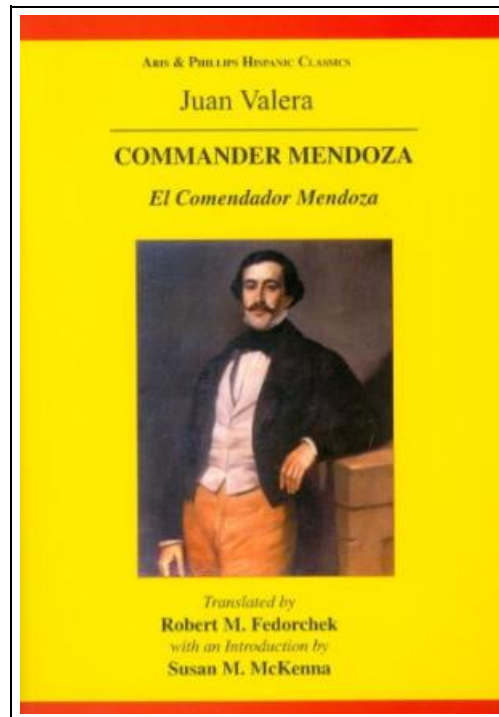


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## VALERA: COMMANDER MENDOZA



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Aris Phillips Ltd, United Kingdom, 2010. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 208 x 147 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Juan Valera y Alcalá-Galiano (1824-1905), one of nineteenth-century Spain's most respected authors, lived an international life—a career in the diplomatic service, with postings to more than a half dozen countries in Europe and the Americas. Cosmopolitan, cultured, and urbane, Valera was fluent in a number of languages and read widely in all of them. A serious student of his own and foreign literatures, he wrote novels, short stories, essays, poetry, and literary criticism, in addition to carrying on a voluminous correspondence with several of his fellow Spanish writers and friends. The unifying thread of his work is art for art's sake, that is, beauty as the end and purpose of inspiration and creativity, a stance he commented on at some length in his introduction to the 1886 Appleton English translation of his first novel, *Pepita Jiménez* (1874), the tale of a young seminarian who falls in love with a young widow. *Commander Mendoza* (1877) tells the story of Don Fadrique López de Mendoza, a man of seafaring adventures and a deist in the mold of the eighteenth-century philosophes, and Dona Blanca Roldán de Solís, a woman of unbounded pride and a Catholic driven by religious fanaticism, neither of which traits prevented her from having had an adulterous affair as a young woman in Lima, Peru, with Don Fadrique. The conflict that plays out in *Commander Mendoza*, with both principals now back in Spain, centers on the Commander's discovery of the marriageable daughter that he did not know he had, and it turns into a contest of wills that effects changes in both of them as the fate of their daughter hangs in the balance. Rich in characterization...



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