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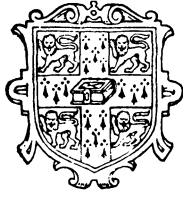
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EL PRÍNCIPE
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by
DON PEDRO CALDERÓN
DE LA BARCA



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INTRODUCTION

THIS FAMOUS play dramatizes the legend of Prince Ferdinand of Portugal. A member of the unsuccessful expedition against Tangier in 1437 led by his brother Prince Henry the Navigator, the historical Ferdinand did not oppose the surrender of Ceuta for which he was handed over to the Moors as a hostage; it was not by his wish that the pact was broken and that he was left to die in captivity. The fortitude with which he bore his involuntary suffering was the basis of the legend that transformed him into a Christian Regulus, choosing martyrdom so that Ceuta should not be lost to Christendom. The legend was dramatized, probably between 1595 and 1598, in a play entitled *La fortuna adversa del Infante don Fernando de Portugal*, attributed to Lope de Vega but more likely to be the work of the Valencian dramatist Francisco Tárrega. This disorderly and, in parts, extravagant play was Calderón's principal source.¹

El príncipe constante was first performed in Madrid early in 1629, a fact recorded in the complaint addressed to the King by Fray Hortensio Paravicino against a personal reference to him in the play; a complaint that led to Calderón's punishment by a few days' detention in his house, and to the suppression of the offensive passage.²

The play was first printed, in a very defective text,

¹ For the text of *La fortuna adversa* and for a comparative study of the two plays, together with an account of the historical and legendary sources of the theme, see Albert E. Sloman, *The Sources of Calderón's 'El Príncipe Constante'* (Oxford, 1950).

² For the whole incident see E. Cotarelo, *Ensayo sobre la Vida y Obras de D. Pedro Calderón* (Madrid, 1924), pp. 131–141.

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in the *Primera Parte de las Comedias de D. Pedro Calderón* published by his brother, José Calderón, in 1636, an edition that was reprinted in 1640. The play was re-edited in the *Primera Parte* (1685) of the complete collection of Calderón's comedias published by Juan de Vera Tassis. This text is an improvement on the *princeps* in that it corrects most of its errors and restores several missing lines, but it is by no means accurate and many of its variant readings seem to be arbitrary changes.

The Vera Tassis text was reproduced, with very few corrections and those not always acceptable, by Apontes (1760), Keil (1827), Hartzenbusch (1848), and Krenkel (1881), none of whom knew the 1636 text. Hartzenbusch established the punctuation which all later editors have followed. Krenkel suggested a few emendations, some of which are valuable. Maccoll (1888) has been hitherto the only editor to make use of the 1636 text, though he incorporated too few of its variant readings. Astrana Marín (1932), despite his diatribes against Vera Tassis, follows quite slavishly the Hartzenbusch version of the latter's text.

For my own text I have followed the José Calderón edition wherever its readings are superior to those of Vera Tassis, or wherever there is nothing to choose between the variants. I have also repunctuated the text. In several passages the meaning can vary according to the punctuation one can adopt; sometimes Hartzenbusch seems to me to favour a wrong interpretation. I have also incorporated such of Krenkel's emendations as I consider necessary, and have ventured to introduce a few of my own where textual difficulties require them. Only one of these, I feel, needs special justification. In the early editions, line 10 on page 88 reads *mo será el*

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honor, mía la gloria. Keil retained the first *mío*, but altered the other to *suya*; and this has been followed by all later editors, except Maccoll, who reverted to the original phrasing. But to retain the first *mío* still attributes to Alfonso an egotistic ambition out of keeping with the context (Enrique's reference to Alfonso's *orgullo altivo* is directed against his blind faith in providence and in Fernando's intercession); it also introduces an unfavourable comparison between his and Fernando's previous attitude (see p. 19, line 19) which the play does not warrant. The additional emendation I propose, by making the honour Fernando's and the glory God's, would seem to give fitting expression to the Infante's final status as saint and martyr.

I have also inserted (p. 18, lines 5–10) the censored passage with the reference to Paravicino, the suppression of which mutilated the rhyme scheme. Its insertion completes the middle rhyme of the preceding *terceto*, and by altering *consuelo*, which rhymes with nothing, into *consejo* (a word which also fits into the meaning of the passage) the rhymes of another *terceto* are regularized; but some irregularity remains in that the two following *tercetos* rhyme *c b c*, *d c d*, instead of *b c b*, *c d c*. I have also ventured to suggest a completion of the line which Paravicino did not quote in full.

For a critical appreciation of this splendid play the reader is referred to Professor Sloman's work already mentioned, and to two articles by Professor E. M. Wilson and the late Professor W. J. Entwistle, 'Calderón's *Príncipe Constante*: two Appreciations' (*Modern Language Review*, vol. xxxiv (1939), pp. 207–222).

A. A. PARKER

December 1956

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PERSONAS

DON FERNANDO	<i>príncipe</i>
DON ENRIQUE	<i>príncipe</i>
DON JUAN COUTIÑO	
EL REY DE FEZ	<i>viejo</i>
MULEY	<i>general</i>
CELÍN	
BRITO	<i>gracioso</i>
DON ALFONSO	<i>rey de Portugal</i>
TARUDANTE	<i>rey de Marruecos</i>
FÉNIX	<i>infanta</i>
ROSA	
ZARA	
ESTRELLA	
CELIMA	
SOLDADOS	
CAUTIVOS	