Edward M. Wilson and Duncan Moir. *A Literary History of Spain. The Golden Age: Drama 1492-1700*. London: Ernest Benn; New York: Barnes and Noble, 1971. Pp. xviii, 171. \$5.25 Paper. (Distributed in Canada by The General Publishing Company, Toronto.)

This very useful volume has been written in collaboration by Edward M. Wilson (Calderón de la Barca only) and Duncan Moir, both British scholars. Their achievements are considerable, and the manual is highly recommended, with some reservations, for students of the Golden Age at all levels.

All critics would agree, I am sure, that "the three most important playwrights of the seventeenth century in Spain" (p. 87) are Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina and Calderón de la Barca. Many would also claim that there is a fourth great name, that of Juan Ruiz de Alarcón, and that this dramatist should not be lumped in with Vélez de Guevara, Mira de Amescua, etc., in his two-page account, but, in addition to being referred to as "a much more gifted dramatist" than some (p. 80), should be given the fuller treatment such as was accorded him by Margaret Wilson, for example, in her *Spanish Drama of the Golden Age* (Pergamon, 1969), pp. 130-38. Personally, I should not accept the stress put on the supposedly strong didactic intention of Lope de Vega's plays (p. 69), for surely he was the least of a "teacher" of all of the Golden Age dramatists and was above all trying to entertain, with "ensalzar deleitando" at most. Nor should I take too literally Lope's directive in the *Arte nuevo* to write "in prose" (p. 48), for I suspect that by the word *prosa* he did not intend that medium as we generally conceive it. Also, another example of details to which I should object, is the very slight treatment of *La estrella de Sevilla*, which, as an "admirable y famosa tragedia," is deserving of additional attention. The word "tragedy" is overemphasized in several cases (for example, *Las paces de los reyes*, p. 60; *Peribáñez*, p. 66), when such plays, with their satisfactory endings, are *comedias* in the Golden Age sense. (On the other hand, it is gratifying to see the stress laid on the close ties between the spirit of the *Arte nuevo* and Lope's practice and the earlier Italian tragicomedians such as Guarini.) It seems wrong (an example of another doubtful detail, p. 89) to state that Don Juan "seduces Doña Ana de Ulloa," for Catalinón, at the end of the *Burlador*, clearly points out that the evil intent was not fulfilled. In the chapter on Calderón, references to "an excellent monograph" on source materials of *El príncipe constante* and to the opinion of "one critic" (both p. 105) are not identified, and must be established by the reader, not through the Notes but by examining the Bibliography at the end of the volume.

Generally speaking, however, the Notes at the end of each chapter of *Drama 1492-1700* are quite full and helpful in providing bibliographical leads, and the above-mentioned end-Bibliography has been carefully selected. Nevertheless, it is strange that the useful Twayne monographs (the Parker *Gil Vicente*, 1967; the Hayes *Lope de Vega*, 1967; the Hesse *Calderón de la Barca*, 1967; and the MacCurdy *Rojas Zorrilla*, 1968) have not been included.

On the whole, the authors have made good use of time-tested and up-to-date theories and information, and their results are good background reading to accompany a study of plays themselves and theatrical productions of Golden Age *comedias*.

J. H. PARKER, *University of Toronto*