.

Pérez is shown on many occasions to be merely a dummy, "el consabido, tître a la moda," (I, 543) and his actions are shown to be empty: "Eran...sus gastos reproductivos, si no en dinero, en fama, que era lo que el buscaba." (I, 547) These ideas of hollowness are taken to extremes a little later. Frasco Pérez, is, in Pereda's eyes, the most despicable of creatures for he has no substance, he is a "hollow man."

An aspect of men's dress which Pereda satirises is the use of the bata. In the first four Madrid novels this is used for effect, on the first appearance of the fashionable madrileño, or, in Los hombres de pro, the first appearance of Simón after he has moved up in society. Its absence from La Montálvez is probably because it will not have the same effect; the novel is set in the capital from the beginning and has no outsider to be dazzled:
Tampoco detallaré los efectos que en [Silvestre] causaron la bata persa... (I, Suum cuique, p. 268)

Entonces apareció [Carlos], envuelto en perezosa bata. (I, La mujer del César, p. 534)

Hay... un hombre... de cincuenta años de edad [Simón]... con... lujosa bata. (I, Los hombres de pro, p. 647)

Se presentó... el señorón de Madrid [Valenzuela] de bata chinesca. (II, Pedro Sánchez, p. 22)

In every instance the luxurious (lujosa), exotic (chinesca, persa) or morally detrimental (perezosa) qualities of the robe are indicated.

Society is itself seen as being hollow and morally empty in La mujer del César, since in two specific instances dress and appearance are shown as being sought after in preference to things of more substance, whether physical (food) or moral (virtue):

Las del jubilado funcionario X., de quienes se contaba que, puestas por su padre en la alternativa de comer patatas y vestir con luj o comer de firme y vestir indiana, optaron sin vacilar por lo primero. (I, 560)

A page later (I, 561) the gossip columnist Lucas Gómez is described, and so is an obituary for a woman in which he mentioned her jewels, clothes etc., but never once her virtues (See Section on the Press.)

The hollowness of Pérez is most clearly seen in his attack on Isabel's honor, which depends on a sleight-of-hand with a set of jewels. The whole incident is redolent of falseness, since it is all dependent on jewels--and Pereda has clarified his position on these earlier,--and also on the lack of perception of Isabel and the deception of Pérez. The reasons she accepts the jewels are ironical, for she cannot
see that while she is humiliating someone else's vanity
she is gratifying her own:

No digo yo dos mil duros, diez años de mi vida me
hubieran parecido hoy poco para comprar una ocasión
como la que se me presenta de humillar la tonta
vanidad de esa mujer. (I, 550)

Women's clothes are censured by Pereda, not simply
because they follow fashions, but for the style themselves.
Examples of his attacks on the excessive decolletage of the
ladies of high society can be found in both La mujer del César
and La Montálvez:

Los altos del cuerpo del vestido iban sumamente bajos,
y...los bajos de las mangas subían hasta muy cerca
del sitio que debían ocupar los altos del cuerpo, merced
da lo cual Isabel llevaba al aire libre mayor cantidad
de carnes que la que autorizaba una moral severa y
los usos ordinarios de la sociedad. (I, 554)

El vestido, sin mangas y casi sin cuerpo, dejábame las
carnes, de cintura arriba, medio a la intemperie...;
quejábame yo de que era mucho lo descubierto; replicábame
que, por lo mismo, y por ser bueno, había que lucirlo....
Vestida de pecadora...me cubrí el seno con el abanico
(II, 406-7).

Pereda stresses in both cases that these dresses are not
authorized by the day-to-day customs of society in general,
and that both compromised the modesty, and the morality, of
their wearers.

Love

Pereda was at pains to point out the hollowness of fashion
and its detrimental effect on morality and modesty in high
society. This section will continue the criticisms he
levelled at the finery of the great world and will show how
this concern with appearance was of similar consequence in
Of the five novels, Suum cuique has least to say about this subject since there is no love interest in the story. On one occasion, however, sex plays a part, and at the close of the novel, Silvestre's reasons for marrying are set out. The moment when sex is introduced is to culminate the series of difficulties that Silvestre meets in Madrid; he is scorned by some prostitutes that he had been watching. This is probably the only occasion when Pereda specifies this portion of life, and it is, perhaps, surprising that he accepts them; although doubtless disapproving of their morality, he voices no opinion on "the oldest profession":

Observó que...discurrían por una y otra acera, pasaban, volvían a pasar, y siempre las mismas...mujeres de incisiva y elocuente mirada, beldades de esbelto talle, y desenvuelta marcha... Más ¡ay!...aquellas mujeres, cuyas miradas devoraban a los transeúntes, con cuyos movimientos, con cuya voz...intentaban seducirlos, sólo para don Silvestre eran ariscas y desaboridas (I, 273-4).

It may perhaps be indicative of Pereda's own uncertainty about women that he did not portray them in detail until after his marriage in 1869, for one finds little evidence of the presence of women in the whole of the Escenas Montañesas. The mention of love in Suum cuique is rather prosaic, and Silvestre marries for various reasons, after winning his court-case he "se sintió tan aburrido", and "hablaba...de la necesidad de perpetuar su casta" (I, 298-9). Because of this he determines to marry, and many people believed his choice was decided by "los ojazos negros de una moza de ocho arrobas,"
but the romantic effect is lessened by the fact that she was "heredera de un decente patrimonio." (I, 299)

When Pereda began writing La mujer del César and Los hombres de pro he had been married for two years, and, possibly because of this, his interest in love and its adjuncts was much greater. La mujer del César is based upon the attempt of Frasco Pérez to seduce Isabel, which he recognises as being extremely difficult: "Parecióle su conquista, ya que no imposible, muy difícil." (I, 547) The most virulent satire occurs when Pereda considers Pérez's strategy, for he "no busca los triunfos sino por el escándalo, y le importa poco que existan, con tal que el público los acepte como hechos consumados." (I, 553) Once again he is reinforcing the emptiness, not only of Pérez, but of society, in which sexual morality is based on appearance; even in adulterous affairs, there is no love, merely a desire to "score," so that the woman is nothing more than another number on a list.

This novel is probably the most narrow-minded of all of Pereda's output, and certainly of all the metropolitan novels. His later works may have been influenced by other novelists' views on the situation. The strictness of the morality is clear when, just prior to the dance which will bring the novel to a climax, "Ramón...miraba como se retorcían las cintas de fuego entre los tizones, que se iban consumiendo a su contacto, como la humana vida entre las malas pasiones." (I, 553)

The marriage of Carlos and Isabel is put under close scrutiny and the faults of both are magnified. It can be
seen as failing through "lack of communication" and it is only at the end, that they decide that the "religion of the home" may be far better than one living too much in the public eye, the other too secluded from life:

El hogar doméstico; sus mil detalles...al calor de los cuales...se forman y viven las dos grandes figuras de la Humanidad: La esposa y la madre. (I, 578)

The importance of Love in La mujer del César is apparent since the whole plot is based upon it; in Los hombres de pro there is less insistence on the topic, but it is still integral to the novel. As with Suum cuique there is one mention of sex and a subsidiary love story in the novel; this latter, concerning Julieta and Arturo, is the conventional elopement of two lovers, and needs no further analysis.

The character of Don Recaredo is clearly the prototype for Don Celso, but there are variations. Don Celso, in keeping with Pereda's purpose in Peñas arriba, is morally almost perfect. Don Recaredo, in contrast, has certain pecadillos which include a fondness for wine and "ciertos mocetones del pueblo, que, a más de parecersele en figura como un huevo a otro, recibían de él frecuentísimos agasajos y deferencias, y le llamaban padrino, sin haberlos sacado de pila." (I, 668)

Pereda's view in 1871 was somewhat different from his moral dictum the previous year: "¡Buen caso hacía don Recaredo de esas debilidades de la Naturaleza!" (I, 668) As with comments on prostitution in Suum cuique, Pereda seems to have accepted certain essentially sexual aspects of human behaviour but to have been intransigent about the general lack or morality in society.
His ideas underwent some changes in *El buey suelto*... and *De tal palo, tal astilla*, the former dealing with the sexual education of Gedeón, the latter with the incompatibility of religious extremes within marriage. His other novels, *Oros son triunfos* and *Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera* reinforce the ideas that he had expressed in his early Madrid novels.

One point that must be clarified is Pereda's attacks on the mercantile and middle classes in the latter novels. He has praised these classes on many occasions, but what he regards as their worst fault is that they ape the morals of the aristocracy. His attacks on the upper classes are vitriolic at times, but he retains his most biting scorn for those who have not the moral fibre to eschew the vice of the aristocracy. More explicitly, he is extremely scathing about those who are immoral and vicious through their upbringing, but he adds to this harsh satire of those who copy this behaviour of the aristocracy merely to be like them.

In *Pedro Sánchez* much is made of the theme of honor, but the love interest does not form as large a part of the theme as it will in *La Montalvez*. From the very beginning the semi-aristocratic position of Pedro is made explicit: "[Los Garcíás] eran labriegos bien acomodados, al paso que los Sánchez éramos señores menesterosos." (II, 12) This marks Pedro from the start as being proud, for he belonged to the family of Sancho Abarca. His pride is to play a decisive role in the novel, but it also means that when Pedro married Clara he was not
really marrying above himself; on the contrary, Valenzuela was of a common family:

Su padre era secretario del Ayuntamiento en un pueblecillo cercano a Ciudad Real. (II, 87)

This provides another level of symbolic duality in this novel, for the lives of Pedro and Valenzuela are thus made virtually parallel in their development; his wife was the daughter of the "desbravador Pedro Jijos" (II, 87-8), the very name revealing her lack of "family."

The love aspect is primarily based on the contrast between the personalities of Clara and Carmen, who "era la más acabada antítesis de Clara." (II, 37) The climatic point in this contrast is reached when Pedro first realizes that he has been deceived by Valenzuela, and that "el farsante manchego que así jugaba, no ya con mi increíbilidad, sino con la de mi padre." (II, 83) As he goes out into the street, Manolo Valenzuela rides past and heedlessly runs down a young woman; Pedro discovers that it is Carmen. The allegory of this incident is emphasized when, walking Carmen back home, she finds Pedro's condescension and boldness unseeming and reprehensible; it is as if the influence exerted on Pedro by high society had made him trample on Carmen's innocence as Manolo had trampled on her body.

The presentation of the characters of the two girls is extended throughout the novel. Clara and her mother, Pilita, are motivated by vanity and ostentation. They are different from Isabel, who had this vice, but which formed only one part of her character; Clara and Pilita and Manolo were driven
solely by a love of ostentation and by opportunism. Pilita was rather stupid, but Clara was like her name, clear-sighted, a quality that typified her, just as Carmen was the incarnation of love, of feeling and of domesticity.

The occasions when love becomes a real problem are not found until near the end of the novel. Barrientos has always followed Clara and Pedro around, and the latter realizes after the trials of governing the province that "Clara...nunca me amó..." (II, 181) He realizes that his marriage had been a mistake, but he is still incapable of seeing everything; eventually he discovers the adultery of his wife with Barrientos. He turns to Matica for consolation, but fate puts Barrientos in his path again; they duel, and Pedro is vanquished:

Yo me volví a casa acompañado de mis amigos, tan afrentado como había salido de ella, mas con la vergüenza de haber sido apaleado por el mismo que me afrentó. ¡Y estos lances los han discurrido los hombres cultos para lavar manchas de honor! ¡Mentecatos! (II, 186)

This is one of the few occasions when a duel takes place in Pereda's novels, and he is predictably opposed to this method of remedying affairs of honor.

Pedro realizes finally that he should have married Carmen ("la amaba y me amaba" [II, 187]) and so turns to her. The only noteworthy part of this is that Pedro turns from a girl who may have been born a madrileña, it is never stated explicitly, to one who definitely was from Madrid, "donde ella había nacido" (II, 37). This is another instance of Pereda not carrying his attacks on the capital to extremes. Pedro has the temerity to suggest that they should live together
because they are in love (II, 187). Her refusal establishes Pereda's traditional attitude which will be overturned by Galdós—but even he can support the idea of extra-marital liaisons only after the turn of the century.  

In the final chapter Pereda chronicles the anticipated death of Clara and the happiness of Pedro's second marriage, to Carmen, with the birth of one child and the expectation of a second. The second part of the chapter is one of the most hard-hitting written at that period, for it establishes a blissful marriage and the prospect of a happy ending and then destroys it; the chapter narrates the deaths of Pedro's father, Carmen (and her unborn child), and Pedro's son, Quica and Matica. This ending would not have found favor in England, but it must be remembered how many major Spanish novels of the period end tragically.  

Pereda's clearest prognostications on love are to be found in La Montalvez. This novel, the last of his three best, was to attack Madrid Society without the over-simplified theme of La mujer del César which had elevated Ramón morally to the position of a demi-god because he was a montañés. In La Montalvez, on the other hand, the action takes place in Madrid and the Montaña never intrudes, neither as itself, nor personified, in a morally perfect character. 

Several marriages and love-relationships are dealt with in the novel, the first being that of the Marqués de Montalvez with the daughter of a "rico excontrasista de carreteras y suministros." (II, 391) The marriage is very much a marriage
of convenience; he wants money, she wants the title. The marquis is comparable to Don Silvestre, for he marries to keep up the family name; unfortunately the pair produce only a daughter, then a sickly son who dies in his teens. He is not regarded as important enough for Pereda to give him a name.

There is a complete lack of family love and consequently the education of the children is very much at fault, but this is more appropriate to a discussion of education than of love, which is essentially sexual love rather than paternal, maternal or filial love.

When Nica's grandfather dies she weeps for him which arouses the wrath of her father who regards it as hypocrisy. Pereda comments on her sorrow and concludes "de todo lo cual se deduce que quería de veras a su abuelo." (II, 410) It is also very evident that she has the clarity of vision of Clara and represents a synthesis of the latter and Carmen; this duality is reiterated time and again, for there is a dichotomy between Nica as a woman and as a mother. Nica's first meeting with love shows how lightly it was regarded in the high society of the time:

El tema amoroso...que ya consideraba...una rutina obligada en los usos de la buena sociedad. (II, 416)

Pereda again reveals that, beneath the words and the acts, love was hollow. Like politics, like the press, like some literature, love was words which expressed no feeling; nothing was real in Society, all was an empty shell full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.
Society's attitude to love and marriage is expressed three times in the novel—by Leticia, by Sagrario and by Nica's mother. Each time it is expressed to Nica who cannot, nor wants to, believe it:

Dicen que las mujeres de nuestra alcurnia deben casarse a cierta edad con hombres de determinadas condiciones...; se acuerda entre ambas familias que Gonzalo y yo nos casemos...; no se admiten consultas, ni protestas, ni reparos, porque...lo principal es que se haga el matrimonio, lo demás no importa tres cominos...y a este papel nos vamos acomodando poco a poco el galán y la dama de esta comedia de la buena sociedad... (II, 422)

Muy ilícito no debe de ser cuándo tanto se usa...el vivir con el marido y el gozar con el amante. (II, 423)

Si quieres conservar el amor que sientas por un hombre, con todo lo que de este amor se sigue y se desprende, no te cases con él. (II, 423)

Nica is in love with Pepe Guzmán, but Sagrario is advising her on her conduct; she believes that Nica ought to marry—but not Guzmán. This teoría deals with "amor de más sustancia, que no es amor para doncellas." (II, 425) "¿De manera que, para complemento de la teoría, es también de necesidad algo de matrimonio? --Indispensable." (II, 425) The advice is finally brought down to details: "No te cases con Pepe Guzmán, aunque, por milagro de Dios, lo pretenda él; pero si don Mauricio el Solemne, pide tu mano, aceptale." (II, 426)

This is the occasion when high society's views on marriage are set out most clearly. The cynicism of the advice is brought out even more strongly when Don Mauricio Ibáñez is glimpsed travelling through Europe with at least two different women, both of whom "a su lado habitaba en el hotel, es decir tabique en medio." (II, 436) The profligacy of Don
Mauricio will be important later in establishing the conditions of his marriage to Nica. Another aspect of high society's cynicism occurs when two of Leticia's lovers duel, and her husband seconds one of them. (II, 438)

Leticia repeats Sagrario's advice, immediately after telling Nica of Ibañez's affairs, and it is she who picks up the carnal advantages of marriage to the banker, which Sagrario had suggested:

Te conviene para marido el hombre que te he propuesto, por lo mismo que es raro y tiene vicios y mala fama; o lo que es igual, todo lo que necesita una mujer de mundo para lograr de casada, con ciertos derechos, lo que no es lícito de soltera. (II, 460)

The third time that the theory is expounded is by her mother, after Don Mauricio has proposed marriage; her mother's reason for seconding the marriage differ from those of her two friends. They advised the marriage for sexual ends, Nica's mother because "dinero, dinero a todo trance, y mundo esplendoroso en que lucirlo [era]...el objeto, el fin, la aspiración única, y hasta la religión de mi madre." (II, 460)

Nica's revulsion at her mother's desires brings out certain aspects in her character, for they were "teorías repugnantes a mi naturaleza de mujer de honradas inclinaciones y mis sentimientos de enamorada." (II, 460)

When Nica finally accepts the banker, it is to become the most extreme sexual situation in Pereda's writings, and indeed one of the strangest arrangements in contemporary literature. Nica establishes a ménage à trois, and because of Ibañez's bad reputation she is able to convince him to live
apart from her—within the same house—while she enjoys her new-found freedom. She tells the reader that "no era un ladrón de caudales el hombre que se escondía por la noche en el cuarto contiguo al de mi doncella y se escapaba al amanecer." (II, 472) Her immoral conduct is emphasized by the birth of a daughter—the image of Pepe Guzmán—eight months after the wedding. Although Pereda in no way approves of her behaviour, he does see it as being both typical of, and produced by, high society. This is possibly his most fundamental criticism of el mundo, that it tended to pervert those who by inclination would not have been immoral or vicious. Pereda can be seen as a little intolerant, for he has Manolo Casa-Vieja say:

Quien debía dar la nota dulce y armónica en este desconcierto de pasiones es la mujer; y bien sabes tú que agallas tiene la nuestra. Por eso ya no hay familia sino entre las gentes oscuras y de poco más o menos. (II, 477)

He seems to be throwing most of the blame on to the female half of society, whereas the disorder in society is caused by both sexes. There is no real justification for the partial prejudice shown by Pereda unless one turns to his ideas on education, wherein he advocates a better upbringing for women, which may improve society's attitudes.

It is into this framework that the characters of Nica, Luz and Angel are developed. The love of the latter is highly poetic, and can be seen as cursi. The sequence was praised by Clarín, and both the episode and Clarín have been accused of cursilería by Montesinos.
The relationship of Luz and Angel is built up by Pereda from a rather sketchy dream of Luz, which gradually becomes more clearly manifested. As time goes on, he adds details, and finally he gives the full range of images: La azotea, el mancebo, el paraíso, arcángel guardador, el terrado, el sendero, la casita, el piano. Thus Luz dreams of her earthly paradise, in which appears the unknown guardian angel. (II, 515-6) Within a few pages of showing Luz's inner dream, an unknown youth arrives at a dance who was "el otro, el mancebo de sus imaginaciones, la figura de su cuadro... ¿De dónde venía? ¿A qué iba allí?..." (II, 521) It then turns out that Angel had exactly the same visions as Luz. It is a very imaginative sequence which supports the idea of a perfect, heaven-born love sensed by both partners, almost as if both were able to communicate extra-sensorily. It is the most romantic part of any of Pereda's novels, and is the only section in his novels filled by two lovers who become all-engrossed in each other and who are involved with love from the very start.

All of Pereda's other heroes and heroines who fall in love never do so violently and passionately. Perhaps the next most passionate of Pereda's heroes is Pedro Sánchez, but his passion for Clara begins as dislike; Marcelo in Peñas arriba marries Lituca only when he discovers the doctor does not love her; none of Sotileza's lovers have their love reciprocated, especially Andrés. Even in the romantic idyll, Al primer vuelo, the love of the two young people develops very slowly. Only this once in Pereda's repertoire does there occur the phenomenon of "love at first sight."
Luz and Angel are the only two lovers whose passion for each other towers over all else; in no other book is there a feeling in the reader that he is witnessing two people whose mutual feelings are to dominate all else. Indeed, these are Pereda's only "pair of star-crossed lovers," and this analogy is true of other aspects of the novel, since the marriage is opposed by the antagonism of the families.

The novel poses many problems in the dichotomous attitude to love. There is love as accepted by el mundo which is heartless, immoral, and cynical. There is love as personified by Luz and Angel, which is pure, angelic and paradisiacal. How must the reader regard these conflicting attitudes? Pereda condemns the one morally, society condemns the other. It can be claimed that Pereda visits the sins of the mother upon the child, since Luz is the only one who suffers physically in the novel. It can be claimed that she, living innocently, is punished; Nica, living in guilt and sin, is not punished. One wonders whether Luz, if brought up in line with the standards of society, would have succumbed.

The conflict as envisaged by Pereda is that of two extremes. One is too worldly, the other is too other-worldly. Pereda's world is one of a carefully measured balancing of ideals. He tries to weigh realism with idealism. His ideas were rejected by the idealist Trueba and by the realist Pardo Bazán; his ideas were too traditional for the liberals and too liberal for the traditionalists. Nowhere is this conflict reflected more clearly than in La Montálvez. Perhaps
most critics do not like this novel because they cannot see why Luz must be punished for the sins of Nica. What they do not allow is that Luz should act and react herself; they never allow her autonomy of action. The reasons for Luz's downfall are not to be looked for in Nica, but in Luz herself: She dies not because of the faults of her mother, but because of faults within herself. This theme will be discussed further as it involves the education of women.

Madrid Society's attitude to love is to fragment sex, love and marriage. Pereda is still maintaining the traditional values of the family, which are replaced by loveless, unstable relationships in the society he describes. Both men and women seek all three but never together. As suggested before, it was not till much later that Galdós was to attack marriage as an institution, whereas Pereda attacked its abuse by society—both men despised the falseness and hypocrisy of the existing state of love and marriage in Spain. Pereda attacks the Romanticism of Luz's view of Love just as harshly as the cynicism of her grandmother.

Pereda is somewhat reticent about sexual love, but he finds it a source for much criticism since it is a basic malaise in Spanish society. What he is attacking is the later development of the centuries-old theme of honor, which the aristocracy had adopted for its own ends. Some aspects of this theme are acceptable, and are supported by Pereda: A person must not only be innocent but seem it—which is very Calderonian. The attitude adopted by society, on the other
hand, was that one lost one's honor only when other people found out. The next step in the development is that one can do anything, providing one appears good. Pereda in his apparent inocentadas about society was not attacking a set of standards, but the very fabric that the society was based on. As he said in his interview with Boris de Tannenberg, he had lost his faith in man. Because Pereda was attacking such basic issues, he seems to have realized that he was digging the ground from under his very feet. He could see that new ideas would eventually destroy even his own idyllic society and that the old ideas could not stand for long. He realized that an attack on man's nature would naturally threaten everyone, even the montañeses; he especially recognized that the acceptance of progress by Marcelo (Peñas arriba) would destroy Tablanca as it had been. These ideas, though not explicit in the novels of the Corte, are implied by them, and can easily be taken to their logical conclusions.

Education

Pereda deals with two aspects of education in some detail. He is concerned with the upbringing and education of the young of both sexes. This is often formal, in school or university, with regard to young men, or more informal when the subject is the upbringing of young ladies.

It would be most useful to consider first the elements of formal education that are present in the novels. The first evidence of this is in Suum cuique, in which Pereda describes Silvestre's years in a provincial Latin-school. If a
comparison be made between the description of the domine of this novel and Don Bernabé in Más reminiscencias (Esbozos y rasguños), it would seem probable that the anecdotes about the school in Suum cuique are from Pereda's own experience.

The school was attended both by Silvestre and Don Fulano de Tal, and is, therefore, the point of contact between them. It was situated in a provincial villa, and at this level it not only links but divides them, since Fulano progressed to Madrid, and Silvestre retired to his village. The Latin of the Latin-school is therefore used several times to stress their friendship and yet to emphasize their differing natures. The usage of Latin is as follows, the link between them not being stressed on every occasion:

Don Silvestre Seturas tenía cuarenta años de edad, plus minusve. (I, 261)

[Concerning the court case] el abogado trabaja a subio.... (I, 261)

"¿Eres tú o no es usted?" --"Mi querido Silvestre: Ego sum" (I, 271)

El primer consejo que le dio el personaje fue el siguiente..."Dum Roma fueris...lo que sigue." (I, 271)

Los diputados...tenían la inmodestia de decir cada uno de sí propio, coram populo, lo que todos los demás les negaban. (I, 272)

Apenas pronunció el cura el Ite misa est....(I, 282)

Barbarus hic ego sum, quia nom intelligor ulli...Cada uno necesita para vivir el elemento que le ha formado: el hombre culto, la civilización; el salvaje, la Naturaleza. Suum cuique, Silvestre, como decía nuestro domine cuando daba un vale a algun discípulo aplicado, mientras desencuadernaba las costillas a zurriazgos a otros veinte holgazanes. (I, 298)
Each use of a Latin tag reminds the reader of the common educational background and emphasizes the later development of the two heroes.

There is no mention of formal education in either *La mujer del César* or *Los hombres de pro*. In contrast it has a major role in the early part of *Pedro Sánchez*. Pedro's two sources of knowledge are the little Latin and "letras humanas" (II, 10), taught him by the parish priest, and the books he reads and rereads:

Con leer a menudo Clarisa Harlowe, *El hombre feliz* y *El Quijote*...cobró señalada afición a la amena literatura. (II, 8)

La novela era mi tentación....(I, 43)

Para mí, aficionado hasta la pasión a las ficciones novelescas... (II, 59)

The importance of both is apparent in the development:

Because Pedro is reasonably well educated, he attracts the attention of Valenzuela; because of his early reading of novels, he becomes a somewhat quixotic character. It is, in fact, his imagination, stirred by the books, which makes him accept Valenzuela's offer, for, like Silvestre (and Don Quijote), his head is turned by reading.

The other occasion when mention is made of formal education is when Pedro first arrives in Madrid. He boards with seven other young men, mostly montañeses, and all students; his description of them is amusing but apparently nothing more. Pereda does use the effect of their strange clothes and actions, however, to draw a serious conclusion
about student life at the period:

Pues han de saber estos hombres precoces que aquellos muchachos recalcitrantes no eran menos listos, ni más tontos, ni más ingeniosos que ellos; pero les daba por las susodichas inocentadas porque no era costumbre entonces entre los estudiantes fundar periódicos batalladores mi asaltar las cátedras del Ateneo y de las Academias para difundir la luz de la ciencia por todos los ámbitos de la patria. (II, 43)

This was the state of the universities in the 1850s. Pereda's words sound prophetic, yet he was complaining of student unrest in 1884.7

In La Montalvez there is perhaps the most decisive statements about formal education and the careers that men can follow. Angel is in many ways the Peredian alter ego, and although Pedro is similar to Pereda because of his experiences in Madrid, Angel is similar because of his attitudes. Angel reviews the possibilities open to him and decides against medicine because he could not stomach the thought of the blood and the horrors it entailed. He rejects philosophy and its alambicados y abstrusos conceptos because of its uselessness in everyday life. He is most scathing about mathematics, a topic which Pereda scorned in his own life. Finally Angel decides, by elimination, to become a lawyer, since this was "la carrera en que caben todos, los grandes y los pequeños, los listos y los tontos, y los que se buscan el título como puerta para salir a todos los campos de las humanas ambiciones, que no eran pocos a la fecha." (II, 525)

As with the very telling comments on Angel's poetic attempts, Pereda is satirising so many of those men who studied
law because they knew not what else to do. He fails as both painter and poet, but he realized he could neither paint nor write poetry, so he became an impartial judge and critic of others. "Y esto era ser poeta y artista." (II, 526) The last comment that Pereda makes rings very like the conclusion to Los hombres de pro: "Las pruebas abundaban, al decir de las gentes, de que en España bastaba querer para convertirse un zapatero en literato distinguido." (II, 527) The moral is therefore even more clearly "zapatero a tu zapato."8

What is more central to Pereda's main thesis is the upbringing of young people, girls in particular. The first time it is dealt with is in the description of Isabel, in La mujer del César, who was the child of a widower, and was "educada en el gran mundo casi desde niña," (I, 539) with the result that she knew little else and consequently her life was lived in accordance with the criteria of fashionable society. Pereda makes no other comment expressly on this point, yet the novel is based on the concept of Isabel's inherent goodness. She is led astray by her lack of education, but this is put right by Ramón. Any comparison between La mujer del César and La Montálvez, must be merely tentative, however, since in the latter a society is depicted in which it is impossible for a woman to be faithful. Despite some similarities of character, despite their own desire to be virtuous, Nica and Isabel are poles apart: Isabel is faithful but appears untrue; Nica is unfaithful but puts up a facade—
flimsy though it is—of fidelity. Both novels attack the appearances that society puts on, but one is optimistic—the figure of Ramón bringing hope—in the other there is no hope.

There is only one real pronouncement on education in Los hombres de pro, "Yo tengo para mí que el mejor colegio para una niña es una buena madre" (I, 631) Pereda's most clear-cut statement of this idea, but Juana is described as tonta and vanidosa (I, 690-1) which is in line with all the bad mothers in Pereda's fiction. Julieta is sent to all the best schools, but she never receives the most important education—a mother's example. As Pereda is to say in La Montálvez, "la educación menos peligrosa y más esmerada de una niña será aquélla en que más se deje sentir la intervención amorosa de su madre, si, por dicha, tiene madre, y madre buena." (II, 398)

The reader is shown Julieta at various stages in her development. She is another model for Nica Montálvez since she is characterized by her absorption of her parents' vanity and ambition, with the addition of her own intelligence. She is also similar to Clara, for she is epitomised by her lucidity. Julieta, like Nica and Clara, reveals the evils of absorbed vanity plus those of intelligence which is used to further the desires of vanity. Her nature is, however, frustrated by the presence of Arturo, who inspires a passion in her which causes her eventually to be deceived by him.

In Pedro Sánchez the reader sees the duality of the natures of Julieta and Nica divided between Clara and Carmen.
Clara is the personification of Cornelian lucidity and is the extremity to which Julieta could move. She is driven by her intelligence and her vanity, and never seems to be disturbed by passion: There is no evidence that her adultery with Barrientos is inspired by love. Carmen is the opposite extreme, the proof that a widower can replace a mother—with help; Don Serafin seems—with Quica's help—to have provided an example for Carmen. She seems to be the one example, in Pereda's Madrid novels, of the girl who has been correctly educated.

The whole first section of La Montálvez is concerned with one method of educating children. Nica's grandfather has very definite ideas on the faults he sees in her education and "apostrofaba a la hija por su frialdad y predicaba a su yerno por su injustificable indiferencia." (II, 393)
The parents lavish their affection on her brother, who is spoiled, and this acts on his malevolent nature to produce an extremely vicious individual. Nica's one anecdote concerns his attempt to ruin her dress and her first night in society (II, 407). What is stressed time and again is the fact that Nica's "corazón no podía dar otro fruto que el de las semillas que se habían depositado en él." (II, 396) Pereda frequently mentions the faults of her parents in neglecting her, and her later development under the influence of Leticia and Sagrario is also made much of: She is formed by her parents and society, despite her own desires. In the words of Manolo Casa-Vieja:
Fue de lo más honrado de la clase...nació para buena y aun creo que lo habría sido, a no caer entre un padre tonto y una madre sin educación y sin entrañas y una caterva de pillos y bribones. (II, 478)

The second part of the novel deals with the education of Luz, and Pereda is normally taken as supporting the idea that "sin un milagro de Dios, de madre mala no puede nacer hija buena, porque...hay quien cree que los vicios se heredan como escrófulas y la tisis." (II, 527) But La Montalvez goes on to prove the exact opposite of this; Luz is the prime example of a good daughter being born of a wicked mother. Pereda's thesis is contained partly in a qualifying statement that Pereda interpolates "sin contar lo que influye en las inclinaciones de las [hijas] el mal ejemplo de las [madres]." (II, 527) What Pereda is indeed concerned with is the dichotomy between Nica as woman and mother, and he is fully convinced that the only way a mother can educate her daughter is by example. Yet Nica wanted to enjoy herself lasciviously and still keep Luz pure, away from the corruption of the world, like a treasure hidden from the world ("Recogió su tesoro del escondite." [II, 505])

It is this fault in Nica which is also to be highlighted by Pereda: She desires to keep Luz free from the world and sin, and the irony of the novel is that "somos del mismo parecer el espectro y yo tocante a la educación de los hijos." (II, 506) The woman who believes in the inheritance of sin (Doña Ramona), and the woman who does not (Nica), both believe in attempting to keep their children pure.⁹ Pereda shows the reader that this view is unfeasible.
There is a conflict within Nica but the outcome is in no doubt: "La madre escrupulosa triunfó sin lucha de la mujer liviana." (II, 512) But from the first moment that he presents Luz, Pereda is not in agreement with her education. He calls it "Vida de invernadero" (II, 513) and goes on to say:

Y es la verdad en casi todo el rigor de la frase;...la marquesa [diga]...a aquella excepcional naturaleza el único medio en que podía desenvolverse sin deformarse. No a todas las plantas conviene el cultivo al aire libre y al cielo abierto. En lo humano era Luz una de esas plantas. No es de extrañar que al salir de su estufa sintiera la impresión de otro ambiente más frío y que esta impresión no le fuera agradable. (II, 513)

Pereda sets out the problem at the beginning of his presentation of Luz, and he will repeat the same words as she is dying. He criticised Nica's parents for making her develop as she did because of their method of bringing her up. Now she has repeated the procedure differently, but the effect is the same. Luz is a rather weak girl; Nica "tenía una salud de bronce." (II, 395) This distinction is important:

La pobre Luz se destruyó al primer choque de su inocencia con las maldades del mundo, en si fui o no fui discreta al cultivar a la sombra una planta destinada a vivir al aire libre, para venir a parar a que no estaba lo malo en esconder más o menos a una hija para que viera o no viera ciertas cosas, sino en que una madre tenga faltas que no pueden ser confesadas a voces." (II, 565)

This is what Nica herself is thinking, and the conclusion that Pereda wants the reader to reach is that both of these faults destroyed Luz, for both concern her education. If Nica had not been ashamed of herself she need not have hidden Luz away and could therefore have educated her herself.
Religion

Perhaps the most surprising thing about Pereda's Madrid novels is the relative unimportance of religion in them. In most of the other novels which deal with metropolitan society the solution is provided by a priest. There is no point where a priest plays a significant role in Pereda's Madrid novels. This is probably the characteristic that distinguishes Pereda from all nineteenth-century Spanish novelists but Valera. Every other novelist dealt with religion on more than one occasion, but Pereda's only religious novel, *De tal palo, tal astilla*, was an answer to Galdós' *Gloria*, and it does not really deal with religious questions as such but merely states two sides of an argument. And its denouement is human and dramatic rather than theological.

There are various occasions when the Church is introduced into the novels, often with a satiric, or character-building, purpose. In *Los hombres de pro* it is a priest who advises Simón and Juana not to leave their village (I, 631) and the pastoral idyll is reiterated when the same *santo varón* comments that although Simón may be rich "¿Le dan más importancia? ¿Es más feliz que aquí? Este es el problema." (I, 646) Yet although he is the spokesman for Pereda's anti-Madrid ideas, he is only a commentator, he never imposes a solution nor even affects the action.

There are satirical elements also in *Los hombres de pro* when Pereda says of the traditionalist that "temieron por sus casas, por sus campos, por sus fábricas, por sus tesoros, es
decir, su Dios, su patria, su alma." (I, 653) This is very similar to Nica's realization that "Dinero...y mundo esplendoroso en que lucirlo...Este venía a ser...hasta la religión de mi madre." (II, 460) Once again Pereda is revealing the hypocrisy of society in both novels, and this is made even more apparent when, in La Montálvez, this very same mother becomes a luminary in "las Madres Ejemplares." a religious charity. The satire is double in that the Marchioness has no religion but money and is far from being an exemplary mother, as the novel is at pains to illustrate. Nica, herself, is a leading figure in the "Doncellas Humildes y Temerosas de Dios," (II, 414) and here the satire is apparent in each word of the name: Nica is far from humble, her awe of God is never an essential characteristic, and at the end of the first part of the novel she eschews her virginity. Mother and daughter thus almost parody the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience (or humility.)

There is one religious sequence in Pedro Sánchez which is used to establish how impressionable Pedro is. This is when he goes into an ecstatic trance while visiting Santander with his father (II, 16-17): "En toda mi vida he vuelto a sentir impresiones como aquéllas" is his verdict on the experience. The episode is also ironical in that he later becomes a liberal and as such his views would be anti-Church. An interesting quotation from the same novel is the speech of the dying idealist Don Serafín, who talks of "este mundo sin justicia." (II, 135) This is also used for character building
since Don Serafin has been persecuted all his life; as such, this dying statement must not be taken as a general view of the world that holds true for all of Pereda.

He rejects all opportunities to introduce religion and the clergy; they appear generally to perform their ritual functions—confession, absolution, and the ministering of the last rites. Their beneficial influences are reduced to human terms, and Pereda's heroes and heroines must make their own peace with the world. He thus reveals his modernity and this trait could justify labelling him "naturalist," for he seems to reject supernatural or religious intervention. His characters must act out their lives in purely human terms since the presence of a Padre Manrique is not a normal occurrence and Pereda does not believe that religion is an external: He cannot see a Jesuit waving his magic wand and putting things right. Even in De tal palo, tal astilla, religion does not triumph over heresy or atheism. Pereda believes in religion, but it is an internal force which transforms man personally, not a magic influence which will triumph over external phenomena. None of Pereda's heroes dies with the expectations of a better life to come, but, like Don Celso, with the knowledge of a life well lived.

Pereda maintains the superiority of Catholicism, but he does not flaunt it as the only answer. It is an internal force for him and its only power is inside man; he never puts it forward as a panacea which has effect from the outside in, but from the inside out.
From this summary of Pereda's presentation of Madrid society of the period, certain common factors can be clearly seen. Love and marriage and sex and honor are seen to be a sham. Because of the attitude of the adults in society, the education of the young—especially of girls—is shown to be faulty, for the principal mode of education he advocates is that of example. Above and beyond all is God, but society ignores God, or only pays him lip service. Pereda, despite his Catholic faith, believes with Valera in "genio y figura, hasta la sepultura," for their human philosophy is very similar; and, despite his faith, he cannot believe with Coloma and Alarcón that God is a short-cut to worldly happiness. He belongs to a much more realistic and terrestrial school of writing than either of the latter novelists.

Ultimately Pereda's view of the world is pessimistic, since he envisages man and society as being in a vicious circle. There is no hope, he prophesies, for society unless the education of the young improves, and there is no hope of this until society improves. Man is condemned both by his own nature and by society; society is condemned by the nature of man. It is an impasse from which he can see no solution.
FOOTNOTES

Chapter 4

1. The marchioness, especially, is to be more important than she appears, as she is the prototype for Sagrario in La Montalvez. Pereda describes both as having a great weakness: "la curiosidad llevada a la exageración." (I, 541)

2. See, for example, the relationship of Teresa Villaescusa and Santiaguito Ibero in the fourth and fifth series of the Episodios nacionales.

3. Perhaps one of the few exceptions in English literature is Charlotte Bronte's Villette. In Spanish one need only remember Galdós' Fortunata y Jacinta, Angel Guerra, Miau, Doña Perfecta...; Emilia Pardo Bazán's El cisne de Vilamorta, Los pazos de Ulloa, La piedra angular...; Leopoldo Alas' La Regenta and Su único hijo and Valera's Las ilusiones del doctor Faustino, Morsamor, Genio y figura....


5. This had been part of the thesis of Alarcón's La pródiga and El escándalo.


7. Perhaps this is not surprising as Mal-Lara complains of the increase of the use of drugs at Salamanca--in the sixteenth century.

8. See, for example, Pérez de Ayala's Belarmino y Apolonio for a treatment of this theme.

9. Pérez de Ayala also develops the them in Luna de miel, luna de hiel/Los trabajos de Urbano y Simona.

10. This is in contrast to the novels of Alarcón and Coloma, especially.
THE THEMES AND CHARACTERS OF

PEDRO SÁNCHEZ AND LA MONTÁLVEZ

The four previous sections have been intended to outline Pereda's view of the society of Madrid during the period 1850 to 1888. Every part of this society that he deals with, he criticizes for certain basic faults: Politics and the press, the financial world, high society and its attitude to fashion, love, education and religion, and certain aspects of literature are accused by being insubstantial and hollow. All of these attacks are present in the three early, short novels (Suum cuique, La mujer del César, and Los hombres de pro) which contain some redeeming qualities, but which are little more than thesis novels. Their importance in this study of Pereda's metropolitan novels is to show that his ideas remained constant from 1864 until 1888, if not later. The two mature works (Pedro Sánchez and La Montálvez), while remaining essentially thesis novels, have a much greater and more universal scope. This section is an attempt to gain an over-all view of the two books and to introduce the themes which are common to both and to Sotileza. This novel must be taken into consideration here, for it is the only one written between the two novels about the capital. Because of its date, and its excellence, it cannot be ignored in trying to achieve a vision of Pereda's philosophy.

The essential difference between the characterization in Pedro Sánchez and La Montálvez is that in the former Pereda
is most concerned with creating the personality of Pedro himself; all the other characters are introduced for the reaction they cause in the hero rather than as people. This does not mean that Pereda does not create lifelike secondary personages, but they are all basically sketches and are not fully rounded characters in the way that Pedro is. In *La Montálvez* these two-dimensional characters also exist, but there are a number of fully rounded personalities. There is never any doubt that Nica is the heroine, but the reader feels that others in the novel exist despite her, whereas some characters in *Pedro Sánchez* exist only because of Pedro himself. This difference is one that springs from the differing technique; the problems of character-drawing in an "autobiographical" novel have haunted most novelists, who have solved them with varying success.

The theme of *Pedro Sánchez* is similar to that expressed in *Los hombres de pro*, which is essentially that everybody should stay in the position to which he is most suited in life. Perhaps the most famous version of this theme is that expressed by Cervantes in *Don Quijote*. It can be found in the episode of Sancho's governing the "island" of Barataria; it will be remembered that Pedro himself makes a reference to this incident when leaving for the province he was to govern.¹

This theme underlies the whole structure of the novel, but is not all that the novel has to say to the reader. The novel has many comments to make on contemporary life, but everything is subordinated to the character of Pedro; if the
novel has a lasting value, it is because of Pereda's creation of an immensely human hero. Although the previous sections in this study have been designed to show that his ideas were more tolerant and modern than he is usually given credit for, it is his fictional ability, the characters he creates, which make the moral thesis irrelevant when discussing his fiction.

Pedro is born in the **Montaña** into a poor but proud family--the Sánchezes--who live in perpetual rivalry with a well-to-do, but lower-class family--the Garcías. One trait of Pedro stressed continually by Pereda is his pride--it is the one constant source of Pedro's failure in life. He inherits his pride from his father, who is one of the real **hidalgos**, which Pereda satirised on numerous occasions.²

The portrait of Juan Sánchez is the first detailed character study that is made in the novel, and it is one of Pereda's best sketches of a proud, petty nobleman who is over-conscious of what is owed to him in the world. Despite being a stock-character in Pereda's fiction, his humanity is never compromised. He is upheld by his family pride and never once does he deviate from his own honest beliefs, nor does he ever downcry anyone else nor attempt to detract from what is due another human being.

Pereda displays superb psychological insight in his presentation of the Sánchezes, father and son; Pedro remains blind to Clara's wiles at the period of their marriage, but he is able to see his father's short-sightedness regarding Valenzuela. It is one of the most perceptive creations of a "worldly wise" young man who is blind to his own failings.
The character of Juan Sánchez is built up, piece by piece, throughout the novel. When Pedro's sister marries a well-to-do jándalo, it is not "sin grandes repugnancias de [su] padre, que tasaba el lustre de su alcurnia en mucho más." (II, 8) His aspirations for Pedro are no higher than the secretary-ship of their village, and both would have been content were it not for the arrival of Valenzuela. Their reception by this eminent politician causes Pedro to leave the village under Valenzuela's auspices.

Although Pedro recognizes his father's pride, he sees him most clearly as a warm and very human father for whom he has the greatest respect. Juan's love for Pedro is revealed when Pedro is about to leave; he gives him "dos roñosas onzas de oro, que quizá eran las economías de toda su vida," (II, 33) and as Juan disappears from Pedro's sight, his conscience pricks him for leaving "el honrado y amoroso anciano, que se quedaba solo y triste cuando más necesitaba el amparo y cariño de la familia." (II, 33)

Although Juan will only appear once more, the reader is consistently aware of his presence through his letters. His benevolence and faith in Valenzuela are contrasted sharply with the reality of life. Pedro himself comments ironically on his father's judgment at a climactic point in the novel, "¡Ojo ducho en conocer a los hombres!... Santo varón! ¡Modelo de caballeros, campechano y noblote el señor de Valenzuela!" (II, 83)

The final appearance of Juan Sánchez is when Pedro returns to his village as governor-elect, to a tumultuous hero's
The character of his father is reaffirmed, as are the affection between father and son, and Juan's pride in Pedro, and his pride in his family which makes him say "¿Quién piensa ya en los Garcías...Era polvo indecente y está donde debe estar: bajo mis zapatos." (II, 162)

Juan Sánchez is used to set off the character of his son, and is also a contrapuntal device which shows up the dishonesty of the madrileños. He could be seen as proof that Pereda supports a purely pastoral and anti-Madrid thesis in the novel, but he is not the only honest person that Pedro meets, and he is not the only contrast to the insubstantiality of Madrid society that Pereda presents. Apart from his allegorical function in the novel, Juan Sánchez is a warm and human creation, but the reader can only see him through Pedro's eyes. As such he is rather two-dimensional and does not seem capable of coming alive outside the novel.

The same remarks hold true for all the members of the Valenzuela family, with the exception of Clara herself. There is an attempt to make her father a more human creation than that of the traditional unscrupulous politician. When Pedro first meets him in his village he is courteous and deferent to Juan Sánchez, and his promise to Pedro is warm and friendly: "el buscarle un destinillo a Pedro...es para mí cosa facilísima" (II, 31). When Pedro tries to see him and get him to fulfill his promise, he is cold, distant and antagonistic. It is later in the novel that Clara tries to justify the conduct of her father; "mi padre es el mejor de los hombres entre su
familia, en los pasillos del teatro, un su pueblo de usted..., en todas partes menos en el sillón de su despacho y dondequiera que ejerza de político entre los suyos" (II, 125-6) and she goes on to give Pedro some idea about the schizophrenia which is inherent in a politician's life. The creation of Valenzuela is one of the least successful in the novel. The reader is never shown convincingly this dichotomy in the politician. It is a failing that Pereda makes him appear stereotyped and rather lifeless: Valenzuela is a straw man at whom he can vent his spleen. He is a creation that lacks the humanity of Juan Sánchez and is never convincing even as a two-dimensional character who sets up a reaction in Pedro.

There is a great deal of symmetry in the novel and Pereda creates three fathers, each of whom represents a different attitude to life. It would therefore be as well to consider the character of this third consuegro, before going into the character of Clara in depth.

This third father is Don Serafín, and he is another powerful character-creation. Like Juan Sánchez he is epitomised by his sincerity and honesty, but also by his humanity and the love he has for his daughter. Pedro's first impression of Don Serafín is that he is "inquieto y muy impresionable" and a little "pintoresco," but his personality comes across and Pedro calls him "llamativo y simpático." (II, 35) He is a rather strange creation, who could have walked straight out of a Galdós novel. Pereda had the ability to create the same type of figure as Galdós loved to present, and their presence
will mark some of the great achievements of the Madrid novels. The similarity of characters is limited to secondary figures, since both novelists created protagonists who were much too complex to be "typical."

The dominant trait in Don Serafín's character, at the time that Pedro met him, was his monomanía about being a cesante. He has a serious grievance and it is a very definite criticism of the political system of the time. Like Galdós' Villaamil he takes it to heart, but the way he describes his loss of jobs is very well-drawn. Everyone has a grievance which he exaggerates to impress others, but with the knowledge that it is an exaggeration which adds humor to the tale:

Es cosa sabida...y hasta proverbial entre las gentes de oficio: ¿hay que hacer un hueco para colocar a un intruso recién llegado? Pues Serafín Balduque, cesante. ¿Ambiciona alguien el puesto mío en una capital determinada? Al día siguiente ya está Serafín Balduque trasladado a los quintos infiernos. ¿Se habla de crisis? Balduque, al agua. ¿Se arma un tiberio político en cualquier parte del mundo? Don Serafín, sin empleo. (II, 38)

This is far better characterization than that of Valenzuela; Pedro had mentioned that Don Serafín was witty (chistoso) and he then goes on to demonstrate it.

While Pedro was new in Madrid, Don Serafín was "incansable" in showing Pedro around the city "en su tenaz propósito de que lo conociera yo como la palma de la mano." (II, 60) This is one of those small touches which every great novelist adds to the characterization of their creations to round them out.
Don Serafín is contrasted to Valenzuela directly, and also indirectly through the opposing natures of their daughters. Thus any distinction that is expressed between Carmen and Clara is reflected in their fathers. The contrast between the two men is developed into antagonism, for Don Serafín enters Pedro's room after one of the governmental crises shouting "¡Mueran los pillos!" His attack on the polacos is extended and he says "Excuso decir que el primogénito está su amigote Valenzuela." (II, 90-91) The two men represent opposing political factions; naturally there is much made of the scorn of the politician and the friendliness of the liberal.

Another aspect worth considering here is that both men are contrasted with Pedro's father, and the three men stand for differing political outlooks which can be summarised as the honest traditionalist, Juan Sánchez, the honest, idealised liberal, Don Serafín, and the corrupt opportunist, Valenzuela. The powerlessness of the first two and their lack of practical judgment is contrasted very sharply with the power assumed by Valenzuela, who does not regard the feelings of others as long as he can attain his own desires. It is because of Pereda's attraction to the more human figures, like Juan Sánchez and Don Serafín, that he is able to turn them into living characters, whereas the cynicism of Valenzuela repulsed him and he created a caricature.

Don Serafín always appears in order to tell Pedro of the events that have taken place on the political scene. When the revolution finally starts it is he who says "¡Se armó la
gorda!" (II, 117) and although he is made into a warm family man, he seems to represent the Spanish people, for his fortunes appear to be tied up with those of the common people. After all, in a government crisis it is the common people who suffer, and in the same way Don Serafín has continually been put out of a job. He, and the Spanish people, achieve their moment of glory in the streets, but any hope of an improvement of their position is cruelly shattered.

The death of Don Serafín is one of the most dramatic and tragic moments in Pereda's fiction. It is tragic for Don Serafín does no one any harm and does as much good as he can; he is helpful, friendly and loves his daughter and brings her up well. His death, nevertheless, seems necessary artistically, and he dies on the streets, just as liberty died there. It is Don Serafín who says exultantly "no hay más Gobiernos en Madrid que la gente que grita por la calle." (II, 119) His final act is one of desperation as he tries to take on the government that is tottering "¡A ganar con mis puños lo que se debe en justicia!...¡A enviar al Gobierno con una bala el memorial de mis agravios!" (II, 135) Don Serafín goes into the streets because of a personal grudge, but also to vent his spleen on the authorities, just as the people had done when they had sacked the houses of various notables.

He throws himself on to one of the parapets with a gun—"¡que ni siquiera estaba cargado!" (II, 135) This is symbolic of his lack of foresight; he is so sure of his ideals that he is gunned down quite needlessly. Perhaps the finest touch
that Pereda gives to this portrait of a man, beset by the hostility of fate, is to make him reflect before he dies that he has forsaken the thing most dear to him; --his daughter--

"¡Sola en este mundo sin justicia!...Y sola, porque yo no pensé bastante en ello...al arriesgar hoy mi vida entre las balas..., con el deseo de ganar a tiros lo que se me debe en buena ley." (II, 135)

Don Serafín is one of the finest creations of the novel, and he is intended as a foil to the many selfish and self-centred people who are found there; he contrasts with Valenzuela, but also with the egotism of Pedro himself. He is also established as a comparison to Juan Sánchez, and thus Pereda represents the ideal of two political extremes. Don Serafín also assumes the role of the common people who were fighting for justice in the streets but who only found death.

There are three other important characters in the novel, along with a host of minor ones. It would be useful to point to a few of these minor characters here, since they have some bearing on those who have just been discussed.

Valenzuela's family consists of his wife and a son, as well as Clara. These two are not nearly as complex as the latter, nor is their stature as great as Valenzuela's. Both are seen as fops whose only thoughts are of their own profit and of ostentation. Manolo is a very shadowy figure, even more of a caricature than the Vizconde del Cierzo of La mujer del César. He is more interested in clothes than in anything else, and is a craven coward. He is one of Pereda's least
successful creations, and the only time any life is injected into him is in the last chapter:

One could say that he enlivens him only in time to kill him, but Pereda with this last deft touch makes the reader see that perhaps Manolo's life was really a tragedy after all, and that the fault lay in his upbringing.

Pilita Jijos de Valenzuela has the pride and foppishness of her son but lacks his taste; she has all the malice of her husband, though lacking his intelligence. Her character is not developed by Pereda until the period of Pedro's marriage to Carmen, when it appears that she takes on the dominant role in the marriage. It is during Pedro's ill-fated governorship that Pilita shows her real colors and argues frequently with Pedro. She is slightly more vital than Manolo, but only just, for she is a negative creation and there are no human touches to round off her figure. Pilita is an inhuman caricature in whom all is feigned but her selfishness.

In Don Serafín's family, on the other hand, there is only the servant Quica. She plays a very minor role, but somehow gains the reader's sympathy, perhaps because she has no pretensions, "Ya cincuentona, pequeñita y fea...inmóvil, casi rígida" (II, 35) perhaps because she is a figure of fun, "Es raro...lo que le pasa a esta mujer en el teatro...todo la hace llorar." (II, 55) Quica in her devotion to Carmen is the counterbalance to Pilita (and Manolo) and she is one of
the most sympathetic creatures that Pereda created. It is Quica who begs Pedro "Escríbale usted de cuando en cuando..., que se queda muy sola!" (II, 165), it is always Quica who seems to have a kind word for Pedro, and who sticks by Carmen without complaint. An exquisite touch to Pedro's own character, and his highest tribute to this ugly but benevolent little woman, is that when he describes his great test he says "Todos [mis planes] se destruyeron como castillo de naipes al primer soplo del viento. Carmen, nuestro hijo, Quica; los tres desaparecieron del mundo..." (II, 189) He may place Quica last, but she is one of the most important parts of his life. He feels her loss almost as deeply as that of his wife and son.

There are one or two other minor characters who are well-drawn, but these are very slight, however much they come alive. Redondo, the editor-in-chief of the Clarín has already been described, and he stands out from the background, preaching progress but forgetting to practise it. The secretary assigned to Pedro during his term as governor is another well-executed cameo. Bujes, the political informant, is the third of these, and his character serves well to bring about Pedro's success in the revolution.

Other minor figures are introduced for comic relief: The family of Don Magín de los Trucos has already been mentioned as has Agamenón. Perhaps the most amusing of all these are Pedro's seven fellow boarders; they cause Pereda to make a serious comment on university education, but they do reveal
that "bohemians" or "hippies" were very much in vogue in the universities during this period.

Shortly after his introduction of these seven strange young men, he is introduced to one who "valía mucho más." (II, 45) This is a poet called Mata, or Matica; he is never given any other name, but he is one of the most consummate portraits in the novel. Matica has his faults, he is prone to obscenity—Pedro declares "No he oído jamás cosas más indecentes" (II, 44) and "Me daba miedo...las liviandades de su obscena musa" (II, 62)—he is lazy, "un vagabundo incurable que derrochaba su ingenio a borbotones en las mesas de los cafés y entre estudiantes desenfadados." (II, 44) Yet he has many virtues; Pedro describes his moral qualities at some length (II, 62) but Matica is best seen in the novel for his good, clear-cut judgment and by his loyalty and friendship to Pedro.

When Don Serafín dies, it is in the company of Pedro and Matica, and one feels that these two men are the real friends of Pedro and are his mentors in a way that his father had not been. Both Don Serafín and Matica are doomed to failure, but it is in their valiant mediocrity that Pereda's genius is best revealed. Any novelist can create a bad character easily; to create two good characters like these who are never sentimentalised, is extremely difficult.

Matica, who must surely have an historical original, is Pedro's mentor in literature—"Leí muchas comedias...siempre por mediación de Matica" (II, 63); in politics—Matica
enlightens Pedro as to Valenzuela's real character; in society—Matica takes him to his first social event; and in the press—Matica gets him his job at the Clarín, which will mean so much for Pedro's success. Matica is also Pedro's conscience; it is he who "se quedó hecho una estatua al saber con quién me casaba." (II, 15?)

There is a difference between the characterizations of Matica and Serafín. The latter is a good example of a figure who is developed throughout the novel and who undergoes a change. This is perfectly convincing, but his idealised heroism is not obvious from the start. Matica, on the other hand, is fully developed from the beginning and undergoes nothing more than amplification as Pedro gets to know him. Once his character is established nothing he does can surprise the reader, or rather he does nothing for which the reader is not prepared. This comparison does not detract from the accuracy of the presentation of Don Serafín, for he is essentially impetuous and unpredictable, and his heroism does not surprise the reader, but catches him unawares.

There is something very moving about the figure of Matica, since the account of his death, following that of Carmen and of Juan Sánchez, still has an impact. Perhaps it is because Carmen's death follows a tradition of the fleetingness of bliss, and Pedro's father is old and forgotten (he was an anciano in the early pages) but Matica's death is so unlooked for—he does not end his days in glory like Don Serafín, but slips quietly away. It may be that the reader has forgotten
Matica amid Pedro's sorrow, and it is the knowledge that the wheel of fortune--Pedro's own image (II, 189)--is irrevocably destroying everything he holds dear:

Le afligía bastante un pertinaz catarréo desde el invierno anterior; pero esperaba curarlo con las brisas de mayo. Esto me decía en febrero. Pues en abril, con la inesperada noticia de su muerte, hundió Redondo, que me la transmitía, el último clavo doloroso en mi corazón. (II, 189)

Of the three characters left to discuss--Pedro and his two wives--one is a manifestation of Pereda's biggest failing. In the whole range of his fiction he shows a predilection for the virtuous, stay-at-home heroine, and he never manages to create a successful one. The reason is that Carmen is too perfect; if one considers his fiction as a whole, one can see that the only heroines of stature are either wicked--such as la Montalvez--mischievous--Nieves of Al primer vuelo--rebellious--Irene of Nubes de estío--or enigmatic--Sotileza. His good heroines, such as Luz Montalvez, Lituca (Peñas arriba) or Inés (La puchera) do not stand out as living people but as caricatures of virtue.

Carmen is Pereda's version of Soledad Gil de la Cuadra, but she cannot compare. Sola is ugly and is determined and self-sufficient; Carmen is beautiful and without fault. She exists as a symbol, not as a human being. If there is a major flaw in the construction of the novel it is that Pereda created a too-perfect contrast to Clara.

Pedro's first wife--Clara--is the opposite; she is the Peredian heroine who stands out along with Nica Montalvez and
Sotileza as being flawed, and, therefore, human. Clara is worth a detailed analysis since she dominates a large portion of the novel; her character is seen to change and develop—or rather Pedro's view of it does—as time goes on.

The first time Pedro sees her, his impression is fleeting and not very imposing—"Parecióme esbelta y de no vulgar continente; descolorida en extremo, dura de faz y más que mediamamente descarnada." (II, 23) His idea of her changes, as far as her physical beauty goes: "Porque si alguna vez los aires han hecho milagros, fue aquélla en la enfermiza, pálida y angulosa Clara" (II, 32) and this becomes greater as time goes on, and he falls under her spell:

Estaba terriblemente hermosa. (II, 123)

Una hermosa mujer....(II, 146)

Era hermosa, terriblemente hermosa. (II, 151)

La afamada, excepcional belleza de la heroína....(II, 157)

La ostentosa y soberbia hermosura....(II, 169)

These quotations reveal Pedro's regard for Clara as a woman, but the adjectives he chooses are not without a certain significance—twice he says her beauty was terrible, and he also credits it with pride and ostentation. When Pedro returns to his village before taking up the governorship of his island he compares her as he first met her, "la yerta, solitaria, seca y bravía figura de la enfermiza hija de Valenzuela" with "la imagen provocativa y sensual de mi mujer." (II, 163) This is probably the clearest exposition of Pedro's great mistake in life; he is seduced by the physical attraction of Clara, and neglects her moral failings.
What makes Clara so imposing a figure is that she combines a hard, cold, calculating mind with a sensual exterior. Pedro first notes that "Faltaba a sus ojos la dulzura, que es el mayor encanto de la belleza," (II, 25) but he also comments that her face is "de los que se imponen, no de los que atraen y enamoran." (II, 25) Yet she later attracts him and makes him fall in love.

Their relationship is a little strained at first, especially when he discovers her desire for the naked truth, a trait which repulses him a little: "para elevación del alma, singularmente la de la mujer, hay mentiras necesarias," (II, 28) Pedro is putting forward a view of the position of women that has changed much since, but the essential idea still holds true that no relationship can ever last if based upon the naked truth, for the truth always hurts and destroys any "better feelings" that may exist.

Pedro's encounters with her in Madrid only serve to further confuse him for they fluctuate between "la misma sequedad" (II, 46) and "la más afectuosa de la acogidas." (II, 79) This alternate repulsion and attraction only serve to captivate him more.

During the revolution, Pedro decides that he ought to save the Valenzuela family; it is Clara who understands his action and gives orders to her mother and brother. His action is inexplicable to her, and she demands the reason for it:

Decir que habían obedecido a un impulso maquinal y filantrópico era poco, y no era la verdad; decir que, a pesar de que Valenzuela no la merecía, me había arriesgado a salvarle, era demasiado; que lo hice acordándome solamente de Clara, aunque no fuera verdad, no podía decirlo. (II, 125)
Even by this stage, Pedro is caught in Clara's trap, and his love grows very quickly while she is in confinement. They are about to reveal their feelings for each other when Pilita interrupts; they renew the subject and are once more interrupted—this time by Manolo. Finally Pedro believes he has the answer when he kisses her; "¡Aquella hermosa estatua, lo que yo creí en un tiempo frío y duro mármol, abrasaba!" (II, 151)

After the marriage, however, Pedro begins to realize what Clara's character is really like. All feelings for him are subordinated to her own desire for ostentation; her love based on selfishness and arrogance. The way she treats those she does not like is insolent, and it is not long before her cynical opportunism is brought home to Pedro. He realizes that she has never loved him at all, "Clara, que nunca me amó," (II, 181) and he talks of "la falsa ley de [su] corazón." (II, 175)

After his return to Madrid and poverty, he is forced to drain his cup of sorrow to the dregs when he discovers her adultery with Barrientos. This is only the final touch in his portrait of the most evil woman in the whole of Peredian fiction. Clara is exemplified by her lucidity, both in her dealings with others, and in her knowledge of herself.

Clara is an exquisitely conceived character. She is just as detestable as her mother, but Pereda manages to match her callousness with her voluptuousness. It is this ability to charm which makes her believable, and she remains life-like to the end of her life, when the integrity of Pereda's
portrait, allows her to die unsentimentally "Murió impenitente, fría y altanera, como una pagana." (II, 188)

Complex as the character of Clara is, Pedro is far more difficult to approach. Physically he is a true hero: "mozo ya de buen nutrido bigote, muy fornido de miembros y, según público decir...la mejor estampa de galán que se paseaba en muchas leguas a la redonda" (II, 18) although he admits it may have been caused by "vanidosa ceguedad" on his part—a characteristic that is to have effects on his future. When he leaves the Montana he says he has "una salud de bronce." (II, 34) He meets and embraces Don Serafin, once in Madrid, "casi por el cogote, por no poder hacerlo más abajo sin encorvarme mucho" (II, 49) and later Matica tells him "Eres el más gallardo mozo que ha pisado madrileños salones." (II, 75)

The development of his character takes the whole of the novel, for that is what the novel is about. Pereda is to give the reader the figure of a young man who is blind to certain facets of his own nature, and to the true natures of those who surround him. He is also characterized by a reflection of the people who surround him. He is an excellent judge of character until passion begins to warp his vision. He is soon capable of assessing the true worth of Valenzuela, but he never manages to see the reality of Clara's personality until he has learned the hard way.

One could summarise Pedro's character and show that it contained all elements that can be found in the others in the novel. In the first sequence Pedro has the honesty and
gullibility of his father, but he is soon tinged with the political ambition of Valenzuela. Later he is suffused with the loyalty and friendship, the idealism and judgment of Don Serafín and Matica; his conduct with Carmen is as heartless as Clara's treatment of him, but it is only when the latter's coldness repulses him, and he is attracted by the former's warmth, that he finds a moment of fleeting happiness.

The novel could be compared most closely to Dickens' *Great Expectations* (in its original form) for the story and the theme are very similar indeed. Pedro is a man of essentially good qualities, but he is brought low by his pride, by his ambition, in short by the very *ceguedad vanidosa* that he himself talks of, and which cause him to have as great expectations in life as Philip Pirrip ever did, and which are just as rudely shattered.

The affection (which has been mentioned) which Juan Sánchez has for Pedro is reciprocated by the latter just as strongly. One manifestation of this is that Juan takes Pedro on two journeys which provide the reader with premonitions of what is to come. On Pedro's first journey to Santander, he undergoes an ecstatic religious experience. This is an indication of Pedro's sensibility and faculty of being easily overawed through his senses—he is extremely sensitive and impressionable. His second journey makes him aware that there is more to life than he has imagined. He does qualify his statement and stress that as yet he was not bitten by "el roedor gusano de las desmedidas ambiciones," (II, 20) but the
reader is prepared for the arrival of Valenzuela shortly after.

Pedro is a "montañés de pura raza" (II, 36) and his biography is closely linked to the fate of the Montaña. Just as the provinces change because of the advent of the railroads, so Pedro is changed by the coming of Valenzuela on the railroad. This aspect of change is fundamental in the novel, which is a chronicle of changing times, and is emphasized by the opening words:

Entonces no era mi pueblo la mitad de lo que es hoy. (II, 7)

With the arrival of Valenzuela and Clara, Pedro will fall under the influence of three of his worst qualities—political and social ambition, pride and passion. It could almost be said that the Valenzuela's are the external manifestations of Pedro's faults; just as his father is a manifestation of the positive value of pride; and Matica and Don Serafín are the externalisation of the good qualities within Pedro. Generosity, loyalty, friendship, idealism and rigorous critical judgment form part of Pedro when it is reflected by these other characters and, of course, affection and love are evidenced by Carmen and his father.

When in Madrid, Pedro is at first marked out by his simplicity and his naive belief in Valenzuela. As time goes on, and as he becomes more and more disillusioned, he becomes less naive and much more cynical. This is brought out when Pedro rescues Carmen after she has been run down by Manolo Valenzuela; she reprimands him for being atrevido, and he
is also condescending in the way he addresses her, and she contrasts him to how he was:

--Yo le prefiero a usted tal y como le conocí viniendo de la Montaña...y algunos días después.

--También por aquí peco, hija mía? Pues esto no es hablar de los pies ni de los manos de usted.
--Pero al fin, son chicoleos de mal gusto, tan impropios de usted como de la ocasión. (II, 85)

The basis of Carmen's criticism is the facile change that Madrid has wrought in his character. This is not necessarily a direct attack on the city, but on the bad influence it may have on men like Pedro, who adopt its external appearance without comprehending its essence. This is once again an attack on the hollowness of certain points of metropolitan society.

The tension between the various sets of characters is maintained and these are held together by Pedro, who is at all times an ambivalent character pulled different ways at different times by his wildly opposed feelings. He is also driven by his ambition; after succeeding as a journalist he says:

Había otro campo en que espigar nuevos y muy sabrosos triunfos, y nadie en mejores condiciones que yo entonces para colocarme en él. Este campo era el mundo, la buena sociedad. (II, 108)

This statement reveals Pereda's stratification of society, for it would be easy to take his image one stage further and thus he can be seen as winning in the field of literature, society, and, later, politics--this is a very real "field of battle" for Pedro.
It is useless to point to the quality of the character sketches as a source of the greatness of Pedro Sánchez. Well-drawn secondary characters can only save a novel from being completely worthless and cannot themselves make it great; they can, however, add to the value of a good novel. Pedro—and Pereda—had himself criticised Fernán Caballero's Clemencia while praising very highly certain secondary characters in the novel. Posterity no longer places Clemencia very high as a novel because of the insipidness of the central action; but it has endorsed Pereda's praise of the secondary characters who have saved the novel from being consigned to oblivion. This does not happen with Pedro Sánchez, in which the creation of the character of the hero is the highest achievement.

The novel, as with all autobiographical novels, depends on the hero, and the action should spring from his character and should be mirrored by it. This is what Pereda does here, just as Dickens had done in David Copperfield and Great Expectations. The picture of society is used to set off the life and opinions of Pedro, and in a sense he creates and directs history itself:

Entonces, de repente, me acordé yo de que era Pedro Sánchez...y aquella [revolución] que fermentaba en derredor mío era, en gran parte, obra de mi ingenio, chispa de mi pluma fulminante...Cientos y cientos, y creo que miles, de bocas repetían entonces mi nombre ...¡Que Dios me perdone, en gracia del caritativo fin que me inspiraba, la culpa que tuve de que se anticipara algunas horas aquel desastre, que estaba decretado y había de cumplirse de todas maneras! (II, 121-3)
It can be seen that Pedro not only becomes influential in, and a commentator on, the literary, social and political worlds, but he influences events that really did take place. This makes him similar to Galdós' protagonists in the *Episodios nacionales* and also adds a further dimension to his character.

*Pedro Sánchez* is one of the most finished novels in that there is a complete and absolute fusion of ideas in the main character and the subsidiary ones. He, as narrator, is involved with every stratum of middle- and upper-class society, and his destiny is linked with the destiny of the nation, and at times controls it. The secondary characters may exist as fully rounded ones, but each has another role—to add to the hero's development.

As a document of life in Madrid it is almost complete; but despite the care with which certain figures are described, there is one aspect which is lacking and which distinguishes the "regional" writer from the "metropolitan" writer: Pereda never describes the lower classes of Madrid. This difference that exists between Galdós and Pereda reveals the real division between their fictional production: Galdós can recreate the lower classes in Madrid; Pereda those of the *Montaña*. Apart from this major distinction, they often describe the other classes with the same mixture of affection and criticism. It is in this way that Pereda has developed considerably from the straightforward characters of Ramón (*La mujer del César*), Silvestre (*Suum cuique*) and Don Simón (*Los hombres de pro*),
all of whom were delineated as being uncomplicated representatives of certain aspects of human nature.

Pereda's development from Pedro Sánchez can be traced through Sotileza—which will be discussed in some detail later—and La Montalvez. In this latter novel he was attempting something far more demanding, and his success both in the technique and in his characterization is less complete. In dealing with this novel, the reader will discover that there are three sets of characters: Those in part one only; those who are only in part two; and a few who are in both. The ones who appear in part one and then disappear are the least memorable. It was as if they were merely introduced because they were needed for the exigencies of the plot.

The first is Nica's grandfather, who is a "rico ex-contratista de carreteras y suministros" (II, 391), and whose essential quality is a clear business mind. The results of this are, of course, vast wealth, which makes his entrance into society easy for him. His character is not developed by Pereda, but remains dependent on this one trait. He loves his granddaughter—"estaba chocho con su nieta" (II, 393)—as her parents do not; on his bed, he talks to Nica in very unflattering terms:

Pero si he de decirte lo que siento, no fío de tu cordura mucho más que la de tus padres. La única ventaja que les sacas es que tienes mejor entendimiento que ellos.

(II, 410)

To the end he maintains his clarity of vision and judgment—a capacity that enables him to forecast "si sale [Nica]
una mujer honrada es un milagro de Dios." (II, 395) He
is an ably drawn character sketch, but he has no real depth
or development of his nature to make him memorable.

Nica's brother is possibly less well drawn than the grand-
father, is certainly far less memorable and extremely unsympa-
thetic. His arrival is greeted with great rejoicing and his
baptism was an event in Madrid. His upbringing is the exact
opposite of Nica's—"¿Por qué detestáis a la una, tanto como
queréis al otro?" (II, 395) asks the grandfather—but he is
the first example of the errors of education that Pereda is
to stress so strongly in the novel. He does make one clear-
cut statement which shows how close—and how far—he really
was to the naturalists. Talking about this distinction between
the education of the two children, he says:

Pereda's stand in this novel is that people have a certain nat-
ure which remains with them throughout their lives; but cer-
tain aspects can be conditioned by society, for he cites as
an example of the above precept, Nica's lack of jealousy of
her brother. Later in the novel, however, the fact that
society has twisted certain parts of her character is funda-
mental to the theme.
The brother is shown as having a somewhat difficult nature—"lo más encanijado, lloron y cascarrabias que hubo venido nunca al mundo" (II, 394)—and that his education serves only to make him worse. He deteriorates morally and physically, and at fifteen he did not even know his letters, and was "raquítico, sarmentoso y descuajaringado" (II, 399). His death was like his life, and it is perhaps in the description of his last whim that Pereda manages to make him come alive, just as he had with Manolo Valenzuela in Pedro Sánchez. The brother—whose names the reader never knows despite having "todos los nombres de los grandes reyes, de los mayores santos del cielo, de todos los conquistadores célebres y de los más gloriosos poetas y artistas de la tierra" (II, 393-4)—demanded fresh cherries in December, and "creció con el obstáculo la fuerza de su empeño" until finally he died (II, 409). Pereda is using the pathetic idea that he should die over an unobtainable desire as a whip with which to lash the parents; he can see that it is only because the child is marred that he has more and yet more fantastic desires.

His mother is likewise a very pale character who has only one moment of decisive action; hers is when she advises Nica to marry Don Mauricio. She is typical of the few mothers that Pereda describes: She can be compared to Pilita (Pedro Sánchez) and Juana (Los hombres de pro). She is seen to be without any real feelings11 her "love" for her son is lavished on him because he is the heir—and she is probably the most
negative character in the novel, being too much of a stereotype of the vain and foolish mother without any special qualities which mark her out from any other of Pereda's bad mothers.

Her husband, while remaining rather stereotyped, is sufficiently developed to make him much more memorable, and is one of Pereda's better drawn caricatures. The similarity between the marquis and Don Simón C. de los Peñasciales has been remarked upon before, but the comparison is very valid. Both men are seduced by politics, both have vain and rather stupid wives who encourage them, both are swindled by a financial trickster for political reasons, and both end their political careers in a disaster that is linked with a speech. The essential difference between them is that the marquis' money is being embezzled by his steward, Simón, whereas Don Simón is extremely adroit in money matters except when his vanity overpowers his greed.

The way the marquis treats his children is amply explained by the fact that he was in love with "los timbres de su linaje" (II, 391) and everything he does is governed by this quality, although he has a modicum of common sense in that he decides to marry a rich wife to replenish his empty coffers.

The characterization follows predictable lines, and Pereda paints the traditional picture of the vain and ambitious nobleman who, through his position and his money, hopes to become a political force. It is the marquis' last act which makes him memorable, for the whole of Madrid society—
or that part which matters—gathers at the marquis's house, and he has to make a speech which will be the culmination of his ambitions. At the very last moment, as he prepares to speak, he collapses; within a few hours he is dead. Pereda has prepared the reader for this, and the contrast between the two occasions is humorously emphasized:

A no haberle recibido el general entre sus brazos, hubiera dado el pobre marques con su oronda humanidad en el santo suelo. (II, 439)

In his final collapse there are no half measures, there is no one to spoil his last exit—or make it less ridiculous:

Exhalando un alarido salvaje [viéronle] desplomarse en el suelo, sobre el cual reboto su colodillo pelado y reluciente, sin que nadie hubiera podido recibirle entre sus brazos... (II, 447-8)

The poor marquis, like so many of Pereda's minor characters, can move the reader's pity only by dying. His death occurs at the most momentous occasion of his life, and Pereda says that "si, después de muerto, se le hubiera permitido recobrar la vida para contemplar la despedida que la hicieron sus deudos y amigos, otra explosión de su vanidad hubiera vuelto a quitársela de repente." (II, 448)

One must regard an author who can create and destroy such a character as being unusual. Pereda never relents in his satirical attack on the marquis' faults, but his death is a mixture of sadness and amusement for Pereda, and he is benevolent enough to allow the marquis a moment of triumph with his sudden death. The marquis is another caricature; his moment of transcendence is that of his death and one feels
that Pereda's generosity always enables him to add a touch of humanity even to his most vicious creations if they have to pay the final penalty.

Three other characters appear in the first part of the novel only: The first of these is Gonzalo de Quiroga, who marries Sagrario Miralta. He is described as being "un completo perdido de buen tomo." (II, 419) He is one of Pereda's least sympathetic characters, whose marriage had been arranged simply because both were the eldest children of old families, and it suited family policy. Marriage meant nothing to either, and Gonzalo is almost a complete nonentity, except that at one point he has sufficient "wit" to contradict Don Mauricio Ibáñez. (II, 419)

The second, the husband of Leticia Espinosa, is scarcely better characterized, for what glimmerings of individuality he has are more caricature than personality. He is a general, and is Pereda's most satirical attack on the military--he is reminiscent of the colonel (later general) who patronised Don Simón in Los hombres de pro--whom he criticised both for their lack of courage, and for their over-attention to politics. (II, 421, 438, 450)

This portrait is more interesting than many, since it provides Pereda's view of the military--or of generals, at least--which is similar to the thumbnail sketch of the general in Los hombres de pro. They reveal that there was just as much hollowness and deceit in the army as in the other levels of society. The main criticism is one that is true of
Spain at the period—and later—in that the generals, instead of concerning themselves with defending the country, became politically minded and, indeed, undermined the stability of the nation.

The third husband is Don Mauricio Ibáñez, and the portrait of him is intended as a satirical attack on the financial world of the period. Don Mauricio is caricatured fairly harshly by Pereda, but it must be remembered that he was extremely rich, and although he may be stupid in political matters, he is very astute in financial affairs. He is a little like the marquis and Don Simón (in Los hombres de pro) in that he is politically ambitious but his conversation is a little restricted. He does himself say that if somebody contradicts him, he is unable to continue his argument (II, 418) hence Gonzalo de Quiroga's delight in opposing him. Like Don Simón, as well, his command of Spanish is a little faulty with his "meroodeadoores" and "tiempos azutales." (II, 418) Don Mauricio is rather foolish—but not stupid—and extremely immoral. (II, 459)

All in all, he is a rather pathetic character who never gains the reader's sympathy, while meriting his scorn. Perhaps of all Pereda's characters he is one of the most negative and the most uncompromisingly black, along with Valenzuela and the Marchioness of Montálvez. None of them assume any human dignity or human warmth.

There are four characters, apart from Nica, who appear in both parts of the novel—these are Simón, the steward,
Pepe Guzmán, Nica's lover, and her two friends Leticia y Sagrario. They deserve treatment here because they form a link with the characters that have just been dealt with, and because those that appear in the second half of the novel form a group apart—the Núñez family, and Luz.

Simón appears twice in the novel, and on each occasion the setting is the same—an interview with his employer. Although there is a quick sketch made of his character, he is most used to reveal the differences between the marquis and his daughter. Simón's basic purpose in the novel is to mirror the faults and understanding of two of the more prominent figures.

Simón is the petty swindler par excellence, who flatters the marquis and, while enabling him to gain more political prestige, slowly pilfers the Montálvez fortune. The first appearance of the steward shows the marquis intent on having money, even though it puts a great strain on his fortune (II, 430-4). "Bien sabido se lo tenía el avisado Simón, y verle solo allí, que si le hallara acompañado del presidente de las Cortes" (II, 431) is the most colorful characteristic that can be seen in Simón—his servile flattery. His second appearance is intended to show that Nica has far better understanding than her father. It marks the discomfiture of Simón and his fall from his position of power:

Simón...no se dobló en dos mitades al acercarse a su señora...Los tiempos habían cambiado y las circunstancias también; y lo que halagaba ciertas debilidades del padre no lo aceptaba, por instintivas resistencias, la hija. (II, 489)
Although he is designed as a foil to the two employers, he does have enough individuality as a swindler who only takes advantage of the carelessness of his master without the malice of a Uriah Heep or a Don Sotero. The characterization is brief and adds extra vitality to the plot. Simón is introduced as an instrument to forward the plot, and to change him from a mere instrument to a humanly believable character improves the whole sequence.

Leticia and Sagrario form, with Nica, Las Tres Gracias. Each of the girls represents a different aspect of immorality in high society. Sagrario is described on her first appearance as:

Una rubia inquieta y bulliciosa, ávida de impresiones, de aire, de luz--y de golosinas. Fisgona impenitente, no había castigo que la curase de la pasión de arrimar, ora el ojo, ora el oído, a todas las rendijas y cerraduras de los aposentos. (II, 396-7)

She is the antithesis to Leticia, and was the least original of the three friends. Her licentiousness, one feels, was caused by her empty-headedness. Her type is frequent in society, and her exuberance demonstrates the axiom "empty vessels make the most sound." Her feelings are shallow and ephemeral, and Angel's judgment of her is "Gastaba muy buen humor y solía decirle cuchufletas, lo mismo que a los demás." (II, 530)

Her friend Leticia is a far more complex character, in whom smoulders fierce passion and rank jealousy. Her character is in itself more stimulating than that of Sagrario; Pereda's portrayal of her is far deeper, and her participation in the novel is more necessary to the argument.
On her first appearance she is described, and both her physical and moral qualities are the opposite of Sagrario's:

Leticia...era una morena triste, o, mejor dicho, serena y algo fría...y sin dejar de ser animosa para todo, faltaba casi siempre en sus actos y en sus dichos el color de la sinceridad, lo cual se atribuía, más que a un vicio de su carácter, a que rara vez la animaba el calor del entusiasmo. (II, 396)

This description is ironical, for the later developments reveal that Leticia is neither serene nor cold, but that like Clara "lo que yo creí en un tiempo frío y duro mármol, abrasaba." (II, 151) In her cold and calculating view of the world, Leticia reveals far more malice than Sagrario in her rumbustiousness.

Leticia marries General Ponce de Lerma, although she is in love with Pepe Guzmán:

Pues con este hombre se había casado Leticia, después de convencerse en opinión de sus amigas--de que no había en el horno de sus especiales hechizos fuegos bastante para fundir el hielo de Pepe Guzmán, que la distinguió por algún tiempo con sus cultas y amenas frialdades (II, 421)

It is this hidden passion which causes Leticia to advise her friend, Nica, to marry Ibáñez while not adding any of the comments about Guzmán that Sagrario had made. Her coldness becomes almost legendary when she remains stolidly in Spa after the scandal daused by the duel between the Russian prince and the undersecretary.

Leticia is somewhat enigmatic, but Pereda reveals that under her coldness there is more passion and feeling than in all of Sagrario's bluster. She has two lovers in her life, and Pereda's mastery of the portrayal of this woman
is superb, for both men are the lovers of the Montálvezes. The first man for whom she falls is Pepe Guzmán, who becomes Nica's lover, the second is Angel, the lover of Luz. Pereda never states openly the envy that Leticia has of Nica, but it is apparent in her actions. She can be viewed as a primitive version of Unamuno's personification of envy in the figure of Joaquín (Abel Sánchez), although the agony of her soul is never analysed.

It is this final sequence in which Leticia is a protagonist. This probably horrified many critics, for her cold-blooded attempt to seduce Angel is one of the most voluptuous and lascivious in any novel of Pereda's—or his contemporaries. The exoticism of the scene—and its eroticism—is used to the full, "Leticia parecía una sultana", "Aquello era un harén", amongst its decorations are "bronces desnudos." This suggestive imagery also gives Pereda an opportunity for humor:

Al sentarse quedó fuera de la fimbria de su bata medio piece cito primorosamente calzado con una babucha de raso, muy escotada. (II, 544)

The transference of ideas, which makes the slipper immoral and suggestive, is more amusing today than in 1888, but the idea remains the same. Angel remains blissfully unaware of the innuendoes of Leticia, and the purpose of the exotic reception till she spells it out for him:

Usted no sabe aun que los amores...se mejoran con la salsa de la experiencia y quiero decir que para un paladar de buen gusto son más sabrosos los más experimentados. (II, 547)
It is at this point that her whole body and attitude "revelaron una emoción y un fuego" (II, 547) and this is the first moment in the whole novel that her emotion takes control, and is, in fact, the turning point in the novel. From the moment of Angel's rejection of her, her malice takes on a major role and it is through her intervention that the death of Luz occurs.

Leticia is one of Pereda's most striking female creations, and, as with most of his successes in this field, she is cold, like Clara, and enigmatic, like Sotileza and Doña Ramona. She is proof of the unusual nature of this novel in the whole corpus of Pereda's fiction, for she is far more deeply analysed and characterized than many of his heroines, and yet she is surpassed by two other female characters in this work--Doña Ramona and Nica herself.

The comparison with Clara is the most fruitful, for they are the two women who are described most unflatteringly in Pereda's novels and are the two who, despite their humanity, are the nearest to being thoroughly wicked. Both are amoral, for they have no moral standards and no consciences to save them--doubtless Leticia, like Clara, would have died impenitent.

Pepe Guzmán is more sympathetically presented than Leticia, but he too is notable for his moral cynicism. As a man of the world he is admired by Pereda: He had read Kant, Krause, Saint Thomas, Machiavelli, Fray Luis de Granada, Shakespeare, Mourier, Santa Teresa and Cervantes. He is a man of potential but lacked patience or the necessity to apply himself to anything, and had too much money and too
Pepe Guzmán is a character to whom Pereda felt himself drawn, and the warmth of the description in the first part is cooled in the second, when Pereda's moral instincts are more acute. Even in the second half, however, some affection for Pepe is retained: He becomes the mentor of Angel to a certain extent, and some of Pepe's good taste rubs off on the latter. Even Manolo Casa-Vieja has praise for him; after saying that Nica had fallen for Pepe, he adds "otra prueba de su buen gusto" (II, 478). Pereda creates one of his most accomplished men of culture in Pepe—after all he did give him his own name, Pepe, which usually reveals an element of sympathy between author and character.

It is in the moral sphere that Pepe is less perfect, and Nica is horrified at his callousness. She always insists that he helped her on her downward path, since it was his rejection of her as a wife that made her become Ibáñez's wife—and Pepe's mistress. His refusal of her hinted proposal (II, 464) is to cause a significant change in Nica, for she hoped to find some stability and solidity in him, and found that he was as false as the rest of society. He is the main failing of La Montalvez, for his character is too slightly developed for the role he has to play in the narrative, and instead of him being a dynamic force in the denouement, his personality stagnates, and Pereda never strives to fill out more than what he established early in the novel.

Only one other figure spans both parts; this is Nica, who will be treated at length at the end of this section.
Of those that are found only in Part Two, there are two groups. The first is the two friends Manolo Casa-Vieja and Paco Ballesteros, who appear only in Part II, Chapter I, and are introduced solely to bridge the gap between the two parts of the novel. The second is formed by Don Santiago, his wife Doña Ramona, their son Angel, and his beloved, Luz Montálvez. A brief appearance is also made by a mother and her two daughters, but little is made of them.

Paco Ballesteros and Manolo Casa-Vieja are not characters in the real sense, for they are only introduced as interlocutors, whose conversation reveals pertinent information about the main figures. Paco "era lo contrario de Manolo sin ser menos perdido" (II, 474). Manolo could be mistaken for Pepe Guzmán; his judgments are concise and to the point and he is one of the three men whose judgments are endorsed by Pereda. One of these three is Angel, who is also one of the two men who form the counter-balance to evil in the novel. This contrast is stressed by Manolo, who says of his children:

Doy por hecho que esos pedacitos de mi corazón, de todas maneras han de salir unos perdidos, como tú y yo. No puede dar otra cosa el terreno... (II, 476)

This forms one of the main themes of the novel: The impossibility that the aristocracy will ever change. Pereda looks to the middle classes and finds hope in Don Santiago and his son, Angel.

Angel is the third representative of good taste in the novel, which is evidenced by the following passages descriptive
of Pepe and Angel, which demonstrate the excellence of their aesthetic judgment even though their moral stand-points may be so diverse:

[Pepe Guzmán] Tenía el buen gusto de no invertir un ochavo en libros viejos ni en bargueños apolillados; prefería las obras contemporáneas, si eran buenas, y, lo que es más raro, las leía y saboreaba. Cosa más rara aun: en igualdad de mérito, estaba por las españoles antes que por las extranjeras. (II, 420)

Angel, para honra suya y tranquilidad de los españoles incautos, aprovechó las caídas para estimar el valor de lo que a él le estaba vedado, y empleó las fuerzas que otro hubiera gastado en odiar a los que eran lo que él no podía ser en admirarlos quieta y sosegadamente. (II, 526)

There is a vast gulf between the morality of the two men, but both are of exquisite taste, and seem to form a plea for an intelligent and enlightened reading public: Pereda was still conscious of the lack of readers in Spain, which Larra had complained of bitterly some fifty years earlier.

The friendship between Pepe and Angel is based upon their mutual esteem which in turn is based on their aesthetic sensibilities, but there is a respect for Angel in Pepe founded upon his recognizing Angel's superior moral integrity. This respect marks Pepe as being among a group of characters to whom Pereda has an ambiguous relationship: Pepe, Manolo Casa-Vieja and Nica all have a respect for virtue, although they may not themselves conform--this is based on their good judgment. The other group consists of Leticia, Sagrario, the Marqueses de Montálvez, Ibáñez and Ponce de Lerma who are impenitent, and who have no regard for virtue at all; they are presented in uncompromising terms by Pereda. All of these
characters are wicked out of foolishness, with the exception of Leticia. For her Pereda has that regard which he gives to integrity, just as he had given it to Clara.

Angel is in many respects a self-portrait of a younger Pereda. This is evidenced by the cessation of his attempt to be a poet--Pereda, too, gave up after writing five short plays; by his rejection of philosophy, medicine, but especially mathematics as careers, and by the fact that he writes a novel with a plot similar to that of La Montálvez.

Angel's character is dominated by his love for his parents. This is apparently the only fixed motive in his behaviour, but as the novel develops he is able to shake off this domination, and his love for Luz becomes the guiding light of his conduct. The characterization of Angel is not as strong as it might be, but Pereda is able to give him the autonomy to break free of this domination. Even so, he is a reflection of the values of his father, and is Pereda's attempt to modify the extreme moral austerity of his mother and the good nature of his father with the good taste of Pepe Guzmán. As such he is at best a compromise, and a compromise can never become a complete character. His sufferings in the later stages are foreseeable, since he is the romantic hero of the novel.

Pereda's depiction of Angel is not a complete failure, but he is dwarfed by the personalities of his parents and of Nica herself. He is never fully able to assert his influence on the novel, since in the episode with Leticia he seems
naive, and in the final sequence everything is dominated by the personality of Nica in her Apuntes.

Angel's great love is for Luz, a character who may be scorned were it not for the fact that both Pepe Guzmán and Nica love her to distraction. She thus becomes the central figure linking the three persons of the best taste in the novel, and to this must be added the judgment of Manolo Casa-Vieja that Luz is "la criatura más angelical, de alma y de cuerpo, que pueda haber sobre la tierra" (II, 481), which means the ratification of the fourth.

Despite this, Luz is the failure of the novel. She is similar to Carmen, but she does not even have the domestic virtues of the heroine of Pedro Sánchez. She is continually referred to as an angel, as angelic; just as angels are ephemeral beings, merely symbols that man adopts for the quintessence of virtue, so Luz is nothing more than Pereda's symbol of an abstraction of virtue.

Unfortunately, Luz never becomes more than a symbol; the reader can never feel entirely caught up in her tragedy, for her character is not sufficiently developed. Or is it unfortunate? I would venture the opinion that Pereda never wants the reader to become too involved in Luz's personality: Pereda was an (immensely) skilful artist, and he must have realized that the tragedy of Luz could easily detract from that of Nica. The novel is, after all, called La Montálvez and the undisputed heroine is Verónica Montálvez; its conclusion concerns her; the tragedy in the novel is hers, not Luz's.
One can argue that it is not so tragic if she does not die, but compare the death of Luz, with Nica's feelings after it:

---¡Qué alto me elevo!...¡Díle a Angel que le espero!...
¡También te espero a ti!...¡Me oyes?...Es imposible, porque he llegado muy arriba...¡Y aún me elevo más!..., ¡más alto todavía!...¡Qué región de soles!...¡Cuánta luz! (II, 567)

Llamé...con las angustias de todos los espantos en la garganta...Sólo me pertenecían las sangrientas y mortales llagas de mi corazón y las torturas de mi conciencia...La vida que me restaba no tenía otro destino que arrastrar la cruz que merecía... (II, 567)

There is no comparison between the two, and one must look to Luz--and to Angel--not as autonomous characters, although the independence of Angel makes him far more human, but as reflections of the character of Nica. Nica becomes, in the second half of the novel especially, a similar figure to Pedro Sánchez; all the other characters are there to reveal better her nature, her character, her tragedy.

There are two figures in the second part of the novel who may have been originally intended as foils to set against Nica, just as Luz is, but these two take control of Pereda's imagination in the same way as Leticia and Clara, Don Serafín and Matica had, and become individual and completely human characters in their own right.

The first of these is Don Santiago Núñez, who represents many of the qualities that Don Serafín had stood for--and it is curious to note that both have names which reveal their positive value without being in any way unusual or forced. One can applaud the suggestive names Miralta, Casa-Vieja and Espinosa for secondary characters, while deploiring the
top-heavy symbolism of the names Angel and Luz. The names Serafín and Santiago are common enough not to stand out, while clearly revealing what they stand for.

Don Santiago is a money lender, his terms are amazingly low. The whole portrayal of him is affectionate and he seems so easy-going as to be unreal, yet one is aware all the time of his success. He is the complete contrast to Don Mauricio Ibáñez for he is self-assured and unambitious, but the reader recognizes there is another side to each of these men which maintains their financial success. He is completely self-possessed and although the image of the "iron hand in the velvet glove" does not strike the right key for Don Santiago, the idea is inherent in the portrayal that there is, behind his amiableness, a sound financial mind, which makes sure of the security of his loans, before forwarding them.

His love for his wife and his son, his gout, his deference--without being servility--his pride in himself are the many small touches that Pereda gives to this man, who comes alive without any effort at all: His virtue is never questioned, yet he never makes demands on others; he is understanding and kind; he is admired by everyone he meets and makes no demands on them, or on the reader's credibility. It is, ironically, his complete eveness of character and likeableness which makes him most unusual, for such human goodness is rare among men.

Don Santiago's wife, Doña Ramona Pacheco, is a strange woman. It is quite conceivable that her type is found more
frequently in real life than is his, but she is a far more
difficult character to bring off and she is one of the
major successes of the novel. Doña Ramona is a little ambig­
uous, and it may be relevant that Pereda gave her the name of
one of Galdós' great successes—and ambiguities—of a short
time earlier: Pacheco. Galdós had created the supreme
character of Guillermina Pacheco in Fortunata y Jacinta.
This may not be more than coincidence, but what is more
certain is that Doña Ramona—in her belief in the inexor­
ability of fate, in her sphinx-like silence, in her brooding
contemplation of her husband's business, and in her dedication
to her "genio calcetero" (II, 494)—is a reincarnation of
Madame Deforge.

She is called variously La Esfinge and El Espectro be­
cause of this inscrutability and because of her stead­
fastness of purpose. She has been seen as a great creation
by some critics⁴ and as a terrible one by others.⁵ Whether
they have liked her as a character, however, they never
fail to be moved by her. As Gil Osorio y Sánchez says, she
is worthy, not only of Pereda, but of Dickens.

She is introduced as a foil to Nica, for both are the
mothers of only children, and both attempt to bring up these
children free from the taint of the world and its sins.
Doña Ramona bears with fortitude her cross which is the loss
of nine children, one after the other, until the tenth and
last survives. There is an immediate sympathy between the
two mothers which Nica admits to, but which the Sphynx covers
up, in her moral rectitude, and one feels that her dislike of Nica is too intense and hides a reproach that she makes of herself for warming to her. "¿No hueles a la peste?" (II, 505)

Doña Ramona is enigmatic and inscrutable, but two things reveal another aspect of her nature—the unqualified love that Don Santiago and Angel have for her. What Pereda is trying to do is to show a woman racked by agony, but who never loses her faith in herself, and in God—"Era mujer de gran espíritu y arraigada fe. Dios la daba hijos y se los quitaba. Disponía de lo suyo." (II, 495) But Pereda is human and he knows the human mind well—nobody with any feeling can suffer such torments without being changed. He goes on to say "Pero su naturaleza era de carne mortal; y sus hijos, pedazos de sus entrañas, y tenía que dolerle mucho allí cuando se las desgarraban fibra de fibra. Dios no pedía cuentos de estas tribulaciones a sus criaturas." (II, 495)

It is one of the most prophetic portraits that Pereda ever painted, for in Doña Ramona the psychological depths that he plumbs and the effect this has on her personality will later be his own. Doña Ramona is not meant to be taken as the moral standpoint of the novel at all, but a profound study of the moralising effect of tragedy on a human being. Nica will suffer the same phenomenon after the death of Luz; so will Pereda himself. It is not surprising that the most strictly moral and anti-Madrid part of Peñas arriba was written when Pereda was still dazed from the suicide of his
best-loved child. Doña Ramona's neurotic phobia about Madrid is satirised by Pereda—he cannot accept her complete rejection of the metropolis—but he rightly foresees that tragedy such as she suffered will bring about such moralistic bigotry.

This consideration must also qualify any conclusions on the theme of the novel. Far from being a thesis-novel in which the bad are punished, the good rewarded, it is a nearly realistic study of human emotional tragedy. In this life virtue is not always rewarded, nor does evil get its just deserts; the opposite may often be true.

Doña Ramona often appears as a reincarnation of the Old Testament God—the God of wrath and vengeance—but her severity is mollified by her husband's benignity and by her own humanity. In the second interview which Nica has with the espectro and her husband, the inflexibility of Doña Ramona seems complete—"no pretenda que la ayude nadie a enmendar los decretos de Dios." (II, 555) But the absolute honesty of Nica, her psychological integrity, and her overweening love for Luz and Angel finally overpower Doña Ramona. It is perhaps one of the supreme moments in Pereda's fiction when humanity triumphs over morality: Nica seems to have triumphed over the unsurmountable obstacle that prevented a happy conclusion:

Al despedirme, el marido me estrechó con efusión la mano entre las dos suyas. No me atreví a tendérselas en seguida a la mujer; pero en cambio ¡qué asombro! me tendió ella la suya. (II, 558)
This seemingly simple act marks the final deft touch which brings Doña Ramona to life. She has appeared completely unmoved by Nica's reason, but even she has one weak spot, and Pereda has brilliantly revealed the way her weakness is her strength and that Nica's appeal does not go unheard.

There is no more profound psychological study in the whole of Pereda's works; only three figures are better delineated. They are the heroes/heroines of Pedro Sánchez, Sotileza and La Montalvez and this is only because they are given greater scope and are analysed at greater length. Doña Ramona owes a great deal to Sotileza, but is a much more difficult character to realize fully since the reader knows her motive and her decisions despite her apparent inscrutability. Sotileza is more intriguing, for she still remains a mystery, and the reader will never know exactly what her motives were.

Nica Montalvez is, in some ways, the female version of Pedro Sánchez. As with Pedro, Nica's life is correlated with the whole novel: Everything that happens has some bearing on her, and her attitude has consequences on the action of the novel. The secondary characters, while often existing in their own right, are essentially intended to reflect, and be reflected by, Nica's character and actions.

Before any conclusions can be drawn on these themes, the character of Nica must be analysed to show Pereda's aims in creating her. His depiction of her character is divided into the two halves formed by the parts of the novel: In reality
one could say that her life is in three sections. The first part is concerned with Nica's early years, from her parents' marriage, through her birth and schooling, up to the conception of her daughter. The intervening years between the two parts are taken up by her marriage, the birth of Luz and the first years of the latter and of her mother's widowhood. The second part of the novel traces the later years of Luz and her courtship and death.

From the very beginning, certain aspects of Nica are made clear: She is exceedingly attractive, she is healthy, she is intelligent and she has the desire to be good. These qualities are marred by her upbringing which make her value the wrong qualities in life—those empty qualities which Pereda detested—money, ostentation, power, ambition and pride. Even as a child she was never taught to cherish the higher moral values that are of lasting worth.

There are incidents that could have been better dealt with—such as her sojourn in the school in Paris—but on the whole it gives a good picture of her. She is a young girl, starved of affection, and who tries vainly to fill the gap made by her early neglect. Her two friends only reinforce the set of values she has found at home, and they are both, apparently, devoid of deep emotion. Nica manages to stay on an even keel until her emotions are involved with those of Pepe Guzmán. For the first time in her life she feels her affection is reciprocated; the disillusionment that follows is shattering.
The closing chapters of Part One are the painful struggle between love and virtue within a young girl's breast. For Nica, love, sex and marriage are concomitant, but when the road she seeks to follow is closed to her, her virtue gives way under the pressure of her love and of society. This is why her struggle is so painful: It is not a clear-cut decision, since her moral being, and religion, and education, advise one thing, yet her love and society--the practice of society--advise another.

During the years that intervene between the two parts, Nica becomes increasingly more cynical and less moral, yet she still recognizes a higher set of values, and, because of these, she tries to educate Luz in the paths of virtue. It was La Rochefoucauld who said "L'hypocrisie est un hommage que le vice rend a la vertu", and if Nica's behavior is somewhat hypocritical, it must be assigned to this homage, for despite her own pleasure she can still recognize how man ought to act.

The second part deals with two inter-related problems: The relationship between Nica and Luz and that between Luz and Angel. There are a curious series of parallel ideas in the novel, which include the behavior of the two mothers, Nica and Doña Ramona, and the results that this produces. The characters of the two mothers are carefully contrasted at all times, and the reader sees that neither of two extremities is successful. Nica is hypocritical, and it makes the flaw in her character that she cannot see the dichotomy
between her desires and the reality of her life. This is seen by Luz, who, just prior to her death, has her vision of paradise but discovers that it has been inundated. Her final sight is a "lodazal tristísimo" (II, 566) which carefully links the recurrent images of charca, cenagal, lodazal, hediondo basurero which are used of high society.

What Pereda is dealing with is the impact of the false values of society upon a paradisiacal vision of what ought to be. In the case of Nica, she was able to withstand it, but turned to carnal pleasures as a result; Luz, it destroyed. The psychological subtlety is that Nica is able to recover from her own disillusionment but is completely devastated by loss of Luz; it is a repetition of her own traumatic experience and is to leave an indelible mark on her.

Running parallel to this is the opposite extreme of man educated in virtue by a mother who abhors the world. Her world is also destroyed, for Angel apparently loves vice; and his world is destroyed, for it, like Nica's, crumbles with the death of Luz. These parallel themes are suggested not so much by the novel as by the character of Nica herself, and it becomes increasingly difficult to separate the two in this second part.

All the other characters are used to reflect and bring out her qualities as a person. Nica is made up of an assortment of conflicting ideas, whose incompatibility make her character so alive. Pereda creates in her the most complete psychological analysis of any woman he describes, and possibly
captures that quality of women which is inexplicable to the opposite sex. Pereda grasps this female trait of illogicality which makes Nica's character even more difficult of analysis. She believes that she can be immoral herself and not influence her daughter: This is best captured by the scene, when Nica is trying to prepare the house for the reception of Luz—her perspicacity concerning Guzmán is never applied to herself:

"¿Te parece bastante? solía preguntarle ella
--Todavía no...
--Voy sospechando--le dijo Nica--que nunca te ha de parecer esta casa bastante purificada.
--¿Por qué?
--Porque eres hombre de buen olfato; y mientras estés tú en ella, siempre has de hallar tufo de peste. Es el úmicln que anda ya por aquí--en cuanto tú vienes. (II, 513)

The themes and purpose of the novel are subsumed in his total concept of creating a character, but both are closely involved with the ideas rampant in society concerning the inheritance of sin. These are, of course, very much a part of the nineteenth-century preoccupation with Darwinism and naturalism, with the conflicting ideologies of inheritance and environment.

What Pereda is unable to accept is any form of supernatural or natural predestination which forces man's fate. His Christianity was too powerful to allow this, and consequently his novel combats any idea that vice is inherited but shows the great power of example. The treatment of the ideas is not as simple as has been made out; for Pereda presents three cases of the wrong education of children. Nica is brought up too laxly, and without sufficient thought and
love; Luz is educated away from the world, but when she finally sees the real world of Nica it demolishes her; Angel is brought up like Luz, but although his mother's virtue is without shadow he is too attracted by "evil," and is crushed.

Pereda sets this novel in Madrid, as he had Pedro Sánchez, and this was for a very good reason: The evils that he was attacking were most rife in Madrid but they were not unique to the metropolis. The problems that he envisaged were social, that is they were germane to any group of people, who together form a society. Because of the nature of these problems, it is only natural that they should be focussed in the capital, which was the largest social centre.

In his acclaimed masterpiece Sotileza, Pereda was dealing with many problems that were similar to those of the Corte novels. It is much closer to them than to the sermon, Peñas arriba. It is true that it contains much that is of beauty, but there is much in the novel that is far from "picturesque" or "pretty." Silda, the heroine, may be very noble in her attempts to retain her virtue, but then so was Nica Montálvez, up to a certain point. Silda, or Sotileza, has all the potentials of a tragedy in her life; she is Nica in another social class, in another social centre.

If one looks very briefly at the character of Sotileza, one can see much that is dark and disturbing—Sotileza has to choose between three suitors: Andrés, the señorito, whose rejection of Sotileza is highly materialistic; his change of heart is gilded by a hint of love, but he remains a thoroughly
unlikeable character. Cleto, the honorable fisherman, who is the Peredian negation of the inheritance of vice. Sotileza's acceptance of his suit is, at best, a compromise, and is another assertion of a false and rather hollow relationship.

Muergo is the illiterate, bestial creature, who was semi-adopted by Sotileza. The attraction of her to this strange being would intrigue many modern psychologists because of its implicit masochistic aberrations.

Sotileza is a grim tale of a sordid town. There is no room in it for picturesqueness as it is concerned with men's passions. These may not be the so-called Grand Passions, but these petty passions often cause more heartbreak and produce more bloodshed, which can be barbarous and ignominious, than the passions of Classical Tragedy. Sotileza is a novel about the pettiness of man, who will often accept second-best if he cannot get what he really desires—like Andrés and Sotileza, herself, perhaps.

The three novels, Pedro Sánchez, Sotileza and La Montálvez stand together at the core of Pereda's work. Despite their superficial differences, they have several things in common. A complex, ambiguous main character holds the novel together. Around this one character are a series of lesser figures who are there to reflect the hero/heroine's moods, personality and reactions. There are certain thematic motifs which run through the novels and emphasize the problems of society, which Pereda rightly sees as the faults of individual men
multiplied by their contact with each other. Pereda has said that he had lost his faith in man; society is made up of these men, and the whole is greater than the constituent parts; it is therefore not surprising that Pereda had lost faith in society. In all three novels, there is an affection shown for the city in which they are set, but, despite the greater accuracy of detail in _Sotileza_, the city is always the target of Pereda's criticism. Perhaps the last comparison between the three is that all are absorbing stories, which hold the reader's interest, and this after all is the prime purpose, and the real measure of the success of a novel.
FOOTNOTES

Chapter 5

1. See Section on Literature. The episode is also reminiscent in the comparison of the characters of the two men; note Sancho's self-confessed faults which made him want to govern an island:
   Llegándose al rucio...le dijo:
   --Venid vos acá...cuando yo me avenía con vos...
   dichosas eran mis horas, mis días y mis años;
   pero después que os dejé y me subí sobre las
   torres de la ambición y la soberbia, se me
   han entrado por el alma dentro mil miseras,
   mil trabajos y cuatro mil desasosiegos...
   Bien se está San Pedro en Roma: quiero decir
   que bien está cada uno usando el oficio para
   que fue nacido. Mejor me está a mí una hoz
   en la mano que un cetro de gobernador.
   [Cervantes, Don Quijote (Austral: Madrid, 1960)
   p. 613]

2. See, for example, Blasones y talegas from Tipos y paisajes.

3. His character has much in common with that of Eugene Wrayburn in Dickens' Our Mutual Friend.

4. For example, A. Rubió y Lluch, "La Montávez" in Correo de las aldeas, Bogotá, 18 October 1888 and
R. Gil Osorio y Sánchez, "La última novela de Pereda" in Revista de España, 29 February 1888.

5. For example, G. Picón Febres, "En defensa de Pereda" in Notas y opiniones, Caracas, 1889.

6. This can be seen from the Dedicatoria to Peñas arriba in which Pereda uses the same image of "la agria pendiente de mi calvario" about himself as he does about Doña Ramona—-and Nica—. He also quotes these lines:
   Dominus dedit, Dominus abstulit.
   Sicut Domino placuit, ita factum est.
   His own feelings on fate—or God—reflect those of
   Doña Ramona (II, Peñas arriba, p. 1147)

7. Duc de la Rochefoucauld, Maximes, 218.
Pereda wrote two major novels and three minor ones which were set in Madrid. They all conform to the basic thesis which has been accepted by most critics; the consensus declares that the fundamental theme in Pereda is "pastoral" and is best summarized by the phrase menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea. It would be an unrewarding task to attempt to disprove this, since it forms the core to the whole gamut of Peredian fiction.

What does need to be changed is the adoption and adaptation of this fundamental ideal by the critics. There are two opposing schools of criticism: Those who reject this philosophy of life and those who support it. The first trend of thought was led by Emilia Pardo Bazán, and reached its culmination in the attack of Gerald Brenan: "He hated large towns, foreign customs, and everything modern. In politics he was a Carlist."¹ This represents the so-called "liberal" attitude, and it criticised Pereda's menosprecio de corte, regarding it as being a completely prejudiced attack, by someone who knew very little about Madrid; by someone who was completely biased against capitals; and by someone who was opposed to Madrid on a political level.

The second critical approach was that adopted by Menéndez y Pelayo, and amplified by later commentators such as Cossío and Montero. These critics endorsed and magnified the second aspect of the theme: alabanza de aldea. It
represents the traditionalist, montanista attitude, and it regarded Pereda's novels as being a faithful portrayal by someone who knew the Montaña intimately; by someone who gave unconditional support to the countryside and its people; and by someone who supported the superiority of the status quo.

These opinions all tend to a perversion of the true qualities of his novels. Strangely, both schools emphasize the same faults: The one in order to dismiss the importance of Pereda in the development of Spanish fiction, by making him merely a regionalist; the second in order to laud him as a regionalist and to keep him to itself, in a rather narrow-minded provincialism.

The true picture of Pereda's ideas is one that shows his basic advocaion of the "pastoral" ideal, but with many reservations and qualifications. His portrayal of Madrid is not without affection, and his criticisms, far from being prejudiced, are those of a rational man, who, by attacking certain vices, knows that he is inveighing against man, not against a city. He describes the capital with mixed feelings, revealing that dichotomy of attitude common among authors, who can see the attraction of what they are opposing.

His portrayal of the Montaña does not lack a severe satirical content; his praise, far from being unconditional, is that of an intelligent writer, who, while approving of certain qualities, can see that it is man who mars the perfection of the setting. One could examine Pereda's--and the "pastoral"--doctrine closely and find that there is
perfection: Nature; if anything spoils nature it is the pettiness of man, and his desires and passions. Opposed to the perfection of nature is the macrocosm of man, i.e. society, which magnifies and multiplies the imperfections found in the individual.

The other question which has kept critics busy for many years is the accuracies and inaccuracies of detail in Pereda's fiction. This is an unrewarding and irrelevant issue, since such matters do not have any bearing on the quality of fiction. If literary criticism were to be based upon the exactness of minutiae, then it would quickly discredit Shakespeare, Goethe, Calderón, Racine and many others who project contemporary attitudes into spatially or temporally distant situations.

The three minor Madrid novels have certain humorous qualities, but are essentially light reading and of little consequence in their own right. They are significant from an historical viewpoint in that they reveal the continuity of Pereda's outlook from the start of his literary career (1864) to very late in it (1888). It would be impossible to claim anything more for them, and they cannot add to the quality of the two major novels.

These two books, in common with all of Pereda's mature works, were written with the intention of creating characters, and putting them in situations, as has been stressed by Alfonso Par. Pedro Sánchez and La Montálvez contain some of the best creations of Pereda, and of contemporary fiction,
in Pedro and Nica themselves, in Don Serafín and Matica, in Don Santiago and Doña Ramona, and in Clara and Leticia. His other novels may contain characters who are just as memorable: Sotileza, Don Valentín (El sabor de la tierruca), Patricio Rigueltta and Don Gonzalo (Don Gonzalo González de la Gonzalera), the Peñarrubias (De tal palo, tal astilla), el Berrugo (La puchera), Don Celso (Peñás arriba); but those in the metropolitan novels are of a type, and find themselves in situations, which the reader who is not from the Montaña can best associate himself with.

One of the best-justified complaints about the Peredian novel is its lack of structure; but, as the Section on Literature has shown, the Madrid novels are the most closely textured that Pereda wrote because every event in them is artistically necessary to the development of the personality of the protagonists.

I have attempted to show that the Madrid novels contain a vast spectrum of contemporary society, and that there is both breadth and depth to the scope of his thoughts on the Corte. He may at times be guilty of merely heeding the popular prejudices that were in the air when he was writing, as, for instance, in La mujer del César, but his views are generally those of a balanced and perceptive observer. Pereda never achieves objectivity, but he comes closest to it in these two novels, as can be seen from the many positive forces and figures he discovers in Madrid society. His anti-Madrid prejudice is far stronger in Peñás arriba than
in either of the two Corte novels, and this may have been
due to a sense of personal tragedy, as I have already suggested;
it may also have been caused by pique at the reception of
La Montálvez by the Madrid press.

To sum up, I believe that these two novels are the most
approachable of the whole of Pereda's fiction for two main
reasons: The characterization is masterly; the events and
situations are closer to the majority of readers. The two
novels about Madrid are virtually the only ones of Pereda's
which are suitable to be read for entertainment and pleasure.
The stories are enthralling and the criticism forms part of
the narration and is not an extraneous element as in Peñas
arriba. This does not mean that they are mere pot-boilers,
for there is much depth of thought in them; like all great
novels, they improve with every new reading. They are also
novels that demand rereading, for they leave the reader with
the impression that he has missed something, and ought to
read them again to savor fully the complexity of the texture.

Pedro Sánchez and La Montálvez continue to entertain
and enthral the reader to this day; and, although their
account of contemporary Madrid may not have been completely
faithful, they can still reveal truths about Man's nature.
This is the excellence and living quality of these novels
which reflect Man, his vices and his virtues, and that relation­
ship with other men, which is called human society.
FOOTNOTES

Conclusion


2. A. Par, "Pereda y Cataluña" In Homenaje al novelista don José María de Pereda, en el primer centenario de su nacimiento (Número extraordinario del Boletín de la Biblioteca Menéndez y Pelayo: Santander, 1933) p. 45.
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