History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella V1 by William H. Prescott

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HISTORY OF THE REIGN OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA, THE CATHOLIC.

BY WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

TO

THE HONORABLE

WILLIAM PRESCOTT, LL.D.,

THE GUIDE OF MY YOUTH,

MY BEST FRIEND IN RIPER YEARS,

THESE VOLUMES,
WITH THE WARMEST FEELINGS OF FILIAL AFFECTION,
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

PREFACE

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

English writers have done more for the illustration of Spanish history,
than for that of any other except their own. To say nothing of the recent
general compendium, executed for the "Cabinet Cyclopaedia," a work of
singular acuteness and information, we have particular narratives of the
several reigns, in an unbroken series, from the emperor Charles the Fifth
(the First of Spain) to Charles the Third, at the close of the last
century, by authors whose names are a sufficient guaranty for the
excellence of their productions. It is singular, that, with this attention
to the modern history of the Peninsula, there should be no particular
account of the period which may be considered as the proper basis of it,—
the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella.

In this reign, the several States, into which the country had been broken
up for ages, were brought under a common rule; the kingdom of Naples was
conquered; America discovered and colonized; the ancient empire of the
Spanish Arabs subverted; the dread tribunal of the Modern Inquisition
established; the Jews, who contributed so sensibly to the wealth and
civilization of the country, were banished; and, in fine, such changes
were introduced into the interior administration of the monarchy, as have
left a permanent impression on the character and condition of the nation.

The actors in these events were every way suited to their importance. Besides the reigning sovereigns, Ferdinand and Isabella, the latter certainly one of the most interesting personages in history, we have, in political affairs, that consummate statesman, Cardinal Ximenes, in military, the "Great Captain," Gonsalvo de Cordova, and in maritime, the most successful navigator of any age, Christopher Columbus; whose entire biographies fall within the limits of this period. Even such portions of it as have been incidentally touched by English writers, as the Italian wars, for example, have been drawn so exclusively from French and Italian sources, that they may be said to be untrodden ground for the historian of Spain. [1]

It must be admitted, however, that an account of this reign could not have been undertaken at any preceding period, with anything like the advantages at present afforded; owing to the light which recent researches of Spanish scholars, in the greater freedom of inquiry now enjoyed, have shed on some of its most interesting and least familiar features. The most important of the works to which I allude are, the History of the Inquisition, from official documents, by its secretary, Llorente; the analysis of the political institutions of the kingdom, by such writers as Marina, Sempere, and Capmany; the literal version, now made for the first time, of the Spanish-Arab chronicles, by Conde; the collection of original and unpublished documents, illustrating the history of Columbus and the early Castilian navigators, by Navarrete; and, lastly, the copious illustrations of Isabella's reign, by Clemencin, the late lamented secretary of the
Royal Academy of History, forming the sixth volume of its valuable Memoirs.

It was the knowledge of these facilities for doing justice to this subject, as well as its intrinsic merits, which led me, ten years since, to select it; and surely no subject could be found more suitable for the pen of an American, than a history of that reign, under the auspices of which the existence of his own favored quarter of the globe was first revealed. As I was conscious that the value of the history must depend mainly on that of its materials, I have spared neither pains nor expense, from the first, in collecting the most authentic. In accomplishing this, I must acknowledge the services of my friends, Mr. Alexander H. Everett, then minister plenipotentiary from the United States to the court of Madrid, Mr. Arthur Middleton, secretary of the American legation, and, above all, Mr. O. Rich, now American consul for the Balearic Islands, a gentleman, whose extensive bibliographical knowledge, and unwearied researches, during a long residence in the Peninsula, have been liberally employed for the benefit both of his own country and of England. With such assistance, I flatter myself that I have been enabled to secure whatever can materially conduce to the illustration of the period in question, whether in the form of chronicle, memoir, private correspondence, legal codes, or official documents. Among these are various contemporary manuscripts, covering the whole ground of the narrative, none of which have been printed, and some of them but little known to Spanish scholars. In obtaining copies of these from the public libraries, I must add, that I have found facilities under the present liberal government, which were denied me under the preceding. In addition to these sources of
information, I have availed myself, in the part of the work occupied with
literary criticism and history, of the library of my friend, Mr. George
Ticknor, who during a visit to Spain, some years since, collected whatever
was rare and valuable in the literature of the Peninsula. I must further
acknowledge my obligations to the library of Harvard University, in
Cambridge, from whose rich repository of books relating to our own country
I have derived material aid. And, lastly, I must not omit to notice the
favors of another kind for which I am indebted to my friend, Mr. William
H. Gardiner, whose judicious counsels have been of essential benefit to me
in the revision of my labors.

In the plan of the work, I have not limited myself to a strict
chronological narrative of passing events, but have occasionally paused,
at the expense, perhaps, of some interest in the story, to seek such
collateral information as might bring these events into a clearer view. I
have devoted a liberal portion of the work to the literary progress of the
nation, conceiving this quite as essential a part of its history as civil
and military details. I have occasionally introduced, at the close of the
chapters, a critical notice of the authorities used, that the reader may
form some estimate of their comparative value and credibility. Finally, I
have endeavored to present him with such an account of the state of
affairs, both before the accession, and at the demise of the Catholic
sovereigns, as might afford him the best points of view for surveying the
entire results of their reign.

How far I have succeeded in the execution of this plan, must be left to
the reader's candid judgment. Many errors he may be able to detect. Sure I
am, there can be no one more sensible of my deficiencies than myself; although it was not till after practical experience, that I could fully estimate the difficulty of obtaining anything like a faithful portraiture of a distant age, amidst the shifting hues and perplexing cross lights of historic testimony. From one class of errors my subject necessarily exempts me; those founded on national or party feeling. I may have been more open to another fault; that of too strong a bias in favor of my principal actors; for characters, noble and interesting in themselves, naturally beget a sort of partiality akin to friendship, in the historian's mind, accustomed to the daily contemplation of them. Whatever defects may be charged on the work, I can at least assure myself, that it is an honest record of a reign important in itself, new to the reader in an English dress, and resting on a solid basis of authentic materials, such as probably could not be met with out of Spain, nor in it without much difficulty.

I hope I shall be acquitted of egotism, although I add a few words respecting the peculiar embarrassments I have encountered, in composing these volumes. Soon after my arrangements were made, early in 1826, for obtaining the necessary materials from Madrid, I was deprived of the use of my eyes for all purposes of reading and writing, and had no prospect of again recovering it. This was a serious obstacle to the prosecution of a work requiring the perusal of a large mass of authorities, in various languages, the contents of which were to be carefully collated, and transferred to my own pages, verified by minute reference. [2] Thus shut out from one sense, I was driven to rely exclusively on another, and to make the ear do the work of the eye. With the assistance of a reader,
uninitiated, it may be added, in any modern language but his own, I worked
my way through several venerable Castilian quartos, until I was satisfied
of the practicability of the undertaking. I next procured the services of
one more competent to aid me in pursuing my historical inquiries. The
process was slow and irksome enough, doubtless, to both parties, at least
till my ear was accommodated to foreign sounds, and an antiquated,
oftimes barbarous phraseology, when my progress became more sensible,
and I was cheered with the prospect of success. It certainly would have
been a far more serious misfortune, to be led thus blindfold through the
pleasant paths of literature; but my track stretched, for the most part,
across dreary wastes, where no beauty lurked, to arrest the traveller’s
eye and charm his senses. After persevering in this course for some years,
my eyes, by the blessing of Providence, recovered sufficient strength to
allow me to use them, with tolerable freedom, in the prosecution of my
labors, and in the revision of all previously written. I hope I shall not
be misunderstood, as stating these circumstances to deprecate the severity
of criticism, since I am inclined to think the greater circumspection I
have been compelled to use has left me, on the whole, less exposed to
inaccuracies, than I should have been in the ordinary mode of composition.
But, as I reflect on the many sober hours I have passed in wading through
black letter tomes, and through manuscripts whose doubtful orthography and
defiance of all punctuation were so many stumbling-blocks to my
amansensis, it calls up a scene of whimsical distresses, not usually
encountered, on which the good-natured reader may, perhaps, allow I have
some right, now that I have got the better of them, to dwell with
satisfaction.
I will only remark, in conclusion of this too prolix discussion about
myself, that while making my tortoise-like progress, I saw what I had
fondly looked upon as my own ground, (having indeed lain unmolested by any
other invader for so many ages,) suddenly entered, and in part occupied,
by one of my countrymen. I allude to Mr. Irving's "History of Columbus,"
and "Chronicle of Granada;" the subjects of which, although covering but a
small part of my whole plan, form certainly two of its most brilliant
portions. Now, alas! if not devoid of interest, they are, at least,
stripped of the charm of novelty. For what eye has not been attracted to
the spot on which the light of that writer's genius has fallen?

I cannot quit the subject which has so long occupied me, without one
glance at the present unhappy condition of Spain; who, shorn of her
ancient splendor, humbled by the loss of empire abroad, and credit at
home, is abandoned to all the evils of anarchy. Yet, deplorable as this
condition is, it is not so bad as the lethargy in which she has been sunk
for ages. Better be hurried forward for a season on the wings of the
tempest, than stagnate in a deathlike calm, fatal alike to intellectual
and moral progress. The crisis of a revolution, when old things are
passing away, and new ones are not yet established, is, indeed, fearful.
Even the immediate consequences of its achievement are scarcely less so to
a people who have yet to learn by experiment the precise form of
institutions best suited to their wants, and to accommodate their
character to these institutions. Such results must come with time,
however, if the nation be but true to itself. And that they will come,
sooner or later, to the Spaniards, surely no one can distrust who is at
all conversant with their earlier history, and has witnessed the examples
it affords of heroic virtue, devoted patriotism, and generous love of freedom;

Clouds and darkness have, indeed, settled thick around the throne of the youthful Isabella; but not a deeper darkness than that which covered the land in the first years of her illustrious namesake; and we may humbly trust, that the same Providence, which guided her reign to so prosperous a termination, may carry the nation safe through its present perils, and secure to it the greatest of earthly blessings, civil and religious liberty.

_November_, 1837.

**FOOTNOTES**

[1] The only histories of this reign by continental writers, with which I am acquainted, are the "Histoire des Rois Catholiques Ferdinand et Regierung Ferdinand des Katholischen, von Rupert Becker, Prag und Leipzig, 1790." Their authors have employed the most accessible materials only in the compilation; and, indeed, they lay claim to no great research, which would seem to be precluded by the extent of their works, in neither instance exceeding two volumes duodecimo. They have the merit of exhibiting, in a simple, perspicuous form, those events, which, lying on
the surface, may be found more or less expanded in moat general histories.

[2] "To compile a history from various authors, when they can only be
consulted by other eyes, is not easy, nor possible, but with more skilful
and attentive help than can be commonly obtained." [Johnson's _Life of
Milton_] This remark of the great critic, which first engaged my
attention in the midst of my embarrassments, although discouraging at
first, in the end stimulated the desire to overcome them.

PREFACE

TO THE THIRD ENGLISH EDITION.

Since the publication of the First Edition of this work, it has undergone
a careful revision; and this, aided by the communications of several
intelligent friends, who have taken an interest in its success, has
enabled me to correct several verbal inaccuracies, and a few typographical
errors, which had been previously overlooked. While the Second Edition was
passing through the press, I received, also, copies of two valuable
Spanish works, having relation to the reign of the Catholic sovereigns,
but which, as they appeared during the recent troubles of the Peninsula,
had not before come to my knowledge. For these I am indebted to the
politeness of Don Angel Calderon de la Barca, late Spanish Minister at
Washington; a gentleman, whose frank and liberal manners, personal
accomplishments, and independent conduct in public life, have secured for
him deservedly high consideration in the United States, as well as in his
I must still further acknowledge my obligation to Don Pascual de Gayangos, the learned author of the "Mahommedan Dynasties in Spain," recently published in London,—a work, which, from its thorough investigation of original sources, and fine spirit of criticism, must supply, what has been so long felt as an important desideratum with the student,—the means of forming a perfect acquaintance with the Arabian portion of the Peninsular annals. There fell into the hands of this gentleman, on the breaking up of the convents of Saragossa in 1835, a rich collection of original documents, comprehending, among other things, the autograph correspondence of Ferdinand and Isabella, and of the principal persons of their court. It formed, probably, part of the library of Geronimo Zurita,—historiographer of Aragon, under Philip the Second,—who, by virtue of his office, was intrusted with whatever documents could illustrate the history of the country. This rare collection was left at his death to a monastery in his native city. Although Zurita is one of the principal authorities for the present work, there are many details of interest in this correspondence, which have passed unnoticed by him, although forming the basis of his conclusions; and I have gladly availed myself of the liberality and great disposal, transcribing such as I have selected, for the corroboration and further illustration of my work. The difficulties attending this labor of love will be better appreciated, when it is understood, that the original writing is in an antiquated character, which _few_ Spanish scholars of the present day could comprehend, and often in cipher, which requires much patience and ingenuity to explain. With these various emendations, it is hoped that the present Edition may be found more deserving of that favor.
from the public, which has been so courteously accorded to the preceding.

_March_, 1841.

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INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

VIEW OF THE CASTILIAN MONARCHY BEFORE THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.


For several hundred years after the great Saracen invasion in the beginning of the eighth century, Spain was broken up into a number of small but independent states, divided in their interests, and often in deadly hostility with one another. It was inhabited by races, the most dissimilar in their origin, religion, and government, the least important of which has exerted a sensible influence on the character and institutions of its present inhabitants. At the close of the fifteenth century, these various races were blended into one great nation, under one common rule. Its territorial limits were widely extended by discovery and conquest. Its domestic institutions, and even its literature, were moulded into the form, which, to a considerable extent, they have maintained to
the present day. It is the object of the present narrative to exhibit the period in which these momentous results were effected,—the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella.

By the middle of the fifteenth century, the number of states, into which the country had been divided, was reduced to four; Castile, Aragon, Navarre, and the Moorish kingdom of Granada. The last, comprised within nearly the same limits as the modern province of that name, was all that remained to the Moslems of their once vast possessions in the Peninsula. Its concentrated population gave it a degree of strength altogether disproportioned to the extent of its territory; and the profuse magnificence of its court, which rivalled that of the ancient caliphs, was supported by the labors of a sober, industrious people, under whom agriculture and several of the mechanic arts had reached a degree of excellence, probably unequalled in any other part of Europe during the Middle Ages.

The little kingdom of Navarre, embosomed within the Pyrenees, had often attracted the avarice of neighboring and more powerful states. But, since their selfish schemes operated as a mutual check upon each other, Navarre still continued to maintain her independence, when all the smaller states in the Peninsula had been absorbed in the gradually increasing dominion of Castile and Aragon.

This latter kingdom comprehended the province of that name, together with Catalonia and Valencia. Under its auspicious climate and free political
institutions, its inhabitants displayed an uncommon share of intellectual
and moral energy. Its long line of coast opened the way to an extensive
and flourishing commerce; and its enterprising navy indemnified the nation
for the scantiness of its territory at home, by the important foreign
conquests of Sardinia, Sicily, Naples, and the Balearic Isles.

The remaining provinces of Leon, Biscay, the Asturias, Galicia, Old and
New Castile, Estremadura, Murcia, and Andalusia, fell to the crown of
Castile, which, thus extending its sway over an unbroken line of country
from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean, seemed by the magnitude, of
its territory, as well as by its antiquity, (for it was there that the old
Gothic monarchy may be said to have first revived after the great Saracen
invasion,) to be entitled to a pre-eminence over the other states of the
Peninsula. This claim, indeed, appears to have been recognized at an early
period of her history. Aragon did homage to Castile for her territory on
the western bank of the Ebro, until the twelfth century, as did Navarre,
Portugal, and, at a later period, the Moorish kingdom of Granada. [1] And,
when at length the various states of Spain were consolidated into one
monarchy, the capital of Castile became the capital of the new empire, and
her language the language of the court and of literature.

It will facilitate our inquiry into the circumstances which immediately
led to these results, if we briefly glance at the prominent features in
the early history and constitution of the two principal Christian states,
Castile and Aragon, previous to the fifteenth century. [2]
The Visigoths who overran the Peninsula, in the fifth century, brought with them the same liberal principles of government which distinguished their Teutonic brethren. Their crown was declared elective by a formal legislative act. Laws were enacted in the great national councils, composed of prelates and nobility, and not unfrequently ratified in an assembly of the people. Their code of jurisprudence, although abounding in frivolous detail, contained many admirable provisions for the security of justice; and, in the degree of civil liberty which it accorded to the Roman inhabitants of the country, far transcended those of most of the other barbarians of the north. In short, their simple polity exhibited the germ of some of those institutions, which, with other nations, and under happier auspices, have formed the basis of a well-regulated constitutional liberty.

But, while in other countries the principles of a free government were slowly and gradually unfolded, their development was much accelerated in Spain by an event, which, at the time, seemed to threaten their total extinction,—the great Saracen invasion at the beginning of the eighth century. The religious, as well as the political institutions of the Arabs, were too dissimilar to those of the conquered nation, to allow the former to exercise any very sensible influence over the latter in these particulars. In the Spirit of toleration, which distinguished the early followers of Mahomet, they conceded to such of the Goths, as were willing to continue among them after the conquest, the free enjoyment of their religious, as well as of many of the civil privileges which they possessed under the ancient monarchy. Under this liberal dispensation it cannot be doubted, that many preferred remaining in the pleasant regions of their
ancestors, to quitting them for a life of poverty and toil. These,

however, appear to have been chiefly of the lower order; [7] and the men
of higher rank, or of more generous sentiments, who refused to accept a
nominal and precarious independence at the hands of their oppressors,

escaped from the overwhelming inundation into the neighboring countries of
France, Italy, and Britain, or retreated behind those natural fortresses
of the north, the Asturian hills and the Pyrenees, whither the victorious
Saracen disdained to pursue them. [8]

Here the broken remnant of the nation endeavored to revive the forms, at
least, of the ancient government. But it may well be conceived, how
imperfect these must have been under a calamity, which, breaking up all
the artificial distinctions of society, seemed to resolve it at once into
its primitive equality. The monarch, once master of the whole Peninsula,
now beheld his empire contracted to a few barren, inhospitable rocks. The
noble, instead of the broad lands and thronged halls of his ancestors, saw
himself at best but the chief of some wandering horde, seeking a doubtful
subsistence, like himself, by rapine. The peasantry, indeed, may be said
to have gained by the exchange; and, in a situation, in which all
factitious distinctions were of less worth than individual prowess and
efficiency, they rose in political consequence. Even slavery, a sore evil
among the Visigoths, as indeed among all the barbarians of German origin,
though not effaced, lost many of its most revolting features, under the
more generous legislation of later times. [9]

A sensible and salutary influence, at the same time, was exerted on the
moral energies of the nation, which had been corrupted in the long
enjoyment of uninterrupted prosperity. Indeed, so relaxed were the morals of the court, as well as of the clergy, and so enervated had all classes become, in the general diffusion of luxury, that some authors have not scrupled to refer to these causes principally the perdition of the Gothic monarchy. An entire reformation in these habits was necessarily effected in a situation, where a scanty subsistence could only be earned by a life of extreme temperance and toil, and where it was often to be sought, sword in hand, from an enemy far superior in numbers. Whatever may have been the vices of the Spaniards, they cannot have been those of effeminate sloth. Thus a sober, hardy, and independent race was gradually formed, prepared to assert their ancient inheritance, and to lay the foundations of far more liberal and equitable forms of government, than were known to their ancestors.

At first, their progress was slow and almost imperceptible. The Saracens, indeed, reposing under the sunny skies of Andalusia, so congenial with their own, seemed willing to relinquish the sterile regions of the north to an enemy whom they despised. But, when the Spaniards, quitting the shelter of their mountains, descended into the open plains of Leon and Castile, they found themselves exposed to the predatory incursions of the Arab cavalry, who, sweeping over the face of the country, carried off in a single foray the hard-earned produce of a summer's toil. It was not until they had reached some natural boundary, as the river Douro, or the chain of the Guadarrama, that they were enabled, by constructing a line of fortifications along these primitive bulwarks, to secure their conquests, and oppose an effectual resistance to the destructive inroads of their enemies.
Their own dissensions were another cause of their tardy progress. The numerous petty states, which rose from the ruins of the ancient monarchy, seemed to regard each other with even a fiercer hatred than that with which they viewed the enemies of their faith; a circumstance that more than once brought the nation to the verge of ruin. More Christian blood was wasted in these national feuds, than in all their encounters with the century, complained that their master made them lead the life of very devils, keeping them in the harness day and night, in wars, not against the Saracens, but one another. [10]

These circumstances so far palsied the arm of the Christians, that a century and a half elapsed after the invasion, before they had penetrated to the Douro, [11] and nearly thrice that period before they had advanced the line of conquest to the Tagus, [12] notwithstanding this portion of the country had been comparatively deserted by the Mahometans. But it was easy to foresee that a people, living, as they did, under circumstances so well adapted to the development of both physical and moral energy, must ultimately prevail over a nation oppressed by despotism, and the effeminate indulgence, to which it was naturally disposed by a sensual religion and a voluptuous climate. In truth, the early Spaniard was urged by every motive that can give efficacy to human purpose. Pent up in his barren mountains, he beheld the pleasant valleys and fruitful vineyards of his ancestors delivered over to the spoiler, the holy places polluted by his abominable rites, and the crescent glittering on the domes, which were once consecrated by the venerated symbol of his faith. His cause became
the cause of Heaven. The church published her bulls of crusade, offering liberal indulgences to those who served, and Paradise to those who fell in battle, against the infidel. The ancient Castilian was remarkable for his independent resistance of papal encroachment; but the peculiarity of his situation subjected him in an uncommon degree to ecclesiastical influence at home. Priests mingled in the council and the camp, and, arrayed in their sacerdotal robes, not unfrequently led the armies to battle. [13] They interpreted the will of Heaven as mysteriously revealed in dreams and visions. Miracles were a familiar occurrence. The violated tombs of the saints sent forth thunders and lightnings to consume the invaders; and, when the Christians fainted in the fight, the apparition of their patron, St. James, mounted on a milk-white steed, and bearing aloft the banner of the cross, was seen hovering in the air, to rally their broken squadrons, and lead them on to victory. [14] Thus the Spaniard looked upon himself as in a peculiar manner the care of Providence. For him the laws of nature were suspended. He was a soldier of the Cross, fighting not only for his country, but for Christendom. Indeed, volunteers from the remotest parts of Christendom eagerly thronged to serve under his banner; and the cause of religion was debated with the same ardor in Spain, as on the plains of Palestine. [15] Hence the national character became exalted by a religious fervor, which in later days, alas! settled into a fierce fanaticism. Hence that solicitude for the purity of the faith, the peculiar boast of the Spaniards, and that deep tinge of superstition, for which they have ever been distinguished above the other nations of Europe.

The long wars with the Mahometans served to keep alive in their bosoms the ardent glow of patriotism; and this was still further heightened by the
body of traditional minstrelsy, which commemorated in these wars the heroic deeds of their ancestors. The influence of such popular compositions on a simple people is undeniable. A sagacious critic ventures to pronounce the poems of Homer the principal bond which united the Grecian states. [16] Such an opinion may be deemed somewhat extravagant. It cannot be doubted, however, that a poem like that of the "Cid," which appeared as early as the twelfth century, [17] by calling up the most inspiring national recollections in connection with their favorite hero, must have operated powerfully on the moral sensibilities of the people.

It is pleasing to observe, in the cordial spirit of these early effusions, little of the ferocious bigotry which sullied the character of the nation in after ages. [18] The Mahometans of this period far excelled their enemies in general refinement, and had carried some branches of intellectual culture to a height scarcely surpassed by Europeans in later times. The Christians, therefore, notwithstanding their political aversion to the Saracens, conceded to them a degree of respect, which subsided into feelings of a very different complexion, as they themselves rose in the scale of civilization. This sentiment of respect tempered the ferocity of a warfare, which, although sufficiently disastrous in its details, affords examples of a generous courtesy, that would do honor to the politest ages of Europe. [19] The Spanish Arabs were accomplished in all knightly exercises, and their natural fondness for magnificence, which shed a lustre over the rugged features of chivalry, easily communicated itself to the Christian cavaliers. In the intervals of peace, these latter frequented the courts of the Moorish princes, and mingled with their adversaries in the comparatively peaceful pleasures of the tourney, as in
war they vied with them in feats of Quixotic gallantry. [20]

The nature of this warfare between two nations, inhabitants of the same
country, yet so dissimilar in their religious and social institutions as
to be almost the natural enemies of each other, was extremely favorable to
the exhibition of the characteristic virtues of chivalry. The contiguity
of the hostile parties afforded abundant opportunities for personal
rencounter and bold romantic enterprise. Each nation had its regular
military associations, who swore to devote their lives to the service of
God and their country, in perpetual war against the _infidel_ [21] The
Spanish knight became the true hero of romance, wandering over his own
land, and even into the remotest climes, in quest of adventures; and, as
late as the fifteenth century, we find him in the courts of England and
Burgundy, doing battle in honor of his mistress, and challenging general
admiration by his uncommon personal intrepidity. [22] This romantic spirit
lingerad in Castile, long after the age of chivalry had become extinct in
other parts of Europe, continuing to nourish itself on those illusions of
fancy, which were at length dispelled by the caustic satire of Cervantes.

Thus patriotism, religious loyalty, and a proud sense of independence,
founded on the consciousness of owing their possessions to their personal
valor, became characteristic traits of the Castilians previously to the
sixteenth century, when the oppressive policy and fanaticism of the
Austrian dynasty contrived to throw into the shade these generous virtues.
Glimpses of them, however, might long be discerned in the haughty bearing
of the Castilian noble, and in that erect, high-minded peasantry, whom
oppression has not yet been able wholly to subdue. [23]
To the extraordinary position, in which the nation was placed, may also be referred the liberal forms of its political institutions, as well as a more early development of them than took place in other countries of Europe. From the exposure of the Castilian towns to the predatory incursions of the Arabs, it became necessary, not only that they should be strongly fortified, but that every citizen should be trained to bear arms in their defence. An immense increase of consequence was given to the burgesses, who thus constituted the most effective part of the national militia. To this circumstance, as well as to the policy of inviting the settlement of frontier places by the grant of extraordinary privileges to the inhabitants, is to be imputed the early date, as well as liberal character, of the charters of community in Castile and Leon. [24] These, although varying a good deal in their details, generally conceded to the citizens the right of electing their own magistrates for the regulation of municipal affairs. Judges were appointed by this body for the administration of civil and criminal law, subject to an appeal to the royal tribunal. No person could be affected in life or property, except by a decision of this municipal court; and no cause while pending before it could be evoked thence into the superior tribunal. In order to secure the barriers of justice more effectually against the violence of power, so often superior to law in an imperfect state of society, it was provided in many of the charters that no nobles should be permitted to acquire real property within the limits of the community; that no fortress or palace should be erected by them there; that such as might reside within its territory, should be subject to its jurisdiction; and that any violence, offered by them to its inhabitants, might be forcibly resisted with
impunity. Ample and inalienable funds were provided for the maintenance of
the municipal functionaries, and for other public expenses. A large extent
of circumjacent country, embracing frequently many towns and villages, was
annexed to each city with the right of jurisdiction over it. All arbitrary
tallages were commuted for a certain fixed and moderate rent. An officer
was appointed by the crown to reside within each community, whose province
it was to superintend the collection of this tribute, to maintain public
order, and to be associated with the magistrates of each city in the
command of the forces it was bound to contribute towards the national
defence. Thus while the inhabitants of the great towns in other parts of
Europe were languishing in feudal servitude, the members of the Castilian
corporations, living under the protection of their own laws and
magistrates in time of peace, and commanded by their own officers in war,
were in full enjoyment of all the essential rights and privileges of
freemen. [25]

It is true, that they were often convulsed by intestine feuds; that the
laws were often loosely administered by incompetent judges; and that the
exercise of so many important prerogatives of independent states inspired
them with feelings of independence, which led to mutual rivalry, and
sometimes to open collision. But with all this, long after similar
immunities in the free cities of other countries, as Italy for example,
[26] had been sacrificed to the violence of faction or the lust of power,
those of the Castilian cities not only remained unimpaired, but seemed to
acquire additional stability with age. This circumstance is chiefly
imputable to the constancy of the national legislature, which, until the
voice of liberty was stifled by a military despotism, was ever ready to
interpose its protecting arm in defence of constitutional rights.

The earliest instance on record of popular representation in Castile occurred at Burgos, in 1169; nearly a century antecedent to the celebrated Leicester parliament. Each city had but one vote, whatever might be the number of its representatives. A much greater irregularity, in regard to the number of cities required to send deputies to cortes on different occasions, prevailed in Castile, than ever existed in England; though, previously to the fifteenth century, this does not seem to have proceeded from any design of infringing on the liberties of the people. The nomination of these was originally vested in the householders at large, but was afterwards confined to the municipalities; a most mischievous alteration, which subjected their election eventually to the corrupt influence of the crown. They assembled in the same chamber with the higher orders of the nobility and clergy; but, on questions of moment, retired to deliberate by themselves. After the transaction of other business, their own petitions were presented to the sovereign, and his assent gave them the validity of laws. The Castilian commons, by neglecting to make their money grants depend on correspondent concessions from the crown, relinquished that powerful check on its operations so beneficially exerted in the British parliament, but in vain contended for even there, till a much later period than that now under consideration. Whatever may have been the right of the nobility and clergy to attend in cortes, their sanction was not deemed essential to the validity of legislative acts; for their presence was not even required in many assemblies of the nation which occurred in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The extraordinary power thus committed to the commons was,
on the whole, unfavorable to their liberties. It deprived them of the
sympathy and co-operation of the great orders of the state, whose
authority alone could have enabled them to withstand the encroachments of
arbitrary power, and who, in fact, did eventually desert them in their
utmost need. [33]

But, notwithstanding these defects, the popular branch of the Castilian
cortes, very soon after its admission into that body, assumed functions
and exercised a degree of power on the whole superior to that enjoyed by
it in other European legislatures. It was soon recognized as a fundamental
principle of the constitution, that no tax could be imposed without its
consent; [34] and an express enactment to this effect was suffered to
remain on the statute book, after it had become a dead letter, as if to
remind the nation of the liberties it had lost. [35] The commons showed a
wise solicitude in regard to the mode of collecting the public revenue,
oftentimes more onerous to the subject than the tax itself. They watched
carefully over its appropriation to its destined uses. They restrained a
too prodigal expenditure, and ventured more than once to regulate the
economy of the royal household. [36] They kept a vigilant eye on the
conduct of public officers, as well as on the right administration of
justice, and commissions were appointed at their suggestion for inquiring
into its abuses. They entered into negotiation for alliances with foreign
powers, and, by determining the amount of supplies for the maintenance of
troops in time of war, preserved a salutary check over military
operations. [37] The nomination of regencies was subject to their
approbation, and they defined the nature of the authority to be entrusted
to them. Their consent was esteemed indispensable to the validity of a
title to the crown, and this prerogative, or at least the image of it, has continued to survive the wreck of their ancient liberties. [38] Finally, they more than once set aside the testamentary provisions of the sovereigns in regard to the succession. [39]

Without going further into detail, enough has been said to show the high powers claimed by the commons, previously to the fifteenth century, which, instead of being confined to ordinary subjects of legislation, seem, in some instances, to have reached to the executive duties of the administration. It would, indeed, show but little acquaintance with the social condition of the Middle Ages, to suppose that the practical exercise of these powers always corresponded with their theory. We trace repeated instances, it is true, in which they were claimed and successfully exerted; while, on the other hand, the multiplicity of remedial statutes proves too plainly how often the rights of the people were invaded by the violence of the privileged orders, or the more artful and systematic usurpations of the crown. But, far from being intimidated by such acts, the representatives in cortes were ever ready to stand forward as the intrepid advocates of constitutional freedom; and the unqualified boldness of their language on such occasions, and the consequent concessions of the sovereign, are satisfactory evidence of the real extent of their power, and show how cordially they must have been supported by public opinion.

It would be improper to pass by without notice an anomalous institution peculiar to Castile, which sought to secure the public tranquillity by means scarcely compatible themselves with civil subordination. I refer to
the celebrated _Hermandad_, or Holy Brotherhood, as the association was
sometimes called, a name familiar to most readers in the lively fictions
of Le Sage, though conveying there no very adequate idea of the
extraordinary functions which it assumed at the period under review.
Instead of a regularly organized police, it then consisted of a
confederation of the principal cities bound together by solemn league and
covenant, for the defence of their liberties in seasons of civil anarchy.
Its affairs were conducted by deputies, who assembled at stated intervals
for this purpose, transacting their business under a common seal, enacting
laws which they were careful to transmit to the nobles and even the
sovereign himself, and enforcing their measures by an armed force. This
wild kind of justice, so characteristic of an unsettled state of society,
repeatedly received the legislative sanction; and, however formidable such
a popular engine may have appeared to the eye of the monarch, he was often
led to countenance it by a sense of his own impotence, as well as of the
overweening power of the nobles, against whom it was principally directed.
Hence these associations, although the epithet may seem somewhat

[40]

With these immunities, the cities of Castile attained a degree of opulence
and splendor unrivalled, unless in Italy, during the middle ages. At a
very early period, indeed, their contact with the Arabs had familiarized
them with a better system of agriculture, and a dexterity in the mechanic
arts unknown in other parts of Christendom. [41]

On the occupation of a conquered town, we find it distributed into
quarters or districts, appropriated to the several crafts, whose members were incorporated into guilds, under the regulation of magistrates and by-laws of their own appointment. Instead of the unworthy disrepute, into which the more humble occupations have since fallen in Spain, they were fostered by a liberal patronage, and their professors in some instances elevated to the rank of knighthood. [42] The excellent breed of sheep, which early became the subject of legislative solicitude, furnished them with an important staple which, together with the simpler manufactures and the various products of a prolific soil, formed the materials of a profitable commerce. [43] Augmentation of wealth brought with it the usual appetite for expensive pleasures; and the popular diffusion of luxury in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is attested by the fashionable invective of the satirist, and by the impotence of repeated sumptuary enactments. [44] Much of this superfluous wealth, however, was expended on the construction of useful public works. Cities, from which the nobles had once been so jealously excluded, came now to be their favorite residence. [45] But, while their sumptuous edifices and splendid retinues dazzled the eyes of the peaceful burghers, their turbulent spirit was preparing the way for those dismal scenes of faction, which convulsed the little commonwealths to their centre during the latter half of the fifteenth century.

The flourishing condition of the communities gave their representatives a proportional increase of importance in the national assembly. The liberties of the people seemed to take deeper root in the midst of those political convulsions, so frequent in Castile, which unsettled the ancient prerogatives of the crown. Every new revolution was followed by new
concessions on the part of the sovereign, and the popular authority continued to advance with a steady progress until the accession of Henry the Third, of Trastamara, in 1393, when it may be said to have reached its zenith. A disputed title and a disastrous war compelled the father of this prince, John the First, to treat the commons with a deference unknown to his predecessors. We find four of their number admitted into his privy council, and six associated in the regency, to which he confided the government of the kingdom during his son's minority. [46] A remarkable fact, which occurred in this reign, showing the important advances made by the commons in political estimation, was the substitution of the sons of burgesses for an equal number of those of the nobility, who were stipulated to be delivered as hostages for the fulfilment of a treaty with Portugal, in 1393. [47] There will be occasion to notice, in the first chapter of this History, some of the circumstances, which, contributing to undermine the power of the commons, prepared the way for the eventual subversion of the constitution.

The peculiar situation of Castile, which had been so favorable to popular rights, was eminently so to those of the aristocracy. The nobles, embarked with their sovereign in the same common enterprise of rescuing their ancient patrimony from its invaders, felt entitled to divide with him the spoils of victory. Issuing forth, at the head of their own retainers, from their strong-holds or castles, (the great number of which was originally implied in the name of the country,) [48] they were continually enlarging the circuit of their territories, with no other assistance than that of their own good swords. [49] This independent mode of effecting their conquests would appear unfavorable to the introduction of the feudal
system, which, although its existence in Castile is clearly ascertained, by positive law, as well as usage, never prevailed to anything like the same extent as it did in the sister kingdom of Aragon, and other parts of Europe. [50]

The higher nobility, or _ricos hombres_, were exempted from general taxation, and the occasional attempt to infringe on this privilege in seasons of great public emergency, was uniformly repelled by this jealous body. [51] They could not be imprisoned for debt; nor be subjected to torture, so repeatedly sanctioned in other cases by the municipal law of Castile. They had the right of deciding their private feuds by an appeal to arms; a right of which they liberally availed themselves. [52] They also claimed the privilege, when aggrieved, of denaturalizing themselves, or, in other words, of publicly renouncing their allegiance to their sovereign, and of enlisting under the banners of his enemy. [53] The number of petty states, which swarmed over the Peninsula, afforded ample opportunity for the exercise of this disorganizing prerogative. The Laras are particularly noticed by Mariana, as having a "great relish for rebellion," and the Castros as being much in the habit of going over to the Moors. [54] They assumed the license of arraying themselves in armed confederacy against the monarch, on any occasion of popular disgust, and they solemnized the act by the most imposing ceremonials of religion. [55] Their rights of jurisdiction, derived to them, it would seem, originally from royal grant, [56] were in a great measure defeated by the liberal charters of incorporation, which, in imitation of the sovereign, they conceded to their vassals, as well as by the gradual encroachment of the royal judicatures. [57] In virtue of their birth they monopolized all the
higher offices of state, as those of constable and admiral of Castile, _adelantados_ or governors of the provinces, cities, etc. [58] They secured to themselves the grand-masterships of the military orders, which placed at their disposal an immense amount of revenue and patronage. Finally, they entered into the royal or privy council, and formed a constituent portion of the national legislature.

These important prerogatives were of course favorable to the accumulation of great wealth. Their estates were scattered over every part of the kingdom, and, unlike the grandees of Spain at the present day, [59] they resided on them in person, maintaining the state of petty sovereigns, and surrounded by a numerous retinue, who served the purposes of a pageant in time of peace, and an efficient military force in war. The demesnes of John, lord of Biscay, confiscated by Alfonso the Eleventh to the use of the crown, in 1327, amounted to more than eighty towns and castles. [60] The "good constable" Davalos, in the time of Henry the Third, could ride through his own estates all the way from Seville to Compostella, almost the two extremities of the kingdom. [61] Alvaro de Luna, the powerful favorite of John the Second, could muster twenty thousand vassals. [62] A contemporary, who gives a catalogue of the annual rents of the principal Castilian nobility at the close of the fifteenth or beginning of the following century, computes several at fifty and sixty thousand ducats a year, [63] an immense income, if we take into consideration the value of money in that age. The same writer estimates their united revenues as equal to one-third of those in the whole kingdom. [64]

These ambitious nobles did not consume their fortunes, or their energies
in a life of effeminate luxury. From their earliest boyhood they were accustomed to serve in the ranks against the infidel, [65] and their whole subsequent lives were occupied either with war, or with those martial exercises which reflect the image of it. Looking back with pride to their ancient Gothic descent, and to those times, when they had stood forward as the peers, the electors of their sovereign, they could ill brook the slightest indignity at his hand. [66] With these haughty feelings and martial habits, and this enormous assumption of power, it may readily be conceived that they would not suffer the anarchical provisions of the constitution, which seemed to concede an almost unlimited license of rebellion, to remain a dead letter. Accordingly, we find them perpetually convulsing the kingdom with their schemes of selfish aggrandizement. The petitions of the commons are filled with remonstrances on their various oppressions, and the evils resulting from their long, desolating feuds. So that, notwithstanding the liberal forms of its constitution, there was probably no country in Europe, during the Middle Ages, so sorely afflicted with the vices of intestine anarchy, as Castile. These were still further aggravated by the improvident donations of the monarch to the aristocracy, in the vain hope of conciliating their attachment, but which swelled their already overgrown power to such a height, that, by the middle of the fifteenth century, it not only overshadowed that of the throne, but threatened to subvert the liberties of the state.

Their self-confidence, however, proved eventually their ruin. They disdained a co-operation with the lower orders in defence of their privileges, and relied too unhesitatingly on their power as a body, to feel jealous of their exclusion from the national legislature, where alone
they could have made an effectual stand against the usurpations of the crown.--The course of this work will bring under review the dexterous policy, by which the crown contrived to strip the aristocracy of its substantial privileges, and prepared the way for the period, when it should retain possession only of a few barren though ostentatious dignities. [67]

The inferior orders of nobility, the _hidalgos_, (whose dignity, like that of the _ricos hombres_, would seem, as their name imports, to have been originally founded on wealth,) [68] and the _cavalleros_, or knights, enjoyed many of the immunities of the higher class, especially that of exemption from taxation. [69] Knighthood appears to have been regarded with especial favor by the law of Castile. Its ample privileges and its duties are defined with a precision and in a spirit of romance, that might have served for the court of King Arthur. [70] Spain was indeed the land of chivalry. The respect for the sex, which had descended from the Visigoths, [71] was mingled with the religious enthusiasm, which had been kindled in the long wars with the infidel. The apotheosis of chivalry, in the person of their apostle and patron, St. James, [72] contributed still further to this exaltation of sentiment, which was maintained by the various military orders, who devoted themselves, in the bold language of the age, to the service "of God and the ladies." So that the Spaniard may be said to have put in action what, in other countries, passed for the extravagances of the minstrel. An example of this occurs in the fifteenth century, when a passage of arms was defended at Orbigo, not Quenones, and his nine companions, against all comers, in the presence of John the Second and his court. Its object was to release the knight from
the obligation, imposed on him by his mistress, of publicly wearing an iron collar round his neck every Thursday. The jousts continued for thirty days, and the doughty champions fought without shield or target, with weapons bearing points of Milan steel. Six hundred and twenty-seven encounters took place, and one hundred and sixty-six lances were broken, when the emprise was declared to be fairly achieved. The whole affair is narrated with becoming gravity by an eye-witness, and the reader may fancy himself perusing the adventures of a Launcelot or an Amadis. [73]

The influence of the ecclesiastics in Spain may be traced back to the age of the Visigoths, when they controlled the affairs of the state in the great national councils of Toledo. This influence was maintained by the extraordinary position of the nation after the conquest. The holy warfare, in which it was embarked, seemed to require the co-operation of the clergy, to propitiate Heaven in its behalf, to interpret its mysterious omens, and to move all the machinery of miracles, by which the imagination is so powerfully affected in a rude and superstitious age. They even condescended, in imitation of their patron saint, to mingle in the ranks, and, with the crucifix in their hands, to lead the soldiers on to battle. Examples of these militant prelates are to be found in Spain so late as the sixteenth century. [74]

But, while the native ecclesiastics obtained such complete ascendancy over the popular mind, the Roman See could boast of less influence in Spain than in any other country in Europe. The Gothic liturgy was alone received, as canonical until the eleventh century; [75] and, until the twelfth, the sovereign held the right of jurisdiction over all
ecclesiastical causes, of collating to benefices, or at least of confirming or annulling the election of the chapters. The code of Alfonso the Tenth, however, which borrowed its principles of jurisprudence from the civil and canon law, completed a revolution already begun, and transferred these important prerogatives to the pope, who now succeeded in establishing a usurpation over ecclesiastical rights in Castile, similar to that which had been before effected in other parts of Christendom. Some of these abuses, as that of the nomination of foreigners to benefices, were carried to such an impudent height, as repeatedly provoked the indignant remonstrances of the cortes. The ecclesiastics, eager to indemnify themselves for what they had sacrificed to Rome, were more than ever solicitous to assert their independence of the royal jurisdiction. They particularly insisted on their immunity from taxation, and were even reluctant to divide with the laity the necessary burdens of a war, which, from its sacred character, would seem to have imperative claims on them.

[76]

Notwithstanding the immediate dependence thus established on the head of the church by the legislation of Alfonso the Tenth, the general immunities secured by it to the ecclesiastics operated as a powerful bounty on their increase; and the mendicant orders in particular, that spiritual militia of the popes, were multiplied over the country to an alarming extent. Many of their members were not only incompetent to the duties of their profession, being without the least tincture of liberal culture, but fixed a deep stain on it by the careless laxity of their morals. Open concubinage was familiarly practised by the clergy, as well as laity, of the period; and, so far from being reprobated by the law of the land,
seems ancieny to have been countenanced by it. [77] This moral
insensibility may probably be referred to the contagious example of their
Mahometan neighbors; but, from whatever source derived, the practice was
indulged to such a shameless extent, that, as the nation advanced in
refinement, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, it became the
subject of frequent legislative enactments, in which the concubines of the
clergy are described as causing general scandal by their lawless
effrontery and ostentatious magnificence of apparel. [78]

Notwithstanding this prevalent licentiousness of the Spanish
ecclesiastics, their influence became every day more widely extended,
while this ascendency, for which they were particularly indebted in that
rude age to their superior learning and capacity, was perpetuated by their
enormous acquisitions of wealth. Scarcely a town was reconquered from the
Moors, without a considerable portion of its territory being appropriated
to the support of some ancient, or the foundation of some new, religious
establishment. These were the common reservoir, into which flowed the
copious streams of private as well as royal bounty; and, when the
consequences of these alienations in mortmain came to be visible in the
impoverishment of the public revenue, every attempt at legislative
interference was in a great measure defeated by the piety or superstition
of the age. The abbess of the monastery of Huelgas, which was situated
within the precincts of Burgos, and contained within its walls one hundred
and fifty nuns of the noblest families in Castile, exercised jurisdiction
ever fourteen capital towns, and more than fifty smaller places; and she
was accounted inferior to the queen only in dignity. [79] The archbishop
of Toledo, by virtue of his office primate of Spain and grand chancellor
of Castile, was esteemed, after the pope, the highest ecclesiastical
dignitary in Christendom. His revenues, at the close of the fifteenth
century, exceeded eighty thousand ducats; while the gross amount of those
of the subordinate beneficiaries of his church rose to one hundred and
eighty thousand. He could muster a greater number of vassals than any
other subject in the kingdom, and held jurisdiction over fifteen large and
populous towns, besides a great number of inferior places. [80]

These princely funds, when intrusted to pious prelates, were munificently
dispensed in useful public works, and especially in the foundation of
eleemosynary institutions, with which every great city in Castile was
liberally supplied. [81] But, in the hands of worldly men, they were
perverted from these noble uses to the gratification of personal vanity,
or the disorganizing schemes of faction. The moral perceptions of the
people, in the mean time, were confused by the visible demeanor of a
hierarchy, so repugnant to the natural conceptions of religious duty. They
learned to attach an exclusive value to external rites, to the forms
rather than the spirit of Christianity; estimating the piety of men by
their speculative opinions, rather than their practical conduct.--The
ancient Spaniards, notwithstanding their prevalent superstition, were
untinctured with the fiercer religious bigotry of later times; and the
uncharitable temper of their priests, occasionally disclosed in the heats
of religious war, was controlled by public opinion, which accorded a high
degree of respect to the intellectual, as well as political superiority of
the Arabs. But the time was now coming when these ancient barriers were to
be broken down; when a difference of religious sentiment was to dissolve
all the ties of human brotherhood; when uniformity of faith was to be
purchased by the sacrifice of any rights, even those of intellectual freedom; when, in fine, the Christian and the Mussulman, the oppressor and the oppressed, were to be alike bowed down under the strong arm of ecclesiastical tyranny. The means by which a revolution so disastrous to Spain was effected, as well as the incipient stages of its progress, are topics that fall within the scope of the present history.

From the preceding survey of the constitutional privileges enjoyed by the different orders of the Castilian monarchy, previous to the fifteenth century, it is evident that the royal authority must have been circumscribed within very narrow limits. The numerous states, into which the great Gothic empire was broken after the conquest, were individually too insignificant to confer on their respective sovereigns the possession of extensive power, or even to authorize their assumption of that state, by which, it is supported in the eyes of the vulgar. When some more fortunate prince, by conquest or alliance, had enlarged the circle of his dominions, and thus in some measure remedied the evil, it was sure to recur upon his death, by the subdivision of his estates among his children. This mischievous practice was even countenanced by public opinion; for the different districts of the country, in their habitual independence of each other, acquired an exclusiveness of feeling, which made it difficult for them ever cordially to coalesce; and traces of this early repugnance to each other are to be discerned in the mutual jealousies and local peculiarities which still distinguish the different sections of the Peninsula, after their consolidation into one monarchy for more than three centuries.
The election to the crown, although no longer vested in the hands of the national assembly, as with the Visigoths, was yet subject to its approbation. The title of the heir apparent was formerly recognized by a cortes convoked for the purpose; and, on the demise of his parent, the new sovereign again convened the estates to receive their oath of allegiance, which they cautiously withheld until he had first sworn to preserve inviolate the liberties of the constitution. Nor was this a merely nominal privilege, as was evinced on more than one memorable occasion. [82]

We have seen, in our review of the popular branch of the government, how closely its authority pressed even on the executive functions of the administration. The monarch was still further controlled, in this department, by his Royal or Privy Council, consisting of the chief nobility and great officers of state, to which, in later times, a deputation of the commons was sometimes added. [83] This body, together with the king, had cognizance of the most important public transactions, whether of a civil, military, or diplomatic nature. It was established by positive enactment, that the prince, without its consent, had no right to alienate the royal demesne, to confer pensions beyond a very limited amount, or to nominate to vacant benefices. [84] His legislative powers were to be exercised in concurrence with the cortes; [85] and, in the judicial department, his authority, during the latter part of the period under review, seems to have been chiefly exercised in the selection of officers for the higher judicatures, from a list of candidates presented to him on a vacancy by their members concurrently with his privy council. [86]
The scantiness of the king's revenue corresponded with that of his constitutional authority. By an ancient law, indeed, of similar tenor with one familiar to the Saracens, the sovereign was entitled to a fifth of the spoils of victory. [87] This, in the course of the long wars with the Moslems, would have secured him more ample possessions than were enjoyed by any prince in Christendom. But several circumstances concurred to prevent it.

The long minorities, with which Castile was afflicted perhaps more than any country in Europe, frequently threw the government into the hands of the principal nobility, who perverted to their own emoluments the high powers intrusted to them. They usurped the possessions of the crown, and invaded some of its most valuable privileges; so that the sovereign's subsequent life was often consumed in fruitless attempts to repair the losses of his minority. He sometimes, indeed, in the impotence of other resources, resorted to such unhappy expedients as treachery and assassination. [88] A pleasant tale is told by the Spanish historians, of the more innocent device of Henry the Third, for the recovery of the estates extorted from the crown by the rapacious nobles during his minority.

Returning home late one evening, fatigued and half famished, from a hunting expedition, he was chagrined to find no refreshment prepared for him, and still more so, to learn from his steward, that he had neither money nor credit to purchase it. The day's sport, however, fortunately furnished the means of appeasing the royal appetite; and, while this was
in progress, the steward took occasion to contrast the indigent condition of the king with that of his nobles, who habitually indulged in the most expensive entertainments, and were that very evening feasting with the archbishop of Toledo. The prince, suppressing his indignation, determined, like the far-famed caliph in the "Arabian Nights," to inspect the affair in person, and, assuming a disguise, introduced himself privately into the archbishop's palace, where he witnessed with his own eyes the prodigal magnificence of the banquet, teeming with costly wines and the most luxurious viands.

The next day he caused a rumor to be circulated through the court, that he had fallen suddenly and dangerously ill. The courtiers, at these tidings, thronged to the palace; and, when they had all assembled, the king made his appearance among them, bearing his naked sword in his hand, and, with an aspect of unusual severity, seated himself on his throne at the upper extremity of the apartment.

After an interval of silence in the astonished assembly, the monarch, addressing himself to the primate, inquired of him, "How many sovereigns he had known in Castile?" The prelate answering four, Henry put the same question to the duke of Benevente, and so on to the other courtiers in succession. None of them, however, having answered more than five, "How is this," said the prince, "that you, who are so old, should have known so few, while I, young as I am, have beheld more than twenty! Yes," continued he, raising his voice, to the astonished multitude, "you are the real sovereigns of Castile, enjoying all the rights and revenues of royalty, while I, stripped of my patrimony, have scarcely wherewithal to procure
the necessaries of life." Then giving a concerted signal, his guards entered the apartment, followed by the public executioner bearing along with him the implements of death. The dismayed nobles, not relishing the turn the jest appeared likely to take, fell on their knees before the monarch and besought his forgiveness, promising, in requital, complete restitution of the fruits of their rapacity. Henry, content with having so cheaply gained his point, allowed himself to soften at their entreaties, taking care, however, to detain their persons as security for their engagements, until such time as the rents, royal fortresses, and whatever effects had been filched from the crown, were restored. The story, although repeated by the gravest Castilian writers, wears, it must be owned, a marvellous tinge of romance. But, whether fact, or founded on it, it may serve to show the dilapidated condition of the revenues at the beginning of the fourteenth century, and its immediate causes. [89]

Another circumstance, which contributed to impoverish the exchequer, was the occasional political revolutions in Castile, in which the adhesion of a faction was to be purchased only by the most ample concessions of the crown.—Such was the violent revolution, which placed the House of Trastamara on the throne, in the middle of the fourteenth century.

But perhaps a more operative cause, than all these, of the alleged evil, was the conduct of those imbecile princes, who, with heedless prodigality, squandered the public resources on their own personal pleasures and unworthy minions. The disastrous reigns of John the Second and Henry the Fourth, extending over the greater portion of the fifteenth century, furnish pertinent examples of this. It was not unusual, indeed, for the
cortes, interposing its paternal authority, by passing an act for the partial resumption of grants thus illegally made, in some degree to repair the broken condition of the finances. Nor was such a resumption unfair to the actual proprietors. The promise to maintain the integrity of the royal demesnes formed an essential part of the coronation oath of every sovereign; and the subject, on whom he afterwards conferred them, knew well by what a precarious, illicit tenure he was to hold them.

From the view which has been presented of the Castilian constitution at the beginning of the fifteenth century, it is apparent, that the sovereign was possessed of less power, and the people of greater, than in other European monarchies at that period. It must be owned, however, as before intimated, that the practical operation did not always correspond with the theory of their respective functions in these rude times; and that the powers of the executive, being susceptible of greater compactness and energy in their movements, than could possibly belong to those of more complex bodies, were sufficiently strong in the hands of a resolute prince, to break down the comparatively feeble barriers of the law.

Neither were the relative privileges, assigned to the different orders of the state, equitably adjusted. Those of the aristocracy were indefinite and exorbitant. The license of armed combinations too, so freely assumed both by this order and the commons, although operating as a safety-valve for the escape of the effervescing spirit of the age, was itself obviously repugnant to all principles of civil obedience, and exposed the state to evils scarcely less disastrous than those which it was intended to prevent.
It was apparent, that, notwithstanding the magnitude of the powers
conceded to the nobility and the commons, there were important defects,
which prevented them from resting on any sound and permanent basis. The
representation of the people in cortes, instead of partially emanating, as
in England, from an independent body of landed proprietors, constituting
the real strength of the nation, proceeded exclusively from the cities,
whose elections were much more open to popular caprice and ministerial
corruption, and whose numerous local jealousies prevented them from acting
in cordial co-operation. The nobles, notwithstanding their occasional
cCoalitions, were often arrayed in feuds against each other. They relied,
for the defence of their privileges, solely on their physical strength,
and heartily disdained, in any emergency, to support their own cause by
identifying it with that of the commons. Hence, it became obvious, that
the monarch, who, notwithstanding his limited prerogative, assumed the
anomalous privilege of transacting public business with the advice of only
one branch of the legislature, and of occasionally dispensing altogether
with the attendance of the other, might, by throwing his own influence
into the scale, give the preponderance to whichever party he should
prefer; and, by thus dexterously availing himself of their opposite
forces, erect his own authority on the ruins of the weaker.--How far and
how successfully this policy was pursued by Ferdinand and Isabella, will
be seen in the course of this History.

* * * * *

Notwithstanding the general diligence of the Spanish historians, they have
done little towards the investigation of the constitutional antiquities of
Castile, until the present century. Dr. Geddes's meagre notice of the
cortes preceded probably, by a long interval, any native work upon that
subject. Robertson frequently complains of the total deficiency of
authentic sources of information respecting the laws and government of
Castile; a circumstance, that suggests to a candid mind an obvious
explanation of several errors, into which he has fallen. Capmany, in the
preface to a work, compiled by order of the central junta in Seville, in
1809, on the ancient organization of the cortes in the different states of
the Peninsula, remarks, that "no author has appeared, down to the present
day, to instruct us in regard to the origin, constitution, and celebration
of the Castilian cortes, on all which topics there remains the most
profound ignorance." The melancholy results to which such an investigation
must necessarily lead, from the contrast it suggests of existing
institutions to the freer forms of antiquity, might well have deterred the
modern Spaniard from these inquiries; which, moreover, it can hardly be
supposed, would have received the countenance of government. The brief
interval, however, in the early part of the present century, when the
nation so ineffectually struggled to resume its ancient liberties, gave
birth to two productions, which have gone far to supply the
_desiderata_ in this department. I allude to the valuable works of
Marina, on the early legislation, and on the cortes, of Castile, to which
repeated reference has been made in this section. The latter, especially,
presents us with a full exposition of the appropriate functions assigned
to the several departments of government, and with the parliamentary
history of Castile deduced from original unpublished records.
It is unfortunate that his copious illustrations are arranged in so unskilful a manner as to give a dry and repulsive air to the whole work. The original documents, on which it is established, instead of being reserved for an appendix, and their import only conveyed in the text, stare at the reader in every page, arrayed in all the technicalities, periphrases, and repetitions incident to legal enactments. The course of the investigation is, moreover, frequently interrupted by impertinent dissertations on the constitution of 1812, in which the author has fallen into abundance of crudities, which he would have escaped, had he but witnessed the practical operation of those liberal forms of government, which he so justly admires. The sanguine temper of Marina has also betrayed him into the error of putting, too uniformly, a favorable construction on the proceedings of the commons, and of frequently deriving a constitutional precedent from what can only be regarded as an accidental and transient exertion of power in a season of popular excitement.

The student of this department of Spanish history may consult, in conjunction with Marina, Sempere's little treatise, often quoted, on the History of the Castilian Cortes. It is, indeed, too limited and desultory in its plan to afford anything like a complete view of the subject. But, as a sensible commentary, by one well skilled in the topics that he discusses, it is of undoubted value. Since the political principles and bias of the author were of an opposite character to Marina's, they frequently lead him to opposite conclusions in the investigation of the same facts. Making all allowance for obvious prejudices, Sempere's work, therefore, may be of much use in correcting the erroneous impressions made by the former writer, whose fabric of liberty too often rests, as
exemplified more than once in the preceding pages, on an ideal basis.

But, with every deduction, Marina's publications must be considered an important contribution to political science. They exhibit an able analysis of a constitution, which becomes singularly interesting, from its having furnished, together with that of the sister kingdom of Aragon, the earliest example of representative government, as well as from the liberal principles on which that government was long administered.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Aragon was formally released from this homage in 1177, and Portugal in 14; lib. 13, cap. 20.) The king of Granada, Aben Alahmar, swore fealty to St. Ferdinand, in 1245, binding himself to the payment of an annual rent, to serve under him with a stipulated number of his knights in war, and personally _attend cortes when summoned_;--a whimsical stipulation this for a Mahometan prince. Conde, Historia de la Dominacion de los Arabes en

[2] Navarre was too inconsiderable, and bore too near a resemblance in its government to the other Peninsular kingdoms, to require a separate notice; for which, indeed, the national writers afford but very scanty materials. The Moorish empire of Granada, so interesting in itself, and so dissimilar, in all respects, to Christian Spain, merits particular attention. I have deferred the consideration of it, however, to that period of the history which is occupied with its subversion. See Part I.,
Recesvinto, in order more effectually to bring about the consolidation of his Gothic and Roman subjects into one nation, abrogated the law prohibiting their intermarriage. The terms in which his enactment is conceived disclose a far more enlightened policy than that pursued either by the Franks or Lombards. (See the Fuero Juzgo, (ed. de la Acad., Madrid, 1815,) lib. 3, tit. 1, ley 1.)--The Visigothic code, Fuero Juzgo, (Forum Judicum,) originally compiled in Latin, was translated into Spanish under St. Ferdinand; a copy of which version was first printed in 1600, at Madrid. (Los Doctores Asso y Manuel, Instituciones del Derecho Civil de Castilla, (Madrid, 1792,) pp. 6, 7.) A second edition, under the supervision of the Royal Spanish Academy, was published in 1815. This compilation, notwithstanding the apparent rudeness and even ferocity of some of its features, may be said to have formed the basis of all the subsequent legislation of Castile. It was, doubtless, the exclusive contemplation of these features, which brought upon these laws the frivoles dans le fond et gigantesques dans le style." Espirit des Loix, liv. 28, chap. 1.

Some of the local usages, afterwards incorporated in the _fueros_, or charters, of the Castilian communities, may probably be derived from the time of the Visigoths. The English reader may form a good idea of the
tenor of the legal institutions of this people and their immediate
descendants, from an article in the sixty-first Number of the Edinburgh
Review, written with equal learning and vivacity.

[6] The Christians, in all matters exclusively relating to themselves,
were governed by their own laws, (See the Fuero Juzgo, Introd. p. 40.)
administered by their own judges, subject only in capital cases to an
appeal to the Moorish tribunals. Their churches and monasteries (\textit{rosae
inter spinas}, says the historian) were scattered over the principal
towns, Cordova retaining seven, Toledo six, etc.; and their clergy were
allowed to display the costume, and celebrate the pompous ceremonial, of
cap. 78.--Conde, Domination de los Arabes, part 1, cap. 15, 22.

resident among the Moors appear in the record of those times. (See Salazar
we could rely on a singular fact, quoted by Zurita, we might infer that a
large proportion of the Goths were content to reside among their Saracen
conquerors. The intermarriages among the two nations had been so frequent,
that, in 1311, the ambassador of James II., of Aragon, stated to his
Holiness, Pope Clement V., that of 200.000 persons composing the
population of Granada, not more than 500 were of pure Moorish descent!
(Anales de la Corona de Aragon, (Zaragoza, 1610,) lib. 5, cap. 93.) As the
object of the statement was to obtain certain ecclesiastical aids from the
pontiff, in the prosecution of the Moorish war, it appears very
suspicious, notwithstanding the emphasis laid on it by the historian.
This author states, that in his time there were several families in Ireland, whose patronymics bore testimony to their descent from these Spanish exiles. That careful antiquarian, Morales, considers the regions of the Pyrenees lying betwixt Aragon and Navarre, together with the Asturias, Biscay, Guipuscoa, the northern portion of Galicia and the Alpuxarras, (the last retreat, too, of the Moors, under the Christian domination,) to have been untouched by the Saracen invaders. See lib. 12, cap. 76.

[9] The lot of the Visigothic slave was sufficiently hard. The oppressions, which this unhappy race endured, were such as to lead Mr. Southey, in his excellent Introduction to the "Chronicle of the Cid," to impute to their co-operation, in part, the easy conquest of the country by the Arabs. But, although the laws, in relation to them, seem to be taken up with determining their incapacities rather than their privileges, it is probable that they secured to them, on the whole, quite as great a degree of civil consequence, as was enjoyed by similar classes in the rest of Europe. By the Fuero Juzgo, the slave was allowed to acquire property for himself, and with it to purchase his own redemption. (Lib. 5, tit. 4, ley 16.) A certain proportion of every man's slaves were also required to bear arms, and to accompany their master to the field. (Lib. 9, tit 2, ley 8.) But their relative rank is better ascertained by the amount of composition (that accurate measurement of civil rights with all the barbarians of the north) prescribed for any personal violence inflicted on them. Thus, by the Salic law, the life of a free Roman was estimated at only one-fifth of that of a Frank, (Lex Salica, tit. 43, sec. 1, 8;) while, by the law of
the Visigoths, the life of a slave was valued at half of that of a
freeman, (lib. 6, tit. 4, ley 1.) In the latter code, moreover, the master
was prohibited, under the severe penalties of banishment and sequestration
of property, from either maiming or murdering his own slave, (lib. 6, tit.
5, leyes 12, 13;) while, in other codes of the barbarians, the penalty was
confined to similar trespasses on the slaves of another; and, by the Salic
law, no higher mulct was imposed for killing, than for kidnapping a slave.
(Lex Salica, tit. 11, sec. 1, 3.) The legislation of the Visigoths, in
those particulars, seems to have regarded this unhappy race as not merely
a distinct species of property. It provided for their personal security,
instead of limiting itself to the indemnification of their masters.

about 850.

[12] Toledo was not reconquered until 1085; Lisbon, in 1147.

[13] The archbishops of Toledo, whose revenues and retinues far exceeded
those of the other ecclesiastics, were particularly conspicuous in these
holy wars. Mariana, speaking of one of these belligerent prelates,
considers it worthy of encomium, that "it is not easy to decide whether he
was most conspicuous for his good government in peace, or his conduct and

[14] The first occasion, on which the military apostle condescended to
reveal himself to the Leonese, was the memorable day of Clavijo, A. D. 844, when 70,000 infidels fell on the field. From that time, the name of St. Jago became the battle-cry of the Spaniards. The truth of the story is attested by a contemporary charter of Ramiro I. to the church of the saint, granting it an annual tribute of corn and wine from the towns in his dominions, and a knight's portion of the spoils of every victory over the Mussulmans. The _privilegio del voto_, as it is called, is given

and is unhesitatingly cited by most of the Spanish historians, as Garibay, Mariana, Morales, and others.—More sharp-sighted critics discover, in its anachronisms, and other palpable blunders, ample evidence of its forgery. (Mondejar, Advertencies &, la Historia de Mariana (Valencia, 1746,) no. (Madrid, 1783-1805,) tom. xvi. supl. 18.) The canons of Compostella, however, seem to have found their account in it, as the tribute of good cheer, which it imposed, continued to be paid by some of the Castilian

French, Flemish, Italian, and English volunteers, led by men of distinguished rank, are recorded by the Spanish writers to have been present at the sieges of Toledo, Lisbon, Algeziras, and various others. More than sixty, or, as some accounts state, a hundred thousand, joined the army before the battle of Navas de Tolosa; a round exaggeration, which, however, implies the great number of such auxiliaries. (Garibay, 12, cap. 33.) The crusades in Spain were as rational enterprises, as those in the East were vain and chimerical. Pope Pascal II. acted like a man of sense, when he sent back certain Spanish adventurers, who had embarked in the wars of Palestine, telling them that "the cause of religion could be..."
much better served by them at home."


7.

[17] The oldest manuscript extant of this poem, (still preserved at Bivar, the hero's birth-place,) bears the date of 1207, or at latest 1307, for there is some obscurity in the writing. Its learned editor, Sanchez, has been led by the peculiarities of its orthography, metre, and idiom, to Castellanas anteriores al Siglo XV. (Madrid 1779-90,) tom. i. p. 223.)

Some of the late Spanish antiquaries have manifested a skepticism in relation to the "Cid," truly alarming. A volume was published at Madrid, in 1792, by Risco, under the title of "Castilla, o Historia de Rodrigo Diaz," etc., which the worthy father ushered into the world with much solemnity, as a transcript of an original manuscript coeval with the time of the "Cid," and fortunately discovered by him in an obscure corner of document, has been led to scrutinize the grounds on which the reputed achievements of the "Cid" have rested from time immemorial, and concludes with the startling assertion, that "of Rodrigo Diaz, el Campeador, we absolutely know nothing with any degree of probability, not even his counymen, that will thus coolly acquiesce in the annihilation of their favorite hero, whose exploits have been the burden of chronicle, as well as romance, from the twelfth century down to the present day.
They may find a warrant for their fond credulity, in the dispassionate
judgment of one of the greatest of modern historians, John Muller, who, so
far from doubting the existence of the Campeador, has succeeded, in his
own opinion at least, in clearing from his history the "mists of fable and
extravagance," in which it has been shrouded. See his Life of the Cid,
appended to Escobar's "Romancero," edited by the learned and estimable Dr.
Julius, of Berlin. Frankfort, 1828.

[18] A modern minstrel inveighs loudly against this charity of his
ancestors, who devoted their "cantos de cigarra," to the glorification of
this "Moorish rabble," instead of celebrating the prowess of the Cid,
Bernardo, and other worthies of their own nation. His discourtesy,
however, is well rebuked by a more generous brother of the craft.

"No es culpa si de los Moros
los valientes hechos cantan,
pues tanto mas resplandecen
que el encarecer los hechos
del vencido en la batalla,
engrandece al vencedor,
aunque no hablen de el palabra."

[19] When the empress queen of Alfonso VII. was besieged in the castle of Azeca, in 1139, she reproached the Moslem cavaliers for their want of courtesy and courage in attacking a fortress defended by a female. They acknowledged the justice of the rebuke, and only requested that she would condescend to show herself to them from her palace; when the Moorish chivalry, after paying their obeisance to her in the most respectful manner, instantly raised the siege, and departed. (Ferreras, Histoire 410.) It was a frequent occurrence to restore a noble captive to liberty without ransom, and even with costly presents. Thus Alfonso XI. sent back to their father two daughters of a Moorish prince, who formed part of the

32.) When this same Castilian sovereign, after a career of almost uninterrupted victory over the Moslems, died of the plague before Gibraltar, in 1350, the knights of Granada put on mourning for him, saying, that "he was a noble prince, and one that knew how to honor his enemies as well as his friends." Conde, Domination de los Arabes, tom. iii. p. 149.

[20] One of the most extraordinary achievements, in this way, was that of the grand master of Alcantara, in 1394, who, after ineffectually challenging the king of Granada to meet him in single combat, or with a force double that of his own, marched boldly up to the gates of his capital, where he was assailed by such an overwhelming host, that he with

19, cap. 3.) It was over this worthy compeer of Don Quixote that the epitaph was inscribed, "Here lies one who never knew fear," which led Charles V. to remark to one of his courtiers, that "the good knight could never have tried to snuff a candle with his fingers."
This singular fact, of the existence of an Arabic military order, is recorded by Conde. (Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. i. p. 619, note.) The brethren were distinguished for the simplicity of their attire, and their austere and frugal habits. They were stationed on the Moorish marches, and were bound by a vow of perpetual war against the Christian infidel. As their existence is traced as far back as 1030, they may possibly have suggested the organization of similar institutions in Christendom, which they preceded by a century at least. The loyal historians of the Spanish military orders, it is true, would carry that of St. Jago as far back as the time of Ramiro I., in the ninth century; (Caro de Torres, Historia de las Ordenes Militares de Santiago, Calatrava, y Alcantara, (Madrid, 1629,) (Toledo, 1572,) fol. 4,) but less prejudiced critics, as Zurita and Mariana, are content with dating it from the papal bull of Alexander III., 1175.

In one of the Paston letters, we find the notice of a Spanish knight appearing at the court of Henry VI., "wyth a Kercheff of Plesaunce iwrapped aboute hys arme, the gwych Knight," says the writer, "wyl renne a cours wyth a sharpe spere for his sou'eyn lady sake." (Fenn, Original Letters, (1787,) vol. i. p. 6.) The practice of using sharp spears, instead of the guarded and blunted weapons usual in the tournament, seems to have been affected by the chivalrous nobles of Castile; many of whom, says the chronicle of Juan II., lost their lives from this circumstance, in the splendid tourney given in honor of the nuptials of Blanche of 1779.) p. 411.) Monstrelet records the adventures of a Spanish cavalier,
who "travelled all the way to the court of Burgundy to seek honor and reverence" by his feats of arms. His antagonist was the Lord of Chargny; on the second day they fought with battle-axes, and "the Castilian attracted general admiration, by his uncommon daring in fighting with his visor up." Chroniques, (Paris, 1595,) tom. ii. p. 109.

[23] The Venetian ambassador, Navagiero, speaking of the manners of the Castilian nobles, in Charles V.'s time, remarks somewhat bluntly, that, "if their power were equal to their pride, the whole world would not be able to withstand them." Viaggio fatto in Spagna et in Francia, (Vinegia, 1563,) fol. 10.

[24] The most ancient of these regular charters of incorporation, now extant, was granted by Alfonso V., in 1020, to the city of Leon and its territory. (Mariana rejects those of an earlier date, adduced by Asso and Legislation de Castilla, (Madrid, 1808,) pp. 80-82.) It preceded, by a long interval, those granted to the burgesses in other parts of Europe, with the exception, perhaps, of Italy; where several of the cities, as Milan, Pavia, and Pisa, seem early in the eleventh century to have exercised some of the functions of independent states. But the extent of municipal immunities conceded to, or rather assumed by, the Italian cities at this early period, is very equivocal; for their indefatigable antiquarian confesses that all, or nearly all their archives, previous to the time of Frederick I., (the latter part of the twelfth century,) had perished amid their frequent civil convulsions. (See the subject in 1752,) dissert. 45.) Acts of enfranchisement became frequent in Spain
during the eleventh century; several of which are preserved, and exhibit, with sufficient precision, the nature of the privileges accorded to the inhabitants.--Robertson, who wrote when the constitutional antiquities of Castile had been but slightly investigated, would seem to have little authority, therefore, for deriving the establishment of communities from Italy, and still less for tracing their progress through France and Germany to Spain. See his History of the Reign of the Emperor Charles V, (London, 1796,) vol. i. pp. 29, 30.

[25] For this account of the ancient polity of the Castilian cities, the (Madrid, 1813, part. 2, cap. 21-23,) where the meagre outline given above is filled up with copious illustration.

[26] The independence of the Lombard cities had been sacrificed, according to the admission of their enthusiastic historian, about the middle of the Moyen-Age, (Paris, 1818,) ch. 20.

345,) where the fact is mentioned; Mariana refers this celebration of often rectifies the chronological inaccuracies of his predecessor, fixes it in 1169. (Hist. d'Espagne, tom. iii. p. 484) Neither of these authors notices the presence of the commons in this assembly; although the phrase used by the Chronicle, _los cibdadanos_, is perfectly unequivocal.

Valencia, (Madrid, 1821,) pp. 230, 231.--Whether the convocation of the
third estate to the national councils proceeded from politic calculation
in the sovereign, or was in a manner forced on him by the growing power
and importance of the cities, it is now too late to inquire. It is nearly
as difficult to settle on what principles the selection of cities to be
represented depended. Marina asserts, that every great town and community
was entitled to a seat in the legislature, from the time of receiving its

Sempere agrees, that this right became general, from the first, to all who

probably, was not much insisted on by the smaller and poorer places,
which, from the charges it involved, felt it often, no doubt, less of a
boon than a burden. This, we know, was the case in England.

[29] It was an evil of scarcely less magnitude, that contested elections

latter of these practices, and, indeed, the former to a certain extent,
are to be met with in English history.

28.) Indeed, there seems to have been some irregularity in the
parliamentary usages themselves. From minutes of a meeting of cortes at
Toledo, in 1538, too soon for any material innovation on the ancient
practice, we find the three estates sitting in separate chambers, from the
very commencement to the close of the session. See the account drawn up by

[31] This, however, so contrary to the analogy of other European
governments, is expressly contradicted by the declaration of the nobles,
at the cortes of Toledo, in 1538. “Oida esta respuesta se dijo, que pues
cosa alguna, _que ellos sin procuradores, y los procuradores sin ellos,

[32] This omission of the privileged orders was almost uniform under Charles V. and his successors. But it would be unfair to seek for constitutional precedent in the usages of a government, whose avowed policy was altogether subversive of the constitution.

[33] During the famous war of the _Comunidades_, under Charles V. For Castile seem to have reposed but a very limited confidence in their delegates, whom they furnished with instructions, to which they were bound

[34] The term "fundamental principle" is fully authorized by the existence of repeated enactments to this effect. Sempere, who admits the "usage," objects to the phrase "fundamental law," on the ground that these acts

254.

[35] "Los Reyes en nuestros Reynos progenitores establecieron por leyes, y pechos, servicios, pedidos, ni monedas, ni otros tributes nuevos, especial, ni generalmente en todos nuestros Reynos, sin que primeramente Cortes vinieren." (Recopilacion de las Leyes, (Madrid, 1640,) tom. ii. fol. 124.) This law, passed under Alfonso XI., was confirmed by John II.,
Henry III., and Charles V.

[36] In 1258, they presented a variety of petitions to the king, in relation to his own personal expenditure, as well as that of his courtiers; requiring him to diminish the charges of his table, attire, etc., and, bluntly, to "bring his appetite within a more reasonable compass;" to all which he readily gave his assent. (Sempere y Guarinos, tom. i. pp. 91, 92.) The English reader is reminded of a very different result, which attended a similar interposition of the commons in the time of Richard II., more than a century later.

[37] Marina claims also the right of the cortes to be consulted on questions of war and peace, of which he adduces several precedents.

held the peculiar province of the executive, was perhaps encouraged by the sovereign, with the politic design of relieving himself of the responsibility of measures whose success must depend eventually on their support. Hallam notices a similar policy of the crown, under Edward III., in his view of the English constitution during the Middle Ages. View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages, (London, 1819,) vol. iii. chap. 8.

[38] The recognition of the title of the heir apparent, by a cortes convoked for that purpose, has continued to be observed in Castile down to
cap. 13, 19, 20, 21, 31, 35, 37, 38.

[40] So at least they are styled by Marina. See his account of these

12, 13.) One hundred cities associated in the Hermandad of 1315. In that
of 1295, were thirty-four. The knights and inferior nobility frequently
made part of the association. The articles of confederation are given by

1826,) tom. xxxvi. p. 162.) In one of these articles it is declared, that,
if any noble shall deprive a member of the association of his property,
and refuse restitution, his house shall be razed to the ground. (Art. 4.)
In another, that if any one, by command of the king, shall attempt to
collect an unlawful tax, he shall be put to death on the spot. Art. 9.


plate, were exported in considerable quantities from Spain, the tenth and
eleventh centuries. They were much used in the churches. The tiara of the
pope was so richly encrusted with the precious metals, says Masdeu, as to
receive the name of _Spanodista_. The familiar use of these metals as
ornaments of dress is attested by the ancient poem of the "Cid." See, in
particular, the costume of the Campeador; vv. 3099 et seq.

pp. 74, 75.--Sempere, Historia del Luxo, tom. i. p. 80.

[43] The historian of Seville describes that city, about the middle of the
fifteenth century, as possessing a flourishing commerce and a degree of
opulence unexampled since the conquest. It was filled with an active
population, employed in the various mechanic arts. Its domestic fabrics,
as well as natural products, of oil, wine, wool, etc., supplied a trade

341.--See also Sempere, Historia del Luxo, p. 81, nota 2.) The ports of
Biscay, which belonged to the Castilian crown, were the marts of an
extensive trade with the north, during the thirteenth and fourteenth
centuries. This province entered into repeated treaties of commerce with
France and England; and her factories were established at Bruges, the
great emporium of commercial intercourse during this period between the
north and south, before those of any other people in Europe, except the
de la Historia, (Madrid, 1802,) tom. i. p. 333.)

Descriptif de l'Espagne, (Paris, 1827-1830,) tom. iv. p. 47,) to the
middle of the fourteenth century, when the great plague, which devastated
the country so sorely, left large depopulated tracts open to pasturage.
This popular opinion is erroneous, since it engaged the attention of
government, and became the subject of legislation as anciently as 1273,
under Alfonso the Wise. (See Asso y Manuel, Instituciones, Introd. p. 56.)
Capmany, however, dates the great improvement in the breed of Spanish
sheep from the year 1394, when Catharine of Lancaster brought with her, as
a part of her dowry to the heir apparent of Castile, a flock of English
merinos, distinguished, at that time, above those of every other country,

336, 337.) This acute writer, after a very careful examination of the


subject, differing from those already quoted, considers the raw material
for manufacture, and the natural productions of the soil, to have
constituted almost the only articles of export from Spain, until after the
fifteenth century. (Ibid., p. 338.) We will remark, in conclusion of this
desultory note, that the term _merinos_ is derived, by Conde, from
_moedinos_, signifying "wandering;" the name of an Arabian tribe, who
shifted their place of residence with the season. (Hist. de los Arabes en
professed etymologist.

[44] See the original acts, cited by Sempere. (Historia del Luxo, passim.)
The archpriest of Hita indulges his vein freely against the luxury,
cupidity, and other fashionable sins of his age. (See Sanchez, Poesias
Castellanas, tom. iv.)--The influence of Mammon appears to have been as
supreme in the fourteenth century as at any later period.

"Sea un ome nescio, et rudo labrador,
Los dineros le fasen fidalgo e sabidor,
Quanto mas algo tiene, tanto es mas de valor,
Vv. 465 et seq.

cap. 15.--The admission of citizens into the king's council would have
formed a most important epoch for the commons, had they not soon been
replaced by jurisconsults, whose studies and sentiments inclined them less
to the popular side than to that of prerogative.

[47] Ibid., lib. 18, cap. 17.

Livy mentions the great number of these towers in Spain in his day.

"Multas et locis altis positas turres Hispania habet." (Lib. 22, cap. 19.)--A castle was emblazoned on the escutcheon of Castile, as far back as the reign of Urraca, in the beginning of the twelfth century, according to no vestige of these arms on any instrument of a much older date than the beginning of the thirteenth century. Compendio, lib. 12, cap. 32.

[49]

"Hizo guerra a los Moros,
Ganando sus fortalezas
Y sus villas.

Caballeros y Caballos

Las rentas y los vasallos
Que le dieron." Coplas de Manrique, copla 31.

[50] Asso and Manuel derive the introduction of fiefs into Castile, from Catalonia. (Instituciones, p. 96.) The twenty-sixth title, part. 4, of Alfonso X.'s code, (Siete Partidas,) treats exclusively of them. (De los Feudos.) The laws 2, 4, 5, are expressly devoted to a brief exposition of
the nature of a fief, the ceremonies of investiture, and the reciprocal obligations of lord and vassal. Those of the latter consisted in keeping his lord's counsel, maintaining his interest, and aiding him in war. With all this, there are anomalies in this code, and still more in the usages of the country, not easy to explain on the usual principles of the feudal relation; a circumstance, which has led to much discrepancy of opinion on the subject, in political writers, as well as to some inconsistency. Sempere, who entertains no doubt of the establishment of feudal institutions in Castile, tells us, that "the nobles, after the Conquest, succeeded in obtaining an exemption from military service,"--one of the most conspicuous and essential of all the feudal relations. Histoire des

chap. 4.--The incensed nobles quitted the cortes in disgust, and threatened to vindicate their rights by arms, on one such occasion, 1176.

[52] Idem auctores, ubi supra.--Prieto y Sotelo, Historia del Derecho Real

[53] Siete Partidas, (ed. de la Real Acad., Madrid, 1807,) part. 4, tit. 25, ley 11. On such occasions they sent him a formal defiance by their

[54] Ibid., tom. i. pp. 707, 713.
John I., in 1390, authorized appeals from the seignorial tribunals to those of the crown. Ibid., tom. ii. p. 179.

The nature of these dignities is explained in Salazar de Mendoza,

From the scarcity of these baronial residences, some fanciful

See Bourgoanne, Travels in Spain, tom. ii. chap. 12.

Guzman, Generaciones y Semblanzas, (Madrid, 1775,) cap. 84.---His annual revenue is computed by Perez de Guzman, at 100,000 doblas of gold; a sum equivalent to 856,000 dollars at the present day.

guided by a dissertation of Clemencin, in the sixth volume of the Memorias de la Real Academia de la Historia, (Madrid, 1821. pp. 507-566,) in the
reduction of sums in this History. That treatise is very elaborate and ample, and brings under view all the different coins of Ferdinand and Isabella's time, settling their specific value with great accuracy. The calculation is attended with considerable difficulty, owing to the depreciation of the value of the precious metals, and the repeated adulteration of the _real_. In his tables, at the end, he exhibits the commercial value of the different denominations, ascertained by the quantity of wheat (as sure a standard as any), which they would buy at that day. Taking the average of values, which varied considerably in different years of Ferdinand and Isabella, it appears that the ducat, reduced to our own currency, will be equal to about eight dollars and seventy-seven cents, and the dobla to eight dollars and fifty-six cents.

[64] The ample revenues of the Spanish grandee of the present time, instead of being lavished on a band of military retainers, as of yore, are sometimes dispensed in the more peaceful hospitality of supporting an almost equally formidable host of needy relations and dependants. According to Bourgoanne (Travels in Spain, vol. 1. chap. 4), no less than 3000 of these gentry were maintained on the estates of the duke of Arcos, who died in 1780.

[65] Mendoza records the circumstance of the head of the family of Ponce de Leon, (a descendant of the celebrated marquis of Cadiz,) carrying his son, then thirteen years old, with him into battle; "an ancient usage," he says, "in that noble house." (Guerra de Granada, (Valencia, 1776,) p. 318.) The only son of Alfonso VI. was slain, fighting manfully in the ranks, at the battle of Ucles, in 1109, when only eleven years of age.
The northern provinces, the theatre of this primitive independence, have always been consecrated by this very circumstance, in the eyes of a Spaniard. "The proudest lord," says Navagiero, "feels it an honor to trace his pedigree to this quarter." (Viaggio, fol. 44.) The same feeling has continued, and the meanest native of Biscay, or the Asturias, at the present day, claims to be noble; a pretension, which often contrasts ridiculously enough with the humble character of his occupation, and has furnished many a pleasant anecdote to travellers.

An elaborate dissertation, by the advocate Don Alonso Carillo, on the pre-eminence and privileges of the Castilian grandee, is appended to Salazar de Mendoza's Origen de las Dignidades Seglares de Castilla, (Madrid, 1794.) The most prized of these appears to be that of keeping the head covered in the presence of the sovereign; "prerogativa tan ilustre," says the writer, "que ella sola imprime el principal caracter de la Grandeza. Y considerada _por sus efectos admirables_, ocupa dignamente el primero lugar." (Discurso 3.) The sentimental citizen Bourgoanne, finds it necessary to apologize to his republican brethren, for noticing these "important trifles." Travels in Spain, vol. i. chap. 4.

"Los llamaron fijosdalgo, que muestra a tanto como fijos de bien."
(Siete Partidas, part. 2, tit. 21.) "Por hidalgos se entienden _los
Instituciones, pp. 33, 34."
[69] Recop. de las Leyes, lib. 6, tit. 1, leyes 2, 9; tit. 2, leyes 3, 4, 10; tit. 14, leyes 14, 19.--They were obliged to contribute to the repair of fortifications and public works, although, as the statute expresses it, "tengan privilegios para que sean essentos de todos pechos."

[70] The knight was to array himself in light and cheerful vestments, and, in the cities and public places his person was to be enveloped in a long and flowing mantle, in order to impose greater reverence on the people. His good steed was to be distinguished by the beauty and richness of his caparisons. He was to live abstemiously, indulging himself in none of the effeminate delights of couch or banquet. During his repast, his mind was to be refreshed with the recital, from history, of deeds of ancient heroism; and in the fight he was commanded to invoke the name of his mistress, that it might infuse new ardor into his soul, and preserve him from the commission of unknighthly actions. See Siete Partidas, part, 2, tit. 21, which is taken up with defining the obligations of chivalry.

[71] See Fuero Juzgo, lib. 3, which is devoted almost exclusively to the sex. Montesquieu discerns in the jealous surveillance, which the Visigoths maintained over the honor of their women, so close an analogy with oriental usages, as must have greatly facilitated the conquest of the country by the Arabians. Esprit des Loix, liv. 14, chap. 14.

The present narrative will introduce the reader to more than one belligerent prelate, who filled the very highest post in the Spanish, and, I may say, the Christian Church, next the papacy. (See Alvaro Gomez, De Rebus Gestis a Francisco Ximenio Cisnerio, (Compluti, 1569,) fol. 110 et seq.) The practice, indeed, was familiar in other countries, as well as Spain, at this late period. In the bloody battle of Ravenna, in 1512, two cardinal legates, one of them the future Leo X., fought on opposite sides. Paolo Giovo, Vita Leonis X., apud "Vitae Illustrium Virorum," (Basiliae, 1578,) lib. 2.

The contest for supremacy, between the Mozarabic ritual and the Roman, is familiar to the reader, in the curious narrative extracted by 16.--The Jesuit Mariana appears to grudge this appropriation of the "sacred revenues of the Church" to defray the expenses of the holy war Ensayo, (nos. 322-364,) where Marina has analyzed and discussed the general import of the first of the Partidas.

Marina, Ensayo, ubi supra, and nos. 220 et seq.

See the original acts quoted by Sempere, in his Historia del Luxo, tom. i. pp. 166 et seq.
[80] Navagiero, Viaggio, fol. 9.---L. marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 12.--
Laborde reckons the revenues of this prelate, in his tables, at 12,000,000
grossly exaggerated for the present day. The rents of this see, like those
of every other in the kingdom, have been grievously clipped in the late
political troubles. They are stated by the intelligent author of "A Year
in Spain," on the authority of the clergy of the diocese, at one-third of
the above sum, only; (p. 217, Boston ed. 1829;) an estimate confirmed by

[81] Modern travellers, who condemn without reserve the corruption of the
inferior clergy, bear uniform testimony to the exemplary piety and
munificent charities of the higher dignitaries of the church.

occurred as late as the accession of Charles V.

[83] The earliest example of this permanent committee of the commons,
residing at court, and entering into the king's council, was in the
minority of Ferdinand IV., in 1295. The subject is involved in some
obscurity, which Marina has not succeeded in dispelling. He considers the
deputation to have formed a necessary and constituent part of the council,
Sempere, on the other hand, discerns no warrant for this, after its
chap. 29.) Marina, who too often mistakes anomaly for practice, is
certainly not justified, even by his own showing, in the sweeping
conclusions to which he arrives. But, if his prejudices lead him to see
more than has happened, on the one hand, those of Sempere, on the other,
make him sometimes high gravel blind.

[84] The important functions and history of this body are investigated by

Erudito, tom. iii. pp. 113 et seq.) where, however, its subsequent
condition is chiefly considered.

[85] Not so exclusively, however, by any means, as Marina pretends.

the famous code of Alfonso X., which was not received as law of the land
till it had been formally published in cortes, in 1348, more than seventy
years after its original compilation. In his zeal for popular rights, he
omits to notice, however, the power so frequently assumed by the sovereign
of granting _fueros_, or municipal charters; a right, indeed, which
the great lords, spiritual and temporal, exercised in common with him,
subject to his sanction. See a multitude of these seignioral codes,
enumerated by Asso and Manuel. (Instituciones, Introd., pp. 31 et seq.)
The monarch claimed, moreover, though not by any means so freely as in
executive character, or for the redress of grievances submitted to him by
the national legislature. Within certain limits, this was undoubtedly a
constitutional prerogative; But the history of Castile, like that of most
other countries in Europe, shows how easily it was abused in the hands of
an arbitrary prince.
The civil and criminal business of the kingdom was committed, in the last resort, to the very ancient tribunal of _alcaldes de casa y corte_, until, in 1371, a new one, entitled the royal audience or chancery, was constituted under Henry II., with supreme and ultimate jurisdiction in civil causes. These, in the first instance, however, might be brought before the _alcaldes de la corte_, which continued, and has since continued, the high court in criminal matters.

The _audiencia_, or chancery, consisted at first of seven judges, whose number varied a good deal afterwards. They were appointed by the crown, in the manner mentioned in the text. Their salaries were such as to secure their independence, as far as possible, of any undue influence; and this was still further done by the supervision of cortes, whose acts show the deep solicitude with which it watched over the concerns and conduct of this important tribunal. For a notice of the original organization and part. 2, cap. 21-25,) Riol, (Informe, apud Semanario Erudito, tom. iii.

and desultory remarks show perfect familiarity with the subject, and presuppose more than is likely to be found in the reader.

[S7] Siete Partidas, part. 2, tit. 26, leyes 5, 6, 7.--Mendoza notices this custom as recently as Philip II.'s day. Guerra de Granada, p. 170.
Pedro Lopez de Ayala, chancellor of Castile and chronicler of the reigns of four of its successive monarchs, terminated his labors abruptly with the sixth year of Henry III., the subsequent period of whose administration is singularly barren of authentic materials for history. The editor of Ayala's Chronicle considers the adventure, quoted in the text, as fictitious, and probably suggested by a stratagem employed by Henry for the seizure of the duke of Benevente, and by his note, (ed. de la Acad., 1780.)

SECTION II.

REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION OF ARAGON TO THE MIDDLE OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Rise of Aragon.--Ricos Hombres.--Their Immunities.--Their Turbulence.--Privileges of Union.--The Legislature.--Its Forms.--Its Powers.--General Privilege.--Judicial Functions of Cortes.--The Justice.--His Great Authority.--Else and Opulence of Barcelona.--Her Free Institutions.--Intellectual Culture.

The political institutions of Aragon, although bearing a general resemblance to those of Castile, were sufficiently dissimilar to stamp a peculiar physiognomy on the character of the nation, which still continued after it had been incorporated with the great mass of the Spanish
monarchy.--It was not until the expiration of nearly five centuries after
the Saracen invasion, that the little district of Aragon, growing up under
the shelter of the Pyrenees, was expanded into the dimensions of the
province which now bears that name. During this period, it was painfully
struggling into being, like the other states of the Peninsula, by dint of
fierce, unintermitted warfare with the infidel.

Even after this period, it would probably have filled but an insignificant
space in the map of history, and, instead of assuming an independent
station, have been compelled, like Navarre, to accommodate itself to the
politics of the potent monarchies by which it was surrounded, had it not
extended its empire by a fortunate union with Catalonia in the twelfth,
and the conquest of Valencia in the thirteenth century. [1] These new
territories were not only far more productive than its own, but, by their
long line of coast and commodious ports, enabled the Aragonese, hitherto
pent up within their barren mountains, to open a communication with
distant regions.

The ancient county of Barcelona had reached a higher degree of
civilization than Aragon, and was distinguished by institutions quite as
liberal. The sea-board would seem to be the natural seat of liberty. There
is something in the very presence, in the atmosphere of the ocean, which
invigorates not only the physical, but the moral energies of man. The
adventurous life of the mariner familiarizes him with dangers, and early
accustoms him to independence. Intercourse with various climes opens new
and more copious sources of knowledge; and increased wealth brings with it
an augmentation of power and consequence. It was in the maritime cities
scattered along the Mediterranean that the seeds of liberty, both in ancient and modern times, were implanted and brought to maturity. During the Middle Ages, when the people of Europe generally maintained a toilsome and infrequent intercourse with each other, those situated on the margin of this inland ocean found an easy mode of communication across the high road of its waters. They mingled in war too as in peace, and this long period is filled with their international contests, while the other free cities of Christendom were wasting themselves in civil feuds and degrading domestic broils. In this wide and various collision their moral powers were quickened by constant activity; and more enlarged views were formed, with a deeper consciousness of their own strength, than could be obtained by those inhabitants of the interior, who were conversant only with a limited range of objects, and subjected to the influence of the same dull, monotonous circumstances.

Among these maritime republics, those of Catalonia were eminently conspicuous. By the incorporation of this country with the kingdom of Aragon, therefore, the strength of the latter was greatly augmented. The Aragonese princes, well aware of this, liberally fostered institutions to which the country owed its prosperity, and skilfully availed themselves of its resources for the aggrandizement of their own dominions. They paid particular attention to the navy, for the more perfect discipline of which a body of laws was prepared by Peter the Fourth, in 1354, that was designed to render it invincible. No allusion whatever is made in this stern code to the mode of surrendering to, or retreating from the enemy. The commander, who declined attacking any force not exceeding his own by more than one vessel, was punished with death. [2] The Catalan navy
successfully disputed the empire of the Mediterranean with the fleets of Pisa, and still more of Genoa. With its aid, the Aragonese monarchs achieved the conquest successively of Sicily, Sardinia, and the Balearic Isles, and annexed them to the empire. [3] It penetrated into the farthest regions of the Levant; and the expedition of the Catalans into Asia, which terminated with the more splendid than useful acquisition of Athens, forms one of the most romantic passages in this stirring and adventurous era. [4]

But, while the princes of Aragon were thus enlarging the bounds of their dominion abroad, there was probably not a sovereign in Europe possessed of such limited authority at home. The three great states with their dependencies, which constituted the Aragonese monarchy, had been declared by a statute of James the Second, in 1319, inalienable and indivisible. [5] Each of them, however, maintained a separate constitution of government, and was administered by distinct laws. As it would be fruitless to investigate the peculiarities of their respective institutions, which bear a very close affinity to one another, we may confine ourselves to those of Aragon, which exhibit a more perfect model than those either of Catalonia or Valencia, and have been far more copiously illustrated by her writers.

The national historians refer the origin of their government to a written constitution of about the middle of the ninth century, fragments of which are still preserved in certain ancient documents and chronicles. On occurrence of a vacancy in the throne, at this epoch, a monarch was elected by the twelve principal nobles, who prescribed a code of laws, to
the observance of which he was obliged to swear before assuming the sceptre. The import of these laws was to circumscribe within very narrow limits the authority of the sovereign, distributing the principal functions to a _Justicia_, or Justice, and these same peers, who, in case of a violation of the compact by the monarch, were authorized to withdraw their allegiance, and, in the bold language of the ordinance, "to substitute any other ruler in his stead, even a pagan, if they listed."

[6] The whole of this wears much of a fabulous aspect, and may remind the reader of the government which Ulysses met with in Phaeacia; where King Alcinous is surrounded by his "twelve illustrious peers or archons," subordinate to himself, "who," says he, "rule over the people, I myself being the thirteenth." [7] But, whether true or not, this venerable tradition must be admitted to have been well calculated to repress the arrogance of the Aragonese monarchs, and to exalt the minds of their subjects by the image of ancient liberty which it presented. [8]

The great barons of Aragon were few in number. They affected to derive their descent from the twelve peers above mentioned, and were styled _ricos hombres de natura_, implying by this epithet, that they were not indebted for their creation to the will of the sovereign. No estate could be legally conferred by the crown, as an _honor_ (the denomination of fiefs in Aragon), on any but one of these high nobles. This, however, was in time evaded by the monarchs, who advanced certain of their own retainers to a level with the ancient peers of the land; a measure which proved a fruitful source of disquietude. [9] No baron could be divested of his fief, unless by public sentence of the Justice and the cortes. The proprietor, however, was required, as usual, to attend the king in
council, and to perform military service, when summoned, during two months in the year, at his own charge. [10]

The privileges, both honorary and substantial, enjoyed by the _ricos hombres_, were very considerable. They filled the highest posts in the state. They originally appointed judges in their domains for the cognizance of certain civil causes, and over a class of their vassals exercised an unlimited criminal jurisdiction. They were excused from taxation except in specified cases; were exempted from all corporal and capital punishment; nor could they be imprisoned, although their estates might be sequestrated for debt. A lower class of nobility styled _infanzones_, equivalent to the Castilian _hidalgos_, together with the _caballeros_, or knights, were also possessed of important though inferior immunities. [11] The king distributed among the great barons the territory reconquered from the Moors, in proportions determined by the amount of their respective services. We find a stipulation to this effect from James the First to his nobles, previous to his invasion of Majorca. [12] On a similar principle they claimed nearly the whole of Valencia. [13] On occupying a city, it was usual to divide it into _barrios_, or districts, each of which was granted by way of fief to some one of the ricos hombres, from which he was to derive his revenue. What proportion of the conquered territory was reserved for the royal demesne does not appear. [14] We find one of these nobles, Bernard de Cabrera, in the latter part of the fourteenth century, manning a fleet of king's ships on his own credit; another, of the ancient family of Luna, in the fifteenth century, so wealthy that he could travel through an almost unbroken line of his estates all the way from Castile to France. [15] With all this, their
incomes in general, in this comparatively poor country, were very inferior to those of the great Castilian lords. [16]

The laws conceded certain powers to the aristocracy of a most dangerous character. They were entitled, like the nobles of the sister kingdom, to defy, and publicly renounce their allegiance to their sovereign, with the whimsical privilege, in addition, of commending their families and estates to his protection, which he was obliged to accord, until they were again reconciled. [17] The mischievous right of private war was repeatedly recognized by statute. It was claimed and exercised in its full extent, and occasionally with circumstances of peculiar atrocity. An instance is recorded by Zurita of a bloody feud between two of these nobles, prosecuted with such inveteracy that the parties bound themselves by solemn oath never to desist from it during their lives, and to resist every effort, even on the part of the crown itself, to effect a pacification between them. [18] This remnant of barbarism lingered longer in Aragon than in any other country in Christendom.

The Aragonese sovereigns, who were many of them possessed of singular capacity and vigor, [19] made repeated efforts to reduce the authority of their nobles within more temperate limits. Peter the Second, by a bold stretch of prerogative, stripped them of their most important rights of jurisdiction. [20] James the Conqueror artfully endeavored to counterbalance their weight by that of the commons and the ecclesiastics. [21] But they were too formidable when united, and too easily united, to be successfully assailed. The Moorish wars terminated, in Aragon, with the conquest of Valencia, or rather the invasion of Murcia, by the middle of
the thirteenth century. The tumultuous spirits of the aristocracy, therefore, instead of finding a vent, as in Castile, in these foreign expeditions, were turned within, and convulsed their own country with perpetual revolution. Haughty from the consciousness of their exclusive privileges and of the limited number who monopolized them, the Aragonese barons regarded themselves rather as the rivals of their sovereign, than as his inferiors. Intrenched within the mountain fastnesses, which the rugged nature of the country everywhere afforded, they easily bade defiance to his authority. Their small number gave a compactness and concert to their operations, which could not have been obtained in a multititudinous body. Ferdinand the Catholic well discriminated the relative position of the Aragonese and Castilian nobility, by saying, "it was as difficult to divide the one, as to unite the other." [22]

These combinations became still more frequent after formally receiving the approbation of King Alfonso the Third, who, in 1287, signed the two celebrated ordinances entitled the "Privileges of Union," by which his subjects were authorized to resort to arms on an infringement of their liberties. [23] The _hermandad_ of Castile had never been countenanced by legislative sanction; it was chiefly resorted to as a measure of police, and was directed more frequently against the disorders of the nobility, than of the sovereign; it was organized with difficulty, and, compared with the union of Aragon, was cumbrous and languid in its operations. While these privileges continued in force, the nation was delivered over to the most frightful anarchy. The least offensive movement on the part of the monarch, the slightest encroachment on personal right or privilege, was the signal for a general revolt. At the cry of _Union_, that "last
voice," says the enthusiastic historian, "of the expiring republic, full of authority and majesty, and an open indication of the insolence of kings," the nobles and the citizens eagerly rushed to arms. The principal castles belonging to the former were pledged as security for their fidelity, and intrusted to conservators, as they were styled, whose duty it was to direct the operations and watch over the interests of the Union. A common seal was prepared, bearing the device of armed men kneeling before their king, intimating at once their loyalty and their resolution, and a similar device was displayed on the standard and the other military insignia of the confederates. [24]

The power of the monarch was as nothing before this formidable array. The Union appointed a council to control all his movements, and, in fact, during the whole period of its existence, the reigns of four successive monarchs, it may be said to have dictated law to the land. At length Peter the Fourth, a despot in heart, and naturally enough impatient of this eclipse of regal prerogative, brought the matter to an issue, by defeating the army of the Union, at the memorable battle of Epila, in 1348, "the last," says Zurita, "in which it was permitted to the subject to take up arms against the sovereign for the cause of liberty." Then, convoking an assembly of the states at Saragossa, he produced before them the instrument containing the two Privileges, and cut it in pieces with his dagger. In doing this, having wounded himself in the hand, he suffered the blood to trickle upon the parchment, exclaiming, that "a law which had been the occasion of so much blood, should be blotted out by the blood of a king." [25] All copies of it, whether in the public archives, or in the possession of private individuals, were ordered, under a heavy penalty, to
be destroyed. The statute passed to that effect carefully omits the date of the detested instrument, that all evidence of its existence might perish with it. [26]

Instead of abusing his victory, as might have been anticipated from his character, Peter adopted a far more magnanimous policy. He confirmed the ancient privileges of the realm, and made in addition other wise and salutary concessions. From this period, therefore, is to be dated the possession of constitutional liberty in Aragon; (for surely the reign of unbridled license, above described, is not deserving that name;) and this not so much from the acquisition of new immunities, as from the more perfect security afforded for the enjoyment of the old. The court of the _Justicia_, that great barrier interposed by the constitution between despotism on the one hand and popular license on the other, was more strongly protected, and causes hitherto decided by arms were referred for adjudication to this tribunal. [27] From this period, too, the cortes, whose voice was scarcely heard amid the wild uproar of preceding times, was allowed to extend a beneficial and protecting sway over the land. And, although the social history of Aragon, like that of other countries in this rude age, is too often stained with deeds of violence and personal feuds, yet the state at large, under the steady operation of its laws, probably enjoyed a more uninterrupted tranquillity than fell to the lot of any other nation in Europe.

The Aragonese cortes was composed of four branches, or arms; [28] the ricos hombres, or great barons; the lesser nobles, comprehending the knights; the clergy, and the commons. The nobility of every denomination
were entitled to a seat in the legislature. The ricos hombres were allowed
to appear by proxy, and a similar privilege was enjoyed by baronial
heiresses. The number of this body was very limited, twelve of them
constituting a quorum. [29]

The arm of the ecclesiastics embraced an ample delegation from the
inferior as well as higher clergy. [30] It is affirmed not to have been a
component of the national legislature until more than a century and a half
after the admission of the commons. [31] Indeed, the influence of the
church was much less sensible in Aragon, than in the other kingdoms of the
peninsula. Notwithstanding the humiliating concessions of certain of their
princes to the papal see, they were never recognized by the nation, who
uniformly asserted their independence of the temporal supremacy of Rome;
and who, as we shall see hereafter, resisted the introduction of the
Inquisition, that last stretch of ecclesiastical usurpation, even to
blood. [32]

The commons enjoyed higher consideration and civil privileges than in
Castile. For this they were perhaps somewhat indebted to the example of
their Catalan neighbors, the influence of whose democratic institutions
naturally extended to other parts of the Aragonese monarchy. The charters
of certain cities accorded to the inhabitants privileges of nobility,
particularly that of immunity from taxation; while the magistrates of
others were permitted to take their seats in the order of hidalgos. [33]
From a very early period we find them employed in offices of public trust,
and on important missions. [34] The epoch of their admission into the
national assembly is traced as far back as 1133, several years earlier
than the commencement of popular representation in Castile. [35] Each city had the right of sending two or more deputies selected from persons eligible to its magistracy; but with the privilege of only one vote, whatever might be the number of its deputies. Any place, which had been once represented in cortes, might always claim to be so. [36]

By a statute of 1307, the convocation of the states, which had been annual, was declared biennial. The kings, however, paid little regard to this provision, rarely summoning them except for some specific necessity. [37] The great officers of the crown, whatever might be their personal rank, were jealously excluded from their deliberations. The session was opened by an address from the king in person, a point of which they were very tenacious; after which the different _arms_ withdrew to their separate apartments. [38] The greatest scrupulousness was manifested in maintaining the rights and dignity of the body; and their intercourse with one another, and with the king, was regulated by the most precise forms of parliamentary etiquette. [39] The subjects of deliberation were referred to a committee from each order, who, after conferring together, reported to their several departments. Every question, it may be presumed, underwent a careful examination; as the legislature, we are told, was usually divided into two parties, “the one maintaining the rights of the monarch, the other, those of the nation,” corresponding nearly enough with those of our day. It was in the power of any member to defeat the passage of a bill, by opposing to it his _veto_ or dissent, formally registered to that effect. He might even interpose his negative on the proceedings of the house, and thus put a stop to the prosecution of all further business during the session. This anomalous privilege, transcending even that
claimed in the Polish diet, must have been too invidious in its exercise, and too pernicious in its consequences, to have been often resorted to. This may be inferred from the fact, that it was not formally repealed until the reign of Philip the Second, in 1592. During the interval of the sessions of the legislature, a deputation of eight was appointed, two from each arm, to preside over public affairs, particularly in regard to the revenue, and the security of justice; with authority to convocate a cortes extraordinary, whenever the exigency might demand it. [40]

The cortes exercised the highest functions whether of a deliberative, legislative, or judicial nature. It had a right to be consulted on all matters of importance, especially on those of peace and war. No law was valid, no tax could be imposed, without its consent; and it carefully provided for the application of the revenue to its destined uses. [41] It determined the succession to the crown; removed obnoxious ministers; reformed the household, and domestic expenditure, of the monarch; and exercised the power, in the most unreserved manner, of withholding supplies, as well as of resisting what it regarded as an encroachment on the liberties of the nation. [42]

The excellent commentators on the constitution of Aragon have bestowed comparatively little attention on the development of its parliamentary history; confining themselves too exclusively to mere forms of procedure. The defect has been greatly obviated by the copiousness of their general historians. But the statute-book affords the most unequivocal evidence of the fidelity with which the guardians of the realm discharged the high trust reposed in them, in the numerous enactments it exhibits, for the
security both of person and property. Almost the first page which meets
the eye in this venerable record contains the General Privilege, the Magna
Charta, as it has been well denominated, of Aragon. It was granted by
Peter the Great to the cortes at Saragossa, in 1283. It embraces a variety
of provisions for the fair and open administration of justice; for
ascertaining the legitimate powers intrusted to the cortes; for the
security of property against exactions of the crown; and for the
conservation of their legal immunities to the municipal corporations and
the different orders of nobility. In short, the distinguishing excellence
of this instrument, like that of Magna Charta, consists in the wise and
equitable protection which it affords to all classes of the community.

[43] The General Privilege, instead of being wrested, like King John's
charter, from a pusillanimous prince, was conceded, reluctantly enough, it
is true, in an assembly of the nation, by one of the ablest monarchs who
ever sat on the throne of Aragon, at a time when his arms, crowned with
repeated victory, had secured to the state the most important of her
foreign acquisitions. The Aragonese, who rightly regarded the General
Privilege as the broadest basis of their liberties, repeatedly procured
its confirmation by succeeding sovereigns. "By so many and such various
precautions," says Blancas, "did our ancestors establish that freedom
which their posterity have enjoyed; manifesting a wise solicitude, that
all orders of men, even kings themselves, confined within their own
sphere, should discharge their legitimate functions without jostling or
jarring with one another; for in this harmony consists the temperance of
our government. Alas!" he adds, "how much of all this has fallen into
desuetude from its antiquity, or been effaced by new customs." [44]
The judicial functions of the cortes have not been sufficiently noticed by writers. They were extensive in their operation, and gave it the name of the General Court. They were principally directed to protect the subject from the oppressions of the crown and its officers; over all which cases it possessed original and ultimate jurisdiction. The suit was conducted before the Justice, as president of the cortes, in its judicial capacity, who delivered an opinion conformable to the will of the majority. [45] The authority, indeed, of this magistrate in his own court was fully equal to providing adequate relief in all these cases. [46] But for several reasons this parliamentary tribunal was preferred. The process was both more expeditious and less expensive to the suitor. Indeed, "the most obscure inhabitant of the most obscure village in the kingdom, although a foreigner," might demand redress of this body; and, if he was incapable of bearing the burden himself, the state was bound to maintain his suit, and provide him with counsel at its own charge. But the most important consequence, resulting from this legislative investigation, was the remedial laws frequently attendant on it. "And our ancestors," says Blancas, "deemed it great wisdom patiently to endure contumely and oppression for a season, rather than seek redress before an inferior tribunal, since, by postponing their suit till the meeting of cortes, they would not only obtain a remedy for their own grievance, but one of a universal and permanent application." [47]

The Aragonese cortes maintained a steady control over the operations of government, especially after the dissolution of the Union; and the weight of the commons was more decisive in it, than in other similar assemblies of that period. Its singular distribution into four estates was favorable
to this. The knights and _hidalgos_, an intermediate order between
the great nobility and the people, when detached from the former,
naturally lent additional support to the latter, with whom, indeed, they
had considerable affinity. The representatives of certain cities, as well
as a certain class of citizens, were entitled to a seat in this body; [48]
so that it approached both in spirit and substance to something like a
popular representation. Indeed, this arm of the cortes was so uniformly
vigilant in resisting any encroachment on the part of the crown, that it
has been said to represent, more than any other, the liberties of the
nation. [49] In some other particulars the Aragonese commons possessed an
advantage over those of Castile. 1. By postponing their money grants to
the conclusion of the session, and regulating them in some degree by the
previous dispositions of the crown, they availed themselves of an
important lever relinquished by the Castilian cortes. [50] 2. The kingdom
of Aragon proper was circumscribed within too narrow limits to allow of
such local jealousies and estrangements, growing out of an apparent
diversity of interests, as existed in the neighboring monarchy. Their
representatives, therefore, were enabled to move with a more hearty
concert, and on a more consistent line of policy. 3. Lastly, the
acknowledged right to a seat in cortes, possessed by every city which had
once been represented there, and this equally whether summoned or not, if
we may credit Capmany, [51] must have gone far to preserve the popular
branch from the melancholy state of dilapidation to which it was reduced
in Castile by the arts of despotic princes. Indeed, the kings of Aragon,
notwithstanding occasional excesses, seem never to have attempted any
systematic invasion of the constitutional rights of their subjects. They
well knew, that the spirit of liberty was too high among them to endure
it. When the queen of Alfonso the Fourth urged her husband, by quoting the
example of her brother the king of Castile, to punish certain refractory citizens of Valencia, he prudently replied, "My people are free, and not so submissive as the Castilians. They respect me as their prince, and I hold them for good vassals and comrades."[52]

No part of the constitution of Aragon has excited more interest, or more deservedly, than the office of the _Justicia_, or Justice; [53] whose extraordinary functions were far from being limited to judicial matters, although in these his authority was supreme. The origin of this institution is affirmed to have been coeval with that of the constitution or frame of government itself. [54] If it were so, his authority may be said, in the language of Blancas, "to have slept in the scabbard" until the dissolution of the Union; when the control of a tumultuous aristocracy was exchanged for the mild and uniform operation of the law, administered by this, its supreme interpreter.

His most important duties may be briefly enumerated. He was authorized to pronounce on the validity of all royal letters and ordinances. He possessed, as has been said, concurrent jurisdiction with the cortes over all suits against the crown and its officers. Inferior judges were bound to consult him in all doubtful cases, and to abide by his opinion, as of "equal authority," in the words of an ancient jurist, "with the law itself." [55] An appeal lay to his tribunal from those of the territorial and royal judges. [56] He could even evoke a cause, while pending before them, into his own court, and secure the defendant from molestation on his giving surety for his appearance. By another process, he might remove a person under arrest from the place in which he had been confined by order
of an inferior court, to the public prison appropriated to this purpose, there to abide his own examination of the legality of his detention. These two provisions, by which the precipitate and perhaps intemperate proceedings of subordinate judicatures were subjected to the revision of a dignified and dispassionate tribunal, might seem to afford sufficient security for personal liberty and property. [57] In addition to these official functions, the Justice of Aragon was constituted a permanent counsellor of the sovereign, and, as such, was required to accompany him where-ever he might reside. He was to advise the king on all constitutional questions of a doubtful complexion; and finally, on a new accession to the throne, it was his province to administer the coronation oath; this he performed with his head covered, and sitting, while the monarch, kneeling before him bare-headed, solemnly promised to maintain the liberties of the kingdom. A ceremony eminently symbolical of that superiority of law over prerogative, which was so constantly asserted in Aragon. [58]

It was the avowed purpose of the institution of the Justicia to interpose such an authority between the crown and the people, as might suffice for the entire protection of the latter. This is the express import of one of the laws of Soprarbe, which, whatever he thought of their authenticity, are undeniably of very high antiquity. [59] This part of his duties is particularly insisted on by the most eminent juridical writers of the nation. Whatever estimate, therefore, may be formed of the real extent of his powers, as compared with those of similar functionaries in other states of Europe, there can be no doubt that this ostensible object of their creation, thus openly asserted, must have had a great tendency to
enforce their practical operation. Accordingly we find repeated examples, in the history of Aragon, of successful interposition on the part of the Justice for the protection of individuals persecuted by the crown, and in defiance of every attempt at intimidation. [60] The kings of Aragon, chafed by this opposition, procured the resignation or deposition, on more than one occasion, of the obnoxious magistrate. [61] But, as such an exercise of prerogative must have been altogether subversive of an independent discharge of the duties of this office, it was provided by a statute of Alfonso the Fifth, in 1442, that the Justice should continue in office during life, removable only, on sufficient cause, by the king and the cortes united. [62]

Several provisions were enacted, in order to secure the nation more effectually against the abuse of the high trust reposed in this officer. He was to be taken from the equestrian order, which, as intermediate between the high nobility and the people, was less likely to be influenced by undue partiality to either. He could not be selected from the ricos hombres, since this class was exempted from corporal punishment, while the Justice was made responsible to the cortes for the faithful discharge of his duties, under penalty of death. [63] As this supervision of the whole legislature was found unwieldy in practice, it was superseded, after various modifications by a commission of members elected from each one of the four estates, empowered to sit every year in Saragossa, with authority to investigate the charges preferred against the Justice, and to pronounce sentence upon him. [64]

The Aragonese writers are prodigal of their encomiums on the pre-eminence
and dignity of this functionary, whose office might seem, indeed, but a
doubtful expedient for balancing the authority of the sovereign; depending
for its success less on any legal powers confided to it, than on the
efficient and constant support of public opinion. Fortunately the Justice
of Aragon uniformly received such support, and was thus enabled to carry
the original design of the institution into effect, to check the
usurpations of the crown, as well as to control the license of the
nobility and the people. A series of learned and independent magistrates,
by the weight of their own character, gave additional dignity to the
office. The people, familiarized with the benignant operation of the law,
referred to peaceful arbitration those great political questions, which,
in other countries at this period, must have been settled by a sanguinary
revolution. [65] While, in the rest of Europe, the law seemed only the web
to ensnare the weak, the Aragonese historians could exult in the
reflection, that the fearless administration of justice in their land
"protected the weak equally with the strong, the foreigner with the
native." Well might their legislature assert, that the value of their
liberties more than counterbalanced "the poverty of the nation, and the
sterility of their soil." [66]

The governments of Valencia and Catalonia, which, as has been already
remarked, were administered independently of each other after their
consolidation into one monarchy, bore a very near resemblance to that of
Aragon. [67] No institution, however, corresponding in its functions with
that of the Justicia, seems to have obtained in either. [68] Valencia,
which had derived a large portion of its primitive population, after the
conquest, from Aragon, preserved the most intimate relations with the
parent kingdom, and was constantly at its side during the tempestuous season of the Union. The Catalans were peculiarly jealous of their exclusive privileges, and their civil institutions wore a more democratical aspect than those of any other of the confederated states; circumstances, which led to important results that fall within the compass of our narrative. [69]

The city of Barcelona, which originally gave its name to the county of which it was the capital, was distinguished from a very early period by ample municipal privileges. [70] After the union with Aragon in the twelfth century, the monarchs of the latter kingdom extended towards it the same liberal legislation; so that, by the thirteenth, Barcelona had reached a degree of commercial prosperity rivalling that of any of the Italian republics. She divided with them the lucrative commerce with Alexandria; and her port, thronged with foreigners from every nation, became a principal emporium in the Mediterranean for the spices, drugs, perfumes, and other rich commodities of the east, whence they were diffused over the interior of Spain and the European continent. [71] Her consuls, and her commercial factories, were established in every considerable port in the Mediterranean and in the north of Europe. [72] The natural products of her soil, and her various domestic fabrics, supplied her with abundant articles of export. Fine wool was imported by her in considerable quantities from England in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and returned there manufactured into cloth; an exchange of commodities the reverse of that existing between the two nations at the present day. [73] Barcelona claims the merit of having established the first bank of exchange and deposit in Europe, in 1401; it
was devoted to the accommodation of foreigners as well as of her own citizens. She claims the glory, too, of having compiled the most ancient written code, among the moderns, of maritime law now extant, digested from the usages of commercial nations, and which formed the basis of the mercantile jurisprudence of Europe during the Middle Ages. [74]

The wealth which flowed in upon Barcelona, as the result of her activity and enterprise, was evinced by her numerous public works, her docks, arsenal, warehouses, exchange, hospitals, and other constructions of general utility. Strangers, who visited Spain in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, expatiate on the magnificence of this city, its commodious private edifices, the cleanliness of its streets and public squares (a virtue by no means usual in that day), and on the amenity of its gardens and cultivated environs. [75]

But the peculiar glory of Barcelona was the freedom of her municipal institutions. Her government consisted of a senate or council of one hundred, and a body of regidores or counsellors, as they were styled, varying at times from four to six in number; the former intrusted with the legislative, the latter with the executive functions of administration. A large proportion of these bodies were selected from the merchants, tradesmen, and mechanics of the city. They were invested, not merely with municipal authority, but with many of the rights of sovereignty. They entered into commercial treaties with foreign powers; superintended the defence of the city in time of war; provided for the security of trade; granted letters of reprisal against any nation who might violate it; and raised and appropriated the public moneys for the
construction of useful works, or the encouragement of such commercial adventures as were too hazardous or expensive for individual enterprise.

[76]

The counsellors, who presided over the municipality, were complimented with certain honorary privileges, not even accorded to the nobility. They heads covered, in the presence of royalty; were preceded by mace-bearers, or lictors, in their progress through the country; and deputies from their body to the court were admitted on the footing, and received the honors, of foreign ambassadors. [77] These, it will be recollected, were plebeians,—merchants and mechanics. Trade never was esteemed a degradation in Catalonia, as it came to be in Castile. [78] The professors of the different arts, as they were called, organized into guilds or companies, constituted so many independent associations, whose members were eligible to the highest municipal offices. And such was the importance attached to these offices, that the nobility in many instances, resigning the privileges of their rank, a necessary preliminary, were desirous of being enrolled among the candidates for them. [79] One cannot but observe in the peculiar organization of this little commonwealth, and in the equality assumed by every class of its citizens, a close analogy to the constitutions of the Italian republics; which the Catalans, having become familiar with in their intimate commercial intercourse with Italy, may have adopted as the model of their own.

Under the influence of these democratic institutions, the burghers of Barcelona, and indeed of Catalonia in general, which enjoyed more or less
of a similar freedom, assumed a haughty independence of character beyond what existed among the same class in other parts of Spain; and this, combined with the martial daring fostered by a life of maritime adventure and warfare, made them impatient, not merely of oppression, but of contradiction, on the part of their sovereigns, who have experienced more frequent and more sturdy resistance from this quarter of their dominions, than from every other. [80] Navagiero, the Venetian ambassador to Spain, early in the sixteenth century, although a republican himself, was so struck with what he deemed the insubordination of the Barcelonians, that he asserts, "The inhabitants have so many privileges, that the king scarcely retains any authority over them; their liberty," he adds, "should rather go by the name of license." [81] One example among many, may be given, of the tenacity with which they adhered to their most inconsiderable immunities.

Ferdinand the First, in 1416, being desirous, in consequence of the exhausted state of the finances on his coming to the throne, to evade the payment of a certain tax or subsidy customarily paid by the kings of Aragon to the city of Barcelona, sent for the president of the council, John Fiveller, to require the consent of that body to this measure. The magistrate, having previously advised with his colleagues, determined to encounter any hazard, says Zurita, rather than compromise the rights of the city. He reminded the king of his coronation oath, expressed his regret that he was willing so soon to deviate from the good usages of his predecessors, and plainly told him, that he and his comrades would never betray the liberties entrusted to them. Ferdinand, indignant at this language, ordered the patriot to withdraw into another apartment, where he...
remained in much uncertainty as to the consequences of his temerity. But
the king was dissuaded from violent measures, if he ever contemplated
them, by the representation of his courtiers, who warned him not to reckon
too much on the patience of the people, who bore small affection to his
person, from the little familiarity with which he had treated them
in comparison with their preceding monarchs, and who were already in arms
to protect their magistrate. In consequence of these suggestions,
Ferdinand deemed it prudent to release the counsellor, and withdrew
abruptly from the city on the ensuing day, disgusted at the ill success of
his enterprise. [82]

The Aragonese monarchs well understood the value of their Catalan
dominions, which sustained a proportion of the public burdens equal in
amount to that of both the other states of the kingdom. [83]

Notwithstanding the mortifications, which they occasionally experienced
from this quarter, therefore, they uniformly extended towards it the most
liberal protection. A register of the various customs paid in the ports of
Catalonia, compiled in 1413, under the above-mentioned Ferdinand, exhibits
a discriminating legislation, extraordinary in an age when the true
principles of financial policy were so little understood. [84] Under James
the First, in 1227, a navigation act, limited in its application, was
published, and another under Alfonso the Fifth, in 1454, embracing all the
dominions of Aragon; thus preceding by some centuries the celebrated
ordinance, to which England owes so much of her commercial grandeur. [85]

The brisk concussion given to the minds of the Catalans in the busy career
in which they were engaged, seems to have been favorable to the
development of poetical talent, in the same manner as it was in Italy. Catalonia may divide with Provence the glory of being the region where the voice of song was first awakened in modern Europe. Whatever may be the relative claims of the two countries to precedence in this respect, [86]
south of France reached its highest perfection; and, when the tempest of persecution in the beginning of the thirteenth century fell on the lovely valleys of that unhappy country, its minstrels found a hospitable asylum in the court of the kings of Aragon; many of whom not only protected, but cultivated the _gay science_ with considerable success. [87] Their names have descended to us, as well as those of less illustrious troubadours, whom Petrarch and his contemporaries did not disdain to imitate; [88] but their compositions, for the most part, lie still buried in those cemeteries of the intellect so numerous in Spain, and call loudly for the diligence of some Sainte Palaye or Raynouard to disinter them. [89]

The languishing condition of the poetic art, at the close of the fourteenth century, induced John the First, who mingled somewhat of the ridiculous even with his most respectable tastes, to depute a solemn embassy to the king of France, requesting that a commission might be detached from the Floral Academy of Toulouse, into Spain, to erect there a similar institution. This was accordingly done, and the Consistory of Barcelona was organized, in 1390. The kings of Aragon endowed it with funds, and with a library valuable for that day, presiding over its meetings in person, and distributing the poetical premiums with their own hands. During the troubles consequent on the death of Martin, this establishment fell into decay, until it was again revived, on the
accession of Ferdinand the First, by the celebrated Henry, marquis of
Villena, who transplanted it to Tortosa. [90]

The marquis, in his treatise on the _gaya sciencia_, details with
becoming gravity the pompous ceremonial observed in his academy on the
event of a public celebration. The topics of discussion were "the praises
of the Virgin, love, arms, and other good usages." The performances of the
candidates, "inscribed on parchment of various colors, richly enamelled
with gold and silver, and beautifully illuminated," were publicly recited,
and then referred to a committee, who made solemn oath to decide
impartially and according to the rules of the art. On the delivery of the
verdict, a wreath of gold was deposited on the victorious poem, which was
registered in the academic archives; and the fortunate troubadour, greeted
with a magnificent prize, was escorted to the royal palace amid a

says the marquis, "the superiority which God and nature have assigned to
genius over dulness." [91]

The influence of such an institution in awakening a poetic spirit is at
best very questionable. Whatever effect an academy may have in stimulating
the researches of science, the inspirations of genius must come unbidden;

"Adflata est numine quando
Jam propiore del."

The Catalans, indeed, seem to have been of this opinion; for they suffered
the Consistory of Tortosa to expire with its founder. Somewhat later, in 1430, was established the University of Barcelona, placed under the direction of the municipality, and endowed by the city with ample funds for instruction in the various departments of law, theology, medicine, and the belles-lettres. This institution survived until the commencement of the last century. [92]

During the first half of the fifteenth century, long after the genuine was carried to its highest excellence by the poets of Valencia. [93] It would be presumptuous for any one, who has not made the _Romance_ dialects his particular study, to attempt a discriminating criticism of these compositions, so much of the merit of which necessarily consists in the almost impalpable beauties of style and expression. The Spaniards, however, applaud, in the verses of Ausias March, the same musical combinations of sound, and the same tone of moral melancholy, which pervade the productions of Petrarch. [94] In prose too, they have (to borrow the words of Andres) their Boccaccio in Martorell; whose fiction of "Tirante el Blanco" is honored by the commendation of the curate in Don Quixote, as "the best book in the world of the kind, since the knights-errant in it eat, drink, sleep, and die quietly in their beds, like other folk, and very unlike most heroes of romance." The productions of these, and some other of their distinguished contemporaries, obtained a general circulation very early by means of the recently invented art of printing, and subsequently passed into repeated editions.[95] But their language has long since ceased to be the language of literature. On the union of the two crowns of Castile and Aragon, the dialect of the former became that of
melodious than any other idiom in the Peninsula, was abandoned as a _patois_ to the lower orders of the Catalans, who, with the language, may boast that they also have inherited the noble principles of freedom which distinguished their ancestors.

* * * * *

The influence of free institutions in Aragon is perceptible in the familiarity displayed by its writers with public affairs, and in the freedom with which they have discussed the organization, and general economy of its government. The creation of the office of national chronicler, under Charles V., gave wider scope to the development of historic talent. Among the most conspicuous of these historiographers was Jerome Blancas, several of whose productions, as the "Coronaciones de los Reyes," "Modo de Proceder en Cortes," and "Commentarii Rerum Aragonensium," especially the last, have been repeatedly quoted in the preceding section. This work presents a view of the different orders of the state, and particularly of the office of the Justicia, with their peculiar functions and privileges. The author, omitting the usual details of history, has devoted himself to the illustration of the constitutional antiquities of his country, in the execution of which he has shown a sagacity and erudition equally profound. His sentiments breathe a generous love of freedom, which one would scarcely suppose to have existed, and still less to have been promulgated, under Philip II. His style is distinguished by the purity and even elegance of its latinity. The first edition, being that which I have used, appeared in 1588, in folio, at Saragossa, executed with much typographical beauty. The work was
afterwards incorporated into Schottus's "Hispania Illustrata."--Blancas, after having held his office for ten years, died in his native city of Saragossa, in 1590.

Jerome Martel, from whose little treatise, "Forma de Celebrar Cortes," I have also liberally cited, was appointed public historiographer in 1597. His continuation of Zurita's Annals, which he left unpublished at his decease, was never admitted to the honors of the press, because, says his biographer, Uztarroz, _verdades lastiman_; a reason as creditable to the author as disgraceful to the government.

A third writer, and the one chiefly relied on for the account of (5 tom. 4to, Madrid, 1779-1792,) may be thought somewhat too discursive and circumstantial for his subject; but it is hardly right to quarrel with information so rare, and painfully collected; the sin of exuberance at any rate is much less frequent, and more easily corrected, than that of sterility. His work is a vast repertory of facts relating to the commerce, manufactures, general policy, and public prosperity, not only of Barcelona, but of Catalonia. It is written with an independent and liberal spirit, which may be regarded as affording the best commentary on the genius of the institutions which he celebrates.--Capmany closed his useful labors at Madrid, in 1810, at the age of fifty-six.

Notwithstanding the interesting character of the Aragonese constitution, and the amplitude of materials for its history, the subject has been hitherto neglected, as far as I am aware, by continental writers.
Robertson and Hallam, more especially the latter, have given such a view of its prominent features to the English reader, as must, I fear, deprive the sketch which I have attempted, in a great degree, of novelty. To these names must now be added that of the author of the "History of Spain and Portugal," (Cabinet Cyclopaedia,) whose work, published since the preceding pages were written, contains much curious and learned disquisition on the early jurisprudence and municipal institutions of both Castile and Aragon.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Catalonia was united with Aragon by the marriage of queen Petronilla with Raymond Berengere, count of Barcelona, in 1150. Valencia was conquered from the Moors by James I., in 1238.

[2] Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, tom. iii. pp. 45-47.--The Catalans were much celebrated during the Middle Ages for their skill with the crossbow; for a more perfect instruction in which, the municipality of Barcelona established games and gymnasiums. Ibid., tom. i. p. 113.

Hence the title of duke of Athens, assumed by the Spanish sovereigns.

The brilliant fortunes of Roger de Flor are related by count Moncada, 1805) in a style much commended by Spanish critics for its elegance. See Mondejar, Advertencias, p. 184.

It was confirmed by Alfonso III., in 1328. Zurita, Anales, tom. ii. fol. 90.

See the fragments of the _Fuero de Soprarbe_, cited by Blancas, Aragonensium Rerum Commentarii, (Caesaraugustae, 1588.) pp. 25-29.—The well-known oath of the Aragonese to their sovereign on his accession, "Nos que valemos tanto como vos," etc., frequently quoted by historians, rests on the authority of Antonio Perez, the unfortunate minister of Philip II., who, however good a voucher for the usages of his own time, has made a blunder in the very sentence preceding this, by confounding the Privilege of Union with one of the Laws of Soprarbe, which shows him to be insufficient, especially as he is the only, authority for this ancient ceremony. See Antonio Perez, Relaciones, (Paris, 1598,) fol. 92.

In like manner Alfonso III. alludes to "the ancient times in Aragon, when

Dodeka gar kata daemon aripretees Basiliaees
Archoi krainonsi, triskaidekatos d' ego autos.
Odyss. O 390.
there were as many kings as ricos hombres." See Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 316.

[8] The authenticity of the "Fuero de Soprarbe" has been keenly debated by the Aragonese and Navarrese writers. Moret, in refutation of Blancas, who espouses it, (see Commentarii, p. 289,) states, that after a diligent investigation of the archives of that region, he finds no mention of the laws, nor even of the name, of Soprarbe, until the eleventh century; a las Antiguedades del Reyno de Navarra, (Pamplona, 1766,) tom. vi. lib. 2, cap. 11.) Indeed, the historians of Aragon admit, that the public documents previous to the fourteenth century suffered so much from various causes as to leave comparatively few materials for authentic narrative.

Blancas transcribed his extract of the laws of Soprarbe principally from Prince Charles of Viana's History, written in the fifteenth century. See Commentarii, p. 25.

[9] Asso y Manuel, Instituciones, pp. 39, 40.--Blancas, Commentarii, pp. 333, 334, 340.--Fueros y Observancias del Reyno de Aragon, (Zaragoza, 1667,) tom. i. fol. 130.--The _ricos hombres_, thus created by the monarch, were styled _de mesnada_, signifying "of the household." It was lawful for a _rico hombre_ to bequeath his honors to whosoever of his legitimate children he might prefer, and, in default of issue, to his nearest of kin. He was bound to distribute the bulk of his estates in fiefs among his knights, so that a complete system of sub-infeudation was established. The knights, on restoring their fiefs, might change their suzerains at pleasure.


[14] See the partition of Saragossa by Alonso the Warrior. Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 43.

218. [16] See a register of these at the beginning of the sixteenth century, apud L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 25.

[17] Zurita, Anales, tom. ii. fol. 127.--Blancas, Commentarii, p. 324.-- "Adhaec Ricis hominibus ipsis majorum more institutisque concedebatur, ut se se possent, dum ipsi vellet, a nostrorum Regum jure et potestare, quasi nodum aliquem, expedire; neque expedire solum, _sed dimisso prius, quo potirentur, Honore_, bellum ipsis inferre; Reges vero Rici hominis sic expediti uxorem, filios, familiam, res, bona, et fortunas omnes in suam
recipere fidem tenebantur. Neque ulla erat eorum utilitatis facienda jactura."

[18] Fueros y Observancias, tom. i. p. 84.--Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 350.

[19] Blancas somewhere boasts, that no one of the kings of Aragon has been stigmatized by a cognomen of infamy, as in most of the other royal races of Europe. Peter IV., "the Ceremonious," richly deserved one.

[20] Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 102.

[21] Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 198.--He recommended this policy to his son-in-law, the king of Castile.

[23] Zurita, Anales, lib. 4, cap. 96.--Abarca dates this event in the year tomm. ii. fol. 8.


195-197.--Hence he was styled "Peter of the Dagger;" and a statue of him, bearing in one hand this weapon, and in the other the Privilege, stood in the Chamber of Deputation at Saragossa in Philip II.'s time. See Antonio Perez, Relaciones, fol. 95.

tom. i. fol. 178.--A copy of the original Privileges was detected by Blancas among the manuscripts of the archbishop of Saragossa; but he declined publishing it from deference to the prohibition of his ancestors. Commentarii, p. 179.


[28] Martel, Forma de Celebrar Cortes, cap. 8.--"Bracos del reino, porque in Catalonia and Valencia; both the greater and lesser nobility sitting in

184.

Zurita, indeed, gives repeated instances of their convocation in the thirteenth and twelfth centuries, from a date almost coeval with that of the commons; yet Blancas, who made this subject his particular study, who wrote posterior to Zurita, and occasionally refers to him, postpones the era of their admission into the legislature to the beginning of the fourteenth century.

One of the monarchs of Aragon, Alfonso the Warrior, according to Mariana, bequeathed all his dominions to the Templars and Hospitallers. Another, Peter II., agreed to hold his kingdom as a fief of the see of 664.) This so much disgusted the people, that they compelled his successors to make a public protest against the claims of the church, before their coronation.--See Blancas, Coronaciones de los Serenisimos Reyes de Aragon, (Zaragoza, 1641,) Cap. 2.

Martel, Forma de Celebrar Cortes, cap. 22.--Asso y Manuel, Instituciones, p. 44.

Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 163, A.D. 1250.

Ibid., tom. i. fol. 51.--The earliest appearance of popular representation in Catalonia is fixed by Ripoll at 1283, (apud Capmany,
introduction of the commons into the cortes of Aragon to 1300? (See p. 55.) Their presence and names are commemorated by the exact Zurita, several times before the close of the twelfth century.

Cortes, cap. 10.--Those who followed a mechanical occupation, _including surgeons and apothecaries_, were excluded from a seat in cortes. (Cap. 17.) The faculty have rarely been treated with so little ceremony.

[37] Martel, Forma de Celebrar Cortes, cap. 7.--The cortes appear to have been more frequently convoked in the fourteenth century, than in any other. Blancas refers to no less than twenty-three within that period, averaging nearly one in four years. (Commentarii, Index, _voce_ Comitia.) In Catalonia and Valencia, the cortes was to be summoned every three years. Berart, Discurso Breve sobre la Celebracion de Cortes de Aragon, (1626,) fol. 12.

of an address from the throne, in 1398, in which the king, after selecting some moral apothegm as a text, rambles for the space of half an hour through Scripture history, etc., and concludes with announcing the object of his convening the cortes together, in three lines. Commentarii, pp. 376-380.

[39] See the ceremonial detailed with sufficient prolixity by Martel, (Forma de Celebrar Cortes, cap. 52, 53,) and a curious illustration of it in Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 313.
Cortes, cap. 50, 60 et seq.--Fueros y Observancias, tom. i. fol. 229.--
Blancas, Modo de Proceder, fol. 2-4.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iii. fol. 321.
--Robertson, misinterpreting a passage of Blancas, (Commentarii, p. 375,)
states, that a "session of Cortes continued forty days." (History of
Charles V., vol. i. p. 140.) It usually lasted months.

[41] Fueros y Observancias, fol. 6, tit. Privileg. Gen.--Blancas,
the practice of the legislature to grant supplies of troops, but not of
money. When Peter IV. requested a pecuniary subsidy, the cortes told him,
that "such thing had not been usual; that his Christian subjects were wont
to serve him with their persons, and it was only for Jews and Moors to
serve him with money." Blancas, Modo de Proceder, cap. 18.

[42] See examples of them in Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 51, 263; tom.
i. fol. 391, 394, 424.--Blancas, Modo de Proceder, fol. 98, 106.

[43] "There was such a conformity of sentiment among all parties," says
Zurita, "that the privileges of the nobility were no better secured than
those of the commons. For the Aragonese deemed that the existence of the
commonwealth depended not so much on its strength, as on its liberties."
(Anales, lib. 4, cap. 38.) In the confirmation of the privilege by James
the Second, in 1325, torture, then generally recognized by the municipal
law of Europe, was expressly prohibited in Aragon, "as unworthy of
freemen." See Zurita, Anales, lib. 6, cap. 61.--and Fueros y Observancias,
The patriotism of Blancas warms as he dwells on the illusory picture of ancient virtue, and contrasts it with the degeneracy of his own day.

"Et vero prisca haec tanta severitas, desertaque illa et inculta vita, quando dies noctesque nostri armati concursabant, ac in bello et Maurorum gignuntur, gigni non solebant; quinimmo ita tunc aequaliter omnes omni genere virtutum floruere, ut egregia haec laus videatur non hominum solum, verum illorum etiam temporum fuisse." Commentarii, p. 340.

It was more frequently referred, both for the sake of expedition, and of obtaining a more full investigation, to commissioners nominated conjointly by the cortes and the party demanding redress. The nature of the _greuges_, or grievances, which might be brought before the legislature, and the mode of proceeding in relation to them, are circumstantially detailed by the parliamentary historians of Aragon. See Berart, Discurso sobre la Celebracion de Cortes, cap. 7.--Capmany, Martel, Forma de Celebrar Cortes, cap. 54-59.

Yet Peter IV., in his dispute with the justice Fernandez de Castro, denied this. Zurita, Anales, tom. ii. fol. 170.

Blancas, Modo de Proceder, ubi supra.
[48] As for example the _ciudadanos honrados_ of Saragossa. (Capmany, presume the same in Aragon, was a landholder, who lived on his rents without being engaged in commerce or trade of any kind, answering to the 30.


[50] Not, however, it must be allowed, without a manly struggle in its defence, and which, in the early part of Charles V.’s reign, in 1525, wrenched a promise from the crown, to answer all petitions definitively, before the rising of cortes. The law still remains on the statute-book, (Recop. de las Leyes, lib. 6, tit. 7, ley 8,) a sad commentary on the faith of princes.

Anales, lib. 7, cap. 17.

[53] The noun "justicia" was made masculine for the accommodation of this magistrate, who was styled "_el_ justicia." Antonio Perez, Relaciones, fol. 91.
[54] Blancas, Commentarii, p. 26.--Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 9.


[56] Blancas, Commentarii, p. 536.--The principal of these jurisdictions was the royal audience in which the king himself presided in person. Ibid., p. 355.

[57] Fueros y Observancias, tom. i. fol. 23, 60 et seq., 155, lib. 3, tit. De Manifestationibus Personarum.--Also fol. 137 et seq., tit. 7, De Firmis Juris.--Blancas, Commentarii, pp. 350, 351.--Zurita, Anales, lib. 10, cap. 37.--The first of these processes was styled _firma de derecho_, the last, _manifestation_. The Spanish writers are warm in their encomiums of these two provisions. "Quibus duobus praesidiis," says Blancas, "ita nostrae reipublicae status continetur, ut nulla pars communium fortunarum details respecting them, which the reader may find extracted, and in part translated, by Mr. Hallam, Middle Ages, vol. ii. pp. 75-77, notes.

When complex litigation became more frequent, the Justice was allowed one, afterwards two, and at a still later period, in 1528, five lieutenants, as they were called, who aided him in the discharge of his onerous duties.

Sempere cites the opinion of an ancient canonist, Canellas, bishop of Huesca, as conclusive against the existence of the vast powers imputed by vague, rhapsodical tone of the extract shows it to be altogether undeserving of the emphasis laid on it; not to add, that it was written more than a century before the period, when the Justicia possessed the influence or the legal authority claimed for him by Aragonese writers,—by Blancas, in particular, from whom Sempere borrowed the passage at second hand.


[60] Such instances may be found in Zurita, Anales, tom. ii. fol. 385, 414,—Blancas, Commentarii, pp. 199, 202-206, 214, 225.—When Ximenes Cerdan, the independent Justice of John I., removed certain citizens from the prison, in which they had been unlawfully confined by the king, in defiance equally of that officer's importunities and menaces, the inhabitants of Saragossa, says Abarca, came out in a body to receive him on his return to the city, and greeted him as the defender of their ancient and natural liberties. (Reyes de Aragon, tom. i. fol. 155.) So
openly did the Aragonese support their magistrate in the boldest exercise of his authority.

[61] This occurred once under Peter III., and twice under Alfonso V. (Zurita, Anales, tom. iii. fol. 255.--Blancas, Commentarii, pp. 174, 489, 499.) The Justice was appointed by the king.

[62] Fueros y Observancias, tom. i. fol. 22.

[63] Ibid., tom. i. fol. 25.


The examination was conducted in the first instance before a court of four inquisitors, as they were termed; who, after a patient hearing of both sides, reported the result of their examination to a council of seventeen, chosen like them from the cortes, from whose decision there was no appeal. No lawyer was admitted into this council, lest the law might be distorted by verbal quibbles, says Blancas. The council, however, was allowed the advice of two of the profession. They voted by ballot, and the majority decided. Such, after various modifications, were the regulations ultimately adopted in 1461, or rather 1467. Robertson appears to have confounded the council of seventeen with the court of inquisition. See his History of Charles V., vol. i. note 31.
[65] Probably no nation of the period would have displayed a temperance
similar to that exhibited by the Aragonese at the beginning of the
fifteenth century, in 1412; when the people, having been split into
factions by a contested succession, agreed to refer the dispute to a
committee of judges, elected equally from the three great provinces of the
kingdom; who, after an examination conducted with all the forms of law,
and on the same equitable principles as would have guided the
determination of a private suit, delivered an opinion, which was received
as obligatory on the whole nation.

[66] See Zurita, Anales, lib. 8, cap. 29,--and the admirable sentiments
cited by Blancas from the parliamentary acts, in 1451. Commentarii, p. 350.

From this independent position must be excepted, indeed, the lower classes
of the peasantry, who seem to have been in a more abject state in Aragon
than in most other feudal countries. "Era tan absolute su dominio (of
servidumbre." (Asso y Manuel, Instituciones, p. 40,--also Blancas,
Commentarii, p. 309.) These serfs extorted, in an insurrection, the
recognition of certain rights from their masters, on condition of paying a
specified tax; whence the name _villanos de parada_.

[67] Although the legislatures of the different states of the crown of
Aragon were never united in one body when convened in the same town, yet
they were so averse to all appearance of incorporation, that the monarch frequently appointed for the places of meeting three distinct towns, within their respective territories and contiguous, in order that he might pass the more expeditiously from one to the other. See Blancas, Modo de Proceder, cap. 4.

[68] It is indeed true, that Peter III., at the request of the Valencians, appointed an Aragonese knight Justice of that kingdom, in 1283. (Zurita, Anales, tom. i. fol. 281.) But we find no further mention of this officer, or of the office. Nor have I met with any notice of it in the details of the Valencian constitution, compiled by Capmany from various writers.

by Blancas, (Commentarii, p. 214,) may lead one to infer, that the places in Valencia, which received the laws of Aragon, acknowledged the jurisdiction of its Justicia.

copious materials, from a variety of authors, for the parliamentary history of Catalonia and Valencia, forming a striking contrast to the scantiness of information he was able to glean respecting Castile. The indifference of the Spanish writers, till very recently, to the constitutional antiquities of the latter kingdom, so much more important than the other states of the Peninsula, is altogether inexplicable.

de Marca cites a charter of Raymond Berenger, count of Barcelona, to the city, as ancient as 1025, confirming its former privileges. See Marca Hispanica, sive Limes Hispanicus, (Parisii, 1688,) Apend. no. 198.
v. pp. 81, 82, 112, 113.--Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, tom. i. part. 1, cap. 1, pp. 4, 8, 10, 11.

[72] Mem. de Barcelona, part. 1, cap. 2, 3.--Capmany has given a register of the consuls and of the numerous stations, at which they were established throughout Africa and Europe, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, (tom. ii. Apend. no. 23.) These officers during the Middle Ages discharged much more important duties than at the present day, if we except those few residing with the Barbary powers. They settled the disputes arising between their countrymen, in the ports where they were established; they protected the trade of their own nation with these ports; and were employed in adjusting commercial relations, treaties, etc. In short, they filled in some sort the post of a modern ambassador, or resident minister, at a period when this functionary was only employed on extraordinary occasions.


[74] Heeren, Essai sur l'Influence des Croisades, traduit par Villers,
(Paris, 1808,) p. 376.--Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, tom. i. p. 213, also pp. 170-180.--Capmany fixes the date of the publication of the _Consulado del Mar_ at the middle of the thirteenth century, under James I. He discusses and refutes the claims of the Pisans to precedence in this codification. See his Preliminary Discourse to the Costumbres Maritimas de Barcelona.

[75] Navagiero, Viaggio, fol. 3.--L. Marineo styles it "the most beautiful city he had ever seen, or, to speak more correctly, in the whole world."
(Cosas Memorables, fol. 18.) Alfonso V., in one of his ordinances, in 1438, calls it "urbs venerabilis in egregiis templis, tuta ut in optimis, pulchra in caeteris aedificiis," etc. Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, tom. ii. Apend. no. 13.

[76] Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, Apend. no. 24.--The senate or great council, though styled the "one hundred," seems to have fluctuated at different times between that number and double its amount.

tom. ii. Apend. no. 29.


[79] Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, tom. i. part. 2, p. 187.--tom. ii. Apend. 30.--Capmany says _principal nobleza_; yet it may be presumed that much
the larger proportion of these noble candidates for office was drawn
from the inferior class of the privileged orders, the knights and
hidalgos. The great barons of Catalonia, fortified with extensive
immunities and wealth, lived on their estates in the country, probably
little relishing the levelling spirit of the burghers of Barcelona.

Barcelona revolted and was twice besieged by the royal arms under
John II., once under Philip IV., twice under Charles II., and twice under
Philip V. This last siege, 1713-14, in which it held out against the
combined forces of France and Spain under Marshal Berwick, is one of the
most memorable events in the eighteenth century. An interesting account of
the siege may be found in Coxe's Memoirs of the Kings of Spain of the
House of Bourbon, (London, 1815,) vol. ii. chap. 21.--The late monarch,
Ferdinand VII., also had occasion to feel, that the independent spirit of
the Catalans did not become extinct with their ancient constitution.

Viaggio, fol. 3.

Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, tom. ii. fol. 183.--Zurita, Anales, tom.
iii. lib. 12, cap. 59.--The king turned his back on the magistrates, who
came to pay their respects to him, on learning his intention of quitting
the city. He seems, however, to have had the magnanimity to forgive,
perhaps to admire, the independent conduct of Fiveller; for at his death,
which occurred very soon after, we find this citizen mentioned as one of
his executors. See Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, tom. ii. Apend. 29.
The taxes were assessed in the ratio of one-sixth on Valencia, two-sixths on Aragon, and three-sixths on Catalonia. See Martel, Forma de Celebrar Cortes, cap. 71.

See the items specified by Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, tom. i. pp. 231, 232.

Idem, tom. i. pp. 221, 234.--Capmany states, that the statute of Alfonso V. prohibited "all foreign ships from taking cargoes in the ports of his dominions." (See also Colec. Dipl., tom. ii. no. 187.) The object of this law, like that of the British Navigation Act, was the encouragement of the national marine. It deviated far, however, from the sagacious policy of the latter, which imposed no restriction on the exportation of domestic produce to foreign countries, except, indeed, its own colonies.

Andres, Dell' Origine, de' Progressi, e dello Stato Attuale d' Ogni Letteratura, (Venezia, 1783,) part. 1, cap. 11.--Lampillas, Saggio Storico-Apologetico della Letteratura Spagnuola, (Genova, 1778,) part. 1, dis. 6, sec. 7.--Andres conjectures, and Lampillas decides, in favor of Catalonia. _Arcades ambo_; and the latter critic, the worst possible authority on all questions of national preference.

Andres, Letteratura, part. 1, cap. 11.--Alfonso II., Peter II., Peter III, James I., Peter IV., have all left compositions in the Limousin
tongue behind them; the three former in verse; the two latter in prose, setting forth the history of their own time. For a particular account of their respective productions, see Latassa, (Escritores Aragoneses, tom. i. pp. 175-179, 185-189, 222, 224, 242-248; tom. ii. p. 28,) also Lanuza, p. 553.) The Chronicle of James I. is particularly esteemed for its fidelity.

[88] Whether Jordi stole from Petrarch, or Petrarch from Jordi, has been Sanchez, after a careful examination of the evidence, candidly decides competent critic in the Retrospective Review, (No. 7, art. 2,) who enjoyed the advantage over Sanchez of perusing a MS. copy of Jordi's original poem, makes out a very plausible argument in favor of the originality of the Valencian poet. After all, as the amount stolen, or, to speak more reverently, borrowed, does not exceed half a dozen lines, it is not of vital importance to the reputation of either poet.

[89] The abate Andres lamented fifty years ago, that the worms and moths should be allowed to revel among the precious relics of ancient Castilian literature. (Letteratura, tom. ii. p. 306.) Have their revels been disturbed yet?

ii. pp. 323, 324.--Crescimbeni, Istorìa della Volgar Poesia, (Venezia,
[92] Andres, Letteratura, tom. iv. pp. 85, 86.--Capmany, Mem. de Barcelona, tom. ii. Apend. no. 16.--There were thirty-two chairs, or professorships, founded and maintained at the expense of the city; six of theology; six of jurisprudence; five of medicine; six of philosophy; four of grammar; one of rhetoric; one of surgery; one of anatomy; one of Hebrew, and another of Greek. It is singular, that none should have existed for the Latin, so much more currently studied at that time, and of so much more practical application always, than either of the other ancient languages.

[93] The Valencian, "the sweetest and most graceful of the Limousin ii. p. 146.--Andres, Letteratura, tom. iv. p. 87.

[95] Cervantes, Don Quixote, (ed. de Pellicer, Madrid, 1787,) tom. i, p. Letteratura, ubi supra.--Pellicer seems to take Martorell's word in good earnest, that his book is only a version from the Castilian.

The _names_ of some of the most noted troubadours are collected by tom. ii. Apend. no. 5.) Some extracts and pertinent criticisms on their productions may be found by the English reader in the Retrospective
Review. (No. 7, art. 2.) It is to be regretted that the author has not redeemed his pledge of continuing his notices to the Castilian era of Spanish poetry.

[Illustration: GENEALOGY OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA.]

PART FIRST.

1406-1492.

THE PERIOD WHEN THE DIFFERENT KINGDOMS OF SPAIN WERE FIRST UNITED UNDER ONE MONARCHY, AND A THOROUGH REFORM WAS INTRODUCED INTO THEIR INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION; OR THE PERIOD EXHIBITING MOST FULLY THE DOMESTIC POLICY OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA.

CHAPTER I.

STATE OF CASTILE AT THE BIRTH OF ISABELLA.---REIGN OF JOHN II., OF CASTILE.

1406-1454.

Revolution of Trastamara.---Accession of John II.---Rise of Alvaro de Luna.

--Jealousy of the Nobles.---Oppression of the Commons.---Its Consequences.-- Early Literature of Castile.---Its Encouragement under John II.---Decline of
Alvaro de Luna.--His Fall.--Death of John II.--Birth of Isabella.

The fierce civil feuds, which preceded the accession of the House of Trastamara in 1368, were as fatal to the nobility of Castile, as the wars of the Hoses were to that of England. There was scarcely a family of note, which had not poured out its blood on the field or the scaffold. The influence of the aristocracy was, of course, much diminished with its numbers. The long wars with foreign powers, which a disputed succession entailed on the country, were almost equally prejudicial to the authority of the monarch, who was willing to buoy up his tottering title by the most liberal concession of privileges to the people. Thus the commons rose in proportion as the crown and the privileged orders descended in the scale; and, when the claims of the several competitors for the throne were finally extinguished, and the tranquillity of the kingdom was secured, by the union of Henry the Third with Catharine of Lancaster at the close of the fourteenth century, the third estate may be said to have attained to the highest degree of political consequence which it ever reached in Castile.

The healthful action of the body politic, during the long interval of peace that followed this auspicious union, enabled it to repair the strength, which had been wasted in its murderous civil contests. The ancient channels of commerce were again opened; various new manufactures were introduced, and carried to a considerable perfection; [1] wealth, with its usual concomitants, elegance and comfort, flowed in apace; and the nation promised itself a long career of prosperity under a monarch, who respected the laws in his own person, and administered them with
vigor. All these fair hopes were blasted by the premature death of Henry the Third, before he had reached his twenty-eighth year. The crown devolved on his son John the Second, then a minor, whose reign was one of the longest and the most disastrous in the Castilian annals. [2] As it was that, however, which gave birth to Isabella, the illustrious subject of our narrative, it will be necessary to pass its principal features under review, in order to obtain a correct idea of her government.

The wise administration of the regency, during a long minority, postponed the season of calamity; and when it at length arrived, it was concealed for some time from the eyes of the vulgar by the pomp and brilliant festivities, which distinguished the court of the young monarch. His indisposition, if not incapacity for business, however, gradually became manifest; and, while he resigned himself without reserve to pleasures, which it must be confessed were not unfrequently of a refined and intellectual character, he abandoned the government of his kingdom to the control of favorites.

The most conspicuous of these was Alvaro de Luna, grand master of St. James, and constable of Castile. This remarkable person, the illegitimate descendant of a noble house in Aragon, was introduced very early as a page into the royal household, where he soon distinguished himself by his amiable manners and personal accomplishments. He could ride, fence, dance, sing, if we may credit his loyal biographer, better than any other cavalier in the court; while his proficiency in music and poetry recommended him most effectually to the favor of the monarch, who professed to be a connoisseur in both. With these showy qualities, Alvaro
de Luna united others of a more dangerous complexion. His insinuating
address easily conciliated confidence, and enabled him to master the
motives of others, while his own were masked by consummate dissimulation.
He was as fearless in executing his ambitious schemes, as he was cautious
in devising them. He was indefatigable in his application to business, so
that John, whose aversion to it we have noticed, willingly reposed on him
the whole burden of government. The king, it was said, only signed, while
the constable dictated and executed. He was the only channel of promotion
to public office, whether secular or ecclesiastical. As his cupidity was
insatiable, he perverted the great trust confided to him to the
acquisition of the principal posts in the government for himself or his
kindred, and at his death is said to have left a larger amount of treasure
than was possessed by the whole nobility of the kingdom. He affected a
magnificence of state corresponding with his elevated rank. The most
considerable grandees in Castile contended for the honor of having their
sons, after the fashion of the time, educated in his family. When he rode
abroad, he was accompanied by a numerous retinue of knights and nobles,
which left his sovereign's court comparatively deserted; so that royalty
might be said on all occasions, whether of business or pleasure, to be
eclipsed by the superior splendors of its satellite. [3] The history of
this man may remind the English reader of that of Cardinal Wolsey, whom he
somewhat resembled in character, and still more in his extraordinary
fortunes.

It may easily be believed, that the haughty aristocracy of Castile would
ill brook this exaltation of an individual so inferior to them in birth,
and who withdrew did not wear his honors with exemplary meekness. John's
blind partiality for his favorite is the key to all the troubles which agitated the kingdom during the last thirty years of his reign. The disgusted nobles organized confederacies for the purpose of deposing the minister. The whole nation took sides in this unhappy struggle. The heats of civil discord were still further heightened by the interference of the royal house of Aragon, which, descended from a common stock with that of Castile, was proprietor of large estates in the latter country. The wretched monarch beheld even his own son Henry, the heir to the crown, enlisted in the opposite faction, and saw himself reduced to the extremity of shedding the blood of his subjects in the fatal battle of Olmedo. Still the address, or the good fortune, of the constable enabled him to triumph over his enemies; and, although he was obliged occasionally to yield to the violence of the storm and withdraw a while from the court, he was soon recalled and reinstated in all his former dignities. This melancholy infatuation of the king is imputed by the writers of that age to sorcery on the part of the favorite. [4] But the only witchcraft which he used, was the ascendency of a strong mind over a weak one.

During this long-protracted anarchy, the people lost whatever they had gained in the two preceding reigns. By the advice of his minister, who seems to have possessed a full measure of the insolence, so usual with persons suddenly advanced from low to elevated station, the king not only abandoned the constitutional policy of his predecessors in regard to the commons, but entered on the most arbitrary and systematic violation of their rights. Their deputies were excluded from the privy council, or lost all influence in it. Attempts were made to impose taxes without the legislative sanction. The municipal territories were alienated, and lavished on the royal minions. The freedom of elections was invaded, and delegates to cortes were frequently nominated by the crown; and, to
complete the iniquitous scheme of oppression, _pragmaticas_, or royal proclamations, were issued, containing provisions repugnant to the acknowledged law of the land, and affirming in the most unqualified terms the right of the sovereign to legislate for his subjects. [5] The commons indeed, when assembled in cortes, stoutly resisted the assumption of such unconstitutional powers by the crown, and compelled the prince not only to revoke his pretensions, but to accompany his revocation with the most humiliating concessions. [6] They even ventured so far, during this reign, as to regulate the expenses of the royal household; [7] and their language to the throne on all these occasions, though temperate and loyal, breathed a generous spirit of patriotism, evincing a perfect consciousness of their own rights, and a steady determination to maintain them. [8]

Alas! what could such resolution avail, in this season of misrule, against the intrigues of a cunning and profligate minister, unsupported too, as the commons were, by any sympathy or co-operation on the part of the higher orders of the state! A scheme was devised for bringing the popular branch of the legislature more effectually within the control of the crown, by diminishing the number of its constituents. It has been already remarked, in the Introduction, that a great irregularity prevailed in Castile as to the number of cities which, at different times, exercised the right of representation. During the fourteenth century, the deputation from this order had been uncommonly full. The king, however, availing himself of this indeterminateness, caused writs to be issued to a very small proportion of the towns which had usually enjoyed the privilege. Some of those that were excluded indignantly though ineffectually remonstrated against this abuse. Others, previously despoiled of their
possessions by the rapacity of the crown, or impoverished by the
disastrous feuds into which the country had been thrown, acquiesced in the
measure from motives of economy. From the same mistaken policy several
cities, again, as Burgos, Toledo, and others, petitioned the sovereign to
defray the charges of their representatives from the royal treasury; a
most ill-advised parsimony, which suggested to the crown a plausible
pretext for the new system of exclusion. In this manner the Castilian
cortes, which, notwithstanding its occasional fluctuations, had exhibited
during the preceding century what might be regarded as a representation of
the whole commonwealth, was gradually reduced, during the reigns of John
the Second and his son Henry the Fourth, to the deputations of some
seventeen or eighteen cities. And to this number, with slight variation,
it has been restricted until the occurrence of the recent revolutionary
movements in that kingdom. [9]

The non-represented were required to transmit their instructions to the
deputies of the privileged cities. Thus Salamanca appeared in behalf of
five hundred towns and fourteen hundred villages; and the populous
province of Galicia was represented by the little town of Zamora, which is
not even included within its geographical limits. [10] The privilege of a
_voice in cortes_, as it was called, came at length to be prized so
highly by the favored cities, that when, in 1506, some of those which were
excluded solicited the restitution of their ancient rights, their petition
was opposed by the former on the impudent pretence, that "the right of
deputation had been reserved by ancient law and usage to only eighteen
cities of the realm." [11] In this short-sighted and most unhappy policy,
we see the operation of those local jealousies and estrangements, to which
we have alluded in the Introduction. But, although the cortes, thus reduced in numbers, necessarily lost much of its weight, it still maintained a bold front against the usurpations of the crown. It does not appear, indeed, that any attempt was made under John the Second, or his successor, to corrupt its members, or to control the freedom of debate; although such a proceeding is not improbable, as altogether conformable to their ordinary policy, and as the natural result of their preliminary measures. But, however true the deputies continued to themselves and to those who sent them, it is evident that so limited and partial a selection no longer afforded a representation of the interests of the whole country. Their necessarily imperfect acquaintance with the principles or even wishes of their widely scattered constituents, in an age when knowledge was not circulated on the thousand wings of the press, as in our day, must have left them oftentimes in painful uncertainty, and deprived them of the cheering support of public opinion. The voice of remonstrance, which derives such confidence from numbers, would hardly now be raised in their deserted halls with the same frequency or energy as before; and, however the representatives of that day might maintain their integrity uncorrupted, yet, as every facility was afforded to the undue influence of the crown, the time might come when venality would prove stronger than principle, and the unworthy patriot be tempted to sacrifice his birthright for a mess of pottage. Thus early was the fair dawn of freedom overcast, which opened in Castile under more brilliant auspices, perhaps, than in any other country in Europe.

While the reign of John the Second is so deservedly odious in a political view, in a literary, it may be inscribed with what Giovio calls "the
golden pen of history." It was an epoch in the Castilian, corresponding with that of the reign of Francis the First in French literature, distinguished not so much by any production of extraordinary genius, as by the effort made for the introduction of an elegant culture, by conducting it on more scientific principles than had been hitherto known. The early literature of Castile could boast of the "Poem of the Cid," in some respects the most remarkable performance of the middle ages. It was enriched, moreover, with other elaborate compositions, displaying occasional glimpses of a buoyant fancy, or of sensibility to external beauty, to say nothing of those delightful romantic ballads, which seemed to spring up spontaneously in every quarter of the country, like the natural wild flowers of the soil. But the unaffected beauties of sentiment, which seem rather the result of accident than design, were dearly purchased, in the more extended pieces, at the expense of such a crude mass of grotesque and undigested verse, as shows an entire ignorance of the principles of the art. [12]

The profession of letters itself was held in little repute by the higher orders of the nation, who were altogether untinctured with liberal learning. While the nobles of the sister kingdom of Aragon, assembled in each other in lays of love and chivalry, those of Castile disdained these effeminate pleasures as unworthy of the profession of arms, the only one of any estimation in their eyes. The benignant influence of John was perceptible in softening this ferocious temper. He was himself sufficiently accomplished, for a king; and, notwithstanding his aversion to business, manifested, as has been noticed, a lively relish for intellectual enjoyment. He was fond of books, wrote and spoke Latin with
facility, composed verses, and condescended occasionally to correct those of his loving subjects. [13] Whatever might be the value of his criticisms, that of his example cannot be doubted. The courtiers, with the quick scent for their own interest which distinguished the tribe in every country, soon turned their attention to the same polite studies; [14] and thus Castilian poetry received very early the courtly stamp, which continued its prominent characteristic down to the age of its meridian glory.

Among the most eminent of these noble _savans_, was Henry, marquis of Villena, descended from the royal houses of Castile and Aragon, [15] but more illustrious, as one of his countrymen has observed, by his talents and attainments, than by his birth. His whole life was consecrated to letters, and especially to the study of natural science. I am not aware that any specimen of his poetry, although much lauded by his contemporaries, [16] has come down to us. [17] He translated Dante's "Commedia" into prose, and is said to have given the first example of a version of the AEneid into a modern language. [18] He labored assiduously to introduce a more cultivated taste among his countrymen, and his little treatise on the _gaya sciencia_, as the divine art was then called, in which he gives an historical and critical view of the poetical Consistory of Barcelona, is the first approximation, however faint, to an Art of Poetry in the Castilian tongue. [19] The exclusiveness with which he devoted himself to science, and especially astronomy, to the utter neglect of his temporal concerns, led the wits of that day to remark, that "he knew much of heaven, and nothing of earth." He paid the usual penalty of such indifference to worldly weal, by seeing himself eventually
stripped of his lordly possessions, and reduced, at the close of life, to
extreme poverty. [20] His secluded habits brought on him the appalling
imputation of necromancy. A scene took place at his death, in 1434, which
is sufficiently characteristic of the age, and may possibly have suggested
a similar adventure to Cervantes. The king commissioned his son's
examine the valuable library of the deceased; and the worthy ecclesiastic
consigned more than a hundred volumes of it to the flames, as savoring too
strongly of the black art. The Bachelor Cibdareal, the confidential
physician of John the Second, in a lively letter on this occurrence to the
poet John de Mena, remarks, that "some would fain get the reputation of
saints, by making others necromancers;" and requests his friend "to allow
him to solicit, in his behalf, some of the surviving volumes from the
king, that in this way the soul of Brother Lope might be saved from
further sin, and the spirit of the defunct marquis consoled by the
consciousness, that his books no longer rested on the shelves of the man
who had converted him into a conjuror." [21] John de Mena denounces this
_auto da fe_ of science in a similar, but graver tone of sarcasm, in
his "Laberinto." These liberal sentiments in the Spanish writers of the
fifteenth century may put to shame the more bigoted criticism of the
seventeenth. [22]

marquis of Santillana, "the glory and delight of the Castilian nobility,"
whose celebrity was such, that foreigners, it was said, journeyed to Spain
from distant parts of Europe to see him. Although passionately devoted to
letters, he did not, like his friend the marquis of Villena, neglect his
public or domestic duties for them. On the contrary, he discharged the
most important civil and military functions. He made his house an academy, in which the young cavaliers of the court might practise the martial exercises of the age; and he assembled around him at the same time men eminent for genius and science, whom he munificently recompensed, and encouraged by his example. [23] His own taste led him to poetry, of which he has left some elaborate specimens. They are chiefly of a moral and preceptive character; but, although replete with noble sentiment, and finished in a style of literary excellence far more correct than that of the preceding age, they are too much infected with mythology and metaphorical affectations to suit the palate of the present day. He possessed, however, the soul of a poet; and when he abandons himself to his native _redondillas_, delivers his sentiments with a sweetness and grace inimitable. To him is to be ascribed the glory, such as it is, of having naturalized the Italian sonnet in Castile, which Boscan, many years later, claimed for himself with no small degree of self-congratulation. [24] His epistle on the primitive history of Spanish verse, although containing notices sufficiently curious from the age and the source whence they proceed, has perhaps done more service to letters by the valuable illustrations it has called forth from its learned editor. [25]

This great man, who found so much leisure for the cultivation of letters amidst the busy strife of politics, closed his career at the age of sixty, in 1458. Though a conspicuous actor in the revolutionary scenes of the period, he maintained a character for honor and purity of motive, unimpeached even by his enemies. The king, notwithstanding his devotion to the faction of his son Henry, conferred on him the dignities of count of
Real de Manzanares and marquis of Santillana; this being the oldest creation of a marquis in Castile, with the exception of Villena. [26] His eldest son was subsequently made duke of Infantado, by which title his descendants have continued to be distinguished to the present day.

But the most conspicuous, for his poetical talents, of the brilliant circle which graced the court of John the Second, was John de Mena, a native of fair Cordova, "the flower of science and of chivalry," [27] as he fondly styles her. Although born in a middling condition of life, with humble prospects, he was early smitten with a love of letters; and, after passing through the usual course of discipline at Salamanca, he repaired to Rome, where, in the study of those immortal masters whose writings had but recently revealed the full capacities of a modern idiom, he imbibed principles of taste, which gave a direction to his own genius, and, in some degree, to that of his countrymen. On his return to Spain, his literary merit soon attracted general admiration, and introduced him to the patronage of the great, and above all to the friendship of the marquis of Santillana. [28] He was admitted into the private circle of the monarch, who, as his gossiping physician informs us, "used to have Mena's verses lying on his table, as constantly as his prayer-book." The poet repaid the debt of gratitude by administering a due quantity of honeyed rhyme, for which the royal palate seems to have possessed a more than ordinary relish. [29] He continued faithful to his master amidst all the fluctuations of faction, and survived him less than two years. He died in 1456; and his friend, the marquis of Santillana, raised a sumptuous monument over his remains, in commemoration of his virtues and of their mutual affection.
John de Mena is affirmed by some of the national critics to have given a new aspect to Castilian poetry. [30] His great work was his "Laberinto," the outlines of whose plan may faintly remind us of that portion of the "Divina Commedia" where Dante resigns himself to the guidance of Beatrice. In like manner the Spanish poet, under the escort of a beautiful personification of Providence, witnesses the apparition of the most eminent individuals, whether of history or fable; and, as they revolve on the wheel of destiny, they give occasion to some animated portraiture, and much dull, pedantic disquisition. In these delineations we now and then meet with a touch of his pencil, which, from its simplicity and vigor, may be called truly _Dantesque_. Indeed, the Castilian Muse never before ventured on so bold a flight; and, notwithstanding the deformity of the general plan, the obsolete barbarisms of the phraseology, its quaintness and pedantry, notwithstanding the cantering dactylic measure in which it is composed, and which to the ear of a foreigner can scarcely be made tolerable, the work abounds in conceptions, nay in whole episodes, of such mingled energy and beauty, as indicate genius of the highest order. In some of his smaller pieces his style assumes a graceful flexibility, too generally denied to his more strained and elaborate efforts. [31]

It will not be necessary to bring under review the minor luminaries of this period. Alfonso de Baena, a converted Jew, secretary of John the Second, compiled the fugitive pieces of more than fifty of these ancient troubadours into a _cancionero_, "for the disport and divertisement of his highness the king, when he should find himself too sorely oppressed with cares of state," a case we may imagine of no rare occurrence. The
original manuscript of Baena, transcribed in beautiful characters of the fifteenth century, lies, or did lie until very lately, unheeded in the cemetery of the Escurial, with the dust of many a better worthy. [32] The extracts selected from it by Castro, although occasionally exhibiting some fluent graces with considerable variety of versification, convey, on the whole, no very high idea of taste or poetic talent. [33].

Indeed, this epoch, as before remarked, was not so much distinguished by uncommon displays of genius, as by its general intellectual movement and the enthusiasm kindled for liberal studies. Thus we find the corporation of Seville granting a hundred _doblas_ of gold as the guerdon of a poet who had celebrated in some score of verses the glories of their native city; and appropriating the same sum as an annual premium for a similar performance. [34] It is not often that the productions of a poet laureate have been more liberally recompensed even by royal bounty. But the gifted spirits of that day mistook the road to immortality. Disdaining the untutored simplicity of their predecessors, they sought to rise above them by an ostentation of learning, as well as by a more classical idiom. In the latter particular they succeeded. They much improved the external forms of poetry, and their compositions exhibit a high degree of literary finish, compared with all that preceded them. But their happiest sentiments are frequently involved in such a cloud of metaphor, as to become nearly unintelligible; while they invoke the pagan deities with a shameless prodigality that would scandalize even a French lyric. This cheap display of school-boy erudition, however it may have appalled their own age, has been a principal cause of their comparative oblivion with posterity. How far superior is one touch of nature, as the "Finojosa" or
“Querella de Amor,” for example, of the marquis of Santillana, to all this farrago of metaphor and mythology!

The impulse, given to Castilian poetry, extended to other departments of elegant literature. Epistolary and historical composition were cultivated with considerable success. The latter, especially, might admit of advantageous comparison with that of any other country in Europe at the same period; [35] and it is remarkable, that, after such early promise, the modern Spaniards have not been more successful in perfecting a classical prose style.

Enough has been said to give an idea of the state of mental improvement in Castile under John the Second. The Muses, who had found a shelter in his court from the anarchy which reigned abroad, soon fled from its polluted precincts under the reign of his successor Henry the Fourth, whose sordid appetites were incapable of being elevated above the objects of the senses. If we have dwelt somewhat long on a more pleasing picture, it is because our road is now to lead us across a dreary waste exhibiting scarcely a vestige of civilization.

While a small portion of the higher orders of the nation was thus endeavoring to forget the public calamities in the tranquillizing pursuit of letters, and a much larger portion in the indulgence of pleasure, [36] the popular aversion for the minister Luna had been gradually infusing itself into the royal bosom. His too obvious assumption of superiority, even over the monarch who had raised him from the dust, was probably the
real though secret cause of this disgust. But the habitual ascendancy of
the favorite over his master prevented the latter from disclosing this
feeling until it was heightened by an occurrence which sets in a strong
light the imbecility of the one and the presumption of the other. John, on
the death of his wife, Maria of Aragon, had formed the design of
connecting himself with a daughter of the king of France. But the
constable, in the mean time, without even the privity of his master,
entered into negotiations for his marriage with the princess Isabella,
granddaughter of John the First of Portugal; and the monarch, with an
unprecedented degree of complaisance, acquiesced in an arrangement
professedly repugnant to his own inclinations. [37] By one of those
dispensations of Providence, however, which often confound the plans of
the wisest, as of the weakest, the column, which the minister had so
artfully raised for his support, served only to crush him.

The new queen, disgusted with his haughty bearing, and probably not much
gratified with the subordinate situation to which he had reduced her
husband, entered heartily into the feelings of the latter, and indeed
contrived to extinguish whatever spark of latent affection for his ancient
favorite lurked within his breast. John, yet fearing the overgrown power
of the constable too much to encounter him openly, condescended to adopt
the dastardly policy of Tiberius on a similar occasion, by caressing the
man whom he designed to ruin, and he eventually obtained possession of his
person, only by a violation of the royal safe-conduct. The constable's
trial was referred to a commission of jurists and privy counsellors, who,
after a summary and informal investigation, pronounced on him the sentence
of death on a specification of charges either general and indeterminate,
or of the most trivial import. "If the king," says Garibay, "had dispensed
similar justice to all his nobles, who equally deserved it in those
turbulent times, he would have had but few to reign over." [38]

The constable had supported his disgrace, from the first, with an
equanimity not to have been expected from his elation in prosperity; and
he now received the tidings of his fate with a similar fortitude. As he
rode along the streets to the place of execution, clad in the sable livery
of an ordinary criminal, and deserted by those who had been reared by his
bounty, the populace, who before called so loudly for his disgrace, struck
with this astonishing reverse of his brilliant fortunes, were melted into
tears. [39] They called to mind the numerous instances of his magnanimity.
They reflected, that the ambitious schemes of his rivals had been not a
whit less selfish, though less successful, than his own; and that, if his
cupidity appeared insatiable, he had dispensed the fruits of it in acts of
princely munificence. He himself maintained a serene and even cheerful
aspect. Meeting one of the domestics of Prince Henry, he bade him request
the prince "to reward the attachment of his servants with a different
guerdon from what his master had assigned to him." As he ascended the
scaffold, he surveyed the apparatus of death with composure, and calmly
submitted himself to the stroke of the executioner, who, in the savage
style of the executions of that day, plunged his knife into the throat of
his victim, and deliberately severed his head from his body. A basin, for
the reception of alms to defray the expenses of his interment, was placed
at one extremity of the scaffold; and his mutilated remains, after having
been exposed for several days to the gaze of the populace, were removed,
by the brethren of a charitable order, to a place called the hermitage of
Such was the tragical end of Alvaro de Luna; a man, who, for more than thirty years, controlled the counsels of the sovereign, or, to speak more properly, was himself the sovereign of Castile. His fate furnishes one of the most memorable lessons in history. It was not lost on his contemporaries; and the marquis of Santillana has made use of it to point the moral of perhaps the most pleasing of his didactic compositions. John did not long survive his favorite's death, which he was seen afterwards to lament even with tears. Indeed, during the whole of the trial he had exhibited the most pitiable agitation, having twice issued and recalled his orders countermanding the constable's execution; and, had it not been for the superior constancy, or vindictive temper of the queen, he would probably have yielded to these impulses of returning affection.

So far from deriving a wholesome warning from experience, John confided the entire direction of his kingdom to individuals not less interested, but possessed of far less enlarged capacities, than the former minister. Penetrated with remorse at the retrospect of his unprofitable life, and filled with melancholy presages of the future, the unhappy prince lamented to his faithful attendant Cibdareal, on his deathbed, that "he had not been born the son of a mechanic, instead of king of Castile." He died July 21st, 1454, after a reign of eight and forty years, if reign it may be called, which was more properly one protracted minority. John left one child by his first wife, Henry, who succeeded him on the throne; and by his second wife two others, Alfonso, then an infant, and Isabella,
afterwards queen of Castile, the subject of the present narrative. She had scarcely reached her fourth year at the time of her father's decease, having been born on the 22d of April, 1451, at Madrigal. The king recommended his younger children to the especial care and protection of their brother Henry, and assigned the town of Cuellar, with its territory and a considerable sum of money, for the maintenance of the Infanta Isabella. [43]

FOOTNOTES

[1] Sempere y Guarinos, Historia del Luxo, y de las Leyes Suntuarias de tit. 3, 5, 68, 74.--Guzman, Generaciones y Semblanzas, (Madrid, 1775,)
towns and fortresses, and kept three thousand lances constantly in pay. Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS.
alibi. His complaisance for the favorite, indeed, must be admitted, if we believe Guzman, to have been of a most extraordinary kind. "E lo que con supra.
[6] Several of this prince's laws for redressing the alleged grievances are incorporated in the great code of Philip II., (Recopilacion de las Leyes, (Madrid, 1640,) lib. 6, tit. 7, leyes 5, 7, 2,) which declares, in the most unequivocal language, the right of the commons to be consulted on all important matters. "Porque en los hechos arduos de nuestros reynos es necesario consejo de nuestros subditos, y naturales, especialmente de los procuradores de las nuestras ciudades, villas, y lugares de los nuestros reynos._" It was much easier to extort good laws from this monarch, than to enforce them.

content to repurchase its ancient right of representation from the crown, at an expense of 80,000 ducats.

d'Espagne, chap. 19.

[13] Guzman, Generaciones, cap. 33.--Gomez de Cibdareal, Centon Epistolario, (Madrid, 1775,) epist. 20, 49.--Cibdareal has given us a specimen of this royal criticism, which Juan de Mena, the subject of it, was courtier enough to adopt.

in print and in manuscript,” says Sanchez, “show the great number of dukes, counts, marquises, and other nobles, who cultivated this art.”

[15] He was the grandson, not, as Sanchez supposes (tom. i. p.15), the son, of Alonso de Villena, the first marquis as well as constable created in Castile, descended from James II. of Aragon. (See Dormer, Enmiendas y Advertencias de Zurita, (Zaragoza, 1683,) pp. 371-376.) His mother was an illegitimate daughter of Henry II., of Castile. Guzman, Generaciones, cap. 203, 339.

[16] Guzman, Generaciones, cap. 28.--Juan de Mena introduces Villena into his "Laberinto," in an agreeable stanza, which has something of the mannerism of Dante.
"Aquel claro padre aquel dulce fuente
aquel que en el castolo monte resuena

[17] The recent Castilian translators of Bouterwek's History of Spanish Literature have fallen into an error in imputing the beautiful
_cancion_ of the "Querella de Amor" to Villena. It was composed by

traducida por Cortina y Hugalde y Mollinedo, (Madrid, 1829,) p. 196, and

[20] Zurita, Anales de la Corona de Aragon, (Zaragoza, 1669,) tom. iii. p. 227.--Guzman, Generaciones, cap. 28.

[21] Centon Epistolario, epist. 66.--The bishop endeavored to transfer the blame of the conflagration to the king. There can be little doubt, however, that the good father infused the suspicions of necromancy into his master's bosom. "The angels," he says in one of his works, "who guarded Paradise, presented a treatise on magic to one of the posterity of Adam, from a copy of which Villena derived his science." (See Juan de Mena, Obras, fol. 139, glosa.) One would think that such an orthodox
source might have justified Villena in the use of it.


[24] Garcilasso de la Vega, Obras, ed. de Herrera, (1580,) pp. 75, 76--19.--It must be admitted, however, that the attempt was premature, and that it required a riper stage of the language to give a permanent character to the innovation.

catalogue of the marquis de Santillana's writings is given in the same volume, (pp. 33 et seq.) Several of his poetical pieces are collected in the Cancionero General, (Anvers, 1573,) fol. 34 et seq.

(Madrid, 1794,) p. 285.--Oviedo makes the marquis much older, seventy-five years of age, when he died. He left, besides daughters, six sons, who all became the founders of noble and powerful houses. See the whole genealogy, in Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 8.
This interesting document, the most primitive of all the Spanish _cancioneros_, notwithstanding its local position in the library is specified by Castro with great precision, eluded the search of the industrious translators of Bouterwek, who think it may have disappeared Mollinedo, p. 205, nota Hh.

The veneration entertained for the poetic art in that day may be conceived from Baena's whimsical prologue. "Poetry," he says, "or the gay science, is a very subtle and delightful composition. It demands in him, who would hope to excel in it, a curious invention, a sane judgment, a various scholarship, familiarity with courts and public affairs, high birth and breeding, a temperate, courteous, and liberal disposition, and, in fine, honey, sugar, salt, freedom, and hilarity in his discourse." p.
[35] Perhaps the most conspicuous of these historical compositions for mere literary execution is the Chronicle of Alvaro de Luna, to which I have had occasion to refer, edited in 1784, by Flores, the diligent secretary of the Royal Academy of History. He justly commends it for the purity and harmony of its diction. The loyalty of the chronicler seduces him sometimes into a swell of panegyric, which may he thought to savor too strongly of the current defect of Castilian prose; but it more frequently imparts to his narrative a generous glow of sentiment, raising it far above the lifeless details of ordinary history, and occasionally even to positive eloquence.

Nic. Antonio, in the tenth book of his great repository, has assembled the biographical and bibliographical notices of the various Spanish authors of the fifteenth century, whose labors diffused a glimmering of light over their own age, which has become faint in the superior illumination of the succeeding.

[36] Sempere, in his Historia del Luxo, (tom. i. p. 177,) has published an extract from an unprinted manuscript of the celebrated marquis of Villena, them for the embellishment of the person, with a degree of minuteness which might edify a modern _dandy_.

afforded by the vivid portrait, sketched by John de Mena, of the constable
in the noontide of his glory.

"Este caualga sobre la fortuna
y doma su cuello con asperas riendas
y aunque del tenga tan muchas de prendas
ella non le osa tocar de ninguna," etc.
Laberinto, coplas 235 et seq.

[41] Entitled "Doctrinal de Privados." See the Cancionero General, fol. 37
et seq.--In the following stanza, the constable is made to moralize with
good effect on the instability of worldly grandeur.

"Quo se hizo la moneda
plata joyas oro y seda
y de todo no me queda
sine este cadahalso;
mundo malo mundo falso
no ay quien contigo pueda."

Manrique has the same sentiments in his exquisite "Coplas." I give
Longfellow's version, as spirited as it is literal.

"Spain's haughty Constable,--the great
And gallant Master,--cruel fate
Stripped him of all.
Breathe not a whisper of his pride,
He on the gloomy scaffold died,
Ignoble fall!
The countless treasures of his care,
Hamlets and villas green and fair,
His mighty power,--
What were they all but grief and shame,
Tears and a broken heart,--when came.
The parting hour!"
Stanza 21.

tit. 128.
There has been considerable discrepancy, even among contemporary writers, both as to the place and the epoch of Isabella's birth, amounting, as regards the latter, to nearly two years. I have adopted the conclusion of authorities, in the sixth volume of the Memorias de la Real Academia de Historia, (Madrid, 1821,) Illust. 1, pp. 56-60. Isabella was descended both on the father's and mother's side from the famous John of Gaunt, duke of

1770,) tom. ii. pp. 743, 787.

CHAPTER II.

CONDITION OF ARAGON DURING THE MINORITY OF FERDINAND.--REIGN OF JOHN II., OF ARAGON.

1452-1472.

John of Aragon.--Difficulties with his Son Carlos.--Birth of Ferdinand.--Insurrection of Catalonia.--Death of Carlos.--His Character.--Tragical Story of Blanche.--Young Ferdinand besieged by the Catalans.--Treaty between France and Aragon.--Distress and Embarrassments of John.--Siege and Surrender of Barcelona.

We must now transport the reader to Aragon, in order to take a view of the
extraordinary circumstances, which opened the way for Ferdinand's succession in that kingdom. The throne, which had become vacant by the death of Martin, in 1410, was awarded by the committee of judges to whom the nation had referred the great question of the succession, to Ferdinand, regent of Castile during the minority of his nephew, John the Second; and thus the sceptre, after having for more than two centuries descended in the family of Barcelona, was transferred to the same bastard branch of Trastamara, that ruled over the Castilian monarchy. [1]

Ferdinand the First was succeeded after a brief reign by his son Alfonso the Fifth, whose personal history belongs less to Aragon than to Naples, which kingdom he acquired by his own prowess, and where he established his residence, attracted, no doubt, by the superior amenity of the climate and the higher intellectual culture, as well as the pliant temper of the people, far more grateful to the monarch than the sturdy independence of his own countrymen.

During his long absence, the government of his hereditary domains devolved on his brother John, as his lieutenant-general in Aragon. [2] This prince had married Blanche, widow of Martin, king of Sicily, and daughter of Charles the Third, of Navarre. By her he had three children; Carlos, prince of Viana; [3] Blanche, married to and afterwards repudiated by Henry the Fourth, of Castile; [4] and Eleanor, who espoused a French noble, Gaston, count of Foix. On the demise of the elder Blanche, the crown of Navarre rightfully belonged to her son, the prince of Viana, conformably to a stipulation in her marriage contract, that, on the event of her death, the eldest heir male, and, in default of sons, female, should inherit the kingdom, to the exclusion of her husband. [5] This
provision, which had been confirmed by her father, Charles the Third, in his testament, was also recognized in her own, accompanied however with a request, that her son Carlos, then twenty-one years of age, would, before assuming the sovereignty, solicit "the good will and approbation of his father." [6] Whether this approbation was withheld, or whether it was ever solicited, does not appear. It seems probable, however, that Carlos, perceiving no disposition in his father to relinquish the rank and nominal title of king of Navarre, was willing he should retain them, so long as he himself should be allowed to exercise the actual rights of sovereignty; which indeed he did, as lieutenant-general or governor of the kingdom, at the time of his mother's decease, and for some years after. [7]

In 1447, John of Aragon contracted a second alliance with Joan Henriquez, of the blood royal of Castile, and daughter of Don Frederic Henriquez, admiral of that kingdom; [8] a woman considerably younger than himself, of consummate address, intrepid spirit, and unprincipled ambition. Some years after this union, John sent his wife into Navarre, with authority to divide with his son Carlos the administration of the government there. This encroachment on his rights, for such Carlos reasonably deemed it, was not mitigated by the deportment of the young queen, who displayed all the insolence of sudden elevation, and who from the first seems to have regarded the prince with the malevolent eye of a step-mother.

Navarre was at that time divided by two potent factions, styled, from their ancient leaders, Beaumonts and Agramonts; whose hostility, originating in a personal feud, had continued long after its original cause had become extinct. [9]
The prince of Viana was intimately connected with some of the principal partisans of the Beaumont faction, who heightened by their suggestions the indignation to which his naturally gentle temper had been roused by the usurpation of Joan, and who even called on him to assume openly, and in defiance of his father, the sovereignty which of right belonged to him.

The emissaries of Castile, too, eagerly seized this occasion of retaliating on John his interference in the domestic concerns of that monarchy, by fanning the spark of discord into a flame. The Agramonts, on the other hand, induced rather by hostility to their political adversaries than to the prince of Viana, vehemently espoused the cause of the queen.

In this revival of half-buried animosities, fresh causes of disgust were multiplied, and matters soon came to the worst extremity. The queen, who had retired to Estella, was besieged there by the forces of the prince.

The king, her husband, on receiving intelligence of this, instantly marched to her relief; and the father and son confronted each other at the head of their respective armies near the town of Aybar. [10] The unnatural position, in which they thus found themselves, seems to have sobered their minds, and to have opened the way to an accommodation, the terms of which were actually arranged, when the long-smothered rancor of the ancient factions of Navarre thus brought in martial array against each other, refusing all control, precipitated them into an engagement. The royal forces were inferior in number, but superior in discipline, to those of the prince, who, after a well contested action, saw his own party entirely discomfited, and himself a prisoner. [11]

Some months before this event, Queen Joan had been delivered of a son,
afterwards so famous as Ferdinand the Catholic; whose humble prospects, at
the time of his birth, as a younger brother, afforded a striking contrast
with the splendid destiny which eventually awaited him. This auspicious
event occurred in the little town of Sos, in Aragon, on the 10th of March,
1452; and, as it was nearly contemporary with the capture of
Constantinople, is regarded by Garibay to have been providentially
assigned to this period, as affording, in a religious view, an ample
counterpoise to the loss of the capital of Christendom. [12]

The demonstrations of satisfaction, exhibited by John and his court on
this occasion, contrasted strangely with the stern severity with which he
continued to visit the offences of his elder offspring. It was not till
after many months of captivity that the king, in deference to public
opinion rather than the movements of his own heart, was induced to release
his son, on conditions, however, so illiberal (his indisputable claim to
Navarre not being even touched upon) as to afford no reasonable basis of
reconciliation. The young prince accordingly, on his return to Navarre,
became again involved in the factions which desolated that unhappy
kingdom, and, after an ineffectual struggle against his enemies, resolved
to seek an asylum at the court of his uncle Alfonso the Fifth, of Naples,
and to refer to him the final arbitration of his differences with his
father. [13]

On his passage through France and the various courts of Italy, he was
received with the attentions due to his rank, and still more to his
personal character and misfortunes. Nor was he disappointed in the
sympathy and favorable reception, which he had anticipated from his uncle.
Assured of protection from so high a quarter, Carlos might now reasonably flatter himself with the restitution of his legitimate rights, when these bright prospects were suddenly overcast by the death of Alfonso, who expired at Naples of a fever in the month of May, 1458, bequeathing his hereditary dominions of Spain, Sicily, and Sardinia to his brother John, and his kingdom of Naples to his illegitimate son Ferdinand. [14]

The frank and courteous manners of Carlos had won so powerfully on the affections of the Neapolitans, who distrusted the dark, ambiguous character of Ferdinand, Alfonso's heir, that a large party eagerly pressed the prince to assert his title to the vacant throne, assuring him of a general support from the people. But Carlos, from motives of prudence or magnanimity, declined engaging in this new contest, [15] and passed over to Sicily, whence he resolved to solicit a final reconciliation with his father. He was received with much kindness by the Sicilians, who, preserving a grateful recollection of the beneficent sway of his mother Blanche, when queen of that island, readily transferred to the son their ancient attachment to the parent. An assembly of the states voted a liberal supply for his present exigencies, and even urged him, if we are to credit the Catalan ambassador at the court of Castile, to assume the sovereignty of the island. [16] Carlos, however, far from entertaining so rash an ambition, seems to have been willing to seclude himself from public observation. He passed the greater portion of his time at a convent of Benedictine friars not far from Messina, where, in the society of learned men, and with the facilities of an extensive library, he endeavored to recall the happier hours of youth in the pursuit of his favorite studies of philosophy and history. [17]
In the mean while, John, now king of Aragon and its dependencies, alarmed by the reports of his son's popularity in Sicily, became as solicitous for the security of his authority there, as he had before been for it in Navarre. He accordingly sought to soothe the mind of the prince by the fairest professions, and to allure him back to Spain by the prospect of an effectual reconciliation. Carlos, believing what he most earnestly wished, in opposition to the advice of his Sicilian counsellors, embarked for Majorca, and, after some preliminary negotiations, crossed over to the coast of Barcelona. Postponing, for fear of giving offence to his father, his entrance into that city, which, indignant at his persecution, had made the most brilliant preparations for his reception, he proceeded to Igualada, where an interview took place between him and the king and queen, in which he conducted himself with unfeigned humility and penitence, reciprocated on their part by the most consummate dissimulation. [18]

All parties now confided in the stability of a pacification so anxiously desired, and effected with such apparent cordiality. It was expected that John would hasten to acknowledge his son's title as heir apparent to the crown of Aragon, and convene an assembly of the states to tender him the customary oath of allegiance. But nothing was further from the monarch's intention. He indeed summoned the Aragonese cortes at Fraga for the purpose of receiving their homage to himself; but he expressly refused their request touching a similar ceremony to the prince of Viana; and he openly rebuked the Catalans for presuming to address him as the successor to the crown. [19]
In this unnatural procedure it was easy to discern the influence of the queen. In addition to her original causes of aversion to Carlos, she regarded him with hatred as the insuperable obstacle to her own child Ferdinand's advancement. Even the affection of John seemed to be now wholly transferred from the offspring of his first to that of his second marriage; and, as the queen's influence over him was unbounded, she found it easy by artful suggestions to put a dark construction on every action of Carlos, and to close up every avenue of returning affection within his bosom.

Convinced at length of the hopeless alienation of his father, the prince of Viana turned his attention to other quarters, whence he might obtain support, and eagerly entered into a negotiation, which had been opened with him on the part of Henry the Fourth, of Castile, for a union with his sister the princess Isabella. This was coming in direct collision with the favorite scheme of his parents. The marriage of Isabella with the young Ferdinand, which indeed, from the parity of their ages, was a much more suitable connection than that with Carlos, had long been the darling object of their policy, and they resolved to effect it in the face of every obstacle. In conformity with this purpose, John invited the prince of Viana to attend him at Lerida, where he was then holding the cortes of Catalonia. The latter fondly, and indeed foolishly, after his manifold experience to the contrary, confiding in the relenting disposition of his father, hastened to obey the summons, in expectation of being publicly acknowledged as his heir in the assembly of the states. After a brief interview he was arrested, and his person placed in strict confinement.
The intelligence of this perfidious procedure diffused general consternation among all classes. They understood too well the artifices of the queen and the vindictive temper of the king, not to feel the most serious apprehensions, not only for the liberty, but for the life of their prisoner. The cortes of Lerida, which, though dissolved on that very day, had not yet separated, sent an embassy to John, requesting to know the nature of the crimes imputed to his son. The permanent deputation of Aragon, and a delegation from the council of Barcelona, waited on him for a similar purpose, remonstrating at the same time against any violent and unconstitutional proceeding. To all these John returned a cold, evasive answer, darkly intimating a suspicion of conspiracy by his son against his life, and reserving to himself the punishment of the offense.

No sooner was the result of their mission communicated, than the whole kingdom was thrown into a ferment. The high-spirited Catalans rose in arms, almost to a man. The royal governor, after a fruitless attempt to escape, was seized and imprisoned in Barcelona. Troops were levied, and placed under the command of experienced officers of the highest rank. The heated populace, outstripping the tardy movement of military operations, marched forward to Lerida in order to get possession of the royal person. The king, who had seasonable notice of this, displayed his wonted presence of mind. He ordered supper to be prepared for him at the usual hour, but, on the approach of night, made his escape on horseback with one or two attendants only, on the road to Fraga, a town within the territory of Aragon; while the mob, traversing the streets of Lerida, and finding
little resistance at the gate, burst into the palace and ransacked every
corner of it, piercing, in their fury, even the curtains and beds with
their swords and lances. [22]

The Catalan army, ascertaining the route of the royal fugitive, marched
directly on Fraga, and arrived so promptly that John, with his wife, and
the deputies of the Aragonese cortes assembled there, had barely time to
make their escape on the road to Saragossa, while the insurgents poured
into the city from the opposite quarter. The person of Carlos, in the mean
time, was secured in the inaccessible fortress of Morella, situated in a
mountainous district on the confines of Valencia. John, on halting at
Saragossa, endeavored to assemble an Aragonese force capable of resisting
the Catalan rebels. But the flame of insurrection had spread throughout
Aragon, Valencia, and Navarre, and was speedily communicated to his
transmarine possessions of Sardinia and Sicily. The king of Castile
supported Carlos at the same time by an irruption into Navarre, and his
partisans, the Beaumonts, co-operated with these movements by a descent on
Aragon. [23]

John, alarmed at the tempest which his precipitate conduct had roused, at
length saw the necessity of releasing his prisoner; and, as the queen had
incurred general odium as the chief instigator of his persecution, he
affected to do this in consequence of her interposition. As Carlos with
his mother-in-law traversed the country on their way to Barcelona, he was
everywhere greeted, by the inhabitants of the villages thronging out to
meet him, with the most touching enthusiasm. The queen, however, having
been informed by the magistrates that her presence would not be permitted
in the capital, deemed it prudent to remain at Villa Franca, about twenty
miles distant; while the prince, entering Barcelona, was welcomed with the
triumphant acclamation due to a conqueror returning from a campaign of
victories. [24]

The conditions on which the Catalans proposed to resume their allegiance
to their sovereign were sufficiently humiliating. They insisted not only
on his public acknowledgment of Carlos as his rightful heir and successor,
with the office, conferred on him for life, of lieutenant-general of
Catalonia, but on an obligation on his own part, that he would never enter
the province without their express permission. Such was John's extremity,
that he not only accepted these unpalatable conditions, but did it with
affected cheerfulness.

Fortune seemed now weary of persecution, and Carlos, happy in the
attachment of a brave and powerful people, appeared at length to have
reached a haven of permanent security. But at this crisis he fell ill of a
fever, or, as some historians insinuate, of a disorder occasioned by
poison administered during his imprisonment; a fact, which, although
unsupported by positive evidence, seems, notwithstanding its atrocity, to
be no wise improbable, considering the character of the parties
implicated. He expired on the 23d of September, 1461, in the forty-first
year of his age, bequeathing his title to the crown of Navarre, in
conformity with the original marriage contract of his parents, to his
sister Blanche and her posterity. [25]
Thus in the prime of life, and at the moment when he seemed to have
triumphed over the malice of his enemies, died the prince of Viana, whose
character, conspicuous for many virtues, has become still more so for his
misfortunes. His first act of rebellion, if such, considering his
legitimate pretensions to the crown, it can be called, was severely
requited by his subsequent calamities; while the vindictive and
persecuting temper of his parents excited a very general commiseration in
his behalf, and brought him more effectual support, than could have been
derived from his own merits or the justice of his cause. The character of
Don Carlos has been portrayed by Lucio Marineo, who, as he wrote an
account of these transactions by the command of Ferdinand the Catholic,
cannot be suspected of any undue partiality in favor of the prince of
Viana. "Such," says he, "were his temperance and moderation, such the
excellence of his breeding, the purity of his life, his liberality and
munificence, and such the sweetness of his demeanor, that no one thing
seemed to be wanting in him which belongs to a true and perfect prince."

[26] He is described by another contemporary, as "in person somewhat above
the middle stature, having a thin visage, with a serene and modest
expression of countenance, and withal somewhat inclined to melancholy."

[27] He was a considerable proficient in music, painting, and several
mechanic arts. He frequently amused himself with poetical composition, and
was the intimate friend of some of the most eminent bards of his time. But
he was above all devoted to the study of philosophy and history. He made a
version of Aristotle's Ethics into the vernacular, which was first printed
nearly fifty years after his death, at Saragossa, in 1509. He compiled
also a Chronicle of Navarre from the earliest period to his own times,
which, although suffered to remain in manuscript, has been liberally used
and cited by the Spanish antiquaries, Garibay, Blancas, and others. [28]
His natural taste and his habits fitted him much better for the quiet 
enjoyment of letters, than for the tumultuous scenes in which it was his 
misfortune to be involved, and in which he was no match for enemies grown 
gray in the field and in the intrigues of the cabinet. But, if his 
devotion to learning, so rare in his own age, and so very rare among 
princes in any age, was unpropitious to his success on the busy theatre on 
which he was engaged, it must surely elevate his character in the 
estimation of an enlightened posterity.

The tragedy did not terminate with the death of Carlos. His sister 
Blanche, notwithstanding the inoffensive gentleness of her demeanor, had 
long been involved, by her adhesion to her unfortunate brother, in a 
similar proscription with him. The succession to Navarre having now 
devolved on her, she became tenfold an object of jealousy both to her 
father, the present possessor of that kingdom, and to her sister Eleanor, 
countess of Foix, to whom the reversion of it had been promised by John, 
on his own decease. The son of this lady, Gaston de Foix, had lately 
made a sister of Louis the Eleventh, of France; and, in a treaty 
subsequently contracted between that monarch and the king of Aragon, it 
was stipulated that Blanche should be delivered into the custody of the 
countess of Foix, as surety for the succession of the latter, and of her 
posterity, to the crown of Navarre. [29]

Conformably to this provision, John endeavored to persuade the princess 
Blanche to accompany him into France, under the pretext of forming an 
alliance for her with Louis’s brother, the duke of Berri. The unfortunate 
lady, comprehending too well her father’s real purpose, besought him with
the most piteous entreaties not to deliver her into the hands of her enemies; but, closing his heart against all natural affection, he caused her to be torn from her residence at Olit, in the heart of her own dominions, and forcibly transported across the mountains into those of the count of Foix. On arriving at St. Jean Pied de Port, a little town on the French side of the Pyrenees, being convinced that she had nothing further to hope from human succor, she made a formal renunciation of her right to Navarre in favor of her cousin and former husband, Henry the Fourth, of Castile, who had uniformly supported the cause of her brother Carlos. Henry, though debased by sensual indulgence, was naturally of a gentle disposition, and had never treated her personally with unkindness. In a letter, which she now addressed to him, and which, says a Spanish historian, cannot be read, after the lapse of so many years, without affecting the most insensible heart, [30] she reminded him of the dawn of happiness which she had enjoyed under his protection, of his early engagements to her, and of her subsequent calamities; and, anticipating the gloomy destiny which awaited her, she settled on him her inheritance of Navarre, to the entire exclusion of her intended assassins, the count and countess of Foix. [31]

On the same day, the last of April, she was delivered over to one of their emissaries, who conducted her to the castle of Ortes in Bearne, where, after languishing in dreadful suspense for nearly two years, she was poisoned by the command of her sister. [32] The retribution of Providence not unfrequently overtakes the guilty even in this world. The countess survived her father to reign in Navarre only three short weeks; while the crown was ravished from her posterity for ever by that very Ferdinand,
whose elevation had been the object to his parents of so much solicitude and so many crimes.

Within a fortnight after the decease of Carlos, the customary oaths of allegiance, so pertinaciously withheld from that unfortunate prince, were tendered by the Aragonese deputation, at Calatayud, to his brother Ferdinand, then only ten years of age, as heir apparent of the monarchy; after which he was conducted by his mother into Catalonia, in order to receive the more doubtful homage of that province. The extremities of Catalonia at this time seemed to be in perfect repose, but the capital was still agitated by secret discontent. The ghost of Carlos was seen stalking by night through the streets of Barcelona, bewailing in piteous accents his untimely end, and invoking vengeance on his unnatural murderers. The manifold miracles wrought at his tomb soon gained him the reputation of a saint, and his image received the devotional honors reserved for such as have been duly canonized by the church. [33]

The revolutionary spirit of the Barcelonians, kept alive by the recollection of past injury, as well as by the apprehensions of future vengeance, should John succeed in reestablishing his authority over them, soon became so alarming, that the queen, whose consummate address, however, had first accomplished the object of her visit, found it advisable to withdraw from the capital; and she sought refuge, with her son and such few adherents as still remained faithful to them, in the fortified city of Gerona, about fifty miles north of Barcelona.
Hither, however, she was speedily pursued by the Catalan militia, embodied under the command of their ancient leader Roger, count of Pallas, and eager to regain the prize which they had so inadvertently lost. The city was quickly entered, but the queen, with her handful of followers, had retreated to a tower belonging to the principal church in the place, which, as was very frequent in Spain, in those wild times, was so strongly fortified as to be capable of maintaining a formidable resistance. To oppose this, a wooden fortress of the same height was constructed by the assailants, and planted with lombards and other pieces of artillery then in use, which kept up an unintermitting discharge of stone bullets on the little garrison. [34] The Catalans also succeeded in running a mine beneath the fortress, through which a considerable body of troops penetrated into it, when, their premature cries of exultation having discovered them to the besieged, they were repulsed, after a desperate struggle, with great slaughter. The queen displayed the most intrepid spirit in the midst of these alarming scenes; unappalled by the sense of her own danger and that of her child, and by the dismal lamentations of the females by whom she was surrounded, she visited every part of the works in person, cheering her defenders by her presence and dauntless resolution. Such were the stormy and disastrous scenes in which the youthful Ferdinand commenced a career, whose subsequent prosperity was destined to be checkered by scarcely a reverse of fortune. [35]

In the mean while, John, having in vain attempted to penetrate through Catalonia to the relief of his wife, effected this by the co-operation of his French ally, Louis the Eleventh. That monarch, with his usual insidious policy, had covertly despatched an envoy to Barcelona on the
death of Carlos, assuring the Catalans of his protection, should they still continue averse to a reconciliation with their own sovereign. These offers were but coldly received; and Louis found it more for his interest to accept the propositions made to him by the king of Aragon himself, which subsequently led to most important consequences. By three several treaties, of the 3d, 21st, and 23d of May, 1462, it was stipulated, that Louis should furnish his ally with seven hundred lances and a proportionate number of archers and artillery during the war with Barcelona, to be indemnified by the payment of two hundred thousand gold crowns within one year after the reduction of that city; as security for which the counties of Roussillon and Cerdagne were pledged by John, with the cession of their revenues to the French king, until such time as the original debt should be redeemed. In this transaction both monarchs manifested their usual policy; Louis believing that this temporary mortgage would become a permanent alienation, from John's inability to discharge it; while the latter anticipated, as the event showed, with more justice, that the aversion of the inhabitants to the dismemberment of their country from the Aragonese monarchy would baffle every attempt on the part of the French to occupy it permanently. [36]

In pursuance of these arrangements, seven hundred French lances with a considerable body of archers and artillery [37] crossed the mountains, and, rapidly advancing on Gerona, compelled the insurgent army to raise the siege, and to decamp with such precipitation as to leave their cannon in the hands of the royalists. The Catalans now threw aside the thin veil, with which they had hitherto covered their proceedings. The authorities of the principality, established in Barcelona, publicly renounced their
allegiance to King John and his son Ferdinand, and proclaimed them enemies of the republic. Writings at the same time were circulated, denouncing from scriptural authority, as well as natural reason, the doctrine of legitimacy in the broadest terms, and insisting that the Aragonese monarchs, far from being absolute, might be lawfully deposed for an infringement of the liberties of the nation. "The good of the commonwealth," it was said, "must always be considered paramount to that of the prince." Extraordinary doctrines these for the age in which they were promulgated, affording a still more extraordinary contrast with those which have been since familiar in that unhappy country! [38]

The government then enforced levies of all such as were above the age of fourteen, and, distrusting the sufficiency of its own resources, offered the sovereignty of the principality to Henry the Fourth, of Castile. The court of Aragon, however, had so successfully insinuated its influence into the council of this imbecile monarch, that he was not permitted to afford the Catalans any effectual support; and, as he abandoned their cause altogether before the expiration of the year, [39] the crown was offered to Don Pedro, constable of Portugal, a descendant of the ancient house of Barcelona. In the mean while, the old king of Aragon, attended by his youthful son, had made himself master, with his characteristic activity, of considerable acquisitions in the revolted territory, successively reducing Lerida, [40] Cervera, Amposta, [41] Tortosa, and the most important places in the south of Catalonia. Many of these places were strongly fortified, and most of them defended with a resolution which cost the conqueror a prodigious sacrifice of time and money. John, like Philip of Macedon, made use of gold even more than arms, for the reduction of his
enemies; and, though he indulged in occasional acts of resentment, his general treatment of those who submitted was as liberal as it was politic.

His competitor, Don Pedro, had brought little foreign aid to the support of his enterprise; he had failed altogether in conciliating the attachment of his new subjects; and, as the operations of the war had been conducted on his part in the most languid manner, the whole of the principality seemed destined soon to relapse under the dominion of its ancient master.

At this juncture the Portuguese prince fell ill of a fever, of which he died on the 29th of June, 1466. This event, which seemed likely to lead to a termination of the war, proved ultimately the cause of its protraction.

It appeared, however, to present a favorable opportunity to John for opening a negotiation with the insurgents. But, so resolute were they in maintaining their independence, that the council of Barcelona condemned two of the principal citizens, suspected of defection from the cause, to be publicly executed; it refused moreover to admit an envoy from the Aragonese cortes within the city, and caused the despatches, with which he was intrusted by that body, to be torn in pieces before his face.

Anjou, to the vacant throne, brother of one of the original competitors for the crown of Aragon on the demise of Martin; whose cognomen of "Good" is indicative of a sway far more salutary to his subjects than the more coveted and imposing title of Great. [43] This titular sovereign of half a dozen empires, in which he did not actually possess a rood of land, was too far advanced in years to assume this perilous enterprise himself; and
he accordingly intrusted it to his son John, duke of Calabria and Lorraine, who, in his romantic expeditions in southern Italy, had acquired a reputation for courtesy and knightly prowess, inferior to none other of his time. [44] Crowds of adventurers flocked to the standard of a leader, whose ample inheritance of pretensions had made him familiar with war from his earliest boyhood; and he soon found himself at the head of eight thousand effective troops. Louis the Eleventh, although not directly aiding his enterprise with supplies of men or money, was willing so far to countenance it, as to open a passage for him through the mountain fastnesses of Roussillon, then in his keeping, and thus enable him to descend with his whole army at once on the northern borders of Catalonia. [45]

The king of Aragon could oppose no force capable of resisting this formidable army. His exchequer, always low, was completely exhausted by the extraordinary efforts, which he had made in the late campaigns; and, as the king of France, either disgusted with the long protraction of the war, or from secret good-will to the enterprise of his feudal subject, withheld from King John the stipulated subsidies, the latter monarch found himself unable, with every expedient of loan and exaction, to raise sufficient money to pay his troops, or to supply his magazines. In addition to this, he was now involved in a dispute with the count and countess of Foix, who, eager to anticipate the possession of Navarre, which had been guaranteed to them on their father's decease, threatened a similar rebellion, though on much less justifiable pretences, to that which he had just experienced from Don Carlos. To crown the whole of John's calamities, his eyesight, which had been impaired by exposure and
protracted sufferings during the winter siege of Amposta, now failed him altogether. [46]

In this extremity, his intrepid wife, putting herself at the head of such forces as she could collect, passed by water to the eastern shores of Catalonia, besieging Rosas in person, and checking the operations of the enemy by the capture of several inferior places; while Prince Ferdinand, effecting a junction with her before Gerona, compelled the duke of Lorraine to abandon the siege of that important city. Ferdinand's ardor, however, had nearly proved fatal to him; as, in an accidental encounter with a more numerous party of the enemy, his jaded horse would infallibly have betrayed him into their hands, had it not been for the devotion of his officers, several of whom, throwing themselves between him and his pursuers, enabled him to escape by the sacrifice of their own liberty.

These ineffectual struggles could not turn the tide of fortune. The duke of Lorraine succeeded in this and the two following campaigns in making himself master of all the rich district of Ampurdan, northeast of Barcelona. In the capital itself, his truly princely qualities and his popular address secured him the most unbounded influence. Such was the enthusiasm for his person, that, when he rode abroad, the people thronged around him, embracing his knees, the trappings of his steed, and even the animal himself, in their extravagance; while the ladies, it is said, pawned their rings, necklaces, and other ornaments of their attire, in order to defray the expenses of the war. [47]
King John, in the mean while, was draining the cup of bitterness to the dregs. In the winter of 1468, his queen, Joan Henriquez, fell a victim to a painful disorder, which had been secretly corroding her constitution for a number of years. In many respects, she was the most remarkable woman of her time. She took an active part in the politics of her husband, and may be even said to have given them a direction. She conducted several important diplomatic negotiations to a happy issue, and, what was more uncommon in her sex, displayed considerable capacity for military affairs. Her persecution of her step-son, Carlos, has left a deep stain on her memory. It was the cause of all her husband's subsequent misfortunes. Her invincible spirit, however, and the resources of her genius, supplied him with the best means of surmounting many of the difficulties in which she had involved him, and her loss at this crisis seemed to leave him at once without solace or support. [48]

At this period, he was further embarrassed, as will appear in the ensuing chapter, by negotiations for Ferdinand's marriage, which was to deprive him, in a great measure, of his son's co-operation in the struggle with his subjects, and which, as he lamented, while he had scarcely three disbursements.

As the darkest hour, however, is commonly said to precede the dawning, so light now seemed to break upon the affairs of John. A physician in Lerida, of the Hebrew race, which monopolized at that time almost all the medical science in Spain, persuaded the king to submit to the then unusual operation of couching, and succeeded in restoring sight to one of his
eyes. As the Jew, after the fashion of the Arabs, debased his real science with astrology, he refused to operate on the other eye, since the planets, he said, wore a malignant aspect. But John's rugged nature was insensible to the timorous superstitions of his age, and he compelled the physician to repeat his experiment, which in the end proved perfectly successful. Thus restored to his natural faculties, the octogenarian chief, for such he might now almost be called, regained his wonted elasticity, and prepared to resume offensive operations against the enemy with all his accustomed energy. [49] Heaven, too, as if taking compassion on his accumulated misfortunes, now removed the principal obstacle to his success by the death of the duke of Lorraine, who was summoned from the theatre of his short-lived triumphs on the 16th of December, 1469. The Barcelonians were thrown into the greatest consternation by his death, imputed, as usual, though without apparent foundation, to poison; and their respect for his memory was attested by the honors no less than royal, which they paid to his remains. His body, sumptuously attired, with his victorious sword by his side, was paraded in solemn procession through the illuminated streets of the city, and, after lying nine days in state, was deposited amid the lamentations of the people in the sepulchre of the sovereigns of Catalonia. [50]

As the father of the deceased prince was too old, and his children too young, to give effectual aid to their cause, the Catalans might be now said to be again without a leader. But their spirit was unbroken, and with the same resolution in which they refused submission more than two centuries after, in 1714, when the combined forces of France and Spain were at the gates of the capital, they rejected the conciliatory advances
made them anew by John. That monarch, however, having succeeded by
extraordinary efforts in assembling a competent force, was proceeding with
his usual alacrity in the reduction of such places in the eastern quarter
of Catalonia as had revolted to the enemy, while at the same time he
instituted a rigorous blockade of Barcelona by sea and land. The
fortifications were strong, and the king was unwilling to expose so fair a
city to the devastating horrors of a storm. The inhabitants made one
vigorou effort in a sally against the royal forces; but the civic militia
were soon broken, and the loss of four thousand men, killed and prisoners,
admonished them of their inability to cope with the veterans of Aragon.

At length, reduced to the last extremity, they consented to enter into
negotiations, which were concluded by a treaty equally honorable to both
parties. It was stipulated, that Barcelona should retain all its ancient
privileges and rights of jurisdiction, and, with some exceptions, its
large territorial possessions. A general amnesty was to be granted for
offences. The foreign mercenaries were to be allowed to depart in safety;
and such of the natives, as should refuse to renew their allegiance to
their ancient sovereign within a year, might have the liberty of removing
with their effects wherever they would. One provision may be thought
somewhat singular, after what had occurred; it was agreed that the king
should cause the Barcelonians to be publicly proclaimed, throughout all
his dominions, good, faithful, and loyal subjects; which was accordingly
done!

The king, after the adjustment of the preliminaries, "declining," says a
contemporary, "the triumphal car which had been prepared for him, made his entrance into the city by the gate of St. Anthony, mounted on a white charger; and, as he rode along the principal streets, the sight of so many pallid countenances and emaciated figures, bespeaking the extremity of famine, smote his heart with sorrow." He then proceeded to the hall of the great palace, and on the 22d of December, 1472, solemnly swore there to respect the constitution and laws of Catalonia. [52]

Thus ended this long, disastrous civil war, the fruit of parental injustice and oppression, which had nearly cost the king of Aragon the fairest portion of his dominions; which devoted to disquietude and disappointment more than ten years of life, at a period when repose is most grateful; and which opened the way to foreign wars, that continued to hang like a dark cloud over the evening of his days. It was attended, however, with one important result; that of establishing Ferdinand's succession over the whole of the domains of his ancestors.

FOOTNOTES

[1] The reader who may be curious in this matter will find the pedigree exhibiting the titles of the several competitors to the crown given by Mr. Hallam. (State of Europe during the Middle Ages, (2d ed. London, 1819,) vol. ii. p. 60, note.) The claims of Ferdinand were certainly not derived from the usual laws of descent.

[2] The reader of Spanish history often experiences embarrassment from the
identity of names in the various princes of the Peninsula. Thus the John, mentioned in the text, afterwards John II., might be easily confounded with his namesake and contemporary, John II., of Castile. The genealogical table, at the beginning of this History, will show their relationship to each other.

[3] His grandfather, Charles III., created this title in favor of Carlos, appropriating it as the designation henceforth of the heir apparent.--Aleson, Anales del Reyno de Navarra, contin. de Moret, (Pamplona, 1766,) tom. iv. p. 398.--Salazar de Mendoza, Monarquía, tom. ii. p. 331.


[5] This fact, vaguely and variously reported by Spanish writers, is fully established by Aleson, who cites the original instrument, contained in the archives of the counts of Lerin. Anales de Navarra, tom. iv. pp. 354, 365.

[6] See the reference to the original document in Aleson. (Tom. iv. pp. 365, 366.) This industrious writer has established the title of Prince Carlos to Navarre, so frequently misunderstood or misrepresented by the national historians, on an incontestable basis.


[8] See Part I. Chap. 3, of this work.
[9] Gaillard errs in referring the origin of these factions to this epoch.

iii. p. 227.) Aleson quotes a proclamation of John in relation to them in
the lifetime of Queen Blanche. Annales de Navarra, tom. iv. p. 494.

[10] Zurita, Anales, tom. iii. fol. 278.--Lucio Marineo Siculo, Coronista


[12] Compendio, tom. iii. p. 419.--L. Marineo describes the heavens as
uncommonly serene at the moment of Ferdinand's birth. "The sun, which had
been obscured with clouds during the whole day, suddenly broke forth with
unwonted splendor. A crown was also beheld in the sky, composed of various
brilliant colors like those of a rainbow. All which appearances were
interpreted by the spectators as an omen, that the child then born would
be the most illustrious among men." (Cosas Memorables, fol. 153.) Garibay
postpones the nativity of Ferdinand to the year 1453, and L. Marineo, who
ascertains with curious precision even the date of his conception, fixes
his birth in 1450, (fol. 153.) But Alonso de Palencia in his History,

refer this event to the period assigned in the text; and, as the same
epoch is adopted by the accurate Zurita, (Anales, tom. iv. fol. 9,) I have
given it the preference.


cap. 43.

[17] Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 97.--Nic. Antonio, Bibliotheca Vetus, tom. ii. p. 282.--L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 106.--Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, tom. ii. fol. 250.--Carlos bargained with Pope Pius II. for a transfer of this library, particularly rich in the ancient classics, to Spain, which was eventually defeated by his death. Zurita, who visited the monastery containing it nearly a century after this period, found its inmates possessed of many traditionary anecdotes respecting the prince
during his seclusion among them.


[19] Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, ubi supra.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 70-75.--Aleson, Anales de Navarra, tom. iv. p. 556.


[23] Zurita, Anales, lib. 17, cap. 6.--L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 111.

--L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 111, 112.--Aleson, Anales de Navarra,
tom. iv. pp. 559, 560.--The inhabitants of Tarraca closed their gates upon
the queen, and rung the bells on her approach, the signal of alarm on the
appearance of an enemy, or for the pursuit of a malefactor.

Cosas Memorables, fol. 114.--Aleson, Anales de Navarra, tom. iv. pp. 561-
563.--Zurita, Anales, cap. 19, 24.

costumbres, la limpieza de su vida, su liberalidad y magnificencia, y
finalmente su dulce conversacion, que ninguna cosa en el faltava de
aquellas que pertenescen a recta vivir; y que arman el verdadero y

p. 281.


[29] This treaty was signed at Olit in Navarre, April 12th, 1462.--Zurita,

Gaillard confounds it with the subsequent one made in the month of May,

near the town of Salvatierra in Bearne.


[32] Lebrija, De Bello Navariensi, (Granatae, 1545,) lib. 1, cap. 1, fol. 74.--Aleson, Anales de Navarra, ubi supra.--Zurita, Anales, lib. 17, cap. 38.--The Spanish historians are not agreed as to the time or even mode of Blanche's death. All concur, however, in attributing it to assassination, and most of them, with the learned Antonio Lebrija, a contemporary, (loc. cit.) in imputing it to poison. The fact of her death, which Aleson, on I know not what authority, refers to the 2d of December, 1464, was not publicly disclosed till some months after its occurrence, when disclosure became necessary in consequence of the proposed interposition of the Navarrese cortes.

tom. iv. fol. 98.--Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, tom. ii. fol. 256.--Aleson, Anales de Navarra, tom. iv. pp. 563 et seq.--L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 114.--According to Lanuza, who wrote nearly two centuries after the death of Carlos, the flesh upon his right arm, which had been amputated for the purpose of a more convenient application to the diseased members of the pilgrims who visited his shrine, remained in his day in a perfectly Aragon, (Zaragoza, 1622,) tom. i. p. 553.) Aleson wonders that any should doubt the truth of miracles, attested by the monks of the very monastery in which Carlos was interred.
Spaniards, deriving the knowledge of artillery from the Arabs, had become familiar with it before the other nations of Christendom. The affirmation of Zurita, however, that 5000 balls were fired from the battery of the besiegers at Gerona in one day, is perfectly absurd. So little was the science of gunnery advanced in other parts of Europe at this period, and indeed later, that it was usual for a field-piece not to be discharged more than twice in the course of an action, if we may credit Machiavelli, who, indeed, recommends dispensing with the use of artillery altogether.

Arte della Guerra, lib. 3. (Opere, Genova, 1798.)

Memorables, fol. 116.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 113.--Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, tom. ii. fol. 259.

[36] Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 111.--Another 100,000 crowns were to be paid in case further assistance should be required from the French monarch after the reduction of Barcelona. This treaty has been incorrectly reported by most of the French and all the Spanish historians whom I have consulted, save the accurate Zurita. An abstract from the original France, (Paris, 1836,) tom. xi. Introd. p. 245.

[37] A French lance, it may be stated, of that day, according to L. Marineo, was accompanied by two horsemen; so that the whole contingent of
cavalry to be furnished on this occasion amounted to 2100. (Cosas Memorables, fol. 117.) Nothing could be more indeterminate than the complement of a lance in the Middle Ages. It is not unusual to find it reckoned at five or six horsemen.

MS., part. 2, cap. 1.

[39] In conformity with the famous verdict given by Louis XI. at Bayonne, April 23d, 1463, previously to the interview between him and Henry IV. on the shores of the Bidassoa. See Part I. Chap. 3, of this History.

[40] This was the battle-ground of Julius Caesar in his wars with Pompey. See his ingenious military manoeuvre as simply narrated in his own Commentaries, (De Bello Civili, tom. i. p. 54,) and by Lucan, (Pharsalia, lib. 4,) with his usual swell of hyperbole.

[41] The cold was so intense at the siege of Amposta, that serpents of an enormous magnitude are reported by L. Marineo to have descended from the mountains, and taken refuge in the camp of the besiegers. Portentous and supernatural voices were frequently heard during the nights. Indeed, the superstition of the soldiers appears to have been so lively as to have prepared them for seeing and hearing anything.

It must have been a very slow poison. He arrived January 21st, 1464, and died June 29th, 1466.

Sir Walter Scott, in his "Anne of Geierstein," has brought into full for poetry and the arts, however, although showing itself occasionally in puerile eccentricities, may compare advantageously with the coarse appetites and mischievous activity of most of the contemporary princes. After all, the best tribute to his worth was the earnest attachment of his people. His biography has been well and diligently compiled by the who has, however, indulged in greater detail than was perhaps to have been habillement que ces conducteurs portent en Italie, et sembloit bien prince

Petitot; (Paris, 1826,) liv. 1, chap. 11.


Palencia swells the numbers of the French in the service of the duke of Lorraine to 20,000.
The queen's death was said to have been caused by a cancer. According to Aleson and some other Spanish writers, Joan was heard several times, in her last illness, to exclaim, in allusion, as was supposed, to her assassination of Carlos, "Alas! Ferdinand, how dear thou hast cost thy mother!" I find no notice of this improbable confession in any contemporary author.

According to M. de Villeneuve Bargemont, the princess Isabella's hand had been offered to the duke of Lorraine, and the envoy despatched to notify his acceptance of it, on arriving at the court of Castile, received from the lips of Henry IV. the first tidings of his master's death, (tom. ii. p. 184.) He must have learned too with no less surprise that Isabella had already been married.
at that time more than a year! See the date of the official marriage recorded in Mem. de la Acad. de Hist., tom. vi. Apend. no. 4.

Anales, tom. iv. fol. 180-183.-Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, rey 29, cap. 29.

[52] L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 144, 147.--Zurita, Anales, tom.

CHAPTER III.

REIGN OF HENRY IV., OF CASTILE--CIVIL WAR.--MARRIAGE OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA.

1454-1469.

Henry IV. disappoints Expectations.--Oppression of the People.--League of the Nobles.--Extraordinary Scene at Avila.--Early Education of Isabella.--Death of her Brother Alfonso.--Intestine Anarchy.--The Crown offered to Isabella.--She declines it.--Her Suitors.--She accepts Ferdinand of Aragon.--Marriage Articles.--Critical Situation of Isabella.--Ferdinand enters Castile.--Their Marriage.

While these stormy events were occurring in Aragon, the Infanta Isabella, whose birth was mentioned at the close of the first chapter, was passing
her youth amidst scenes scarcely less tumultuous. At the date of her birth, her prospect of succeeding to the throne of her ancestors was even more remote than Ferdinand’s prospect of inheriting that of his; and it is interesting to observe through what trials, and by what a series of remarkable events, Providence was pleased to bring about this result, and through it the union, so long deferred, of the great Spanish monarchies.

The accession of her elder brother, Henry the Fourth, was welcomed with an enthusiasm, proportioned to the disgust which had been excited by the long-protracted and imbecile reign of his predecessor. Some few, indeed, who looked back to the time when he was arrayed in arms against his father, distrusted the soundness either of his principles or of his judgment. But far the larger portion of the nation was disposed to refer this to inexperience, or the ebullition of youthful spirit, and indulged the cheering anticipations which are usually entertained of a new reign and a young monarch. [1] Henry was distinguished by a benign temper, and by a condescension, which might be called familiarity, in his intercourse with his inferiors, virtues peculiarly engaging in persons of his elevated station; and as vices, which wear the gloss of youth, are not only pardoned, but are oftentimes popular with the vulgar, the reckless extravagance in which he indulged himself was favorably contrasted with the severe parsimony of his father in his latter years, and gained him the surname of “the Liberal.” His treasurer having remonstrated with him on the prodigality of his expenditure, he replied, “Kings, instead of hoarding treasure like private persons, are bound to dispense it for the happiness of their subjects. We must give to our enemies to make them friends, and to our friends to keep them so.” He suited the action so well
to the word, that, in a few years, there was scarcely a _mara-vedi_ remaining in the royal coffers. [2]

He maintained greater state than was usual with the monarchs of Castile, keeping in pay a body-guard of thirty-six hundred lances, splendidly equipped, and officered by the sons of the nobility. He proclaimed a crusade against the Moors, a measure always popular in Castile; assuming the pomegranate branch, the device of Granada, on his escutcheon, in token of his intention to extirpate the Moslems from the Peninsula. He assembled the chivalry of the remote provinces; and, in the early part of his reign, scarce a year elapsed without one or more incursions into the hostile territory, with armies of thirty or forty thousand men. The results did not correspond with the magnificence of the apparatus; and these brilliant expeditions too often evaporated in a mere border foray, or in an empty gasconade under the walls of Granada. Orchards were cut down, harvests plundered, villages burnt to the ground, and all the other modes of annoyance peculiar to this barbarous warfare put in practice by the invading armies as they swept over the face of the country; individual feats of prowess, too, commemorated in the romantic ballads of the time, were achieved; but no victory was gained, no important post acquired. The king in vain excused his hasty retreats and abortive enterprises by saying, "that he prized the life of one of his soldiers more than those of a thousand Mussulmans." His troops murmured at this timorous policy, and the people of the south, on whom the charges of the expeditions fell with peculiar heaviness, from their neighborhood to the scene of operations, complained that "the war was carried on against them, not against the infidel." On one occasion an attempt was made to detain the king's person,
and thus prevent him from disbanding his forces. So soon had the royal
to pay tribute after a series of these ineffectual operations, replied
"that, in the first years of Henry's reign, he would have offered
anything, even his children, to preserve peace to his dominions; but now
he would give nothing." [3]

The contempt, to which the king exposed himself by his public conduct, was
still further heightened by his domestic. With even a greater
indisposition to business, than was manifested by his father, [4] he
possessed none of the cultivated tastes, which were the redeeming
qualities of the latter. Having been addicted from his earliest youth to
debauchery, when he had lost the powers, he retained all the relish, for
the brutish pleasures of a voluptuary. He had repudiated his wife, Blanche
of Aragon, after a union of twelve years, on grounds sufficiently
ridiculous and humiliating. [5] In 1455, he espoused Joanna, a Portuguese
princess, sister of Alfonso the Fifth, the reigning monarch. This lady,
then in the bloom of youth, was possessed of personal graces, and a lively
wit, which, say the historians, made her the delight of the court of
Portugal. She was accompanied by a brilliant train of maidens, and her
entrance into Castile was greeted by the festivities and military
pageants, which belong to an age of chivalry. The light and lively manners
of the young queen, however, which seemed to defy the formal etiquette of
the Castilian court, gave occasion to the grossest suspicions. The tongue
of scandal indicated Beltran de la Cueva, one of the handsomest cavaliers
in the kingdom, and then newly risen in the royal graces, as the person to
whom she most liberally dispensed her favors. This knight defended a
passage of arms, in presence of the court, near Madrid, in which he maintained the superior beauty of his mistress, against all comers. The king was so much delighted with his prowess, that he commemorated the event by the erection of a monastery dedicated to St. Jerome; a whimsical origin for a religious institution. [6]

The queen's levity might have sought some justification in the unveiled licentiousness of her husband. One of the maids of honor, whom she brought in her train, acquired an ascendancy over Henry, which he did not attempt to disguise; and the palace, after the exhibition of the most disgraceful scenes, became divided by the factions of the hostile fair ones. The archbishop of Seville did not blush to espouse the cause of the paramour, who maintained a magnificence of state, which rivalled that of royalty itself. The public were still more scandalized by Henry's sacrilegious intrusion of another of his mistresses into the post of abbess of a convent in Toledo, after the expulsion of her predecessor, a lady of noble rank and irreproachable character. [7]

The stream of corruption soon finds its way from the higher to the more humble walks of life. The middling classes, imitating their superiors, indulged in an excess of luxury equally demoralizing, and ruinous to their fortunes. The contagion of example infected even the higher ecclesiastics; and we find the archbishop of St. James hunted from his see by the indignant populace in consequence of an outrage attempted on a youthful bride, as she was returning from church, after the performance of the nuptial ceremony. The rights of the people could be but little consulted, or cared for, in a court thus abandoned to unbounded license. Accordingly
we find a repetition of most of the unconstitutional and oppressive acts
which occurred under John the Second, of Castile; attempts at arbitrary
taxation, interference in the freedom of elections, and in the right
exercised by the cities of nominating the commanders of such contingents
of troops as they might contribute to the public defence. Their
territories were repeatedly alienated, and, as well as the immense sums
raised by the sale of papal indulgences for the prosecution of the Moorish
war, were lavished on the royal satellites. [8]

But, perhaps, the most crying evil of this period was the shameless
adulteration of the coin. Instead of five royal mints, which formerly
existed, there were now one hundred and fifty in the hands of authorized
individuals, who debased the coin to such a deplorable extent, that the
most common articles of life were enhanced in value three, four, and even
six fold. Those who owed debts eagerly anticipated the season of payment;
and, as the creditors refused to accept it in the depreciated currency, it
became a fruitful source of litigation and tumult, until the whole nation
seemed on the verge of bankruptcy. In this general license, the right of
the strongest was the only one which could make itself heard. The nobles,
converting their castles into dens of robbers, plundered the property of
the traveller, which was afterwards sold publicly in the cities. One of
these robber chieftains, who held an important command on the frontiers of
Murcia, was in the habit of carrying on an infamous traffic with the Moors
by selling to them as slaves the Christian prisoners of either sex whom he
had captured in his marauding expeditions. When subdued by Henry, after a
sturdy resistance, he was again received into favor, and reinstated in his
possessions. The pusillanimous monarch knew neither when to pardon, nor
But no part of Henry's conduct gave such umbrage to his nobles, as the facility with which he resigned himself to the control of favorites, whom he had created as it were from nothing, and whom he advanced over the heads of the ancient aristocracy of the land. Among those especially disgusted by this proceeding were Juan Pacheco, marquis of Villena, and Alfonso Carillo, archbishop of Toledo. These two personages exercised so important an influence over the destinies of Henry, as to deserve more particular notice. The former was of noble Portuguese extraction, and originally a page in the service of the constable Alvaro de Luna, by whom he had been introduced into the household of Prince Henry, during the lifetime of John the Second. His polished and plausible address soon acquired him a complete ascendancy over the feeble mind of his master, who was guided by his pernicious counsels, in his frequent dissensions with his father. His invention was ever busy in devising intrigues, which he recommended by his subtile, insinuating eloquence; and he seemed to prefer the attainment of his purposes by a crooked rather than by a direct policy, even when the latter might equally well have answered. He sustained reverses with imperturbable composure; and, when his schemes were most successful, he was willing to risk all for the excitement of a new revolution. Although naturally humane, and without violent or revengeful passions, his restless spirit was perpetually involving his country in all the disasters of civil war. He was created marquis of Villena, by John the Second; and his ample domains, lying on the confines of Toledo, Murcia, and Valencia, and embracing an immense extent of populous and well-fortified territory, made him the most powerful vassal
in the kingdom. [10]

His uncle, the archbishop of Toledo, was of a sterner character. He was one of those turbulent prelates, not unfrequent in a rude age, who seem intended by nature for the camp rather than the church. He was fierce, haughty, intractable; and he was supported in the execution of his ambitious enterprises, no less by his undaunted resolution, than by the extraordinary resources, which he enjoyed as primate of Spain. He was capable of warm attachments, and of making great personal sacrifices for his friends, from whom, in return, he exacted the most implicit deference; and, as he was both easily offended and implacable in his resentments, he seems to have been almost equally formidable as a friend and as an enemy. [11]

These early adherents of Henry, little satisfied with seeing their own consequence eclipsed by the rising glories of the newly-created favorites, began secretly to stir up cabals and confederacies among the nobles, until the occurrence of other circumstances obviated the necessity, and indeed the possibility, of further dissimulation. Henry had been persuaded to take part in the internal dissensions which then agitated the kingdom of Aragon, and had supported the Catalans in their opposition to their sovereign by seasonable supplies of men and money. He had even made some considerable conquests for himself, when he was induced, by the advice of the marquis of Villena and the archbishop of Toledo, to refer the arbitration of his differences with the king of Aragon to Louis the Eleventh, of France; a monarch whose habitual policy allowed him to refuse no opportunity of interference in the concerns of his neighbors.
The conferences were conducted at Bayonne, and an interview was subsequently agreed on between the kings of France and Castile, to be held near that city, on the banks of the Bidassoa, which divides the dominions of the respective monarchs. The contrast exhibited by the two princes at this interview, in their style of dress and equipage, was sufficiently striking to deserve notice. Louis, who was even worse attired than usual, according to Comines, wore a coat of coarse woollen cloth cut short, a fashion then deemed very unsuitable to persons of rank, with a doublet of fustian, and a weather-beaten hat, surmounted by a little leaden image of the Virgin. His imitative courtiers adopted a similar costume. The Castilians, on the other hand, displayed uncommon magnificence. The barge of the royal favorite, Beltran de la Cueva, was resplendent with sails of cloth of gold, and his apparel glittered with a profusion of costly jewels. Henry was escorted by his Moorish guard gorgeously equipped, and the cavaliers of his train vied with each other in the sumptuous decorations of dress and equipage. The two nations appear to have been mutually disgusted with the contrast exhibited by their opposite affectations. The French sneered at the ostentation of the Spaniards, and the latter, in their turn, derided the sordid parsimony of their neighbors; and thus the seeds of a national aversion were implanted, which, under the influence of more important circumstances, ripened into open hostility. [12]

The monarchs seem to have separated with as little esteem for each other as did their respective courtiers; and Comines profits by the occasion to inculcate the inexpediency of such interviews between princes, who have
exchanged the careless jollity of youth for the cold and calculating policy of riper years. The award of Louis dissatisfied all parties; a tolerable proof of its impartiality. The Castilians, in particular, complained, that the marquis of Villena and the archbishop of Toledo had compromised the honor of the nation, by allowing their sovereign to cross over to the French shore of the Bidassoa, and its interests, by the cession of the conquered territory to Aragon. They loudly accused them of being pensioners of Louis, a fact which does not appear improbable, considering the usual policy of this prince, who, as is well known, maintained an espionage over the councils of most of his neighbors. Henry was so far convinced of the truth of these imputations, that he dismissed the obnoxious ministers from their employments. [13]

The disgraced nobles instantly set about the organization of one of those formidable confederacies, which had so often shaken the monarchs of Castile upon their throne, and which, although not authorized by positive law, as in Aragon, seemed to have derived somewhat of a constitutional sanction from ancient usage. Some of the members of this coalition were doubtless influenced exclusively by personal jealousies; but many others entered into it from disgust at the imbecile and arbitrary proceedings of the crown.

In 1462, the queen had been delivered of a daughter, who was named like herself Joanna, but who, from her reputed father, Beltran de la Cueva, was better known in the progress of her unfortunate history by the cognomen of Beltraneja. Henry, however, had required the usual oath of allegiance to be tendered to her as presumptive heir to the crown. The confederates,
assembled at Burgos, declared this oath of fealty a compulsory act, and
that many of them had privately protested against it at the time, from a
conviction of the illegitimacy of Joanna. In the bill of grievances, which
they now presented to the monarch, they required that he should deliver
his brother Alfonso into their hands, to be publicly acknowledged as his
successor; they enumerated the manifold abuses, which pervaded every
department of government, which they freely imputed to the unwholesome
influence exercised by the favorite, Beltran de la Cueva, over the royal
counsels, doubtless the true key to much of their patriotic sensibility;
and they entered into a covenant, sanctioned by all the solemnities of
religion usual on these occasions, not to re-enter the service of their
sovereign, or accept any favor from him until he had redressed their
wrongs. [14]

The king, who by an efficient policy might perhaps have crushed these
revolutionary movements in their birth, was naturally averse to violent,
preceptor, who recommended these measures; "You priests, who are not
called to engage in the fight, are very liberal of the blood of others."
To which the prelate rejoined, with more warmth than breeding, "Since you
are not true to your own honor, at a time like this, I shall live to see
you the most degraded monarch in Spain; when you will repent too late this
unseasonable pusillanimity." [15]

Henry, unmoved either by the entreaties or remonstrances of his adherents,
resorted to the milder method of negotiation. He consented to an interview
with the confederates, in which he was induced, by the plausible arguments
of the marquis of Villena, to comply with most of their demands. He delivered his brother Alfonso into their hands, to be recognized as the lawful heir to the crown, on condition of his subsequent union with Joanna; and he agreed to nominate, in conjunction with his opponents, a commission of five, who should deliberate on the state of the kingdom, and provide an effectual reform of abuses. [16] The result of this deliberation, however, proved so prejudicial to the royal authority, that the feeble monarch was easily persuaded to disavow the proceedings of the commissioners, on the ground of their secret collusion with his enemies, and even to attempt the seizure of their persons. The confederates, disgusted with this breach of faith, and in pursuance, perhaps, of their original design, instantly decided on the execution of that bold measure, which some writers denounce as a flagrant act of rebellion, and others vindicate as a just and constitutional proceeding.

In an open plain, not far from the city of Avila, they caused a scaffold to be erected, of sufficient elevation to be easily seen from the surrounding country. A chair of state was placed on it, and in this was seated an effigy of King Henry, clad in sable robes and adorned with all the insignia of royalty, a sword at its side, a sceptre in its hand, and a crown upon its head. A manifesto was then read, exhibiting in glowing colors the tyrannical conduct of the king, and the consequent determination to depose him; and vindicating the proceeding by several precedents drawn from the history of the monarchy. The archbishop of Toledo, then ascending the platform, tore the diadem from the head of the statue; the marquis of Villena removed the sceptre, the count of Placencia the sword, the grand master of Alcantara and the counts of Benavente and
Paredes the rest of the regal insignia; when the image, thus despoiled of its honors, was rolled in the dust, amid the mingled groans and clamors of the spectators. The young prince Alfonso, at that time only eleven years of age, was seated on the vacant throne, and the assembled grandees severally kissed his hand in token of their homage; the trumpets announced the completion of the ceremony, and the populace greeted with joyful acclamations the accession of their new sovereign. [17]

Such are the details of this extraordinary transaction, as recorded by the two contemporary historians of the rival factions. The tidings were borne, with the usual celerity of evil news, to the remotest parts of the kingdom. The pulpit and the forum resounded with the debates of disputants, who denied, or defended, the right of the subject to sit in judgment on the conduct of his sovereign. Every man was compelled to choose his side in this strange division of the kingdom. Henry received intelligence of the defection, successively, of the capital cities of Burgos, Toledo, Cordova, Seville, together with a large part of the southern provinces, where lay the estates of some of the most powerful partisans of the opposite faction. The unfortunate monarch, thus deserted by his subjects, abandoned himself to despair, and expressed the extremity of his anguish in the strong language of Job: "Naked came I from my mother's womb, and naked must I go down to the earth!" [18]

A large, probably the larger part of the nation, however, disapproved of the tumultuous proceedings of the confederates. However much they contemned the person of the monarch, they were not prepared to see the royal authority thus openly degraded. They indulged, too, some compassion
for a prince, whose political vices, at least, were imputable to mental
incapacity, and to evil counsellors, rather than to any natural turpitude
of heart. Among the nobles who adhered to him, the most conspicuous were
"the good count of Haro," and the powerful family of Mendoza, the worthy
scions of an illustrious stock. The estates of the marquis of Santillana,
the head of this house, lay chiefly in the Asturias, and gave him a
considerable influence in the northern provinces, [19] the majority of
whose inhabitants remained constant in their attachment to the royal
cause.

When Henry's summons, therefore, was issued for the attendance of all his
loyal subjects capable of bearing arms, it was answered by a formidable
array of numbers, that must have greatly exceeded that of his rival, and
which is swelled by his biographer to seventy thousand foot and fourteen
thousand horse; a much smaller force, under the direction of an efficient
leader, would doubtless have sufficed to extinguish the rising spirit of
revolt. But Henry's temper led him to adopt a more conciliatory policy,
and to try what could be effected by negotiation, before resorting to
arms. In the former, however, he was no match for the confederates, or
rather the marquis of Villena, their representative on these occasions.
This nobleman, who had so zealously co-operated with his party in
conferring the title of king on Alfonso, had intended to reserve the
authority to himself. He probably found more difficulty in controlling the
operations of the jealous and aspiring aristocracy, with whom he was
associated, than he had imagined; and he was willing to aid the opposite
party in maintaining a sufficient degree of strength to form a
counterpoise to that of the confederates, and thus, while he made his own
services the more necessary to the latter, to provide a safe retreat for himself, in case of the shipwreck of their fortunes. [20]

In conformity with this dubious policy, he had, soon after the occurrence at Avila, opened a secret correspondence with his former master, and suggested to him the idea of terminating their differences by some amicable adjustment. In consequence of these intimations, Henry consented to enter into a negotiation with the confederates; and it was agreed, that the forces on both sides should be disbanded, and that a suspension of hostilities for six months should take place, during which some definitive and permanent scheme of reconciliation might be devised. Henry, in compliance with this arrangement, instantly disbanded his levies; they retired overwhelmed with indignation at the conduct of their sovereign, who so readily relinquished the only means of redress that he possessed, and whom they now saw it would be unavailing to assist, since he was so ready to desert himself. [21]

It would be an unprofitable task to attempt to unravel all the fine-spun intrigues, by which the marquis of Villena contrived to defeat every attempt at an ultimate accommodation between the parties, until he was very generally execrated as the real source of the disturbances in the kingdom. In the mean while, the singular spectacle was exhibited of two monarchs presiding over one nation, surrounded by their respective courts, administering the laws, convoking cortes, and in fine assuming the state and exercising all the functions of sovereignty. It was apparent that this state of things could not last long; and that the political ferment, which now agitated the minds of men from one extremity of the kingdom to the
other, and which occasionally displayed itself in tumults and acts of violence, would soon burst forth with all the horrors of a civil war.

At this juncture, a proposition was made to Henry for detaching the powerful family of Pacheco from the interests of the confederates, by the marriage of his sister Isabella with the brother of the marquis of Villena, Don Pedro Giron, grand master of the order of Calatrava, a nobleman of aspiring views, and one of the most active partisans of his faction. The archbishop of Toledo would naturally follow the fortunes of his nephew, and thus the league, deprived of its principal supports, must soon crumble to pieces. Instead of resenting this proposal as an affront upon his honor, the abject mind of Henry was content to purchase repose even by the most humiliating sacrifice. He acceded to the conditions; application was made to Rome for a dispensation from the vows of celibacy imposed on the grand master as the companion of a religious order; and splendid preparations were instantly commenced for the approaching nuptials. [22]

Isabella was then in her sixteenth year. On her father’s death, she retired with her mother to the little town of Arevalo, where, in seclusion, and far from the voice of flattery and falsehood, she had been permitted to unfold the natural graces of mind and person, which might have been blighted in the pestilent atmosphere of a court. Here, under the maternal eye, she was carefully instructed in those lessons of practical piety, and in the deep reverence for religion, which distinguished her maturer years. On the birth of the princess Joanna, she was removed, together with her brother Alfonso, by Henry to the royal palace, in order
more effectually to discourage the formation of any faction adverse to the interests of his supposed daughter. In this abode of pleasure, surrounded by all the seductions most dazzling to youth, she did not forget the early lessons that she had imbibed; and the blameless purity of her conduct shone with additional lustre amid the scenes of levity and licentiousness by which she was surrounded. [23]

The near connection of Isabella with the crown, as well as her personal character, invited the application of numerous suitors. Her hand was first solicited for that very Ferdinand, who was destined to be her future husband, though not till after the intervention of many inauspicious circumstances. She was next betrothed to his elder brother, Carlos; and some years after his decease, when thirteen years of age, was promised by Henry to Alfonso, of Portugal. Isabella was present with her brother at a personal interview with that monarch in 1464, but neither threats nor entreaties could induce her to accede to a union so unsuitable from the disparity of their years; and with her characteristic discretion, even at this early age, she rested her refusal on the ground, that "the infantas of Castile could not be disposed of in marriage, without the consent of the nobles of the realm." [25]

When Isabella understood in what manner she was now to be sacrificed to the selfish policy of her brother, in the prosecution of which, compulsory measures if necessary were to be employed, she was filled with the liveliest emotions of grief and resentment. The master of Calatrava was well known as a fierce and turbulent leader of faction, and his private life was stained with most of the licentious vices of the age. He was even
accused of having invaded the privacy of the queen dowager, Isabella's mother, by proposals of the most degrading nature, an outrage which the king had either not the power, or the inclination, to resent. [26] With this person, then, so inferior to her in birth, and so much more unworthy of her in every other point of view, Isabella was now to be united. On receiving the intelligence, she confined herself to her apartment, abstaining from all nourishment and sleep for a day and night, says a contemporary writer, and imploring Heaven, in the most piteous manner, to save her from this dishonor, by her own death or that of her enemy. As she was bewailing her hard fate to her faithful friend, Beatriz de Bobadilla, "God will not permit it," exclaimed the high-spirited lady, "neither will I;" then drawing forth a dagger from her bosom, which she kept there for the purpose, she solemnly vowed to plunge it in the heart of the master of Calatrava, as soon as he appeared! [27]

Happily her loyalty was not put to so severe a test. No sooner had the grand master received the bull of dispensation from the pope, than, resigning his dignities in his military order, he set about such sumptuous preparations for his wedding, as were due to the rank of his intended bride. When these were completed, he began his journey from his residence at Almagro to Madrid, where the nuptial ceremony was to be performed, attended by a splendid retinue of friends and followers. But, on the very first evening after his departure, he was attacked by an acute disorder while at Villarubia, a village not far from Ciudad Real, which terminated his life in four days. He died, says Palencia, with imprecations on his lips, because his life had not been spared some few weeks longer. [28] His death was attributed by many to poison, administered to him by some of the
nobles, who were envious of his good fortune. But, notwithstanding the seasonableness of the event, and the familiarity of the crime in that age, no shadow of imputation was ever cast on the pure fame of Isabella. [29]

The death of the grand master dissipated, at a blow, all the fine schemes of the marquis of Villena, as well as every hope of reconciliation between the parties. The passions, which had been only smothered, now burst forth into open hostility; and it was resolved to refer the decision of the question to the issue of a battle. The two armies met on the plains of Olmedo, where, two and twenty years before, John, the father of Henry, had been in like manner confronted by his insurgent subjects. The royal army was considerably the larger; but the deficiency of numbers in the other was amply supplied by the intrepid spirit of its leaders. The archbishop of Toledo appeared at the head of its squadrons, conspicuous by a rich scarlet mantle, embroidered with a white cross, thrown over his armor. The young prince Alfonso, scarcely fourteen years of age, rode by his side, clad like him in complete mail. Before the action commenced, the archbishop sent a message to Beltran de la Cueva, then raised to the title of duke of Albuquerque, cautioning him not to venture in the field, as no less than forty cavaliers had sworn his death. The gallant nobleman, who, on this as on some other occasions, displayed a magnanimity which in some degree excused the partiality of his master, returned by the envoy a particular description of the dress he intended to wear; a chivalrous defiance, which wellnigh cost him his life. Henry did not care to expose his person in the engagement, and, on receiving erroneous intelligence of the discomfiture of his party, retreated precipitately with some thirty or forty horsemen to the shelter of a neighboring village. The action lasted
three hours, until the combatants were separated by the shades of evening,
without either party having decidedly the advantage, although that of
Henry retained possession of the field of battle. The archbishop of Toledo
and Prince Alfonso were the last to retire; and the former was seen
repeatedly to rally his broken squadrons, notwithstanding his arm had been
pierced through with a lance early in the engagement. The king and the
prelate may be thought to have exchanged characters in this tragedy. [30]

The battle was attended with no result, except that of inspiring
appetites, which had tasted of blood, with a relish for more unlicensed
carnage. The most frightful anarchy now prevailed throughout the kingdom,
dismembered by factions, which the extreme youth of one monarch and the
imbécility of the other made it impossible to control. In vain did the
papal legate, who had received a commission to that effect from his
master, interpose his mediation, and even fulminate sentence of
excommunication against the confederates. The independent barons plainly
told him, that "those who advised the pope that he had a right to
interfere in the temporal concerns of Castile deceived him; and that they
had a perfect right to depose their monarch on sufficient grounds, and
should exercise it." [31]

Every city, nay, almost every family, became now divided within itself. In
Seville and in Cordova, the inhabitants of one street carried on open war
against those in another. The churches, which were fortified, and occupied
with bodies of armed men, were many of them sacked and burnt to the
ground. In Toledo no less than four thousand dwellings were consumed in
one general conflagration. The ancient family feuds, as those between the
great houses of Guzman and Ponce de Leon in Andalusia, being revived, carried new division into the cities, whose streets literally ran with blood. [32] In the country, the nobles and gentry, issuing from their castles, captured the defenceless traveller, who was obliged to redeem his liberty by the payment of a heavier ransom than was exacted even by the Mahometans. All communication on the high roads was suspended, and no man, says a contemporary, dared move abroad beyond the walls of his city, unless attended by an armed escort. The organization of one of those popular confederacies, known under the name of _Hermandad_, in 1465, which continued in operation during the remainder of this gloomy period, brought some mitigation to these evils by the fearlessness with which it exercised its functions, even against offenders of the highest rank, some of whose castles were razed to the ground by its orders. But this relief was only partial; and the successful opposition, which the Hermandad sometimes encountered on these occasions, served to aggravate the horrors of the scene. Meanwhile, fearful omens, the usual accompaniments of such troubled times, were witnessed; the heated imagination interpreted the ordinary operations of nature as signs of celestial wrath; [33] and the minds of men were filled with dismal bodings of some inevitable evil, like that which overwhelmed the monarchy in the days of their Gothic ancestors. [34]

At this crisis, a circumstance occurred, which gave a new face to affairs, and totally disconcerted the operations of the confederates. This was the loss of their young leader, Alfonso; who was found dead in his bed, on the Avila, which had so recently been the theatre of his glory. His sudden death was imputed, in the usual suspicious temper of that corrupt age, to
poison, supposed to have been conveyed to him in a trout, on which he
dined the day preceding. Others attributed it to the plague, which had
followed in the train of evils, that desolated this unhappy country. Thus
at the age of fifteen, and after a brief reign, if reign it may be called,
of three years, perished this young prince, who, under happier auspices
and in maturer life, might have ruled over his country with a wisdom equal
to that of any of its monarchs. Even in the disadvantageous position, in
which he had been placed, he gave clear indications of future excellence.
A short time before his death, he was heard to remark, on witnessing the
oppressive acts of some of the nobles, "I must endure this patiently,
until I am a little older." On another occasion, being solicited by the
citizens of Toledo to approve of some act of extortion which they had
committed, he replied, "God forbid I should countenance such injustice!"
And on being told that the city in that case would probably transfer its
allegiance to Henry, he added, "Much as I love power, I am not willing to
purchase it at such a price." Noble sentiments, but not at all palatable
to the grandees of his party, who saw with alarm that the young lion, when
he had reached his strength, would be likely to burst the bonds with which
they had enthralled him. [35]

It is not easy to consider the reign of Alfonso in any other light, than
that of a usurpation; although some Spanish writers, and among the rest
Marina, a competent critic when not blinded by prejudice, regard him as a
rightful sovereign, and as such to be enrolled among the monarchs of
Castile. [36] Marina, indeed, admits the ceremony at Avila to have been
originally the work of a faction, and in itself informal and
unconstitutional; but he considers it to have received a legitimate
sanction from its subsequent recognition by the people. But I do not find, that the deposition of Henry the Fourth was ever confirmed by an act of cortes. He still continued to reign with the consent of a large portion, probably the majority, of his subjects; and it is evident that proceedings, so irregular as those at Avila, could have no pretence to constitutional validity, without a very general expression of approbation on the part of the nation.

The leaders of the confederates were thrown into consternation by an event, which threatened to dissolve their league, and to leave them exposed to the resentment of an offended sovereign. In this conjuncture, they naturally turned their eyes on Isabella, whose dignified and commanding character might counterbalance the disadvantages arising from the unsuitableness of her sex for so perilous a situation, and justify her election in the eyes of the people. She had continued in the family of Henry during the greater part of the civil war; until the occupation of Segovia by the insurgents, after the battle of Olmedo, enabled her to seek the protection of her younger brother Alfonso, to which she was the more inclined by her disgust with the license of a court, where the love of pleasure scorned even the veil of hypocrisy. On the death of her brother, she withdrew to a monastery at Avila, where she was visited by the archbishop of Toledo, who, in behalf of the confederates, requested her to occupy the station lately filled by Alfonso, and allow herself to be proclaimed queen of Castile. [37]

Isabella discerned too clearly, however, the path of duty and probably of interest. She unhesitatingly refused the seductive proffer, and replied,
that, "while her brother Henry lived, none other had a right to the crown; that the country had been divided long enough under the rule of two contending monarchs; and that the death of Alfonso might perhaps be interpreted into an indication from Heaven of its disapprobation of their cause." She expressed herself desirous of establishing a reconciliation between the parties, and offered heartily to co-operate with her brother in the reformation of existing abuses. Neither the eloquence nor entreaties of the primate could move her from her purpose; and, when a deputation from Seville announced to her that that city, in common with the rest of Andalusia, had unfurled its standards in her name and proclaimed her sovereign of Castile, she still persisted in the same wise and temperate policy. [38]

The confederates were not prepared for this magnanimous act from one so young, and in opposition to the advice of her most venerated counsellors. No alternative remained, however, but that of negotiating an accommodation on the best terms possible with Henry, whose facility of temper and love of repose naturally disposed him to an amicable adjustment of his differences. With these dispositions, a reconciliation was effected between the parties on the following conditions; namely, that a general amnesty should be granted by the king for all past offences; that the queen, whose dissolute conduct was admitted to be matter of notoriety, should be divorced from her husband, and sent back to Portugal; that Isabella should have the principality of the Asturias (the usual demesne of the heir apparent to the crown) settled on her, together with a specific provision suitable to her rank; that she should be immediately recognized heir to the crowns of Castile and Leon; that a cortes should be
convoked within forty days for the purpose of bestowing a legal sanction
on her title, as well as of reforming the various abuses of government;
and finally, that Isabella should not be constrained to marry in
opposition to her own wishes, nor should she do so without the consent of
her brother. [39]

In pursuance of these arrangements, an interview took place between Henry
nobles, at a place called Toros de Guisando, in New Castile. [40] The
monarch embraced his sister with the tenderest marks of affection, and
then proceeded solemnly to recognize her as his future and rightful heir.
An oath of allegiance was repeated by the attendant nobles, who concluded
the ceremony by kissing the hand of the princess in token of their homage.
In due time the representatives of the nation, convened in cortes at
proceedings, and thus Isabella was announced to the world as the lawful
successor to the crowns of Castile and Leon. [41]

It can hardly be believed, that Henry was sincere in subscribing
conditions so humiliating; nor can his easy and lethargic temper account
for his so readily relinquishing the pretensions of the Princess Joanna,
whom, notwithstanding the popular imputations on her birth, he seems
always to have cherished as his own offspring. He was accused, even while
actually signing the treaty, of a secret collusion with the marquis of
Villena for the purpose of evading it; an accusation, which derives a
plausible coloring from subsequent events.
The new and legitimate basis, on which the pretensions of Isabella to the throne now rested, drew the attention of neighboring princes, who contended with each other for the honor of her hand. Among these suitors, was a brother of Edward the Fourth, of England, not improbably Richard, duke of Gloucester, since Clarence was then engaged in his intrigues with the earl of Warwick, which led a few months later to his marriage with the daughter of that nobleman. Had she listened to his proposals, the duke would in all likelihood have exchanged his residence in England for Castile, where his ambition, satisfied with the certain reversion of a crown, might have been spared the commission of the catalogue of crimes which blacken his memory. [42]

Another suitor was the duke of Guienne, the unfortunate brother of Louis the Eleventh, and at that time the presumptive heir of the French monarchy. Although the ancient intimacy, which subsisted between the royal families of France and Castile, in some measure favored his pretensions, the disadvantages resulting from such a union were too obvious to escape attention. The two countries were too remote from each other, [43] and their inhabitants too dissimilar in character and institutions, to permit the idea of their ever cordially coalescing as one people under a common sovereign. Should the duke of Guienne fail in the inheritance of the crown, it was argued, he would be every way an unequal match for the heiress of Castile; should he succeed to it, it might be feared, that, in case of a union, the smaller kingdom would be considered only as an appendage, and sacrificed to the interests of the larger. [44]

The person on whom Isabella turned the most favorable eye was her kinsman
Ferdinand of Aragon. The superior advantages of a connection, which should
be the means of uniting the people of Aragon and Castile into one nation,
were indeed manifest. They were the descendants of one common stock,
speaking one language, and living under the influence of similar
institutions, which had moulded them into a common resemblance of
color and manners. From their geographical position, too, they seemed
destined by nature to be one nation; and, while separately they were
condemned to the rank of petty and subordinate states, they might hope,
when consolidated into one monarchy, to rise at once to the first class of
European powers. While arguments of this public nature pressed on the mind
of Isabella, she was not insensible to those which most powerfully affect
the female heart. Ferdinand was then in the bloom of life, and
distinguished for the comeliness of his person. In the busy scenes, in
which he had been engaged from his boyhood, he had displayed a chivalrous
valor, combined with maturity of judgment far above his years. Indeed, he
was decidedly superior to his rivals in personal merit and attractions.

[45] But, while private inclinations thus happily coincided with
considerations of expediency for inclining her to prefer the Aragonese
match, a scheme was devised in another quarter for the express purpose of
defeating it.

A fraction of the royal party, with the family of Mendoza at their head,
had retired in disgust with the convention of Toros de Guisando, and
openly espoused the cause of the princess Joanna. They even instructed her
to institute an appeal before the tribunal of the supreme pontiff, and
caused a placard, exhibiting a protest against the validity of the late
proceedings, to be nailed secretly in the night to the gate of Isabella's
mansion. [46] Thus were sown the seeds of new dissensions, before the old
were completely eradicated. With this disaffected party the marquis of
Villena, who, since his reconciliation, had resumed his ancient ascendency
over Henry, now associated himself. Nothing, in the opinion of this
nobleman, could be more repugnant to his interests, than the projected
union between the houses of Castile and Aragon; to the latter of which, as
already noticed, [47] once belonged the ample domains of his own
marquisate, which he imagined would be held by a very precarious tenure
should any of this family obtain a footing in Castile.

In the hope of counteracting this project, he endeavored to revive the
obsolete pretensions of Alfonso, king of Portugal; and, the more
effectually to secure the co-operation of Henry, he connected with his
scheme a proposition for marrying his daughter Joanna with the son and
heir of the Portuguese monarch; and thus this unfortunate princess might
be enabled to assume at once a station suitable to her birth, and at some
future opportunity assert with success her claim to the Castilian crown.
In furtherance of this complicated intrigue, Alfonso was invited to renew
his addresses to Isabella in a more public manner than he had hitherto
done; and a pompous embassy, with the archbishop of Lisbon at its head,
of their master. The princess returned, as before, a decided though
temperate refusal. [48] Henry, or rather the marquis of Villena, piqued at
this opposition to his wishes, resolved to intimidate her into compliance;
and menaced her with imprisonment in the royal fortress at Madrid. Neither
her tears nor entreaties would have availed against this tyrannical
proceeding; and the marquis was only deterred from putting it in execution
Isabella. Indeed, the common people of Castile very generally supported her in her preference of the Aragonese match. Boys paraded the streets, bearing banners emblazoned with the arms of Aragon, and singing verses predictive of the glories of the auspicious union. They even assembled round the palace gates, and insulted the ears of Henry and his minister by the repetition of satirical stanzas, which contrasted Alfonso's years with the youthful graces of Ferdinand. [49] Notwithstanding this popular expression of opinion, however, the constancy of Isabella might at length have yielded to the importunity of her persecutors, had she not been encouraged by her friend, the archbishop of Toledo, who had warmly entered into the interests of Aragon, and who promised, should matters come to extremity, to march in person to her relief at the head of a sufficient force to insure it.

Isabella, indignant at the oppressive treatment, which she experienced from her brother, as well as at his notorious infraction of almost every article in the treaty of Toros de Guisando, felt herself released from her corresponding engagements, and determined to conclude the negotiations relative to her marriage, without any further deference to his opinion. Before taking any decisive step, however, she was desirous of obtaining the concurrence of the leading nobles of her party. This was effected without difficulty, through the intervention of the archbishop of Toledo, and of Don Frederic Henriquez, admiral of Castile, and the maternal grandfather of Ferdinand; a person of high consideration, both from his rank and character, and connected by blood with the principal families in the kingdom. [50] Fortified by their approbation, Isabella dismissed the Aragonese envoy with a favorable answer to his master's suit. [51]
Her reply was received with almost as much satisfaction by the old king of Aragon, John the Second, as by his son. This monarch, who was one of the shrewdest princes of his time, had always been deeply sensible of the importance of consolidating the scattered monarchies of Spain under one head. He had solicited the hand of Isabella for his son, when she possessed only a contingent reversion of the crown. But, when her succession had been settled on a more secure basis, he lost no time in effecting this favorite object of his policy. With the consent of the states, he had transferred to his son the title of king of Sicily, and associated him with himself in the government at home, in order to give him greater consequence in the eyes of his mistress. He then despatched a confidential agent into Castile, with instructions to gain over to his interests all who exercised any influence on the mind of the princess; furnishing him for this purpose with _cartes blanches_, signed by himself and Ferdinand, which he was empowered to fill at his discretion.

[52]

Between parties thus favorably disposed, there was no unnecessary delay. The marriage articles were signed, and sworn to by Ferdinand at Cervera, on the 7th of January. He promised faithfully to respect the laws and usages of Castile; to fix his residence in that kingdom, and not to quit it without the consent of Isabella; to alienate no property belonging to the crown; to prefer no foreigners to municipal offices, and indeed to make no appointments of a civil or military nature, without her consent and approbation; and to resign to her exclusively the right of nomination to ecclesiastical benefices. All ordinances of a public nature were to be
subscribed equally by both. Ferdinand engaged, moreover, to prosecute the war against the Moors; to respect King Henry; to suffer every noble to remain unmolested in the possession of his dignities, and not to demand restitution of the domains formerly owned by his father in Castile. The treaty concluded with a specification of a magnificent dower to be settled on Isabella, far more ample than that usually assigned to the queens of Aragon. [53] The circumspection of the framers of this instrument is apparent from the various provisions introduced into it solely to calm the apprehensions and to conciliate the good will of the party disaffected to the marriage; while the national partialities of the Castilians in general were gratified by the jealous restrictions imposed on Ferdinand, and the relinquishment of all the essential rights of sovereignty to his consort.

While these affairs were in progress, Isabella's situation was becoming extremely critical. She had availed herself of the absence of her brother and the marquis of Villena in the south, whither they had gone for the purpose of suppressing the still lingering spark of insurrection, to of her mother, she intended to abide the issue of the pending negotiations with Aragon. Far, however, from escaping the vigilant eye of the marquis of Villena by this movement, she laid herself more open to it. She found the bishop of Burgos, the nephew of the marquis, stationed at Madrigal, who now served as an effectual spy upon her actions. Her most confidential servants were corrupted, and conveyed intelligence of her proceedings to her enemy. Alarmed at the actual progress made in the negotiations for her marriage, the marquis was now convinced that he could only hope to defeat them by resorting to the coercive system, which he had before abandoned. He accordingly instructed the archbishop of Seville to march at once to
Madrigal with a sufficient force to secure Isabella's person; and letters were at the same time addressed by Henry to the citizens of that place, menacing them with his resentment, if they should presume to interpose in her behalf. The timid inhabitants disclosed the purport of the mandate to Isabella, and besought her to provide for her own safety. This was perhaps the most critical period in her life. Betrayed by her own domestics, deserted even by those friends of her own sex who might have afforded her sympathy and counsel, but who fled affrighted from the scene of danger, and on the eve of falling into the snares of her enemies, she beheld the sudden extinction of those hopes, which she had so long and so fondly cherished. [54]

In this exigency, she contrived to convey a knowledge of her situation to Admiral Henriquez, and the archbishop of Toledo. The active prelate, on receiving the summons, collected a body of horse, and, reinforced by the admiral's troops, advanced with such expedition to Madrigal, that he succeeded in anticipating the arrival of the enemy. Isabella received her friends with unfeigned satisfaction; and, bidding adieu to her dismayed guardian, the bishop of Burgos, and his attendants, she was borne off by her little army in a sort of military triumph to the friendly city of Valladolid, where she was welcomed by the citizens with a general burst of enthusiasm. [55]

In the mean time Gutierre de Cardenas, one of the household of the princess, [56] and Alfonso de Palencia, the faithful chronicler of these events, were despatched into Aragon in order to quicken Ferdinand's operations, during the auspicious interval afforded by the absence of
Henry in Andalusia. On arriving at the frontier town of Osma, they were dismayed to find that the bishop of that place, together with the duke of Medina Celi, on whose active co-operation they had relied for the safe introduction of Ferdinand into Castile, had been gained over to the interests of the marquis of Villena. [57] The envoys, however, adroitly concealing the real object of their mission, were permitted to pass unmolested to Saragossa, where Ferdinand was then residing. They could not have arrived at a more inopportune season. The old king of Aragon was in the very heat of the war against the insurgent Catalans, headed by the victorious John of Anjou. Although so sorely pressed, his forces were on the eve of disbanding for want of the requisite funds to maintain them. His exhausted treasury did not contain more than three hundred enriques. [58] In this exigency he was agitated by the most distressing doubts. As he could spare neither the funds nor the force necessary for covering his son's entrance into Castile, he must either send him unprotected into a hostile country, already aware of his intended enterprise and in arms to defeat it, or abandon the long-cherished object of his policy, at the moment when his plans were ripe for execution. Unable to extricate himself from this dilemma, he referred the whole matter to Ferdinand and his council. [59]

It was at length determined, that the prince should undertake the journey, accompanied by half a dozen attendants only, in the disguise of merchants, by the direct route from Saragossa; while another party, in order to divert the attention of the Castilians, should proceed in a different direction, with all the ostentation of a public embassy from the king of Aragon to Henry the Fourth. The distance was not great, which Ferdinand
and his suite were to travel before reaching a place of safety; but this 
intervening country was patrolled by squadrons of cavalry for the purpose 
of intercepting their progress; and the whole extent of the frontier, from 
Almazan to Guadalajara, was defended by a line of fortified castles in the 
hands of the family of Mendoza. [60] The greatest circumspection therefore 
was necessary. The party journeyed chiefly in the night; Ferdinand assumed 
the disguise of a servant, and, when they halted on the road, took care of 
the mules, and served his companions at table. In this guise, with no 
other disaster except that of leaving at an inn the purse which contained 
the funds for the expedition, they arrived, late on the second night, at a 
little place called the Burgo or Borough, of Osma, which the count of 
considerable body of men-at-arms. On knocking at the gate, cold and faint 
with travelling, during which the prince had allowed himself to take no 
repose, they were saluted by a large stone discharged by a sentinel from 
the battlements, which, glancing near Ferdinand's head, had wellnigh 
brought his romantic enterprise to a tragical conclusion; when his voice 
was recognized by his friends within, and, the trumpets proclaiming his 
arrival, he was received with great joy and festivity by the count and his 
followers. The remainder of his journey, which he commenced before dawn, 
was performed under the convoy of a numerous and well-armed escort; and on 

Castilian nobles and cavaliers of his party eagerly thronged to render him 
the homage due to his rank. [61]

The intelligence of Ferdinand's arrival diffused universal joy in the 
little court of Isabella at Valladolid. Her first step was to transmit a 
letter to her brother Henry, in which she informed him of the presence of
the prince in his dominions, and of their intended marriage. She excused the
course she had taken by the embarrassments, in which she had been
involved by the malice of her enemies. She represented the political
advantages of the connection, and the sanction it had received from the
Castilian nobles; and she concluded with soliciting his approbation of it,
giving him at the same time affectionate assurances of the most dutiful
submission both on the part of Ferdinand and of herself. [62] Arrangements
were then made for an interview between the royal pair, in which some
courtly parasites would fain have persuaded their mistress to require some
act of homage from Ferdinand; in token of the inferiority of the crown of
Aragon to that of Castile; a proposition which she rejected with her usual
discretion. [63]

Agreeably to these arrangements, Ferdinand, on the evening of the 15th of
attendants, to the neighboring city of Valladolid, where he was received
by the archbishop of Toledo, and conducted to the apartment of his
mistress. [64] Ferdinand was at this time in the eighteenth year of his
age. His complexion was fair, though somewhat bronzed by constant exposure
to the sun; his eye quick and cheerful; his forehead ample, and
approaching to baldness. His muscular and well-proportioned frame was
invigorated by the toils of war, and by the chivalrous exercises in which
he delighted. He was one of the best horsemen in his court, and excelled
in field sports of every kind. His voice was somewhat sharp, but he
possessed a fluent eloquence; and, when he had a point to carry, his
address was courteous and even insinuating. He secured his health by
extreme temperance in his diet, and by such habits of activity, that it
was said he seemed to find repose in business. [65] Isabella was a year
older than her lover. In stature she was somewhat above the middle size.

Her complexion was fair; her hair of a bright chestnut color, inclining to red; and her mild blue eye beamed with intelligence and sensibility. She was exceedingly beautiful; "the handsomest lady," says one of her household, "whom I ever beheld, and the most gracious in her manners."

[66] The portrait still existing of her in the royal palace, is conspicuous for an open symmetry of features, indicative of the natural serenity of temper, and that beautiful harmony of intellectual and moral qualities, which most distinguished her. She was dignified in her demeanor, and modest even to a degree of reserve. She spoke the Castilian language with more than usual elegance; and early imbibed a relish for letters, in which she was superior to Ferdinand, whose education in this particular seems to have been neglected. [67] It is not easy to obtain a dispassionate portrait of Isabella. The Spaniards, who revert to her glorious reign, are so smitten with her moral perfections, that even in depicting her personal, they borrow somewhat of the exaggerated coloring of romance.

The interview lasted more than two hours, when Ferdinand retired to his marriage, however, were first adjusted; but so great was the poverty of the parties, that it was found necessary to borrow money to defray the expenses of the ceremony. [68] Such were the humiliating circumstances attending the commencement of a union destined to open the way to the highest prosperity and grandeur of the Spanish monarchy!

The marriage between Ferdinand and Isabella was publicly celebrated, on
the morning of the 19th of October, in the palace of John de Vivero, the
temporary residence of the princess, and subsequently appropriated to the
chancery of Valladolid. The nuptials were solemnized in the presence of
Ferdinand's grandfather, the admiral of Castile, of the archbishop of
Toledo, and a multitude of persons of rank, as well as of inferior
condition, amounting in all to no less than two thousand. [69] A papal
bull of dispensation was produced by the archbishop, relieving the parties
from the impediment incurred by their falling within the prohibited
degrees of consanguinity. This spurious document was afterwards discovered
to have been devised by the old king of Aragon, Ferdinand, and the
archbishop, who were deterred from applying to the court of Rome by the
zeal with which it openly espoused the interests of Henry, and who knew
that Isabella would never consent to a union repugnant to the canons of
the established church, and one which involved such heavy ecclesiastical
censures. A genuine bull of dispensation was obtained, some years later,
from Sixtus the Fourth; but Isabella, whose honest mind abhorred
everything like artifice, was filled with no little uneasiness and
mortification at the discovery of the imposition. [70] The ensuing week
was consumed in the usual festivities of this joyous season; at the
expiration of which, the new-married pair attended publicly the
celebration of mass, agreeably to the usage of the time, in the collegiate
church of Sante Maria. [71]

An embassy was despatched by Ferdinand and Isabella to Henry, to acquaint
him with their proceedings, and again request his approbation of them.
They repeated their assurances of loyal submission, and accompanied the
message with a copious extract from such of the articles of marriage, as,
by their import, would be most likely to conciliate his favorable disposition. Henry coldly replied, that "he must advise with his ministers." [72]

* * * * *

frequently cited in this History, was born at Madrid, in 1478. He was of noble Asturian descent. Indeed, every peasant in the Asturias claims nobility as his birthright. At the age of twelve he was introduced into the royal palace, as one of the pages of Prince John. He continued with the court several years, and was present, though a boy, in the closing campaigns of the Moorish war. In 1514, according to his own statement, he embarked for the Indies, where, although he revisited his native country several times, he continued during the remainder of his long life. The time of his death is uncertain.

Oviedo occupied several important posts under the government, and he was appointed to one of a literary nature, for which he was well qualified by his long residence abroad; that of historiographer of the Indies. It was in this capacity that he produced his principal work, "Historia General de las Indias," in fifty books. Las Casas denounces the book as a wholesale fabrication, "as full of lies, almost, as pages." (Oeuvres, trad. de Llorente, tom. i. p. 382.) But Las Casas entertained too hearty an aversion for the man, whom he publicly accused of rapacity and cruelty, and was too decidedly opposed to his ideas on the government of the Indies, to be a fair critic. Oviedo, though somewhat loose and rambling,
possessed extensive stores of information, by which those who have had
occasion to follow in his track have liberally profited.

The work with which we are concerned is his Quincuagenas. It is entitled
dialogues, in which the author is the chief interlocutor. It contains a
very full, and, indeed, prolix notice of the principal persons in Spain,
their lineage, revenues, and arms, with an inexhaustible fund of private
anecdote. The author, who was well acquainted with most of the individuals
of note in his time, amused himself, during his absence in the New World,
with keeping alive the images of home by this minute record of early
reminiscences. In this mass of gossip, there is a good deal, indeed, of
very little value. It contains, however, much for the illustration of
domestic manners, and copious particulars, as I have intimated, respecting
the characters and habits of eminent personages, which could have been
known only to one familiar with them. On all topics of descent and
heraldry, he is uncommonly full; and one would think his services in this
department alone might have secured him, in a land where these are so much
respected, the honors of the press. His book, however, still remains in
manuscript, apparently little known, and less used, by Castilian scholars.
Besides the three folio volumes in the Royal Library at Madrid, from which
the transcript in my possession was obtained, Clemencin, whose
commendations of this work, as illustrative of Isabella's reign, are
unqualified. (Mem. de la Acad. de Hist., tom. vi. Illust. 10,) enumerates
three others, two in the king's private library, and one in that of the Academy.

FOOTNOTES

[1]
"Nil pudet assuetos sceptris: mitissima sors est Regnorum sub rege novo." Lucan, Pharsalia, lib. 8.


Henry's lavish expenditure, particularly on works of architecture, gained him in early life the appellation of "the Liberal," he is better known on the roll of Castilian sovereigns by the less flattering title of "the Impotent."

seq.--The surprise of Gibraltar, the unhappy source of feud between the families of Guzman and Ponce de Leon, did not occur till a later period, 1462.

[4] Such was his apathy, says Mariana, that he would subscribe his name to public ordinances, without taking the trouble to acquaint himself with
Navarra, tom. iv. pp. 519, 520.--The marriage between Blanche and Henry was publicly declared void by the bishop of Segovia, confirmed by the archbishop of Toledo, "por impotencia respectiva, owing to some malign influence!"

part. 1, cap. 20, 21.--It does not appear, however, whom Beltran de la Cueva indicated as the lady of his love on this occasion. (See Castillo, the gallantry of the times. The archbishop of Seville concluded a superb table two vases filled with rings garnished with precious stones, to be distributed among his female guests. At a ball given on another occasion, the young queen having condescended to dance with the French ambassador, the latter made a solemn vow, in commemoration of so distinguished an honor, never to dance with any other woman.

cap. 23.

349.--The papal bulls of crusade issued on these occasions, says Palencia, contained among other indulgences an exemption from the pains and penalties of purgatory, assuring to the soul of the purchaser, after death, an immediate translation into a state of glory. Some of the more
orthodox casuists doubted the validity of such a bull. But it was decided, after due examination, that, as the holy father possessed plenary power of absolution of all offenses committed upon earth, and as purgatory is situated upon earth, it properly fell within his jurisdiction, (cap. 32.) Bulls of crusade were sold at the rate of 200 maravedies each; and it is computed by the same historian, that no less than 4,000,000 maravedies were amassed by this traffic in Castile, in the space of four years!

[9] Saez, Monedas de Enrique IV., (Madrid, 1805,) pp. 2-5.--Alonso de Villena, having been incorporated into the crown of Castile, devolved to Prince Henry of Aragon, on his marriage with the daughter of John II. It was subsequently confiscated by that monarch, in consequence of the repeated rebellions of Prince Henry; and the title, together with a large proportion of the domains originally attached to it, was conferred on Don Juan Pacheco, by whom it was transmitted to his son, afterwards raised to the rank of duke of Escalona, in the reign of Isabella. Salazar de Mendoza, Dignidades de Castilla y Leon, (Madrid, 1794,) lib. 3, cap. 12, 17.

cap. 10, 11.

[12] At least these are the important consequences imputed to this
cap. 48, 49.—Zurita, Anales, lib. 17, cap. 50.


was as skilful a diplomatist as her husband, John I., assailed the vanity
of Villena, quite as much as his interest. On one of his missions to her
while during the repast they were served by the ladies of the palace.
Ibid., cap. 40.

[14] See the memorial presented to the king, cited at length in Marina,
Anales, lib. 17, cap. 56.—Lebrija, Hispanarum Rerum Ferdinando Rege et

[16] See copies from the original instruments, which are still preserved

[19] The celebrated marquis of Santillana died in 1458, at the age of
to his eldest son, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, who is represented by his contemporaries to have been worthy of his sire. Like him, he was imbued with a love of letters; he was conspicuous for his magnanimity and chivalrous honor, his moderation, constancy, and uniform loyalty to his sovereign, virtues of rare worth in those rapacious and turbulent times. (Pulgar, Claros Varones, tit. 9.) Ferdinand and Isabella created him duke del Infantado. This domain derives its name from its having been once the

[25] Aleson, Anales de Navarra, tom. iv. pp. 561, 562.--Zurita, Anales,

friend of Isabella, will appear often in the course of our narrative.

Gonzalo de Oviedo, who knew her well, describes her as "illustrating her generous lineage by her conduct, which was wise, virtuous, and valiant."

(Quincuagenas, MS., dial. de Cabrera.) The last epithet, rather singular for a female character, was not unmerited.

cap. 73.

[29] Rades y Andrada, Las Tres Ordenes, fol. 77.--Caro de Torres, Historia de las Ordenes Militares de Santiago, Calatrava, y Alcantara, (Madrid,

cette mort ce qu'il voulut." And again in a few pages after, speaking of Isabella, he says, "On remarqua que tons ceux qui pouvoient faire obstacle

fond of seasoning his style with those piquant sarcasms, in which oftentimes more is meant than meets the ear, and which Voltaire rendered fashionable in history. I doubt, however, if, amid all the heats of controversy and faction, there is a single Spanish writer of that age, or indeed of any subsequent one, who has ventured to impute to the contrivance of Isabella any one of the fortunate coincidences, to which the author alludes.
quoted an animated apostrophe addressed to the citizens by one of their number in this season of discord:

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de los tus fijos, i tus cavalleros,
que fado enemigo te tiene minguada," etc.
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The poem concludes with a summons to throw off the yoke of their oppressors:

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"Despierta Sevilla e sacude el imperio,
que faze a tus nobles tanto vituperio."
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See Anales, p. 359.

[33] "Quod in pace fore, sen natura, tune fatum et ira dei vocabatur;"
says Tacitus, (Historiae, lib. 4, cap. 26,) adverting to a similar state of excitement.
[34] Saez quotes a MS. letter of a contemporary, exhibiting a frightful picture of these disorders. (Monedas de Enrique IV., p. 1, not.--Castillo, part. 1, cap. 69.) The active force kept on duty by the Hermandad amounted to 3000 horse. Ibid., cap. 89, 90.

cap. 94.--Garibay, Compendio, lib. 17, cap. 20.

[37] Lebrija, Rerum Gestarum Decad., lib. 1, cap. 3.--Alonso de Palencia, 790.

[38] Lebrija, Rerum Gestarum Decad., lib. 1, cap. 3.--Ferreras, Hist. 92.--part. 2, cap. 5.

[40] So called from four bulls, sculptured in stone, discovered there, with Latin inscriptions thereon, indicating it to have been the site of one of Julius Caesar’s victories during the civil war. (Estrada, Poblacion a
contemporary, fixes the date of this convention in August. Apales del Rey

incensed by his sister's refusal of the king of Portugal, dissolved the

opposite one of Pulgar, a contemporary writer, like himself. (Reyes

after their marriage, to Henry IV., transcribed also by Castillo, allude

incidentally to such a recognition as to a well-known fact, the balance of

cap. 114.

[42] Isabella, who in a letter to Henry IV., dated Oct. 12th, 1469,

adverts to these proposals of the English prince, as being under

consideration at the time of the convention of Toros de Guisando, does not

specify which of the brothers of Edward IV. was intended. (Castillo,

Mr. Turner, in his History of England during the Middle Ages, (London,

1825,) quotes part of the address delivered by the Spanish envoy to

Richard III., in 1483, in which the orator speaks of "the unkindness,

which his queen Isabella had conceived for Edward IV., for his refusal of

her, and his taking instead to wife a widow of England." (Vol. iii. p.

274.) The old chronicler Hall, on the other hand, mentions, that it was

currently reported, although he does not appear to credit it, that the

earl of Warwick had been despatched into Spain in order to request the

hand of the princess Isabella for his master Edward IV., in 1463. (See his
Chronicle of England, (London, 1809,) pp. 263, 264.)--I find nothing in
the Spanish accounts of that period, which throws any light on these
obvious contradictions.

[43] The territories of France and Castile touched, indeed, on one point
(Guipuscoa), but were separated along the whole remaining line of frontier
by the kingdoms of Aragon and Navarre.

part. 2, cap. 10.

[45] Isabella, in order to acquaint herself more intimately with the
personal qualities of her respective suitors, had privately despatched her
confidential chaplain, Alonso de Coca, to the courts of France and of
Aragon, and his report on his return was altogether favorable to
Ferdinand. The duke of Guienne he represented as "a feeble, effeminate
prince, with limbs so emaciated as to be almost deformed, and with eyes so
weak and watery as to incapacitate him for the ordinary exercises of
chivalry. While Ferdinand, on the other hand, was possessed of a comely,
symmetrical figure, a graceful demeanor, and a spirit that was up to
anything;" _mui dispuesto para toda coga que hacer ginsiese_. It is
not improbable that the queen of Aragon condescended to practise some of
those agreeable arts on the worthy chaplain, which made so sensible an
impression on the marquis of Villena.

[48] Faria y Sousa, Europa Portuguesa, tom. ii. p. 391.--Castillo,

7.--Lebrija, Rerum Gestarum Decad., lib. 1, cap. 7.

[50] Pulgar, Claros Varones, tit. 2.


[52] Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 157, 163.

[53] See the copy of the original marriage contract, as it exists in the archives of Simancas, extracted in tom. vi. of Memorias de la Acad. de Hist., Apend. no. 1.--Zurita, Anales, lib. 18, cap. 21.--Ferreras, Hist. d'Espagne, tom. vii. p. 236.

de Bobadilla and Mencia de la Torre, the two ladies most in her confidence, had escaped to the neighboring town of Coca.
This cavalier, who was of an ancient and honorable family in Castile, was introduced to the princess's service by the archbishop of Toledo. He is represented by Gonzalo de Oviedo as a man of much sagacity and knowledge of the world, qualities with which he united a steady devotion to the interests of his mistress. Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 2, dial. 1.

that "if his own servants deserted him, he would oppose the entrance of Ferdinand into the kingdom."

Zurita, Anales, lib. 18, cap. 26.--The enrique was a gold coin, so denominated from Henry II.

Zurita, Anales, lib. 18, cap. 26.--Abarca, Reyes de Aragon, tom. ii. p. 273.

Mem. de la Acad. de Hist., tom. vi. p. 78, Illust. 2.

loc. cit.
[62] This letter, dated October 12th, is cited at length by Castillo,

[64] Gutierre de Cardenas was the first who pointed him out to the princess, exclaiming at the same time, "Ese es, ese es, This is he;" in commemoration of which he was permitted to place on his escutcheon the letters SS, whose pronunciation in Spanish resembles that of the exclamation which he had uttered. Ibid., part. 2, cap. 15.--Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 2, dial. 1.

[65] L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 182.--Garibay, Compendio, lib. 18, cap. 1.--"Tan amigo de los negocios," says Mariana, "que parecia con el

[66] "En hermosura, puestas delante S. A. todas las mugeres que yo he visto, ninguna vi tan graciosa, ni tanto de ver corao su persona, ni de part. 2, cap. 16.--Zurita, Anales, lib. 18, cap. 26.--See a copy of the official record of the marriage, Mem. de la Acad., tom. vi. Apend. 4. See
also the Ilust. 2.

[70] The intricacies of this affair, at once the scandal and the
Clemencin, with his usual perspicuity. See Mem. de la Acad., tom. vi. pp.
105-116, Ilust. 2.

narrative of the adventures of Prince Ferdinand, detailed in this chapter,
may be found in Cushing's Reminiscences of Spain, (Boston, 1833,) vol. i.
pp. 225-255.

part. 2, cap. 16.

CHAPTER IV.

FACTIONS IN CASTILE.--WAR BETWEEN FRANCE AND ARAGON.--DEATH OF HENRY IV.,
OF CASTILE.

1469-1474.

Factions in Castile.--Ferdinand and Isabella.--Gallant Defence of
Perpignan against the French.--Ferdinand Raises the Siege.--Isabella's
Party gains Strength.--Interview between King Henry IV. and Isabella.--The
French Invade Roussillon.--Ferdinand's Summary Justice.--Death of Henry
The marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella disconcerted the operations of the marquis of Villena, or, as he should be styled, the grand master of St. James, since he had resigned his marquisate to his elder son, on his appointment to the command of the military order above mentioned, a dignity inferior only to the primacy in importance. It was determined, however, in the councils of Henry to oppose at once the pretensions of the princess Joanna to those of Isabella; and an embassy was gladly received from the king of France, offering to the former lady the hand of his brother the duke of Guienne, the rejected suitor of Isabella. Louis the Eleventh was willing to engage his relative in the unsettled politics of a distant state, in order to relieve himself from his pretensions at home.

An interview took place between Henry the Fourth and the French ambassadors in a little village in the vale of Lozoya, in October, 1470. A proclamation was read, in which Henry declared his sister to have forfeited whatever claims she had derived from the treaty of Toros de Guisando, by marrying contrary to his approbation. He then with his queen swore to the legitimacy of the princess Joanna, and announced her as his true and lawful successor. The attendant nobles took the usual oaths of allegiance, and the ceremony was concluded by affiancing the princess, then in the ninth year of her age, with the formalities ordinarily practised on such occasions, to the count of Boulogne, the representative of the duke of Guienne.
This farce, in which many of the actors were the same persons who performed the principal parts at the convention of Toros de Guisando, had on the whole an unfavorable influence on Isabella’s cause. It exhibited her rival to the world as one whose claims were to be supported by the whole authority of the court of Castile, with the probable co-operation of France. Many of the most considerable families in the kingdom, as the Pachecos, [3] the Mendozas in all their extensive ramifications, [4] the recently rendered to Isabella, now openly testified their adhesion to her niece.

so poor as to be scarcely capable of defraying the ordinary charges of their table. The northern provinces of Biscay and Guipuscoa had, however, loudly declared against the French match; and the populous province of Andalusia, with the house of Medina Sidonia at its head, still maintained its loyalty to Isabella unshaken. But her principal reliance was on the archbishop of Toledo, whose elevated station in the church and ample revenues gave him perhaps less real influence, than his commanding and resolute character, which had enabled him to triumph over every obstacle devised by his more crafty adversary, the grand master of St. James. The prelate, however, with all his generous self-devotion, was far from being a comfortable ally. He would willingly have raised Isabella to the throne, but he would have her indebted for her elevation exclusively to himself. He looked with a jealous eye on her most intimate friends, and complained that neither she nor her husband deferred sufficiently to his counsel. The princess could not always conceal her disgust at these humors, and
Ferdinand, on one occasion, plainly told him that "he was not to be put in leading-strings, like so many of the sovereigns of Castile." The old king of Aragon, alarmed at the consequences of a rupture with so indispensable an ally, wrote in the most earnest manner to his son, representing the necessity of propitiating the offended prelate. But Ferdinand, although educated in the school of dissimulation, had not yet acquired that self-command, which enabled him in after-life to sacrifice his passions, and sometimes indeed his principles, to his interests. [9]

The most frightful anarchy at this period prevailed throughout Castile. While the court was abandoned to corrupt or frivolous pleasure, the administration of justice was neglected, until crimes were committed with a frequency and on a scale, which menaced the very foundations of society. The nobles conducted their personal feuds with an array of numbers which might compete with those of powerful princes. The duke of Infantado, the head of the house of Mendoza, [10] could bring into the field, at four and twenty hours' notice one thousand lances and ten thousand foot. The battles, far from assuming the character of those waged by the Italian _condottieri_ at this period, were of the most sanguinary and destructive kind. Andalusia was in particular the theatre of this savage warfare. The whole of that extensive district was divided by the factions of the Guzmans and Ponces de Leon. The chiefs of these ancient houses having recently died, the inheritance descended to young men, whose hot blood soon revived the feuds, which had been permitted to cool under the temperate sway of their fathers. One of these fiery cavaliers was Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, so deservedly celebrated afterwards in the wars of Granada as the marquis of Cadiz. He was an illegitimate and younger son of the
count of Arcos, but was preferred by his father to his other children in
consequence of the extraordinary qualities which he evinced at a very
early period. He served his apprenticeship to the art of war in the
campaigns against the Moors, displaying on several occasions an uncommon
dergree of enterprise and personal heroism. On succeeding to his paternal
honors, his haughty spirit, impatient of a rival, led him to revive the
old feud with the duke of Medina Sidonia, the head of the Guzmans, who,
though the most powerful nobleman in Andalusia, was far his inferior in
capacity and military science. [11]

On one occasion the duke of Medina Sidonia mustered an army of twenty
thousand men against his antagonist; on another, no less than fifteen
hundred houses of the Ponce faction were burnt to the ground in Seville.
Such were the potent engines employed by these petty sovereigns in their
conflicts with one another, and such the havoc which they brought on the
fairest portion of the Peninsula. The husbandman, stripped of his harvest
and driven from his fields, abandoned himself to idleness, or sought
subsistence by plunder. A scarcity ensued in the years 1472 and 1473, in
which the prices of the most necessary commodities rose to such an
exorbitant height, as put them beyond the reach of any but the affluent.
But it would be wearisome to go into all the loathsome details of
wretchedness and crime brought on this unhappy country by an imbecile
government and a disputed succession, and which are portrayed with lively
fidelity in the chronicles, the letters, and the satires of the time. [12]

While Ferdinand's presence was more than ever necessary to support the
drooping spirits of his party in Castile, he was unexpectedly summoned
into Aragon to the assistance of his father. No sooner had Barcelona
submitted to King John, as mentioned in a preceding chapter, [13] than the
inhabitants of Roussillon and Cerdagne, which provinces, it will be
remembered, were placed in the custody of France, as a guaranty for the
king of Aragon's engagements, oppressed by the grievous exactions of their
new rulers, determined to break the yoke, and to put themselves again
under the protection of their ancient master, provided they could obtain
his support. The opportunity was favorable. A large part of the garrisons
in the principal cities had been withdrawn by Louis the Eleventh, to cover
the frontier on the side of Burgundy and Brittany. John, therefore, gladly
embraced the proposal, and on a concerted day a simultaneous insurrection
took place throughout the provinces, when such of the French, in the
principal towns, as had not the good fortune to escape into the citadels,
were indiscriminately massacred. Of all the country, Salces, Collioure,
and the castle of Perpignan alone remained in the hands of the French.
John then threw himself into the last-named city with a small body of
forces, and instantly set about the construction of works to protect the
inhabitants against the fire of the French garrison in the castle, as well
as from the army which might soon be expected to besiege them from
without. [14]

Louis the Eleventh, deeply incensed at the defection of his new subjects,
ordered the most formidable preparations for the siege of their capital.
John's officers, alarmed at these preparations, besought him not to expose
his person at his advanced age to the perils of a siege and of captivity.
But the lion-hearted monarch saw the necessity of animating the spirits of
the besieged by his own presence; and, assembling the inhabitants in one
of the churches of the city, he exhorted them resolutely to stand to their
defence, and made a solemn oath to abide the issue with them to the last.

contiguous French provinces, and mustered an array of chivalry and feudal
militia amounting, according to the Spanish historians, to thirty thousand
men. With these ample forces, his lieutenant-general, the duke of Savoy,
closely invested Perpignan; and, as he was provided with a numerous train
of battering artillery, instantly opened a heavy fire on the inhabitants.

John, thus exposed to the double fire of the fortress and the besiegers,
was in a very critical situation. Far from being disheartened, however, he
was seen, armed cap-a-pie, on horseback from dawn till evening, rallying
the spirits of his troops, and always present at the point of danger. He
succeeded perfectly in communicating his own enthusiasm to the soldiers.
The French garrison were defeated in several sorties, and their governor
taken prisoner; while supplies were introduced into the city in the very
face of the blockading army. [15]

Ferdinand, on receiving intelligence of his father's perilous situation,
instantly resolved, by Isabella's advice, to march to his relief. Putting
himself at the head of a body of Castilian horse, generously furnished him
by the archbishop of Toledo and his friends, he passed into Aragon, where
he was speedily joined by the principal nobility of the kingdom, and an
army amounting in all to thirteen hundred lances and seven thousand
infantry. With this corps he rapidly descended the Pyrenees, by the way of
time from the view of the enemy. The latter, during their protracted
operations, for nearly three months, had sustained a serious diminution of
numbers in their repeated skirmishes with the besieged, and still more from an epidemic which broke out in their camp. They also began to suffer not a little from want of provisions. At this crisis, the apparition of this new army, thus unexpectedly descending on their rear, filled them with such consternation, that they raised the siege at once, setting fire to their tents, and retreating with such precipitation as to leave most of the sick and wounded a prey to the devouring element. John marched out, with colors flying and music playing, at the head of his little band, to greet his deliverers; and, after an affecting interview in the presence of the two armies, the father and son returned in triumph into Perpignan. [16]

The French army, reinforced by command of Louis, made a second ineffectual attempt (their own writers call it only a feint) upon the city; and the campaign was finally concluded by a treaty between the two monarchs, in which it was arranged, that the king of Aragon should disburse within the year the sum originally stipulated for the services rendered him by Louis in his late war with his Catalan subjects; and that, in case of failure, the provinces of Roussillon and Cerdagne should be permanently ceded to the French crown. The commanders of the fortified places in the contested territory, selected by one monarch from the nominations of the other, were excused during the interim from obedience to the mandates of either; at least so far as they might contravene their reciprocal engagements. [17]

There is little reason to believe that this singular compact was subscribed in good faith by either party. John, notwithstanding the temporary succor which he had received from Louis at the commencement of
his difficulties with the Catalans, might justly complain of the infraction of his engagements, at a subsequent period of the war; when he not only withheld the stipulated aid, but indirectly gave every facility in his power to the invasion of the duke of Lorraine. Neither was the king of Aragon in a situation, had he been disposed, to make the requisite disbursements. Louis, on the other hand, as the event soon proved, had no other object in view but to gain time to reorganize his army, and to lull his adversary into security, while he took effectual measures for recovering the prize which had so unexpectedly eluded him.

During these occurrences Isabella's prospects were daily brightening in Castile. The duke of Guienne, the destined spouse of her rival Joanna, had died in France; but not until he had testified his contempt of his engagements with the Castilian princess by openly soliciting the hand of the heiress of Burgundy. [18] Subsequent negotiations for her marriage with two other princes had entirely failed. The doubts which hung over her birth, and which the public protestations of Henry and his queen, far from dispelling, served only to augment, by the necessity which they implied for such an extraordinary proceeding, were sufficient to deter any one from a connection which must involve the party in all the disasters of a civil war. [19]

Isabella's own character, moreover, contributed essentially to strengthen her cause. Her sedate conduct, and the decorum maintained in her court, formed a strong contrast with the frivolity and license which disgraced that of Henry and his consort. Thinking men were led to conclude that the sagacious administration of Isabella must eventually secure to her the
ascendancy over her rival; while all, who sincerely loved their country, could not but prognosticate for it, under her beneficent sway, a degree of prosperity, which it could never reach under the rapacious and profligate ministers who directed the councils of Henry, and most probably would continue to direct those of his daughter.

Among the persons whose opinions experienced a decided revolution from these considerations was Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, archbishop of Seville and cardinal of Spain; a prelate, whose lofty station in the church was supported by talents of the highest order; and whose restless ambition led him, like many of the churchmen of the time, to take an active interest in politics, for which he was admirably adapted by his knowledge of affairs and discernment of character. Without deserting his former master, he privately entered into a correspondence with Isabella; and a service, which Ferdinand, on his return from Aragon, had an opportunity of rendering the duke of Infantado, the head of the Mendozas, [20] secured the attachment of the other members of this powerful family. [21]

A circumstance occurred at this time, which seemed to promise an accommodation between the adverse factions, or at least between Henry and his sister. The government of Segovia, whose impregnable citadel had been made the depository of the royal treasure, was intrusted to Andres de Cabrera, an officer of the king's household. This cavalier, influenced in part by personal pique to the grand master of St. James, and still more perhaps by the importunities of his wife, Beatriz de Bobadilla, the early friend and companion of Isabella, entered into a correspondence with the princess, and sought to open the way for her permanent reconciliation with
her brother. He accordingly invited her to Segovia, where Henry occasionally resided, and, to dispel any suspicions which she might entertain of his sincerity, despatched his wife secretly by night, disguised in the garb of a peasant, to Aranda, where Isabella then held her court. The latter, confirmed by the assurances of her friend, did not hesitate to comply with the invitation, and, accompanied by the archbishop of Toledo, proceeded to Segovia, where an interview took place between her and Henry the Fourth, in which she vindicated her past conduct, and endeavored to obtain her brother's sanction to her union with Ferdinand. Henry, who was naturally of a placable temper, received her communication with complacency, and, in order to give public demonstration of the good understanding now subsisting between him and his sister, condescended to walk by her side, holding the bridle of her palfrey, as she rode along the streets of the city. Ferdinand, on his return into Castile, hastened to Segovia, where he was welcomed by the monarch with every appearance of satisfaction. A succession of and splendid entertainments, at which both parties assisted, seemed to announce an entire oblivion of all past animosities, and the nation welcomed with satisfaction these symptoms of repose after the vexatious struggle by which it had been so long agitated.

[22]

The repose, however, was of no great duration. The slavish mind of Henry gradually relapsed under its ancient bondage; and the grand master of St. James succeeded, in consequence of an illness with which the monarch was suddenly seized after an entertainment given by Cabrera, in infusing into his mind suspicions of an attempt at assassination. Henry was so far incensed or alarmed by the suggestion, that he concerted a scheme for
privately seizing the person of his sister, which was defeated by her own prudence and the vigilance of her friends. [23]--But, if the visit to Segovia failed in its destined purpose of a reconciliation with Henry, it was attended with the important consequence of securing to Isabella a faithful partisan in Cabrera, who, from the control which his situation gave him over the royal coffers, proved a most seasonable ally in her subsequent struggle with Joanna.

Not long after this event, Ferdinand received another summons from his father to attend him in Aragon, where the storm of war, which had been for some time gathering in the distance, now burst with pitiless fury. In the beginning of February, 1474, an embassy consisting of two of his principal nobles, accompanied by a brilliant train of cavaliers and attendants, had been deputed by John to the court of Louis XI., for the ostensible purpose of settling the preliminaries of the marriage, previously agreed on, between the dauphin and the infanta Isabella, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, then little more than three years of age. [24] The real object of the mission was to effect some definitive adjustment or compromise of the differences relating to the contested territories of Roussillon and Cerdagne. The king of France, who, notwithstanding his late convention with John, was making active preparations for the forcible occupation of these provinces, determined to gain time by amusing the ambassadors with a show of negotiation, and interposing every obstacle which his ingenuity could devise to their progress through his dominions. He succeeded so well in this latter part of his scheme, that the embassy did not reach Paris until the close of Lent. Louis, who seldom resided in his capital, took good care to be absent at this season. The ambassadors in the interim were
entertained with balls, military reviews, and whatever else might divert
them from the real objects of their mission. All communication was cut off
with their own government, as their couriers were stopped and their
despatches intercepted, so that John knew as little of his envoys or their
proceedings, as if they had been in Siberia or Japan. In the mean time,
formidable preparations were making in the south of France for a descent
on Roussillon; and when the ambassadors, after a fruitless attempt at
negotiation, which evaporated in mutual crimination and recrimination, set
out on their return to Aragon, they were twice detained, at Lyons and
Montpelier, from an extreme solicitude, as the French government expressed
it, to ascertain the safest route through a country intersected by hostile
armies; and all this, notwithstanding their repeated protestations against
this obliging disposition, which held them prisoners, in opposition to
their own will and the law of nations. The prince who descended to such
petty trickery passed for the wisest of his time. [25]

In the mean while, the Seigneur du Lude had invaded Roussillon at the head
of nine hundred French lances and ten thousand infantry, supported by a
powerful train of artillery, while a fleet of Genoese transports, laden
with supplies, accompanied the army along the coast. Elna surrendered
after a sturdy resistance; the governor and some of the principal
prisoners were shamefully beheaded as traitors; and the French then
proceeded to invest Perpignan. The king of Aragon was so much impoverished
by the incessant wars in which he had been engaged, that he was not only
unable to recruit his army, but was even obliged to pawn the robe of
costly fur, which he wore to defend his person against the inclemencies of
the season, in order to defray the expense of transporting his baggage. In
this extremity, finding himself disappointed in the cooperation, on which
he had reckoned, of his ancient allies the dukes of Burgundy and Brittany,
he again summoned Ferdinand to his assistance, who, after a brief
interview with his father in Barcelona, proceeded to Saragossa, to solicit
aid from the estates of Aragon.

An incident occurred on this visit of the prince worth noticing, as
strongly characteristic of the lawless habits of the age. A citizen of
Saragossa, named Ximenes Gordo, of noble family, but who had relinquished
the privileges of his rank in order to qualify himself for municipal
office, had acquired such ascendancy over his townsmen, as to engross the
most considerable posts in the city for himself and his creatures. This
authority he abused in a shameless manner, making use of it not only for
the perversion of justice, but for the perpetration of the most flagrant
crimes. Although these facts were notorious, yet such were his power and
popularity with the lower classes, that Ferdinand, despairing of bringing
him to justice in the ordinary way, determined on a more summary process.
As Gordo occasionally visited the palace to pay his respects to the
prince, the latter affected to regard him with more than usual favor,
showing him such courtesy as might dissipate any distrust he had conceived
of him. Gordo, thus assured, was invited at one of those interviews to
withdraw into a retired apartment, where the prince wished to confer with
him on business of moment. On entering the chamber he was surprised by the
sight of the public executioner, the hangman of the city, whose presence,
together with that of a priest, and the apparatus of death with which the
apartment was garnished, revealed at once the dreadful nature of his
destiny.
He was then charged with the manifold crimes of which he had been guilty, and sentence of death was pronounced on him. In vain did he appeal to Ferdinand, pleading the services which he had rendered on more than one occasion to his father. Ferdinand assured him that these should be gratefully remembered in the protection of his children, and then, bidding him unburden his conscience to his confessor, consigned him to the hand of the executioner. His body was exposed that very day in the market-place of the city, to the dismay of his friends and adherents, most of whom paid the penalty of their crimes in the ordinary course of justice. This extraordinary proceeding is highly characteristic of the unsettled times in which it occurred; when acts of violence often superseded the regular operation of the law, even in those countries, whose forms of government approached the nearest to a determinate constitution. It will doubtless remind the reader of the similar proceeding imputed to Louis the Eleventh, in the admirable sketch given us of that monarch in "Quentin Durward."

The supplies furnished by the Aragonese cortes were inadequate to King John's necessities, and he was compelled, while hovering with his little force on the confines of Roussillon, to witness the gradual reduction of its capital, without being able to strike a blow in its defence. The inhabitants, indeed, who fought with a resolution worthy of ancient Numantia or Saguntum, were reduced to the last extremity of famine, supporting life by feeding on the most loathsome offal, on cats, dogs, the corpses of their enemies, and even on such of their own dead as had fallen in battle! And when at length an honorable capitulation was granted them
on the 14th of March, 1475, the garrison who evacuated the city, reduced
to the number of four hundred, were obliged to march on foot to Barcelona,
as they had consumed their horses during the siege. [27]

The terms of capitulation, which permitted every inhabitant to evacuate,
or reside unmolested in the city, at his option, were too liberal to
satisfy the vindictive temper of the king of France. He instantly wrote to
his generals, instructing them to depart from their engagements, to keep
the city so short of supplies as to compel an emigration of its original
inhabitants, and to confiscate for their own use the estates of the
principal nobility; and after delineating in detail the pernicious policy
which they were to pursue, he concluded with the assurance, "that, by the
blessing of God and our Lady, and Monsieur St. Martin, he would be with
them before the winter, in order to aid them in its execution." [28] Such
was the miserable medley of hypocrisy and superstition, which
characterized the politics of the European courts in this corrupt age, and
which dimmed the lustre of names, most conspicuous on the page of history.

The occupation of Roussillon was followed by a truce of six months between
the belligerent parties. The regular course of the narrative has been
somewhat anticipated, in order to conclude that portion of it relating to
the war with Prance, before again reverting to the affairs of Castile,
where Henry the Fourth, pining under an incurable malady, was gradually
approaching the termination of his disastrous reign.

This event, which, from the momentous consequences it involved, was
contemplated with the deepest solicitude, not only by those who had an immediate and personal interest at stake, but by the whole nation, took place on the night of the 11th of December, 1474. [29] It was precipitated by the death of the grand master of St. James, on whom the feeble mind of Henry had been long accustomed to rest for its support, and who was cut off by an acute disorder but a few months previous, in the full prime of his ambitious schemes. The king, notwithstanding the lingering nature of his disease gave him ample time for preparation, expired without a will, or even, as generally asserted, the designation of a successor. This was the more remarkable, not only as being contrary to established usage, but as occurring at a period when the succession had been so long and hotly debated. [30] The testaments of the Castilian sovereigns, though never esteemed positively binding, and occasionally, indeed, set aside, when deemed unconstitutional or even inexpedient by the legislature, [31] were always allowed to have great weight with the nation.

With Henry the Fourth terminated the male line of the house of Trastamara, who had kept possession of the throne for more than a century, and in the course of only four generations had exhibited every gradation of character from the bold and chivalrous enterprise of the first Henry of that name, down to the drivelling imbecility of the last.

The character of Henry the Fourth has been sufficiently delineated in that of his reign. He was not without certain amiable qualities, and may be considered as a weak, rather than a wicked prince. In persons, however, intrusted with the degree of power exercised by sovereigns of even the most limited monarchies of this period, a weak man may be deemed more
mischievous to the state over which he presides than a wicked one. The latter, feeling himself responsible in the eyes of the nation for his actions, is more likely to consult appearances, and, where his own passions or interests are not immediately involved, to legislate with reference to the general interests of his subjects. The former, on the contrary, is too often a mere tool in the hands of favorites, who, finding themselves screened by the interposition of royal authority from the consequences of measures for which they should be justly responsible, sacrifice without remorse the public weal to the advancement of their private fortunes. Thus the state, made to minister to the voracious appetites of many tyrants, suffers incalculably more than it would from one. So fared it with Castile under Henry the Fourth; dismembered by faction, her revenues squandered on worthless parasites, the grossest violations of justice unredressed, public faith become a jest, the treasury bankrupt, the court a brothel, and private morals too loose and audacious to seek even the veil of hypocrisy! Never had the fortunes of the kingdom reached so low an ebb since the great Saracen invasion.

* * * * *

The historian cannot complain of a want of authentic materials for the reign of Henry IV. Two of the chroniclers of that period, Alonso de Palencia and Enriquez del Castillo, were eye-witnesses and conspicuous actors in the scenes which they recorded, and connected with opposite factions. The former of these writers, Alonso de Palencia, was born, as appears from his work, "De Synonymis," cited by Pellicer, (Bibliotheca de Traductores, p. 7,) in 1423. Nic. Antonio has fallen into the error of
dating his birth nine years later. (Bibliotheca Vetus, tom. ii. p. 331.)

At the age of seventeen, he became page to Alfonso of Carthagena, bishop of Burgos, and, in the family of that estimable prelate, acquired a taste for letters, which never deserted him during a busy political career. He afterwards visited Italy, where he became acquainted with Cardinal Bessarion, and through him with the learned George of Trebizond, whose lectures on philosophy and rhetoric he attended. On his return to his native country, he was raised to the dignity of royal historiographer by Alfonso, younger brother of Henry IV., and competitor with him for the crown. He attached himself to the fortunes of Isabella after Alfonso's death, and was employed by the archbishop of Toledo in many delicate negotiations, particularly in arranging the marriage of the princess with Ferdinand, for which purpose he made a secret journey into Aragon. On the accession of Isabella, he was confirmed in the office of national chronicler, and passed the remainder of his life in the composition of philological and historical works and translations from the ancient classics. The time of his death is uncertain. He lived to a good old age, however, since it appears from his own statement, (see Mendez, Typographia completed till the year 1492.

The most popular of Palencia's writings are his "Chronicle of Henry IV.," and his Latin "Decades," continuing the reign of Isabella down to the capture of Baza, in 1489. His historical style, far from scholastic pedantry, exhibits the business-like manner of a man of the world. His Chronicle, which, being composed in the Castilian, was probably intended for popular use, is conducted with little artifice, and indeed with a proximity and minuteness of detail, arising no doubt from the deep
interest which as an actor he took in the scenes he describes. His sentiments are expressed with boldness, and sometimes with the acerbity of party feeling. He has been much commended by the best Spanish writers, evidence of this is sufficiently strong in his delineation of those scenes in which he was personally engaged; in his account of others, it will not be difficult to find examples of negligence and inaccuracy. His Latin "Decades" were probably composed with more care, as addressed to a learned class of readers; and they are lauded by Nic. Antonio as an elegant commentary, worthy to be assiduously studied by all who would acquaint themselves with the history of their country. The art of printing has done less perhaps for Spain than for any other country in Europe; and these two valuable histories are still permitted to swell the rich treasure of manuscripts with which her libraries are overloaded.

Enriquez del Castillo, a native of Segovia, was the chaplain and historiographer of King Henry IV., and a member of his privy council. His situation not only made him acquainted with the policy and intrigues of the court, but with the personal feelings of the monarch, who reposed entire confidence in him, which Castillo repaid with uniform loyalty. He appears very early to have commenced his Chronicle of Henry's reign. On the occupation of Segovia by the young Alfonso, after the battle of Olmedo, in 1467, the chronicler, together with the portion of his history then complied, was unfortunate enough to fall into the enemy's hands. The author was soon summoned to the presence of Alfonso and his counsellors, to hear and justify, as he could, certain passages of what they termed his "false and frivolous narrative." Castillo, hoping little from a defence before such a prejudiced tribunal, resolutely kept his peace; and it might
have gone hard with him, had it not been for his ecclesiastical
profession. He subsequently escaped, but never recovered his manuscripts,
which were probably destroyed; and, in the introduction to his Chronicle,
he laments, that he has been obliged to rewrite the first half of his
master's reign.

Notwithstanding Castillo's familiarity with public affairs, his work is
not written in the business-like style of Palencia's. The sentiments
exhibit a moral sensibility scarcely to have been expected, even from a
minister of religion, in the corrupt court of Henry IV.; and the honest
indignation of the writer, at the abuses which he witnessed, sometimes
breaks forth in a strain of considerable eloquence. The spirit of his
work, notwithstanding its abundant loyalty, may be also commended for its
candor in relation to the partisans of Isabella; which has led some
critics to suppose that it underwent a _rifacimento_ after the accession
of that princess to the throne.

Castillo's Chronicle, more fortunate than that of his rival, has been
published in a handsome form under the care of Don Jose Miguel de Flores,
Secretary of the Spanish Academy of History, to whose learned labors in
this way Castilian literature is so much indebted.

FOOTNOTES

Caro de Torres, Ordenes Militares, fol. 43.
Henry, well knowing how little all this would avail without the constitutional sanction of the cortes, twice issued his summons in 1470 for the convocation of the deputies, to obtain a recognition of the title of Joanna. But without effect. In the letters of convocation issued for a third assembly of the states, in 1471, this purpose was prudently omitted, and thus the claims of Joanna failed to receive the countenance of the only body which could give them validity. See the copies of the original writs, addressed to the cities of Toledo and Segovia, cited by Marina,

[3] The grand master of St. James, and his son, the marquis of Villena, afterwards duke of Escalona. The rents of the former nobleman, whose avarice was as insatiable as his influence over the feeble mind of Henry IV. was unlimited, exceeded those of any other grandee in the kingdom. See Pulgar, Claros Varones, tit. 6.

[4] The marquis of Santillana, first duke of Infantado, and his brothers, Mendoza, afterwards cardinal of Spain, and archbishop of Toledo, who was indebted for the highest dignities in the church less to his birth than his abilities. See Claros Varones, tit. 4, 9.—Salazar de Mendoza, Dignidades, lib. 3, cap. 17.

Arevalo.—Pedro Fernandez de Velasco, count of Haro, was raised to the
post of constable of Castile in 1473, and the office continued to be hereditary in the family from that period. Pulgar, Claros Varones, tit.

3.--Salazar de Mendoza, Dignidades, lib. 3, cap. 21.

[6] The Pimentels, counts of Benavente, had estates which gave them 60,000 ducats a year; a very large income for that period, and far exceeding that of any other grandee of similar rank in the kingdom. L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 25.

cap. 45.

Oviedo calls him, was at this time only marquis of Santillana, and was not raised to the title of duke of Infantado till the reign of Isabella, (Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 8.) To avoid confusion, however, I have given him the title by which he is usually recognized by Castilian writers.

35, 38, 39, 42.--Saez, Monedas de Enrique IV., pp. 1-5.--Pulgar, in an epistle addressed, in the autumn of 1473, to the bishop of Coria, adverts
to several circumstances which set in a strong light the anarchical state
of the kingdom and the total deficiency of police. The celebrated
satirical eclogue, also, entitled "Mingo Revulgo," exposes, with coarse
but cutting sarcasm, the license of the court, the corruption of the
clergy, and the prevalent depravity of the people. In one of its stanzas
it boldly ventures to promise another and a better sovereign to the
country. This performance, even more interesting to the antiquarian than
to the historian, has been attributed by some to Pulgar, (see Mariana,
Nic. Antonio, Bibliotheca Veins, tom. ii p. 264,) but without satisfactory
evidence in favor of either. Bouterwek is much mistaken in asserting it to
have been aimed at the government of John II. The gloss of Pulgar, whose
authority as a contemporary must be considered decisive, plainly proves it
to have been directed against Henry IV.


Anales, tom. iv. fol. 195.--Anquetil, Histoire de France, (Paris, 1805,)
tom. v. pp. 60, 61.

[16] Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 196.--Barante, Hist. des Ducs de
Bourgogne, tom. x. pp. 105, 106.--L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 149.
266.--See the articles of the treaty cited by Duclos, Hist. de Louis XI.,

[18] Louis XI. is supposed with much probability to have assassinated this brother. M. de Barante sums up his examination of the evidence with this personne ne pensa qu’il en fut incapable." Hist. des Ducs de Bourgogne, tom. ix. p. 433.

[19] The two princes alluded to were the duke of Segorbe, a cousin of Ferdinand, and the king of Portugal. The former, on his entrance into Castile, assumed such sovereign state, (giving his hand, for instance, to the grandees to kiss,) as disgusted these haughty nobles, and was eventually the occasion of breaking off his match. Alonso de Palencia, ii. p. 392.

[20] Oviedo assigns another reason for this change; the disgust occasioned by Henry IV.’s transferring the custody of his daughter from the family of Mendoza to the Pachecos. Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 8.

163.--The influence of these new allies, especially of the cardinal, over Isabella's councils, was an additional ground of umbrage to the archbishop of Toledo, who, in a communication with the king of Aragon, declared
himself, though friendly to their cause, to be released from all further
obligations to serve it. See Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. lib. 46, cap. 19.

2, cap. 75.--Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 23.

cap. 164.--Oviedo has given a full account of this cavalier, who was
allied to an ancient Catalan family, but who raised himself to such pre-
eminence by his own deserts, says that writer, that he may well be
considered the founder of his house. Loc. cit.

Ferdinand and Isabella, born Oct. 1st, 1470; afterwards queen of Portugal.

xiii. pp. 443, 444.


[27] L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 150.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iv.

[28] Of the original letters, as given by M. Barante, in his History of
the Dukes of Burgundy, in which the author has so happily seized the tone
and picturesque coloring of the ancient chronicle; tom. x. pp. 289, 298.

[30] This topic is involved in no little obscurity, and has been reported
with much discrepancy as well as inaccuracy by the modern Spanish
historians. Among the ancient, Castillo, the historiographer of Henry IV.,
mentions certain "testamentary executors," without, however, noticing in
Los Palacios refers to a clause reported, he says, to have existed in the
testament of Henry IV., in which he declares Joanna his daughter and heir;
there was no such instrument, and that Henry, on being asked who was to
succeed him, referred to his secretary Juan Gonzalez for a knowledge of
his usual improvidence," left no will. (Cosas Memorables, fol. 155.)
Pulgar, another contemporary, expressly declares that he executed no will,
and quotes the words dictated by him to his secretary, in which he simply
designates two of the grandees as "executors of his soul," (_albuceas de
su anima_,) and four others in conjunction with them as the guardians
of his daughter Joanna. (Reyes Cat. p. 31.) It seems not improbable that
the existence of this document has been confounded with that of a
testament, and that with reference to it, the phrase above quoted of
Castillo, as well as the passage of Bernaldez, is to be interpreted.
Carbajal's wild story of the existence of a will, of its secretion for
more than thirty years, and its final suppression by Ferdinand, is too
naked of testimony to deserve the least weight with the historian. (See
the above-mentioned writers compiled their works after the accession of
Isabella, and that none, save Castillo, were the partisans of her rival.

It should also be added that in the letters addressed by the princess
Joanna to the different cities of the kingdom, on her assuming the title
of queen of Castile, (bearing date May, 1475,) it is expressly stated that
Henry IV., on his deathbed, solemnly affirmed her to be his only daughter
and lawful heir. These letters were drafted by John de Oviedo, (Juan
Gonzalez,) the confidential secretary of Henry IV. See Zurita, Anales,
tom. iv. fol. 235-239.

[31] As was the case with the testaments of Alfonso of Leon and Alfonso
the Wise, in the thirteenth century, and with that of Peter the Cruel, in
the fourteenth.

CHAPTER V.

ACCESSION OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA.--WAR OF THE SUCCESSION.--BATTLE OF
TORO.

1474-1476.

Isabella proclaimed Queen.--Settlement of the Crown.--Alfonso of Portugal
supports Joanna.--Invades Castile.--Retreat of the Castilians.--
Appropriation of the Church Plate.--Reorganization of the Army.--Battle of
Toro.--Submission of the whole Kingdom.--Peace with France and Portugal.--
Most of the contemporary writers are content to derive Isabella's title to the crown of Castile from the illegitimacy of her rival Joanna. But, as this fact, whatever probability it may receive from the avowed licentiousness of the queen, and some other collateral circumstances, was never established by legal evidence, or even made the subject of legal inquiry, it cannot reasonably be adduced as affording in itself a satisfactory basis for the pretensions of Isabella. [1]

These are to be derived from the will of the nation as expressed by its representatives in cortes. The power of this body to interpret the laws regulating the succession, and to determine the succession itself, in the most absolute manner, is incontrovertible, having been established by repeated precedents from a very ancient period. [2] In the present instance, the legislature, soon after the birth of Joanna, tendered the usual oaths of allegiance to her as heir apparent to the monarchy. On a subsequent occasion, however, the cortes, for reasons deemed sufficient by itself, and under a conviction that its consent to the preceding measure had been obtained through an undue influence on the part of the crown, reversed its former acts, and did homage to Isabella as the only true and lawful successor. [3] In this disposition the legislature continued so resolute, that, notwithstanding Henry twice convoked the states for the express purpose of renewing their allegiance to Joanna, they refused to comply with the summons; [4] and thus Isabella, at the time of her brother's death, possessed a title to the crown unimpaired, and derived from the sole authority which could give it a constitutional validity. It
may be added that the princess was so well aware of the real basis of her pretensions, that in her several manifestoes, although she adverts to the popular notion of her rival's illegitimacy, she rests the strength of her cause on the sanction of the cortes.

On learning Henry's death, Isabella signified to the inhabitants of Segovia, where she then resided, her desire of being proclaimed queen in that city, with the solemnities usual on such occasions. [5] Accordingly, on the following morning, being the 13th of December, 1474, a numerous assembly, consisting of the nobles, clergy, and public magistrates in their robes of office, waited on her at the alcazar or castle, and, receiving her under a canopy of rich brocade, escorted her in solemn procession to the principal square of the city, where a broad platform or scaffold had been erected for the performance of the ceremony. Isabella, royally attired, rode on a Spanish jennet whose bridle was held by two of the civic functionaries, while an officer of her court preceded her on horseback, bearing aloft a naked sword, the symbol of sovereignty. On arriving at the square she alighted from her palfrey, and, ascending the platform, seated herself on a throne which had been prepared for her. A herald with a loud voice proclaimed, "Castile, Castile for the king Don proprietaria_ ) of these kingdoms!" The royal standards were then unfurled, while the peal of bells and the discharge of ordnance from the castle publicly announced the accession of the new sovereign. Isabella, after receiving the homage of her subjects, and swearing to maintain inviolate the liberties of the realm, descended from the platform, and, church; where, after Te Deum had been chanted, she prostrated herself
before the principal altar, and, returning thanks to the Almighty for the protection hitherto vouchsafed her, implored him to enlighten her future counsels, so that she might discharge the high trust reposed in her, with equity and wisdom. Such were the simple forms, that attended the coronation of the monarchs of Castile, previously to the sixteenth century. [6]

The cities favorable to Isabella's cause, comprehending far the most populous and wealthy throughout the kingdom, followed the example of Segovia, and raised the royal standard for their new sovereign. The principal grandees, as well as most of the inferior nobility, soon presented themselves from all quarters, in order to tender the customary oaths of allegiance; and an assembly of the estates, convened for the ensuing month of February at Segovia, imparted, by a similar ceremony, a constitutional sanction to these proceedings. [7]

On Ferdinand's arrival from Aragon, where he was staying at the time of Henry's death, occupied with the war of Roussillon, a disagreeable discussion took place in regard to the respective authority to be enjoyed by the husband and wife in the administration of the government. Ferdinand's relatives, with the admiral Henriquez at their head, contended that the crown of Castile, and of course the exclusive sovereignty, was limited to him as the nearest male representative of the house of Trastamara. Isabella's friends, on the other hand, insisted that these rights devolved solely on her, as the lawful heir and proprietor of the kingdom. The affair was finally referred to the arbitration of the cardinal of Spain and the archbishop of Toledo, who, after careful
examination, established by undoubted precedent, that the exclusion of females from the succession did not obtain in Castile and Leon, as was the case in Aragon; [8] that Isabella was consequently sole heir of these dominions; and that whatever authority Ferdinand might possess, could only be derived through her. A settlement was then made on the basis of the original marriage contract. [9] All municipal appointments, and collation to ecclesiastical benefices, were to be made in the name of both with the advice and consent of the queen. All fiscal nominations, and issues from the treasury, were to be subject to her order. The commanders of the fortified places were to render homage to her alone. Justice was to be administered by both conjointly, when residing in the same place, and by each independently, when separate. Proclamations and letters patent were to be subscribed with the signatures of both; their images were to be stamped on the public coin, and the united arms of Castile and Aragon emblazoned on a common seal. [10]

Ferdinand, it is said, was so much dissatisfied with an arrangement which vested the essential rights of sovereignty in his consort, that he threatened to return to Aragon; but Isabella reminded him, that this distribution of power was rather nominal than real; that their interests were indivisible; that his will would be hers; and that the principle of the exclusion of females from the succession, if now established, would operate to the disqualification of their only child, who was a daughter. By these and similar arguments the queen succeeded in soothing her offended husband, without compromising the prerogatives of her crown.

Although the principal body of the nobility, as has been stated, supported
Isabella's cause, there were a few families, and some of them the most potent in Castile, who seemed determined to abide the fortunes of her rival. Among these was the marquis of Villena, who, inferior to his father in talent for intrigue, was of an intrepid spirit, and is commended by one of the Spanish historians as "the best lance in the kingdom." His immense estates, stretching from Toledo to Murcia, gave him an extensive influence over the southern regions of New Castile. The duke of Arevalo possessed a similar interest in the frontier province of Estremadura. With these were combined the grand master of Calatrava and his brother, together with the young marquis of Cadiz, and, as it soon appeared, the archbishop of Toledo. This latter dignitary, whose heart had long swelled with secret jealousy at the rising fortunes of the cardinal Mendoza, could no longer brook the ascendency which that prelate's consummate sagacity and insinuating address had given him over the counsels of his young sovereigns. After some awkward excuses, he abruptly withdrew to his own estates; nor could the most conciliatory advances on the part of the queen, nor the deprecatory letters of the old king of Aragon, soften his inflexible temper, or induce him to resume his station at the court; until it soon became apparent from his correspondence with Isabella's enemies, that he was busy in undermining the fortunes of the very individual, whom he had so zealously labored to elevate. [11]

Under the auspices of this coalition, propositions were made to Alfonso the Fifth, king of Portugal, to vindicate the title of his niece Joanna to the throne of Castile, and, by espousing her, to secure to himself the same rich inheritance. An exaggerated estimate was, at the same time, exhibited of the resources of the confederates, which, when combined with
those of Portugal, would readily enable them to crush the usurpers, unsupported, as the latter must be, by the co-operation of Aragon, whose arms already found sufficient occupation with the French.

Alfonso, whose victories over the Barbary Moors had given him the cognomen of "the African," was precisely of a character to be dazzled by the nature of this enterprise. The protection of an injured princess, his near relative, was congenial with the spirit of chivalry; while the conquest of an opulent territory, adjacent to his own, would not only satisfy his dreams of glory, but the more solid cravings of avarice. In this disposition he was confirmed by his son, Prince John, whose hot and enterprising temper found a nobler scope for ambition in such a war, than in the conquest of a horde of African savages. [12]

Still, there were a few among Alfonso's counsellors possessed of sufficient coolness to discern the difficulties of the undertaking. They reminded him that the Castilian nobles on whom he principally relied were the very persons who had formerly been most instrumental in defeating the claims of Joanna, and securing the succession to her rival; that Ferdinand was connected by blood with the most powerful families of Castile; that the great body of the people, the middle as well as the lower classes, were fully penetrated not only with a conviction of the legality of Isabella's title, but with a deep attachment to her person; while, on the other hand, their proverbial hatred of Portugal would make them too impatient of interference from that quarter, to admit the prospect of permanent success. [13]
These objections, sound as they were, were overruled by John's impetuosity, and the ambition or avarice of his father. War was accordingly resolved on; and Alfonso, after a vaunting, and, as may be supposed, ineffectual summons to the Castilian sovereigns to resign their crown in favor of Joanna, prepared for the immediate invasion of the kingdom at the head of an army amounting, according to the Portuguese historians, to five thousand six hundred horse and fourteen thousand foot. This force, though numerically not so formidable as might have been expected, comprised the flower of the Portuguese chivalry, burning with the hope of reaping similar laurels to those won of old by their fathers on the plains of Aljubarrotta; while its deficiency in numbers was to be amply compensated by recruits from the disaffected party in Castile, who would eagerly flock to its banners, on its advance across the borders. At the same time negotiations were entered into with the king of France, who was invited to make a descent upon Biscay, by a promise, somewhat premature, of a cession of the conquered territory.

Early in May, the king of Portugal put his army in motion, and, entering Castile by the way of Estremadura, held a northerly course towards Placencia, where he was met by the duke of Arevalo and the marquis of Villena, and by the latter nobleman presented to the princess Joanna, his destined bride. On the 12th of the month he was affianced with all becoming pomp to this lady, then scarcely thirteen years of age; and a messenger was despatched to the court of Rome, to solicit a dispensation for their marriage, rendered necessary by the consanguinity of the parties. The royal pair were then proclaimed, with the usual solemnities,
sovereigns of Castile; and circulars were transmitted to the different cities, setting forth Joanna's title and requiring their allegiance. [14]

After some days given to festivity, the army resumed its march, still in a northerly direction, upon Arevalo, where Alfonso determined to await the arrival of the reinforcements which he expected from his Castilian allies. Had he struck at once into the southern districts of Castile, where most of those friendly to his cause were to be found, and immediately commenced active operations with the aid of the marquis of Cadiz, who it was understood was prepared to support him in that quarter, it is difficult to say what might have been the result. Ferdinand and Isabella were so wholly unprepared at the time of Alfonso's invasion, that it is said they could scarcely bring five hundred horse to oppose it. By this opportune delay at Arevalo, they obtained space for preparation. Both of them were indefatigable in their efforts. Isabella, we are told, was frequently engaged through the whole night in dictating despatches to her secretaries. She visited in person such of the garrisoned towns as required to be confirmed in their allegiance, performing long and painful journeys on horseback with surprising celerity, and enduring fatigues, which, as she was at that time in delicate health, wellnigh proved fatal to her constitution. [15] On an excursion to Toledo, she determined to make one effort more to regain the confidence of her ancient minister the archbishop. She accordingly sent an envoy to inform him of her intention surly prelate, far from being moved by this condescension, returned for answer, that, "if the queen entered by one door, he would go out at the other," she did not choose to compromise her dignity by any further advances.
By Isabella's extraordinary exertions, as well as those of her husband, the latter found himself, in the beginning of July, at the head of a force amounting in all to four thousand men-at-arms, eight thousand light horse, and thirty thousand foot, an ill-disciplined militia, chiefly drawn from the mountainous districts of the north, which manifested peculiar devotion to his cause; his partisans in the south being preoccupied with suppressing domestic revolt, and with incursions on the frontiers of Portugal. [16]

Meanwhile Alfonso, after an unprofitable detention of nearly two months at Arevalo, marched on Toro, which, by a preconcerted agreement, was delivered into his hands by the governor of the city, although the fortress, under the conduct of a woman, continued to maintain a gallant defence. While occupied with its reduction, Alfonso was invited to receive the submission of the adjacent city and castle of Zamora. The defection of these places, two of the most considerable in the province of Leon, and peculiarly important to the king of Portugal from their vicinity to his dominions, was severely felt by Ferdinand, who determined to advance at once against his rival, and bring their quarrel to the issue of a battle; in this, acting in opposition to the more cautious counsel of his father, who recommended the policy, usually judged most prudent for an invaded country, of acting on the defensive, instead of risking all on the chances of a single action.

Ferdinand arrived before Toro on the 19th of July, and immediately drew up
his army, before its walls, in order of battle. As the king of Portugal, however, still kept within his defences, Ferdinand sent a herald into his camp, to defy him to a fair field of fight with his whole army, or, if he declined this, to invite him to decide their differences by personal combat. Alfonso accepted the latter alternative; but, a dispute arising respecting the guaranty for the performance of the engagements on either side, the whole affair evaporated, as usual, in an empty vaunt of chivalry.

The Castilian army, from the haste with which it had been mustered, was wholly deficient in battering artillery, and in other means for annoying a fortified city; and, as its communications were cut off, in consequence of the neighboring fortresses being in possession of the enemy, it soon became straitened for provisions. It was accordingly decided in a council of war to retreat without further delay. No sooner was this determination known, than it excited general dissatisfaction throughout the camp. The soldiers loudly complained that the king was betrayed by his nobles; and a party of over-loyal Biscayans, inflamed by the suspicions of a conspiracy against his person, actually broke into the church where Ferdinand was conferring with his officers, and bore him off in their arms from the midst of them to his own tent, notwithstanding his reiterated explanations and remonstrances. The ensuing retreat was conducted in so disorderly a manner by the mutinous soldiery, that Alfonso, says a contemporary, had he but sallied with two thousand horse, might have routed and perhaps annihilated the whole army. Some of the troops were detached to reinforce the garrisons of the loyal cities, but most of them dispersed again among their native mountains. The citadel of Toro soon afterwards capitulated.
The archbishop of Toledo, considering these events as decisive of the fortunes of the war, now openly joined the king of Portugal at the head of five hundred lances, boasting at the same time, that "he had raised Isabella from the distaff, and would soon send her back to it again." [17]

So disastrous an introduction to the campaign might indeed well fill Isabella's bosom with anxiety. The revolutionary movements, which had so long agitated Castile, had so far unsettled every man's political principles, and the allegiance of even the most loyal hung so loosely about them, that it was difficult to estimate how far it might be shaken by such a blow occurring at this crisis. [18] Fortunately, Alfonso was in no condition to profit by his success. His Castilian allies had experienced the greatest difficulty in enlisting their vassals in the Portuguese cause; and, far from furnishing him with the contingents which he had expected, found sufficient occupation in the defence of their own territories against the loyal partisans of Isabella. At the same time, numerous squadrons of light cavalry from Estremadura and Andalusia, penetrating into Portugal, carried the most terrible desolation over the whole extent of its unprotected borders. The Portuguese knights loudly murmured at being cooped up in Toro, while their own country was made the theatre of war; and Alfonso saw himself under the necessity of detaching so considerable a portion of his army for the defence of his frontier, as entirely to cripple his future operations. So deeply, indeed, was he impressed, by these circumstances, with the difficulty of his enterprise, that, in a negotiation with the Castilian sovereigns at this time, he expressed a willingness to resign his claims to their crown in consideration of the cession of Galicia, together with the cities of Toro
and Zamora, and a considerable sum of money. Ferdinand and his ministers, it is reported, would have accepted the proposal; but Isabella, although acquiescing in the stipulated money payment, would not consent to the dismemberment of a single inch of the Castilian territory.

In the mean time both the queen and her husband, undismayed by past reverses, were making every exertion for the reorganization of an army on a more efficient footing. To accomplish this object, an additional supply of funds became necessary, since the treasure of King Henry, delivered into their hands by Andres de Cabrera, at Segovia, had been exhausted by the preceding operations. [19] The old king of Aragon advised them to imitate their ancestor Henry the Second, of glorious memory, by making liberal grants and alienations in favor of their subjects, which they might, when more firmly seated on the throne, resume at pleasure. Isabella, however, chose rather to trust to the patriotism of her people, than have recourse to so unworthy a stratagem. She accordingly convened an assembly of the states, in the month of August, at Medina del Campo. As the nation had been too far impoverished under the late reign to admit of fresh exactions, a most extraordinary expedient was devised for meeting the stipulated requisitions. It was proposed to deliver into the royal treasury half the amount of plate belonging to the churches throughout the kingdom, to be redeemed in the term of three years, for the sum of thirty _cuentos_, or millions, of maravedies. The clergy, who were very generally attached to Isabella's interests, far from discouraging this startling proposal, endeavored to vanquish the queen's repugnance to it by arguments and pertinent illustrations drawn from Scripture. This transaction certainly exhibits a degree of disinterestedness, on the part
of this body, most unusual in that age and country, as well as a generous
confidence in the good faith of Isabella, of which she proved herself
worthy by the punctuality with which she redeemed it. [20]

Thus provided with the necessary funds, the sovereigns set about enforcing
new levies and bringing them under better discipline, as well as providing
for their equipment in a manner more suitable to the exigencies of the
service, than was done for the preceding army. The remainder of the summer
and the ensuing autumn were consumed in these preparations, as well as in
placing their fortified towns in a proper posture of defence, and in the
reduction of such places as held out against them. The king of Portugal,
all this while, lay with his diminished forces in Toro, making a sally on
one occasion only, for the relief of his friends, which was frustrated by
the sleepless vigilance of Isabella.

Early in December, Ferdinand passed from the siege of Burgos, in Old
Castile, to Zamora, whose inhabitants expressed a desire to return to
their ancient allegiance; and, with the co-operation of the citizens,
supported by a large detachment from his main army, he prepared to invest
its citadel. As the possession of this post would effectually intercept
Alfonso’s communications with his own country, he determined to relieve it
at every hazard, and for this purpose despatched a messenger into Portugal
requiring his son, Prince John, to reinforce him with such levies as he
could speedily raise. All parties now looked forward with eagerness to a
general battle, as to a termination of the evils of this long-protracted
war.
The Portuguese prince, having with difficulty assembled a corps amounting to two thousand lances and eight thousand infantry, took a northerly circuit round Galicia, and effected a junction with his father in Toro, on the 14th of February, 1476. Alfonso, thus reinforced, transmitted a pompous circular to the pope, the king of France, his own dominions, and those well affected to him in Castile, proclaiming his immediate intention of taking the usurper, or of driving him from the kingdom. On the night of the 17th, having first provided for the security of the city by leaving in it a powerful reserve, Alfonso drew off the residue of his army, probably not much exceeding three thousand five hundred horse and five thousand foot, well provided with artillery and with arquebuses, which latter engine was still of so clumsy and unwieldy construction, as not to have entirely superseded the ancient weapons of European warfare. The Portuguese army, traversing the bridge of Toro, pursued their march along the southern side of the Douro, and reached Zamora, distant only a few leagues, before the dawn. [21]

At break of day, the Castilians were surprised by the array of floating banners, and martial panoply glittering in the sun, from the opposite side of the river, while the discharges of artillery still more unequivocally announced the presence of the enemy. Ferdinand could scarcely believe that the Portuguese monarch, whose avowed object had been the relief of the castle of Zamora, should have selected a position so obviously unsuitable for this purpose. The intervention of the river, between him and the fortress situated at the northern extremity of the town, prevented him from relieving it, either by throwing succors into it, or by annoying the
Castilian troops, who, intrenched in comparative security within the walls and houses of the city, were enabled by means of certain elevated positions, well garnished with artillery, to inflict much heavier injury on their opponents, than they could possibly receive from them. Still, Ferdinand's men, exposed to the double fire of the fortress and the besiegers, would willingly have come to an engagement with the latter; but the river, swollen by winter torrents, was not fordable, and the bridge, the only direct avenue to the city, was enfiladed by the enemy's cannon, so as to render a sally in that direction altogether impracticable. During this time, Isabella's squadrons of light cavalry, hovering on the skirts of the Portuguese camp, effectually cut off its supplies, and soon reduced it to great straits for subsistence. This circumstance, together with the tidings of the rapid advance of additional forces to the support of Ferdinand, determined Alfonso, contrary to all expectation, on an immediate retreat; and accordingly on the morning of the 1st of March, being little less than a fortnight from the time in which he commenced this empty gasconade, the Portuguese army quitted its position before Zamora, with the same silence and celerity with which it had occupied it.

Ferdinand's troops would instantly have pushed after the fugitives, but the latter had demolished the southern extremity of the bridge before their departure; so that, although some few effected an immediate passage in boats, the great body of the army was necessarily detained until the repairs were completed, which occupied more than three hours. With all the expedition they could use, therefore, and leaving their artillery behind them, they did not succeed in coming up with the enemy until nearly four o'clock in the afternoon, as the latter was defiling through a narrow pass
formed by a crest of precipitous hills on the one side, and the Douro on the other, at the distance of about five miles from the city of Toro. [22]

A council of war was then called, to decide on the expediency of an immediate assault. It was objected, that the strong position of Toro would effectually cover the retreat of the Portuguese in case of their discomfiture; that they would speedily be reinforced by fresh recruits from that city, which would make them more than a match for Ferdinand's army, exhausted by a toilsome march, as well as by its long fast, which it had not broken since the morning; and that the celerity, with which it had moved, had compelled it, not only to abandon its artillery, but to leave a considerable portion of the heavy-armed infantry in the rear.

Notwithstanding the weight of these objections, such were the high spirit of the troops and their eagerness to come to action, sharpened by the view of the quarry, which after a wearisome chase seemed ready to fall into their hands, that they were thought more than sufficient to counterbalance every physical disadvantage; and the question of battle was decided in the affirmative.

As the Castilian army emerged from the defile into a wide and open plain, they found that the enemy had halted, and was already forming in order of battle. The king of Portugal led the centre, with the archbishop of Toledo on his right wing, its extremity resting on the Douro; while the left, comprehending the arquebusiers and the strength of the cavalry, was placed under the command of his son, Prince John. The numerical force of the two armies, although in favor of the Portuguese, was nearly equal, amounting probably in each to less than ten thousand men, about one-third being
cavalry. Ferdinand took his station in the centre, opposite his rival, having the admiral and the duke of Alva on his left; while his right wing, distributed into six battles or divisions, under their several commanders, was supported by a detachment of men-at-arms from the provinces of Leon and Galicia.

The action commenced in this quarter. The Castilians, raising the war-cry of "St. James and St. Lazarus," advanced on the enemy's left under Prince John, but were saluted with such a brisk and well-directed fire from his arquebusiers, that their ranks were disconcerted. The Portuguese men-at-arms, charging them at the same time, augmented their confusion, and compelled them to fall back precipitately on the narrow pass in their rear, where, being supported by some fresh detachments from the reserve, they were with difficulty rallied by their officers, and again brought into the field. In the meantime, Ferdinand closed with the enemy's centre, and the action soon became general along the whole line. The battle raged with redoubled fierceness in the quarter where the presence of the two monarchs infused new ardor into their soldiers, who fought as if conscious that this struggle was to decide the fate of their masters. The lances were shivered at the first encounter, and, as the ranks of the two armies mingled with each other, the men fought hand to hand with their swords, with a fury sharpened by the ancient rivalry of the two nations, making the whole a contest of physical strength rather than skill. [23]

The royal standard of Portugal was torn to shreds in the attempt to seize it on the one side and to preserve it on the other, while its gallant bearer, Edward de Almeyda, after losing first his right arm, and then his
left, in its defence, held it firmly with his teeth until he was cut down
by the assailants. The armor of this knight was to be seen as late as
Mariana’s time, in the cathedral church of Toledo, where it was preserved
as a trophy of this desperate act of heroism, which brings to mind a
similar feat recorded in Grecian story.

The old archbishop of Toledo, and the cardinal Mendoza, who, like his
reverend rival, had exchanged the crosier for the corslet, were to be seen
perpetuated the unbecoming spectacle of militant ecclesiastics among the
Spaniards, to a still later period, and long after it had disappeared from
the rest of civilized Europe.

At length, after an obstinate struggle of more than three hours, the valor
of the Castilian troops prevailed, and the Portuguese were seen to give
way in all directions. The duke of Alva, by succeeding in turning their
flank, while they were thus vigorously pressed in front, completed their
disorder, and soon converted their retreat into a rout. Some, attempting
to cross the Douro, were drowned, and many, who endeavored to effect an
entrance into Toro, were entangled in the narrow defile of the bridge, and
fell by the sword of their pursuers, or miserably perished in the river,
which, bearing along their mutilated corpses, brought tidings of the fatal
victory to Zamora. Such were the heat and fury of the pursuit, that the
intervening night, rendered darker than usual by a driving rain storm,
alone saved the scattered remains of the army from destruction. Several
Portuguese companies, under favor of this obscurity, contrived to elude
their foes by shouting the Castilian battle-cry. Prince John, retiring
with a fragment of his broken squadrons to a neighboring eminence, succeeded, by lighting fires and sounding his trumpets, in rallying round him a number of fugitives; and, as the position he occupied was too strong to be readily forced, and the Castilian troops were too weary, and well satisfied with their victory, to attempt it, he retained possession of it till morning, when he made good his retreat into Toro. The king of Portugal, who was missing, was supposed to have perished in the battle, until, by advices received from him late on the following day, it was ascertained that he had escaped without personal injury, and with three or distant from the field of action. Numbers of his troops, attempting to escape across the neighboring frontiers into their own country, were maimed or massacred by the Spanish peasants, in retaliation of the excesses wantonly committed by them in their invasion of Castile.

Ferdinand, shocked at this barbarity, issued orders for the protection of their persons, and freely gave safe-conducts to such as desired to return into Portugal. He even, with a degree of humanity more honorable, as well as more rare, than military success, distributed clothes and money to several prisoners brought into Zamora in a state of utter destitution, and enabled them to return in safety to their own country. [24]

The Castilian monarch remained on the field of battle till after midnight, when he returned to Zamora, being followed in the morning by the cardinal of Spain and the admiral Henriquez, at the head of the victorious legions. Eight standards with the greater part of the baggage were taken in the engagement, and more than two thousand of the enemy slain or made prisoners. Queen Isabella, on receiving tidings of the event at Tordesillas, where she then was, ordered a procession to the church of St.
Paul in the suburbs, in which she herself joined, walking barefoot with all humility, and offered up a devout thanksgiving to the God of battles for the victory with which he had crowned her arms. [25]

It was indeed a most auspicious victory, not so much from the immediate loss inflicted on the enemy, as from its moral influence on the Castilian nation. Such as had before vacillated in their faith,—who, in the expressive language of Bernaldez, "estaban aviva quien vence,"—who were prepared to take sides with the strongest, now openly proclaimed their allegiance to Ferdinand and Isabella; while most of those, who had been arrayed in arms or had manifested by any other overt act their hostility to the government, vied with each other in demonstrations of the most loyal submission, and sought to make the best terms for themselves which they could. Among these latter, the duke of Arevalo, who indeed had made overtures to this effect some time previous through the agency of his son, brother, experienced the lenity of government, and were confirmed in the entire possession of their estates. The two principal delinquents, the marquis of Villena and the archbishop of Toledo, made a show of resistance for some time longer; but, after witnessing the demolition of their castles, the capture of their towns, the desertion of their vassals, and the sequestration of their revenues, were fain to purchase a pardon at the price of the most humble concessions, and the forfeiture of an ample portion of domain.

The castle of Zamora, expecting no further succors from Portugal, speedily surrendered, and this event was soon followed by the reduction of Madrid,
Baeza, Toro, and other principal cities; so that, in little more than six
months from the date of the battle, the whole kingdom, with the exception
of a few insignificant posts still garrisoned by the enemy, had
acknowledged the supremacy of Ferdinand and Isabella. [26]

Soon after the victory of Toro, Ferdinand was enabled to concentrate a
force amounting to fifty thousand men, for the purpose of repelling the
French from Guipuscoa, from which they had already twice been driven by
the intrepid natives, and whence they again retired with precipitation on
receiving news of the king's approach. [27]

Alfonso, finding his authority in Castile thus rapidly melting away before
the rising influence of Ferdinand and Isabella, withdrew with his virgin
bride into Portugal, where he formed the resolution of visiting France in
person, and soliciting succor from his ancient ally, Louis the Eleventh.
In spite of every remonstrance, he put this extraordinary scheme into
execution. He reached France, with a retinue of two hundred followers, in
the month of September. He experienced everywhere the honors due to his
exalted rank, and to the signal mark of confidence, which he thus
exhibited towards the French king. The keys of the cities were delivered
into his hands, the prisoners were released from their dungeons, and his
progress was attended by a general jubilee. His brother monarch, however,
excused himself from affording more substantial proofs of his regard,
until he should have closed the war then pending between him and Burgundy,
and until Alfonso should have fortified his title to the Castilian crown,
by obtaining from the pope a dispensation for his marriage with Joanna.
The defeat and death of the duke of Burgundy, whose camp, before Nanci, Alfonso visited in the depth of winter, with the chimerical purpose of effecting a reconciliation between him and Louis, removed the former of these impediments; as, in good time, the compliance of the pope did the latter. But the king of Portugal found himself no nearer the object of his negotiations; and, after waiting a whole year a needy supplicant at the court of Louis, he at length ascertained that his insidious host was concerting an arrangement with his mortal foes, Ferdinand and Isabella. Alfonso, whose character always had a spice of Quixotism in it, seems to have completely lost his wits at this last reverse of fortune. Overwhelmed with shame at his own credulity, he felt himself unable to encounter the ridicule which awaited his return to Portugal, and secretly withdrew, with two or three domestics only, to an obscure village in Normandy, whence he transmitted an epistle to Prince John, his son, declaring, “that, as all earthly vanities were dead within his bosom, he resolved to lay up an imperishable crown by performing a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and devoting himself to the service of God, in some retired monastery;” and he concluded with requesting his son “to assume the sovereignty, at once, in the same manner as if he had heard of his father’s death.” [28]

Fortunately Alfonso’s retreat was detected before he had time to put his extravagant project in execution, and his trusty followers succeeded, though with considerable difficulty, in diverting him from it; while the king of France, willing to be rid of his importunate guest, and unwilling perhaps to incur the odium of having driven him to so desperate an extremity as that of his projected pilgrimage, provided a fleet of ships
to transport him back to his own dominions, where, to complete the farce, he arrived just five days after the ceremony of his son's coronation as king of Portugal. Nor was it destined that the luckless monarch should solace himself, as he had hoped, in the arms of his youthful bride; since the pliant pontiff, Sixtus the Fourth, was ultimately persuaded by the court of Castile to issue a new bull overruling the dispensation formerly conceded, on the ground that it had been obtained by a misrepresentation of facts.

Prince John, whether influenced by filial piety, or prudence, resigned the crown of Portugal to his father, soon after his return; [29] and the old monarch was no sooner reinstated in his authority, than, burning with a thirst for vengeance, which made him insensible to every remonstrance, he again prepared to throw his country into combustion by reviving his enterprise against Castile. [30]

While these hostile movements were in progress, Ferdinand, leaving his consort in possession of a sufficient force for the protection of the frontiers, made a journey into Biscay for the purpose of an interview with his father, the king of Aragon, to concert measures for the pacification of Navarre, which still continued to be rent with those sanguinary feuds, that were bequeathed like a precious legacy from one generation to another. [31] In the autumn of the same year a treaty of peace was definitively adjusted between the plenipotentiaries of Castile and France, at St. Jean de Luz, in which it was stipulated as a principle article, that Louis the Eleventh should disconnect himself from his alliance with Portugal, and give no further support to the pretensions of Joanna. [32]
Thus released from apprehension in this quarter, the sovereigns were enabled to give their undivided attention to the defence of the western borders. Isabella, accordingly, early in the ensuing winter, passed into Estremadura for the purpose of repelling the Portuguese, and still more of suppressing the insurrectionary movements of certain of her own subjects, who, encouraged by the vicinity of Portugal, carried on from their private fortresses a most desolating and predatory warfare over the circumjacent territory. Private mansions and farm-houses were pillaged and burnt to the ground, the cattle and crops swept away in their forays, the highways beset, so that all travelling was at an end, all communication cut off, and a rich and populous district converted at once into a desert.

Isabella, supported by a body of regular troops and a detachment of the Holy Brotherhood, took her station at Truxillo, as a central position, whence she might operate on the various points with greatest facility. Her counsellors remonstrated against this exposure of her person in the very heart of the disaffected country; but she replied that "it was not for her to calculate perils or fatigues in her own cause, nor by an unseasonable timidity to dishearten her friends, with whom she was now resolved to remain until she had brought the war to a conclusion." She then gave immediate orders for laying siege at the same time to the fortified towns of Medellin, Merida, and Deleytosa.

King Alfonso, and maternal aunt of Isabella, touched with grief at the calamities, in which she saw her country involved by the chimerical ambition of her brother, offered herself as the mediator of peace between
the belligerent nations. Agreeably to her proposal, an interview took
place between her and Queen Isabella at the frontier town of Alcantara. As
the conferences of the fair negotiators experienced none of the
embarrassments usually incident to such deliberations, growing out of
jealousy, distrust, and a mutual design to overreach, but were conducted
in perfect good faith, and a sincere desire, on both sides, of
establishing a cordial reconciliation, they resulted, after eight days'
discussion, in a treaty of peace, with which the Portuguese infanta
returned into her own country, in order to obtain the sanction of her
royal brother. The articles contained in it, however, were too unpalatable
to receive an immediate assent; and it was not until the expiration of six
months, during which Isabella, far from relaxing, persevered with
increased energy in her original plan of operations, that the treaty was
formally ratified by the court of Lisbon. [33]

It was stipulated in this compact, that Alfonso should relinquish the
title and armorial bearings, which he had assumed as king of Castile; that
he should resign his claims to the hand of Joanna, and no longer maintain
her pretensions to the Castilian throne; that that lady should make the
election within six months, either to quit Portugal for ever, or to remain
there on the condition of wedding Don John, the infant son of Ferdinand
and Isabella, [34] so soon as he should attain a marriageable age, or to
retire into a convent, and take the veil; that a general amnesty should be
granted to all such Castilians as had supported Joanna's cause; and,
finally, that the concord between the two nations should be cemented by
the union of Alonso, son of the prince of Portugal, with the infanta
Isabella, of Castile. [35]
Thus terminated, after a duration of four years and a half, the War of the Succession. It had fallen with peculiar fury on the border provinces of Leon and Estremadura, which, from their local position, had necessarily been kept in constant collision with the enemy. Its baneful effects were long visible there, not only in the general devastation and distress of the country, but in the moral disorganization, which the licentious and predatory habits of soldiers necessarily introduced among a simple peasantry. In a personal view, however, the war had terminated most triumphantly for Isabella, whose wise and vigorous administration, seconded by her husband’s vigilance, had dispelled the storm, which threatened to overwhelm her from abroad, and established her in undisturbed possession of the throne of her ancestors.

Joanna’s interests were alone compromised, or rather sacrificed, by the treaty. She readily discerned in the provision for her marriage with an infant still in the cradle, only a flimsy veil intended to disguise the king of Portugal’s desertion of her cause. Disgusted with a world, in which she had hitherto experienced nothing but misfortune herself, and been the innocent cause of so much to others, she determined to renounce it for ever, and seek a shelter in the peaceful shades of the cloister. She accordingly entered the convent of Santa Clara at Coimbra, where, in the following year, she pronounced the irrevocable vows, which divorce the unhappy subject of them for ever from her species. Two envoys from Castile, Ferdinand de Talavera, Isabella’s confessor, and Dr. Diaz de Madrigal, one of her council, assisted at this affecting ceremony; and the reverend father, in a copious exhortation addressed to the youthful
novice, assured her "that she had chosen the better part approved in the Evangelists; that, as spouse of the church, her chastity would be prolific of all spiritual delights; her subjection, liberty,—the only true liberty, partaking more of Heaven than of earth. No kinsman," continued the disinterested preacher, "no true friend, or faithful counsellor, would divert you from so holy a purpose." [36]

Not long after this event, King Alfonso, penetrated with grief at the loss of his destined bride,—the "excellent lady," as the Portuguese continue to call her,—resolved to imitate her example, and exchange his royal robes for the humble habit of a Franciscan friar. He consequently made preparation for resigning his crown anew, and retiring to the monastery of Varatojo, on a bleak eminence near the Atlantic Ocean, when he suddenly fell ill, at Cintra, of a disorder which terminated his existence, on the 28th of August, 1481. Alfonso's fiery character, in which all the elements of love, chivalry, and religion were blended together, resembled that of some paladin of romance; as the chimerical enterprises, in which he was perpetually engaged, seem rather to belong to the age of knight-errantry, than to the fifteenth century. [37]

In the beginning of the same year in which the pacification with Portugal secured to the sovereigns the undisputed possession of Castile, another crown devolved on Ferdinand by the death of his father, the king of Aragon, who expired at Barcelona, on the 20th of January, 1479, in the eighty-third year of his age. [38] Such was his admirable constitution that he retained not only his intellectual, but his bodily vigor, unimpaired to the last. His long life was consumed in civil faction or
foreign wars; and his restless spirit seemed to take delight in these tumultuous scenes, as best fitted to develop its various energies. He combined, however, with this intrepid and even ferocious temper, an address in the management of affairs, which led him to rely, for the accomplishment of his purposes, much more on negotiation than on positive force. He may be said to have been one of the first monarchs who brought into vogue that refined science of the cabinet, which was so profoundly studied by statesmen at the close of the fifteenth century, and on which his own son Ferdinand furnished the most practical commentary.

The crown of Navarre, which he had so shamelessly usurped, devolved, on his decease, on his guilty daughter Leonora, countess of Foix, who, as we have before noticed, survived to enjoy it only three short weeks. Aragon, with its extensive dependencies, descended to Ferdinand. Thus the two crowns of Aragon and Castile, after a separation of more than four centuries, became indissolubly united, and the foundations were laid of the magnificent empire which was destined to overshadow every other European monarchy.

FOOTNOTES

[1] The popular belief of Joanna's illegitimacy was founded on the following circumstances. 1. King Henry's first marriage with Blanche of Navarre was dissolved, after it had subsisted twelve years, on the publicly alleged ground of "impotence in the parties." 2. The princess Joanna, the only child of his second queen, Joanna of Portugal, was not
born until the eighth year of her marriage, and long after she had become notorious for her gallantries. 3. Although Henry kept several mistresses, whom he maintained in so ostentatious a manner as to excite general scandal, he was never known to have had issue by any one of them.--To counterbalance the presumption afforded by these facts, it should be stated, that Henry appears, to the day of his death, to have cherished the princess Joanna as his own offspring, and that Beltran de la Cueva, duke of Albuquerque, her reputed father, instead of supporting her claims to the crown on the demise of Henry, as would have been natural had he been entitled to the honors of paternity, attached himself to the adverse faction of Isabella.

Queen Joanna survived her husband about six months only. Father Florez whitewash her character; but, to say nothing of almost every contemporary historian, as well as of the official documents of that day (see Marina, by the repeated testimony of Castillo, the loyal adherent of her own party, to be thus easily effaced.

It is said, however, that the queen died in the odor of sanctity; and Ferdinand and Isabella caused her to be deposited in a rich mausoleum, erected by the ambassador to the court of the Great Tamerlane for himself, but from which his remains were somewhat unceremoniously ejected, in order to make room for those of his royal mistress.

cap. 1-10.--See, also, Introd. Sect. I. of this History.
Fortunately, this strong place, in which the royal treasure was deposited, was in the keeping of Andres de Cabrera, the husband of Isabella's friend, Beatriz de Bobadilla. His co-operation at this juncture was so important, that Oviedo does not hesitate to declare, "It lay with him to make Isabella or her rival queen, as he listed." Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 23.

Cosas Memorables, fol. 155.—Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 2, dial. 3.

Marina, whose peculiar researches and opportunities make him the best, pp. 63, 89.) The extracts he makes from the writ of summons, however, seem to imply, that the object was not the recognition of Ferdinand and Isabella, but of their daughter, as successor to the crown. Among the nobles, who openly testified their adhesion to Isabella, were no less than four of the six individuals, to whom the late king had intrusted the guardianship of his daughter Joanna; viz. the grand cardinal of Spain, the constable of Castile, the duke of Infantado, and the count of Benavente.
A precedent for female inheritance, in the latter kingdom, was subsequently furnished by the undisputed succession and long reign of Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and mother of Charles V. The introduction of the Salic law, under the Bourbon dynasty, opposed a new barrier, indeed; but this has been since swept away by the decree of the late monarch, Ferdinand VII., and the paramount authority of the cortes; and we may hope that the successful assertion of her lawful rights by Isabella II. will put this much vexed question at rest for ever.

See Part I. Chap. 3.--Ferdinand's powers are not so narrowly limited, at least not so carefully defined, in this settlement, as in the marriage articles. Indeed, the instrument is much more concise and general in its whole import.

Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 155, 156.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. instrument signed by Ferdinand and Isabella, cited at length in Dormer's Discursos Varios de Historia, (Zaragoza, 1683,) pp. 295-313.--It does not appear that the settlement was ever confirmed by, or indeed presented to, the cortes. Marina speaks of it, however, as emanating from that body.

the instrument itself, it seems to have been made under no other auspices or sanction, than that of the great nobility and cavaliers. Marina's eagerness to find a precedent for the interference of the popular branch in all the great concerns of government, has usually quickened, but sometimes clouded, his optics. In the present instance he has undoubtedly
confounded the irregular proceedings of the aristocracy exclusively, with
the deliberate acts of the legislature.

11.--Pulgar, Letras, (Madrid, 1775,) let. 3, al Arzobispo de Toledo.--The
archbishop's jealousy of cardinal Mendoza is uniformly reported by the
Spanish writers as the true cause of his defection from the queen.

[13] The ancient rivalry between the two nations was exasperated into the
most deadly rancor, by the fatal defeat at Aljubarrotta, in 1235, in which
fell the flower of the Castilian nobility. King John I. wore mourning, it
is said, to the day of his death, in commemoration of this disaster.

de Portugal, tom. iii. pp. 357-359.) Pulgar, the secretary of Ferdinand
and Isabella, addressed, by their order, a letter of remonstrance to the
king of Portugal, in which he endeavors, by numerous arguments founded on
expediency and justice, to dissuade him from his meditated enterprise.
Pulgar, Letras, No. 7.

previously to his invasion, caused largesses of plate and money to be
distributed among the Castilian nobles, whom he imagined to be well
affected towards him. Some of them, the duke of Alva in particular,
received his presents and used them in the cause of Isabella.--Faria y
[15] The queen, who was, at that time, in a state of pregnancy, brought on a miscarriage by her incessant personal exposure. Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 234.

[18] "Pues no os maravilleis de eso," says Oviedo, in relation to these

[19] The royal coffers were found to contain about 10,000 marks of silver.

goblet from her table, engaging that a similar present should be regularly made to him and his successors on the anniversary of his surrender of Segovia. She subsequently gave a more solid testimony of her gratitude, by raising him to the rank of marquis of Moya, with the grant of an estate suitable to his new dignity.---Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1,
dial. 23.

[20] The indignation of Dr. Salazar de Mendoza is roused by this misapplication of the church's money, which he avers "no necessity whatever could justify." This worthy canon flourished in the seventeenth century.

62.--Faria y Sousa, Europa Portuguesa, tom. ii. p. 400.--Rades y Andrada, Las Tres Ordenes, part. 1, fol. 67.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 243.--

particulars respecting the grant of the cortes, which I do not find verified by any contemporary author. Annales de Sevilla, p. 372.

156.--Faria y Sousa, Europa Portuguesa, tom. ii. pp. 401, 404.--Several of the contemporary Castilian historians compute the Portuguese army at double the amount given in the text.

252, 253.--Faria y Sousa, Europa Portuguesa, tom. ii. pp. 404, 405.--

Alfonso V., cap. 190.

tom. iv. fol. 252-255.

[24] Faria y Sousa claims the honors of the victory for the Portuguese,
all his deference to the Portuguese historian, cannot swallow this. Faria y Sousa, Europa Portuguesa, tom. ii. pp. 405-410.--Oviedo, Quincuagenas,

Alfonso V., cap. 191.--Ferdinand, in allusion to Prince John, wrote to his wife, that "if it had not been for the chicken, the old cock would have been taken." Garibay, Compendio, lib. 18, cap. 8.

previous vow, caused a superb monastery, dedicated to St. Francis, to be erected in Toledo, with the title of San Juan de los Reyes, in commemoration of their victory over the Portuguese. This edifice was still to be seen in Mariana's time.


V., cap. 194-202.--Faria y Sousa, Europa Portuguesa, tom. ii. pp. 412-

[29] According to Faria y Sousa, John was walking along the shores of the
Tagus, with the duke of Braganza, and the cardinal archbishop of Lisbon, when he received the unexpected tidings of his father's return to Portugal. On his inquiring of his attendants how he should receive him, "How but as your king and father!" was the reply; at which John, knitting his brows together, skimmed a stone, which he held in his hand, with much violence across the water. The cardinal, observing this, whispered to the duke of Braganza, "I will take good care that that stone does not rebound on me." Soon after, he left Portugal for Rome, where he fixed his residence. The duke lost his life on the scaffold for imputed treason soon after John's accession.--Europa Portuguesa, tom. ii. p. 416.

Portuguesa, tom. ii. p. 116.--Zurita, Anales, lib. 20, cap. 25.--

[31] This was the first meeting between father and son since the elevation of the latter to the Castilian throne. King John would not allow Ferdinand to kiss his hand; he chose to walk on his left; he attended him to his quarters, and, in short, during the whole twenty days of their conference manifested towards his son all the deference, which, as a parent, he was entitled to receive from him. This he did on the ground that Ferdinand, as king of Castile, represented the elder branch of Trastamara, while he represented only the younger. It will not be easy to meet with an instance of more punctilious etiquette, even in Spanish history.--Pulgar, Reyes
at the period in which he was writing, 1522, (fol. 168.) Notwithstanding her "irrevocable vows," however, Joanna several times quitted the monastery, and maintained a royal state under the protection of the Portuguese monarchs, who occasionally threatened to revive her dormant claims to the prejudice of the Castilian sovereigns. She may be said, consequently, to have formed the pivot, on which turned, during her whole life, the diplomatic relations between the courts of Castile and Portugal, and to have been a principal cause of those frequent intermarriages between the royal families of the two countries, by which Ferdinand and Isabella hoped to detach the Portuguese crown from her interests. Joanna affected a royal style and magnificence, and subscribed herself "I the Queen," to the last. She died in the palace at Lisbon, in 1530, in the 69th year of her age, having survived most of her ancient friends, suitors, and competitors.--Joanna's history, subsequent to her
INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION OF CASTILE.

1475-1482.

Schemes of Reform.--Holy Brotherhood.--Tumult at Segovia.--The Queen's Presence of Mind.--Severe Execution of Justice.--Royal Progress through Andalusia.--Reorganization of the Tribunals.--Castilian Jurisprudence.--Plans for Reducing the Nobles.--Revocation of Grants.--Military Orders of Castile.--Masterships annexed to the Crown.--Ecclesiastical Usurpations Resisted.--Restoration of Trade.--Prosperity of the Kingdom.

I have deferred to the present chapter a consideration of the important changes introduced into the interior administration of Castile after the accession of Isabella, in order to present a connected and comprehensive view of them to the reader, without interrupting the progress of the
military narrative. The subject may afford an agreeable relief to the
dreary details of blood and battle, with which we have been so long
occupied, and which were rapidly converting the garden of Europe into a
wilderness. Such details indeed seem to have the deepest interest for
contemporary writers; but the eye of posterity, unclouded by personal
interest or passion, turns with satisfaction from them to those cultivated
arts, which can make the wilderness to blossom as the rose.

If there be any being on earth, that may be permitted to remind us of the
Deity himself, it is the ruler of a mighty empire, who employs the high
powers intrusted to him exclusively for the benefit of his people; who,
derived with intellectual gifts corresponding with his station, in an age
of comparative barbarism, endeavors to impart to his land the light of
civilization which illumines his own bosom, and to create from the
elements of discord the beautiful fabric of social order. Such was
Isabella; and such the age in which she lived. And fortunate was it for
Spain that her sceptre, at this crisis, was swayed by a sovereign
possessed of sufficient wisdom to devise, and energy to execute, the most
salutary schemes of reform, and thus to infuse a new principle of vitality
into a government fast sinking into premature decrepitude.

The whole plan of reform introduced into the government by Ferdinand and
Isabella, or more properly by the latter, to whom the internal
administration of Castile was principally referred, was not fully unfolded
until the completion of her reign. But the most important modifications
were adopted previously to the war of Granada in 1482. These may be
embraced under the following heads. I. The efficient administration of
I. The administration of justice. In the dismal anarchy, which prevailed in Henry the Fourth's reign, the authority of the monarch and of the royal judges had fallen into such contempt, that the law was entirely without force. The cities afforded no better protection than the open country. Every man's hand seemed to be lifted against his neighbor. Property was plundered; persons were violated; the most holy sanctuaries profaned; and the numerous fortresses scattered throughout the country, instead of sheltering the weak, converted into dens of robbers. [1] Isabella saw no better way of checking tins unbounded license, than to direct against it that popular engine, the _Santa Hermandad_, or Holy Brotherhood, which had more than once shaken the Castilian monarchs on their throne.

The project for the reorganization of this institution was introduced into the cortes held, the year after Isabella's accession at Madrigal, in 1476. It was carried into effect by the _junta_ of deputies from the different institution differed essentially from the ancient _hermandades_, since, instead of being partial in its extent, it was designed to embrace the whole kingdom; and, instead of being directed, as had often been the case, against the crown itself, it was set in motion at the suggestion of the latter, and limited in its operation to the maintenance of public order.
The crimes, reserved for its jurisdiction, were all violence or theft committed on the highways or in the open country, and in cities by such offenders as escaped into the country; house-breaking; rape; and resistance of justice. The specification of these crimes shows their frequency; and the reason for designating the open country, as the particular theatre for the operations of the hermandad, was the facility which criminals possessed there for eluding the pursuit of justice, especially under shelter of the strong-holds or fortresses, with which it was plentifully studded.

An annual contribution of eighteen thousand maravedies was assessed on every hundred _vecinos_ or householders, for the equipment and maintenance of a horseman, whose duty it was to arrest offenders, and enforce the sentence of the law. On the flight of a criminal, the tocsins of the villages, through which he was supposed to have passed, were sounded, and the _quadrilleros_ or officers of the brotherhood, stationed on the different points, took up the pursuit with such promptness as left little chance of escape. A court of two alcaldes was established in every town containing thirty families, for the trial of all crimes within the jurisdiction of the hermandad; and an appeal lay from them in specified cases to a supreme council. A general junta, composed of deputies from the cities throughout the kingdom, was annually convened for the regulation of affairs, and their instructions were transmitted to provincial juntas, who superintended the execution of them. The laws, enacted at different times in these assemblies, were compiled into a code under the sanction of the junta general at Tordelaguna, in 1485. [2] The penalties for theft, which are literally written in blood, are specified in this code with singular
precision. The most petty larceny was punished with stripes, the loss of a member, or of life itself; and the law was administered with an unsparing rigor, which nothing but the extreme necessity of the case could justify. Capital executions were conducted by shooting the criminal with arrows. The enactment, relating to this, provides, that "the convict shall receive the sacrament like a Catholic Christian, and after that be executed as speedily as possible, in order that his soul may pass the more securely." [3]

Notwithstanding the popular constitution of the hermandad, and the obvious advantages attending its introduction at this juncture, it experienced so decided an opposition from the nobility, who discerned the check it was likely to impose on their authority, that it required all the queen's address and perseverance to effect its general adoption. The constable de Haro, however, a nobleman of great weight from his personal character, and the most extensive landed proprietor in the north, was at length prevailed on to introduce it among his vassals. His example was gradually followed by others of the same rank; and, when the city of Seville, and the great lords of Andalusia, had consented to receive it, it speedily became established throughout the kingdom. Thus a standing body of troops, two thousand in number, thoroughly equipped and mounted, was placed at the disposal of the crown, to enforce the law, and suppress domestic insurrection. The supreme junta, which regulated the counsels of the hermandad, constituted moreover a sort of inferior cortes, relieving the exigencies of government, as we shall see hereafter, on more than one occasion, by important supplies of men and money. By the activity of this new military police, the country was, in the course of a few years,
cleared of its swarms of banditti, as well as of the robber chieftains, whose strength had enabled them to defy the law. The ministers of justice found a sure protection in the independent discharge of their duties; and the blessings of personal security and social order, so long estranged from the nation, were again restored to it.

The important benefits, resulting from the institution of the hermandad, secured its confirmation by successive cortes, for the period of twenty-two years, in spite of the repeated opposition of the aristocracy. At length, in 1498, the objects for which it was established having been completely obtained, it was deemed advisable to relieve the nation from the heavy charges which its maintenance imposed. The great salaried officers were dismissed; a few subordinate functionaries were retained for the administration of justice, over whom the regular courts of criminal law possessed appellate jurisdiction; and the magnificent apparatus of the _Santa Hermandad_, stripped of all but the terrors of its name, dwindled into an ordinary police, such as it has existed, with various modifications of form, down to the present century. [4]

Isabella was so intent on the prosecution of her schemes of reform, that, even in the minuter details, she frequently superintended the execution of them herself. For this she was admirably fitted by her personal address, and presence of mind in danger, and by the influence which a conviction of her integrity gave her over the minds of the people. A remarkable exemplification of this occurred, the year but one after her coronation, at Segovia. The inhabitants, secretly instigated by the bishop of that place, and some of the principal citizens, rose against Cabrera, marquis
of Moya, to whom the government of the city had been intrusted, and who had made himself generally unpopular by his strict discipline. They even proceeded so far as to obtain possession of the outworks of the citadel, and to compel the deputy of the _alcayde_, who was himself absent, to take shelter, together with the princess Isabella, then the only daughter of the sovereigns, in the interior defences, where they were rigorously blockaded.

The queen, on receiving tidings of the event at Tordesillas, mounted her horse and proceeded with all possible despatch towards Segovia, attended by Cardinal Mendoza, the count of Benavente, and a few others of her court. At some distance from the city, she was met by a deputation of the inhabitants, requesting her to leave behind the count of Benavente and the marchioness of Moya, (the former of whom as the intimate friend, and the latter as the wife of the alcayde, were peculiarly obnoxious to the citizens,) or they could not answer for the consequences. Isabella haughtily replied, that "she was queen of Castile; that the city was hers, moreover, by right of inheritance; and that she was not used to receive conditions from rebellious subjects." Then pressing forward with her little retinue, through one of the gates, which remained in the hands of her friends, she effected her entrance into the citadel.

The populace, in the mean while, assembling in greater numbers than before, continued to show the most hostile dispositions, calling out, "Death to the alcayde! Attack the castle!" Isabella's attendants, terrified at the tumult, and at the preparations which the people were making to put their menaces into execution, besought their mistress to
cause the gates to be secured more strongly, as the only mode of defence
against the infuriated mob. But, instead of listening to their counsel,
she bade them remain quietly in the apartment, and descended herself into
the courtyard, where she ordered the portals to be thrown open for the
admission of the people. She stationed herself at the further extremity of
the area, and, as the populace poured in, calmly demanded the cause of the
insurrection. "Tell me," said she, "what are your grievances, and I will
do all in my power to redress them; for I am sure that what is for your
interest, must be also for mine, and for that of the whole city." The
insurgents, abashed by the unexpected presence of their sovereign, as well
as by her cool and dignified demeanor, replied, that all they desired was
the removal of Cabrera from the government of the city. "He is deposed
already," answered the queen, "and you have my authority to turn out such
of his officers as are still in the castle, which I shall intrust to one
of my own servants, on whom I can rely." The people, pacified by these
assurances, shouted, "Long live the queen!" and eagerly hastened to obey
her mandates.

After thus turning aside the edge of popular fury, Isabella proceeded with
her retinue to the royal residence in the city, attended by the fickle
multitude, whom she again addressed on arriving there, admonishing them to
return to their vocations, as this was no time for calm inquiry; and
promising, that, if they would send three or four of their number to her
on the morrow to report the extent of their grievances, she would examine
into the affair, and render justice to all parties. The mob accordingly
dispersed, and the queen, after a candid examination, having ascertained
the groundlessness or gross exaggeration of the misdemeanors imputed to
Cabrera, and traced the source of the conspiracy to the jealousy of the bishop of Segovia and his associates, reinstated the deposed alcayde in the full possession of his dignities, which his enemies, either convinced of the altered dispositions of the people, or believing that the favorable moment for resistance had escaped, made no further attempts to disturb. Thus by a happy presence of mind, an affair, which threatened, at its outset, disastrous consequences, was settled without bloodshed, or compromise of the royal dignity. [5]

In the summer of the following year, 1477, Isabella resolved to pay a visit to Estremadura and Andalusia, for the purpose of composing the dissensions, and introducing a more efficient police, in these unhappy provinces; which, from their proximity to the stormy frontier of Portugal, as well as from the feuds between the great houses of Guzman and Ponce de Leon, were plunged in the most frightful anarchy. Cardinal Mendoza and her other ministers remonstrated against this imprudent exposure of her person, where it was so little likely to be respected. But she replied, "it was true there were dangers and inconveniences to be encountered; but her fate was in God's hands, and she felt a confidence that he would guide to a prosperous issue such designs as were righteous in themselves and resolutely conducted."

Isabella experienced the most loyal and magnificent reception from the inhabitants of Seville, where she established her head-quarters. The first of reeds, and other exercises of the Castilian chivalry. After this she devoted her whole time to the great purpose of her visit, the reformation
of abuses. She held her court in the saloon of the alcazar, or royal
castle, where she revived the ancient practice of the Castilian
sovereigns, of presiding in person over the administration of justice.

Every Friday, she took her seat in her chair of state, on an elevated
platform covered with cloth of gold, and surrounded by her council,

Together with the subordinate functionaries, and the insignia of a court

of justice. The members of her privy council, and of the high court of
criminal law, sat in their official capacity every day in the week; and

the queen herself received such suits as were referred to her

adjudication, saving the parties the usual expense and procrastination of

justice.

By the extraordinary despatch of the queen and her ministers, during the
two months that she resided in the city, a vast number of civil and
criminal causes were disposed of, a large amount of plundered property was
restored to its lawful owners, and so many offenders were brought to
condign punishment, that no less than four thousand suspected persons, it
is computed, terrified by the prospect of speedy retribution for their

crimes, escaped into the neighboring kingdoms of Portugal and Granada. The
worthy burghers of Seville, alarmed at this rapid depopulation of the
city, sent a deputation to the queen, to depurate her anger, and to
represent that faction had been so busy of late years in their unhappy
town, that there was scarcely a family to be found in it, some of whose
members were not more or less involved in the guilt. Isabella, who was

naturally of a benign disposition, considering that enough had probably
been done to strike a salutary terror into the remaining delinquents, was
willing to temper justice with mercy, and accordingly granted an amnesty
for all past offences, save heresy, on the condition, however, of a
general restitution of such property as had been unlawfully seized and
retained during the period of anarchy. [6]

But Isabella became convinced that all arrangements for establishing
permanent tranquillity in Seville would be ineffectual, so long as the
feud continued between the great families of Guzman and Ponce de Leon. The
duke of Medina Sidonia and the marquis of Cadiz, the heads of these
houses, had possessed themselves of the royal towns and fortresses, as
well as of those which, belonging to the city, were scattered over its
circumjacent territory, where, as has been previously stated, they carried
on war against each other, like independent potentates. The former of
these grandees had been the loyal supporter of Isabella in the War of the
Succession. The marquis of Cadiz, on the other hand, connected by marriage
with the house of Pacheco, had cautiously withheld his allegiance,
although he had not testified his hostility by any overt act. While the
queen was hesitating as to the course she should pursue in reference to
the marquis, who still kept himself aloof in his fortified castle of
Xerez, he suddenly presented himself by night at her residence in Seville,
accompanied only by two or three attendants. He took this step, doubtless,
from the conviction that the Portuguese faction had nothing further to
hope in a kingdom where Isabella reigned not only by the fortune of war,
but by the affections of the people; and he now eagerly proffered his
allegiance to her, excusing his previous conduct as he best could. The
queen was too well satisfied with the submission, however tardy, of this
formidable vassal, to call him to severe account for past delinquencies.
She exacted from him, however, the full restitution of such domains and
fortresses as he had filched from the crown and from the city of Seville, on condition of similar concessions by his rival, the duke of Medina Sidonia. She next attempted to establish a reconciliation between these belligerent grandees; but, aware that, however pacific might be their demonstrations for the present, there could be little hope of permanently allaying the inherited feuds of a century, whilst the neighborhood of the parties to each other must necessarily multiply fresh causes of disgust, she caused them to withdraw from Seville to their estates in the country, and by this expedient succeeded in extinguishing the flame of discord. [7]

In the following year, 1478, Isabella accompanied her husband in a tour through Andalusia, for the immediate purpose of reconnoitring the coast. In the course of this progress, they were splendidly entertained by the duke and marquis at their patrimonial estates. They afterwards proceeded to Cordova, where they adopted a similar policy with that pursued at Seville, compelling the count de Cabra, connected with the blood royal, and Alonso de Aguilar, lord of Montilla, whose factions had long desolated this fair city, to withdraw into the country, and restore the immense possessions, which they had usurped both from the municipality and the crown. [8]

One example among others may be mentioned, of the rectitude and severe impartiality, with which Isabella administered justice, that occurred in person, being convicted of a capital offence, attended with the most aggravating circumstances, sought to obtain a commutation of his punishment, by the payment of forty thousand _doblas_ of gold to the
queen, a sum exceeding at that time the annual rents of the crown. Some of
Isabella's counsellors would have persuaded her to accept the donative,
and appropriate it to the pious purposes of the Moorish war. But, far from
being blinded by their sophistry, she suffered the law to take its course,
and, in order to place her conduct above every suspicion of a mercenary
motive, allowed his estates, which might legally have been confiscated to
the crown, to descend to his natural heirs. Nothing contributed more to
re-establish the supremacy of law in this reign, than the certainty of its
execution, without respect to wealth or rank; for the insubordination,
prevalent throughout Castile, was chiefly imputable to persons of this
description, who, if they failed to defeat justice by force, were sure of
doing so by the corruption of its ministers. [9]

Ferdinand and Isabella employed the same vigorous measures in the other
parts of their dominions, which had proved so successful in Andalusia, for
the extirpation of the hordes of banditti, and of the robber-knights, who
differed in no respect from the former, but in their superior power. In
Galicia alone, fifty fortresses, the strongholds of tyranny, were razed to
the ground, and fifteen hundred malefactors, it was computed, were
compelled to fly the kingdom. "The wretched inhabitants of the mountains,"
says a writer of that age, "who had long since despaired of justice,
blessed God for their deliverance, as it were, from a deplorable
captivity." [10]

While the sovereigns were thus personally occupied with the suppression of
domestic discord, and the establishment of an efficient police, they were
not inattentive to the higher tribunals, to whose keeping, chiefly, were
intrusted the personal rights and property of the subject. They reorganized the royal or privy council, whose powers, although, as has been noticed in the Introduction, principally of an administrative nature, had been gradually encroaching on those of the superior courts of law. During the last century, this body had consisted of prelates, knights, and lawyers, whose numbers and relative proportions had varied in different times. The right of the great ecclesiastics and nobles to a seat in it was, indeed, recognized, but the transaction of business was reserved for the counsellors specially appointed. [11] Much the larger proportion of these, by the new arrangement, was made up of jurists, whose professional education and experience eminently qualified them for the station. The specific duties and interior management of the council were prescribed with sufficient accuracy. Its authority as a court of justice was carefully limited; but, as it was charged with the principal executive duties of government, it was consulted in all important transactions by the sovereigns, who paid great deference to its opinions, and very frequently assisted at its deliberations. [12]

No change was made in the high criminal court of _alcaldes de corte_, except in its forms of proceeding. But the royal audience, or chancery, the supreme and final court of appeal in civil causes, was entirely remodelled. The place of its sittings, before indeterminate, and consequently occasioning much trouble and cost to the litigants, was fixed at Valladolid. Laws were passed to protect the tribunal from the interference of the crown, and the queen was careful to fill the bench with magistrates whose wisdom and integrity would afford the best guaranty for a faithful interpretation of the law. [13]
In the cortes of Madrigal (1476), and still more in the celebrated one of Toledo (1480), many excellent provisions were made for the equitable administration of justice, as well as for regulating the tribunals. The judges were to ascertain every week, either by personal inspection, or report, the condition of the prisons, the number of the prisoners, and the nature of the offences for which they were confined. They were required to bring them to a speedy trial, and afford every facility for their defence. An attorney was provided at the public expense, under the title of "advocate for the poor," whose duty it was to defend the suits of such as were unable to maintain them at their own cost. Severe penalties were enacted against venality in the judges, a gross evil under the preceding reigns, as well as against such counsel as took exorbitant fees, or even maintained actions that were manifestly unjust. Finally, commissioners were appointed to inspect and make report of the proceedings of municipal and other inferior courts throughout the kingdom. [14]

The sovereigns testified their respect for the law by reviving the ancient, but obsolete practice of presiding personally in the tribunals, at least once a week. "I well remember," says one of their court, "to have seen the queen, together with the Catholic king, her husband, sitting in judgment in the alcazar of Madrid, every Friday, dispensing justice to all such, great and small, as came to demand it. This was indeed the golden age of justice," continues the enthusiastic writer, "and since our sainted mistress has been taken from us, it has been more difficult, and far more costly, to transact business with a stripling of a secretary, than it was with the queen and all her ministers." [15]
By the modifications then introduced, the basis was laid of the judiciary system, such as it has been perpetuated to the present age. The law acquired an authority, which, in the language of a Spanish writer, "caused a decree, signed by two or three judges, to be more respected since that time, than an army before." [16] But perhaps the results of this improved administration cannot be better conveyed than in the words of an eye-witness. "Whereas," says Pulgar, "the kingdom was previously filled with banditti and malefactors of every description, who committed the most diabolical excesses, in open contempt of law, there was now such terror impressed on the hearts of all, that no one dared to lift his arm against another, or even to assail him with contumelious or discourteous language. The knight and the squire, who had before oppressed the laborer, were intimidated by the fear of that justice, which was sure to be executed on them; the roads were swept of the banditti; the fortresses, the strong-holds of violence, were thrown open, and the whole nation, restored to tranquillity and order, sought no other redress, than that afforded by the operation of the law." [17]

II. Codification of the laws. Whatever reforms might have been introduced into the Castilian judicatures, they would have been of little avail, without a corresponding improvement in the system of jurisprudence by which their decisions were to be regulated. This was made up of the Visigothic code, as the basis, the _fueros_ of the Castilian princes, as far back as the eleventh century, and the "Siete Partidas," the famous compilation of Alfonso the Tenth, digested chiefly from maxims of the civil law. [18] The deficiencies of these ancient codes had been gradually
supplied by such an accumulation of statutes and ordinances, as rendered
the legislation of Castile in the highest degree complex, and often
contradictory. The embarrassment resulting from this, occasioned, as may
be imagined, much tardiness, as well as uncertainty, in the decisions of
the courts, who, despairing of reconciling the discrepancies in their own
law, governed themselves almost exclusively by the Roman, so much less
accommodated, as it was, than their own, to the genius of the national
institutions, as well as to the principles of freedom. [19]

The nation had long felt the pressure of these evils, and made attempts to
redress them in repeated cortes. But every effort proved unavailing,
during the stormy or imbecile reigns of the princes of Trastamara. At
length, the subject having been resumed in the cortes of Toledo, in 1480,
Dr. Alfonso Diaz de Montalvo, whose professional science had been matured
under the reigns of three successive sovereigns, was charged with the
commission of revising the laws of Castile, and of compiling a code, which
should be of general application throughout the kingdom.

This laborious undertaking was accomplished in little more than four

Reales_, was published, or, as the privilege expresses it, “written
with types,” _excrito de letra de molde_, at Huete, in the beginning
of 1485. It was one of the first works, therefore, which received the
honors of the press in Spain; and surely none could have been found, at
that period, more deserving of them. It went through repeated editions in
the course of that, and the commencement of the following century. [20] It
was admitted as paramount authority throughout Castile; and, although the
many innovations, which were introduced in that age of reform, required
the addition of two subsidiary codes in the latter years of Isabella, the
to the time of Philip the Second; and may be said to have suggested the
idea, as indeed it was the basis of the comprehensive compilation, "Nueva
Recopilacion," which has since formed the law of the Spanish monarchy.

III. Depression of the nobles. In the course of the preceding chapters, we
have seen the extent of the privileges constitutionally enjoyed by the
aristocracy, as well as the enormous height to which they had swollen
under the profuse reigns of John the Second, and Henry the Fourth. This
was such, at the accession of Ferdinand and Isabella, as to disturb the
balance of the constitution, and to give serious cause of apprehension
both to the monarch and the people. They had introduced themselves into
every great post of profit or authority. They had ravished from the crown
the estates, on which it depended for its maintenance, as well as dignity.
They coined money in their own mints, like sovereign princes; and they
covered the country with their fortified castles, whence they defied the
law, and desolated the unhappy land with interminable feuds. It was
obviously necessary for the new sovereigns to proceed with the greatest
caution against this powerful and jealous body, and, above all, to attempt
no measure of importance, in which they would not be supported by the
hearty co-operation of the nation.

The first measure, which may be said to have clearly developed their
policy, was the organization of the hermandad, which, although ostensibly
directed against offenders of a more humble description, was made to bear
indirectly upon the nobility, whom it kept in awe by the number and
discipline of its forces, and the promptness with which it could assemble
them on the most remote points of the kingdom; while its rights of
jurisdiction tended materially to abridge those of the seignorial
tribunals. It was accordingly resisted with the greatest pertinacity by
the aristocracy; although, as we have seen, the resolution of the queen,
supported by the constancy of the commons, enabled her to triumph over all
opposition, until the great objects of the institution were accomplished.

Another measure, which insensibly operated to the depression of the
nobility, was making official preferment depend less exclusively on rank,
and much more on personal merit, than before. "Since the hope of guerdon,"
says one of the statutes enacted at Toledo, "is the spur to just and
honorable actions, when men perceive that offices of trust are not to
descend by inheritance, but to be conferred on merit, they will strive to
excel in virtue, that they may attain its reward." [22] The sovereigns,
instead of confining themselves to the grandees, frequently advanced
persons of humble origin, and especially those learned in the law, to the
most responsible stations, consulting them, and paying great deference to
their opinions, on all matters of importance. The nobles, finding that
rank was no longer the sole, or indeed the necessary avenue to promotion,
sought to secure it by attention to more liberal studies, in which they
were greatly encouraged by Isabella, who admitted their children into her
palace, where they were reared under her own eye. [23]

But the boldest assaults on the power of the aristocracy were made in the
famous cortes of Toledo, in 1480, which Carbajal enthusiastically styles

The first object of its attention was the condition of the exchequer, which Henry the Fourth had so exhausted by his reckless prodigality, that the clear annual revenue amounted to no more than thirty thousand ducats, a sum much inferior to that enjoyed by many private individuals; so that, stripped of his patrimony, it at last came to be said, he was "king only of the highways." Such had been the royal necessities, that blank certificates of annuities assigned on the public rents were hawked about the market, and sold at such a depreciated rate, that the price of an annuity did not exceed the amount of one year's income. The commons saw with alarm the weight of the burdens which must devolve on them for the maintenance of the crown thus impoverished in its resources; and they resolved to meet the difficulty by advising at once a resumption of the grants unconstitutionally made during the latter half of Henry the Fourth's reign, and the commencement of the present. [25] This measure, however violent, and repugnant to good faith, it may appear at the present time, seems then to have admitted of justification, as far as the nation was concerned; since such alienation of the public revenue was in itself illegal, and contrary to the coronation oath of the sovereign; and those who accepted his obligations, held them subject to the liability of their revocation, which had frequently occurred under the preceding reigns.

As the intended measure involved the interests of most of the considerable proprietors in the kingdom, who had thriven on the necessities of the crown, it was deemed proper to require the attendance of the nobility and great ecclesiastics in cortes by a special summons, which it seems had been previously omitted. Thus convened, the legislature appears, with
great unanimity, and much to the credit of those most deeply affected by it, to have acquiesced in the proposed resumption of the grants, as a measure of absolute necessity. The only difficulty was to settle the principles on which the retrenchment might be most equitably made, with reference to creditors, whose claims rested on a great variety of grounds. The plan suggested by Cardinal Mendoza seems to have been partially adopted. It was decided, that all, whose pensions had been conferred without any corresponding services on their part, should forfeit them entirely; that those, who had purchased annuities, should return their certificates on a reimbursement of the price paid for them; and that the remaining creditors, who composed the largest class, should retain such a proportion only of their pensions, as might be judged commensurate with their services to the state. [26]

By this important reduction, the final adjustment and execution of which were intrusted to Fernando de Talavera, the queen's confessor, a man of austere probity, the gross amount of thirty millions of maravedies, a sum equal to three-fourths of the whole revenue on Isabella's accession, was annually saved to the crown. The retrenchment was conducted with such strict impartiality, that the most confidential servants of the queen, and the relatives of her husband, were among those who suffered the most severely. [27] It is worthy of remark that no diminution whatever was made of the stipends settled on literary and charitable establishments. It may be also added, that Isabella appropriated the first fruits of this measure, by distributing the sum of twenty millions of maravedies among the widows and orphans of those loyalists who had fallen in the War of the Succession. [28] This resumption of the grants may be considered as the
basis of those economical reforms, which, without oppression to the
subject, augmented the public revenue more than twelve fold during this
auspicious reign. [29]

Several other acts were passed by the same cortes, which had a more
exclusive bearing on the nobility. They were prohibited from quartering
the royal arms on their escutcheons, from being attended by a mace-bearer
and a bodyguard, from imitating the regal style of address in their
written correspondence, and other insignia of royalty which they had
arrogantly assumed. They were forbidden to erect new fortresses, and we
have already seen the activity of the queen in procuring the demolition or
restitution of the old. They were expressly restrained from duels, an
inveterate source of mischief, for engaging in which the parties, both
principals and seconds, were subjected to the penalties of treason.
Isabella evinced her determination of enforcing this law on the highest
offenders, by imprisoning, soon after its enactment, the counts of Luna
and Valencia for exchanging a cartel of defiance, until the point at issue
should be settled by the regular course of justice. [30]

It is true the haughty nobility of Castile winced more than once at
finding themselves so tightly curbed by their new masters. On one
occasion, a number of the principal grandees, with the duke of Infantado
at their head, addressed a letter of remonstrance to the king and queen,
requiring them to abolish the hermandad, as an institution burdensome on
the nation, deprecating the slight degree of confidence which their
highnesses reposed in their order, and requesting that four of their
number might be selected to form a council for the general direction of
affairs of state, by whose advice the king and queen should be governed in all matters of importance, as in the time of Henry the Fourth.

Ferdinand and Isabella received this unseasonable remonstrance with great indignation, and returned an answer couched in the haughtiest terms. "The hermandad," they said, "is an institution most salutary to the nation, and is approved by it as such. It is our province to determine who are best entitled to preferment, and to make merit the standard of it. You may follow the court, or retire to your estates, as you think best; but, so long as Heaven permits us to retain the rank with which we have been intrusted, we shall take care not to imitate the example of Henry the Fourth, in becoming a tool in the hands of our nobility." The discontented lords, who had carried so high a hand under the preceding imbecile reign, feeling the weight of an authority which rested on the affections of the people, were so disconcerted by the rebuke, that they made no attempt to rally, but condescended to make their peace separately as they could, by the most ample acknowledgments. [31]

An example of the impartiality as well as spirit, with which Isabella asserted the dignity of the crown, is worth recording. During her husband's absence in Aragon in the spring of 1481, a quarrel occurred, in the ante-chamber of the palace at Valladolid, between two young noblemen, admiral of Castile, king Ferdinand's uncle. The queen, on receiving intelligence of it, granted a safe-conduct to the lord of Toral, as the weaker party, until the affair should be adjusted between them. Don Frederic, however, disregarding this protection, caused his enemy to be
waylaid by three of his followers, armed with bludgeons, and sorely beaten
one evening in the streets of Valladolid.

Isabella was no sooner informed of this outrage on one whom she had taken
under the royal protection, than, burning with indignation, she
immediately mounted her horse, though in the midst of a heavy storm of
rain, and proceeded alone towards the castle of Simancas, then in
possession of the admiral, the father of the offender, where she supposed
him to have taken refuge, travelling all the while with such rapidity,
that she was not overtaken by the officers of her guard, until she had
gained the fortress. She instantly summoned the admiral to deliver up his
son to justice; and, on his replying that "Don Frederic was not there, and
that he was ignorant where He was," she commanded him to surrender the
keys of the castle, and, after a fruitless search, again returned to
Valladolid. The next day Isabella was confined to her bed by an illness
occasioned as much by chagrin, as by the excessive fatigue which she had
undergone. "My body is lame," said she, "with the blows given by Don
Frederic in contempt of my safe-conduct."

The admiral, perceiving how deeply he and his family had incurred the
displeasure of the queen, took counsel with his friends, who were led by
their knowledge of Isabella's character to believe that he would have more
to hope from the surrender of his son, than from further attempts at
concealment. The young man was accordingly conducted to the palace by his
uncle, the constable de Haro, who deprecated the queen's resentment by
representing the age of his nephew, scarcely amounting to twenty years.
Isabella, however, thought proper to punish the youthful delinquent, by
ordering him to be publicly conducted as a prisoner, by one of the alcaldes of her court, through the great square of Valladolid to the fortress of Arevalo, where he was detained in strict confinement, all privilege of access being denied to him; and when, at length, moved by the consideration of his consanguinity with the king, she consented to his release, she banished him to Sicily, until he should receive the royal permission to return to his own country. [32]

Notwithstanding the strict impartiality as well as vigor of the administration, it could never have maintained itself by its own resources alone, in its offensive operations against the high-spirited aristocracy of Castile. Its most direct approaches, however, were made, as we have seen, under cover of the cortes. The sovereigns showed great deference, especially in this early period of their reign, to the popular branch of this body; and, so far from pursuing the odious policy of preceding princes in diminishing the amount of represented cities, they never failed to direct their writs to all those which, at their accession, retained the right of representation, and subsequently enlarged the number by the conquest of Granada; while they exercised the anomalous privilege, noticed in the Introduction to this History, of omitting altogether, or issuing only a partial summons to the nobility. [33] By making merit the standard of preferment, they opened the path of honor to every class of the community. They uniformly manifested the greatest tenderness for the rights of the commons in reference to taxation; and, as their patriotic policy was obviously directed to secure the personal rights and general prosperity of the people, it insured the co-operation of an ally, whose weight, combined with that of the crown, enabled them eventually to
restore the equilibrium which had been disturbed by the undue
preponderance of the aristocracy.

It may be well to state here the policy pursued by Ferdinand and Isabella
in reference to the Military Orders of Castile, since, although not fully
developed until a much later period, it was first conceived, and indeed
partly executed, in that now under discussion.

The uninterrupted warfare, which the Spaniards were compelled to maintain
for the recovery of their native land from the infidel, nourished in their
bosoms a flame of enthusiasm, similar to that kindled by the crusades for
the recovery of Palestine, partaking in an almost equal degree of a
religious and a military character. This similarity of sentiment gave
birth also to similar institutions of chivalry. Whether the military
orders of Castile were suggested by those of Palestine, or whether they go
back to a remoter period, as is contended by their chroniclers, or
whether, in fine, as Conde intimates, they were imitated from
corresponding associations, known to have existed among the Spanish Arabs,
[34] there can be no doubt that the forms under which they were
permanently organized, were derived, in the latter part of the twelfth
century, from the monastic orders established for the protection of the
Holy Land. The Hospitalers, and especially the Templars, obtained more
extensive acquisitions in Spain, than in any, perhaps every other country
in Christendom; and it was partly from the ruins of their empire, that
were constructed the magnificent fortunes of the Spanish orders. [35]
The most eminent of these was the order of St. Jago, or St. James, of Compostella. The miraculous revelation of the body of the Apostle, after the lapse of eight centuries from the date of his interment, and his frequent apparition in the ranks of the Christian armies, in their desperate struggles with the infidel, had given so wide a celebrity to the obscure town of Compostella in Galicia, which contained the sainted relics, [36] that it became the resort of pilgrims from every part of Christendom, during the Middle Ages; and the escallop shell, the device of St. James, was adopted as the universal badge of the palmer. Inns for the refreshment and security of the pious itinerants were scattered along the whole line of the route from France; but, as they were exposed to perpetual annoyance from the predatory incursions of the Arabs, a number of knights and gentlemen associated themselves, for their protection, with the monks of St. Lojo, or Eloy, adopting the rule of St. Augustine, and thus laid the foundation of the chivalric order of St. James, about the middle of the twelfth century. The cavaliers of the fraternity, which received its papal bull of approbation five years later, in 1175, were distinguished by a white mantle embroidered with a red cross, in fashion of a sword, with the escallop shell below the guard, in imitation of the device which glittered on the banner of their tutelar saint, when, he condescended to take part in their engagements with the Moors. The red color denoted, according to an ancient commentator, "that it was stained with the blood of the infidel." The rules of the new order imposed on its members the usual obligations of obedience, community of property, and of conjugal chastity, instead of celibacy. They were, moreover, required to relieve the poor, defend the traveler, and maintain perpetual war upon the Mussulman. [37]
The institution of the knights of Calatrava was somewhat more romantic in its origin. That town, from its situation on the frontiers of the Moorish territory of Andalusia, where it commanded the passes into Castile, became of vital importance to the latter kingdom. Its defense had accordingly been entrusted to the valiant order of the Templars, who, unable to keep their ground against the pertinacious assaults of the Moslems, abandoned it, at the expiration of eight years, as untenable. This occurred about the middle of the twelfth century; and the Castilian monarch, Sancho the Beloved, as the last resort, offered it to whatever good knights would undertake its defense.

The emprise was eagerly sought by a monk of a distant convent in Navarre, who had once been a soldier, and whose military ardor seems to have been exalted, instead of being extinguished, in the solitude of the cloister. The monk, supported by his conventual brethren, and a throng of cavaliers and more humble followers, who sought redemption under the banner of the church, was enabled to make good his word. From the confederation of these knights and ecclesiastics sprung the military fraternity of Calatrava, which received the confirmation of the pontiff, Alexander the Third, in 1164. The rules which it adopted were those of St. Benedict, and its discipline was in the highest degree austere.

The cavaliers were sworn to perpetual celibacy, from which they were not released till so late as the sixteenth century. Their diet was of the plainest kind. They were allowed meat only thrice a week, and then only one dish. They were to maintain unbroken silence at the table, in the
chapel, and the dormitory; and they were enjoined both to sleep and to worship with the sword girt on their side, in token of readiness for action. In the earlier days of the institution, the spiritual, as well as the military brethren, were allowed to make part of the martial array against the infidel, until this was prohibited, as indecorous, by the Holy See. From this order branched off that of Montesa, in Valencia, which was instituted at the commencement of the fourteenth century, and continued dependent on the parent stock. [38]

The third great order of religious chivalry in Castile was that of Alcantara, which also received its confirmation from Pope Alexander the Third, in 1177. It was long held in nominal subordination to the knights of Calatrava, from which it was relieved by Julius the Second, and eventually rose to an importance little inferior to that of its rival. [39]

The internal economy of these three fraternities was regulated by the same general principles. The direction of affairs was entrusted to a council, consisting of the grand master and a number of the commanders (comendadores), among whom the extensive territories of the order were distributed. This council, conjointly with the grand master, or the latter exclusively, as in the fraternity of Calatrava, supplied the vacancies. The master himself was elected by a general chapter of these military functionaries alone, or combined with the conventual clergy, as in the order of Calatrava, which seems to have recognized the supremacy of the military over the spiritual division of the community, more unreservedly than that of St. James.
These institutions appear to have completely answered the objects of their creation. In the earlier history of the Peninsula, we find the Christian chivalry always ready to bear the brunt of battle against the Moors. Set apart for this peculiar duty, their services in the sanctuary only tended to prepare them for their sterner duties in the field of battle, where the zeal of the Christian soldier may be supposed to have been somewhat sharpened by the prospect of the rich temporal acquisitions, which the success of his arms was sure to secure to his fraternity. For the superstitious princes of those times, in addition to the wealth lavished so liberally on all monastic institutions, granted the military orders almost unlimited rights over the conquests achieved by their own valor. In the sixteenth century, we find the order of St. James, which had shot up to a pre-eminence above the rest, possessed of eighty-four commanderies, and two hundred inferior benefices. This same order could bring into the field, according to Garibay, four hundred belted knights, and one thousand lances, which, with the usual complement of a lance in that day, formed a very considerable force. The rents of the mastership of St. James amounted, in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella, to sixty thousand ducats, those of Alcantara to forty-five thousand, and those of Calatrava to forty thousand. There was scarcely a district of the Peninsula which was not covered with their castles, towns, and convents. Their rich commanderies gradually became objects of cupidity to men of the highest rank, and more especially the grand-masterships, which, from their extensive patronage, and the authority they conferred over an organized militia pledged to implicit obedience, and knit together by the strong tie of common interest, raised their possessors almost to the level of royalty itself.
Hence the elections to these important dignities came to be a fruitful source of intrigue, and frequently of violent collision. The monarchs, who had anciently reserved the right of testifying their approbation of an election by presenting the standard of the order to the new dignitary, began personally to interfere in the deliberations of the chapter. While the pope, to whom a contested point was not unfrequently referred, assumed at length the prerogative of granting the masterships in administration on a vacancy, and even that of nomination itself, which, if disputed, he enforced by his spiritual thunders. [40]

Owing to these circumstances, there was probably no one cause, among the many which occurred in Castile during the fifteenth century, more prolific of intestine discord, than the election to these posts, far too important to be intrusted to any subject, and the succession to which was sure to be contested by a host of competitors. Isabella seems to have settled in her mind the course of policy to be adopted in this matter, at a very early period of her reign. On occasion of a vacancy in the grand-mastership of St. James, by the death of the incumbent, in 1476, she made a rapid journey on horseback, her usual mode of travelling, from Valladolid to the town of Ucles, where a chapter of the order was deliberating on the election of a new principal. The queen, presenting herself before this body, represented with so much energy the inconvenience of devolving powers of such magnitude on any private individual, and its utter incompatibility with public order, that she prevailed on them, smarting, as they were, under the evils of a disputed succession, to solicit the administration for the king, her husband. That monarch, indeed, consented to waive this privilege in favor of Alonso de Cardenas, one of the
competitors for the office, and a loyal servant of the crown; but, at his
decease in 1499, the sovereigns retained the possession of the vacant
mastership, conformably to a papal decree, which granted them its
administration for life, in the same manner as had been done with that of
Calatrava in 1487, and of Alcántara in 1494. [41]

The sovereigns were no sooner vested with the control of the military
orders, than they began with their characteristic promptness to reform the
various corruptions, which had impaired their ancient discipline. They
erected a council for the general superintendence of affairs relating to
the orders, and invested it with extensive powers both of civil and
criminal jurisdiction. They supplied the vacant benefices with persons of
acknowledged worth, exercising an impartiality, which could never be
maintained by any private individual, necessarily exposed to the influence
of personal interests and affections. By this harmonious distribution, the
honors, which had before been held up to the highest bidder, or made the
subject of a furious canvass, became the incentive and sure recompense of
desert. [42]

In the following reign, the grand-masterships of these fraternities were
annexed in perpetuity to the crown of Castile by a bull of Pope Adrian the
Sixth; while their subordinate dignities, having survived the object of
their original creation, the subjugation of the Moors, degenerated into
the empty decorations, the stars and garters, of an order of nobility.
[43]
IV. Vindication of ecclesiastical rights belonging to the crown from papal usurpation. In the earlier stages of the Castilian monarchy, the sovereigns appear to have held a supremacy in spiritual, very similar to that exercised by them in temporal matters. It was comparatively late that the nation submitted its neck to the papal yoke, so closely riveted at a subsequent period; and even the Romish ritual was not admitted into its churches till long after it had been adopted in the rest of Europe.

But, when the code of the Partidas was promulgated in the thirteenth century, the maxims of the canon law came to be permanently established. The ecclesiastical encroached on the lay tribunals. Appeals were perpetually carried up to the Roman court; and the popes, pretending to regulate the minutest details of church economy, not only disposed of inferior benefices, but gradually converted the right of confirming elections to the episcopal and higher ecclesiastical dignities, into that of appointment.

These usurpations of the church had been repeatedly the subject of grave remonstrance in cortes. Several remedial enactments had passed that body, during the present reign, especially in relation to the papal provision of foreigners to benefices; an evil of much greater magnitude in Spain than in other countries of Europe, since the episcopal demesnes, frequently covering the Moorish frontier, became an important line of national defence, obviously improper to be intrusted to the keeping of foreigners and absentees. Notwithstanding the efforts of cortes, no effectual remedy was devised for this latter grievance, until it became the subject of actual collision between the crown and the pontiff, in reference to the
Sixtus the Fourth had conferred the latter benefice, on its becoming vacant in 1482, on his nephew, Cardinal San Giorgio, a Genoese, in direct opposition to the wishes of the queen, who would have bestowed it on her chaplain, Alfonso de Burgos, in exchange for the bishopric of Cordova. An ambassador was accordingly despatched by the Castilian sovereigns to Rome, to remonstrate on the papal appointment; but without effect, as Sixtus replied, with a degree of presumption, which might better have become his predecessors of the twelfth century, that "he was head of the church, and, as such, possessed of unlimited power in the distribution of benefices, and that he was not bound to consult the inclination of any potentate on earth, any farther than might subserve the interests of religion."

The sovereigns, highly dissatisfied with this response, ordered their subjects, ecclesiastical as well as lay, to quit the papal dominions; an injunction, which the former, fearful of the sequestration of their temporalities in Castile, obeyed with as much promptness as the latter. At the same time, Ferdinand and Isabella proclaimed their intention of inviting the princes of Christendom to unite with them in convoking a general council for the reformation of the manifold abuses, which dishonored the church. No sound could have grated more unpleasantly on the pontifical ear, than the menace of a general council, particularly at this period, when ecclesiastical corruptions had reached a height which could but ill endure its scrutiny. The pope became convinced that he had ventured too far, and that Henry the Fourth was no longer monarch of Castile. He accordingly despatched a legate to Spain, fully empowered to arrange the matter en an amicable basis.
The legate, who was a layman, by name Domingo Centurion, no sooner arrived in Castile, than he caused the sovereigns to be informed of his presence there, and the purpose of his mission; but he received orders instantly to quit the kingdom, without attempting so much as to disclose the nature of his instructions, since they could not but be derogatory to the dignity of the crown. A safe-conduct was granted for himself and his suite; but, at the same time, great surprise was expressed that any one should venture to appear, as envoy from his Holiness, at the court of Castile, after it had been treated by him with such unmerited indignity.

Far from resenting this ungracious reception, the legate affected the deepest humility; professing himself willing to waive whatever immunities he might claim as papal ambassador, and to submit to the jurisdiction of the sovereigns as one of their own subjects, so that he might obtain an audience. Cardinal Mendoza, whose influence in the cabinet had gained him the title of "third king of Spain," apprehensive of the consequences of a protracted rupture with the church, interposed in behalf of the envoy, whose conciliatory deportment at length so far mitigated the resentment of the sovereigns, that they consented to open negotiations with the court of Rome. The result was the publication of a bull by Sixtus the Fourth, in which his Holiness engaged to provide such natives to the higher dignities of the church in Castile, as should be nominated by the monarchs of that kingdom; and Alfonso de Burgos was accordingly translated to the see of Cuenca. [47] Isabella, on whom the duties of ecclesiastical preferment devolved, by the act of settlement, availed herself of the rights, thus wrested from the grasp of Rome, to exalt to the vacant sees persons of
exemplary piety and learning, holding light, in comparison with the
faithful discharge of this duty, every minor consideration of interest,
and even the solicitations of her husband, as we shall see hereafter. [48]
And the chronicler of her reign dwells with complacency on those good old
times, when churchmen were to be found of such singular modesty, as to
require to be urged to accept the dignities to which their merits entitled
them. [49]

V. The regulation of trade. It will be readily conceived that trade,
agriculture, and every branch of industry must have languished under the
misrule of preceding reigns. For what purpose, indeed, strive to
accumulate wealth, when it would only serve to sharpen the appetite of the
spoiler? For what purpose cultivate the earth, when the fruits were sure
to be swept away, even before harvest time, in some ruthless foray? The
frequent famines and pestilences, which occurred in the latter part of
Henry's reign and the commencement of his successor's, show too plainly
the squalid condition of the people, and their utter destitution of all
useful arts. We are assured by the Curate of Los Palacios, that the plague
broke out in the southern districts of the kingdom, carrying off eight, or
nine, or even fifteen thousand inhabitants from the various cities; while
the prices of the ordinary aliments of life rose to a height, which put
them above the reach of the poorer classes of the community. In addition
to these physical evils, a fatal shock was given to commercial credit by
the adulteration of the coin. Under Henry the Fourth, it is computed that
there were no less than one hundred and fifty mints openly licensed by the
crown, in addition to many others erected by individuals without any legal
authority. The abuse came to such a height, that people at length refused
to receive in payment of their debts the debased coin, whose value
depreciated more and more every day; and the little trade, which remained
in Castile, was carried on by barter, as in the primitive stages of
society. [50]

The magnitude of the evil was such as to claim the earliest attention of
the cortes under the new monarchs. Acts were passed fixing the standard
and legal value of the different denominations of coin. A new coinage was
subsequently made. Five royal mints were alone authorized, afterwards
augmented to seven, and severe penalties denounced against the fabrication
of money elsewhere. The reform of the currency gradually infused new life
into commerce, as the return of the circulations, which have been
interrupted for a while, quickens the animal body. This was furthered by
salutary laws for the encouragement of domestic industry. Internal
communication was facilitated by the construction of roads and bridges.
Absurd restrictions on change of residence, as well as the onerous duties
which had been imposed on commercial intercourse between Castile and
Aragon, were repealed. Several judicious laws were enacted for the
protection of foreign trade; and the flourishing condition of the
mercantile marine may be inferred from that of the military, which enabled
the sovereigns to fit out an armament of seventy sail in 1482, from the
ports of Biscay and Andalusia, for the defence of Naples against the
Turks. Some of their regulations, indeed, as those prohibiting the
exportation of the precious metals, savor too strongly of the ignorance of
the true principles of commercial legislation, which has distinguished the
Spaniards to the present day. But others, again, as that for relieving the
importation of foreign books from all duties, "because," says the statute,
"they bring both honor and profit to the kingdom, by the facilities which they afford for making men learned," are not only in advance of that age, but may sustain an advantageous comparison with provisions on corresponding subjects in Spain at the present time. Public credit was re-established by the punctuality with which the government redeemed the debt contracted during the Portuguese war; and, notwithstanding the repeal of various arbitrary imposts, which enriched the exchequer under Henry the Fourth, such was the advance of the country under the wise economy of the present reign, that the revenue was augmented nearly six fold between the years 1477 and 1482. [51]

Thus released from the heavy burdens imposed on it, the spring of enterprise recovered its former elasticity. The productive capital of the country was made to flow through the various channels of domestic industry. The hills and the valleys again rejoiced in the labor of the husbandman; and the cities were embellished with stately edifices, both public and private, which attracted the gaze and commendation of foreigners. [52] The writers of that day are unbounded in their plaudits of Isabella, to whom they principally ascribe this auspicious revolution in the condition of the country and its inhabitants, [53] which seems almost as magical as one of those transformations in romance wrought by the hands of some benevolent fairy. [54]

VI. The pre-eminence of the royal authority. This, which, as we have seen, appears to have been the natural result of the policy of Ferdinand and Isabella, was derived quite as much from the influence of their private characters, as from their public measures. Their acknowledged talents were
supported by a dignified demeanor, which formed a striking contrast with 
the meanness in mind and manners that had distinguished their predecessor. 

They both exhibited a practical wisdom in their own personal relations, 
which always commands respect, and which, however it may have savored of 
worldly policy in Ferdinand, was, in his consort, founded on the purest 
and most exalted principle. Under such a sovereign, the court, which had 
been little better than a brothel under the preceding reign, became the 
nursery of virtue and generous ambition. Isabella watched assiduously over 
the nurture of the high-born damsels of her court, whom she received into 
the royal palace, causing them to be educated under her own eye, and 
endowing them with liberal portions on their marriage. [55] By these and 
similar acts of affectionate solicitude, she endeared herself to the 
higher classes of her subjects, while the patriotic tendency of her public 
conduct established her in the hearts of the people. She possessed, in 
combination with the feminine qualities which beget love, a masculine 
energy of character, which struck terror into the guilty. She enforced the 
execution of her own plans, oftentimes even at great personal hazard, with 
a resolution surpassing that of her husband. Both were singularly 
temperate, indeed, frugal, in their dress, equipage, and general style of 
living; seeking to affect others less by external pomp, than by the silent 
though more potent influence of personal qualities. On all such occasions 
as demanded it, however, they displayed a princely magnificence, which 
dazzled the multitude, and is blazoned with great solemnity in the 
garrulous chronicles of the day. [56]

The tendencies of the present administration were undoubtedly to 
strengthen the power of the crown. This was the point to which most of the
feudal governments of Europe at this epoch were tending. But Isabella was far from being actuated by the selfish aim or unscrupulous policy of many contemporary princes, who, like Louis the Eleventh, sought to govern by the arts of dissimulation, and to establish their own authority by fomenting the divisions of their powerful vassals. On the contrary, she endeavored to bind together the disjointed fragments of the state, to assign to each of its great divisions its constitutional limits, and, by depressing the aristocracy to its proper level and elevating the commons, to consolidate the whole under the lawful supremacy of the crown. At least, such was the tendency of her administration up to the present period of our history. These laudable objects were gradually achieved without fraud or violence, by a course of measures equally laudable; and the various orders of the monarchy, brought into harmonious action with each other, were enabled to turn the forces, which had before been wasted in civil conflict, to the glorious career of discovery and conquest, which it was destined to run during the remainder of the century.

* * * * *

The sixth volume of the Memoirs of the Royal Spanish Academy of History, published in 1821, is devoted altogether to the reign of Isabella. It is distributed into Illustrations, as they are termed, of the various branches of the administrative policy of the queen, of her personal character, and of the condition of science under her government. These essays exhibit much curious research, being derived from unquestionable contemporary documents, printed and manuscript, and from the public archives. They are compiled with much discernment; and, as they throw
light on some of the most recondite transactions of this reign, are of
inestimable service to the historian. The author of the volume is the late
lamented secretary of the Academy, Don Diego Clemencin; one of the few who
survived the wreck of scholarship in Spain, and who with the erudition,
which has frequently distinguished his countrymen, combined the liberal
and enlarged opinions, which would do honor to any country.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Among other examples, Pulgar mentions that of the alcayde of Castro-
committed such grievous devastations throughout the country, that the
cities of Burgos, Avila, Salamanca, Segovia, Valladolid, Medina, and
others in that quarter, were fain to pay him a tribute, (black mail,) to
protect their territories from his rapacity. His successful example was
imitated by many other knightly freebooters of the period. (Reyes
manuscript notices by contemporaries of Henry IV. Monedas de Enrique IV.,
pp. 1, 2.

[2] The _quaderno_ of the laws of the Hermandad has now become very
rare. That in my possession was printed at Burgos, in 1527. It has since
been incorporated with considerable extension into the Recopilacion of
Philip II.

[3] Quaderno de las Leyes Nuevas de la Hermandad, (Burgos, 1527,) leyes 1,
By one of the laws, the inhabitants of such seignorial towns as refused to pay the contributions of the Hermandad were excluded from its benefits, as well as from traffic with, and even the power of recovering their debts, from other natives of the kingdom.

Ley 33.

[4] Recopilacion de las Leyes, (Madrid, 1640,) lib. 8, tit. 13, ley 44.--
cap. 51.--Mem. de la Acad. de Hist., tom. vi. Ilust. 6.--Lebrija, Rerum
fol. 85.--L. Marineo, Cosas Memarables, fol. 160.

Gonzalo de Oviedo lavishes many encomiums on Cabrera, for "his generous qualities, his singular prudence in government, and his solicitude for his vassals, whom he inspired with the deepest attachment." (Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 23.) The best panegyric on his character, is the unshaken confidence, which his royal mistress reposed in him, to the day of her death.

less than 8,000 guilty fled from Seville and Cordova.
Decades, lib. 7.—L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, ubi supra.—Garibay, Compendio, lib. 18, cap. 11.

part. 2, cap. 78.

imputado seguir más la via de rigor que de la piedad; y esto facia por Memorables, fol. 162.

31.

This constitutional, though, as it would seem, impotent right of the should not have escaped Marina.

council. The number of the members was limited to one prelate, as sessions were to be held every day, in the palace. (Leyes 1, 2.) They were instructed to refer to the other tribunals all matters not strictly coming within their own jurisdiction. (Ley 4.) Their acts, in all cases except those specially reserved, were to have the force of law without the royal signature. (Leyes 23, 24.) See also Los Doctores Asso y Manuel,
Instituciones del Derecho Civil de Castilla, (Madrid, 1792,) Introd. p. 111; and Santiago Agustin Riol, Informe, apud Semanario Erudito, (Madrid, 1788,) tom. iii. p. 114, who is mistaken in stating the number of jurists in the council, at this time, at sixteen; a change, which did not take place till Philip II.'s reign. (Recop. de las Leyes, lib. 2, tit. 4, ley 1.)

Marina denies that the council could constitutionally exercise any judicial authority, at least, in suits between private parties, and quotes a passage from Pulgar, showing that its usurpations in this way were of this nature, however, to a considerable extent, appear to have been conceded to it by more than one statute under this reign. See Recop. de las Leyes, (lib. 2, tit. 4, leyes 20, 22, and tit. 5, ley 12,) and the unqualified testimony of Riol, Informe, apud Semanario Erudito, ubi supra.

part. 2, cap. 25.

By one of the statutes, (ley 4,) the commission of the judges, which, before extended to life, or a long period, was abridged to one year. This important innovation was made at the earnest and repeated remonstrance of cortes, who traced the remissness and corruption, too frequent of late in the court, to the circumstance that its decisions were not liable to be mistook the true cause of the evil. Few will doubt, at any rate, that the remedy proposed must have been fraught with far greater.
[15] Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS.--By one of the statutes of the cortes of Toledo, in 1480, the king was required to take his seat in the council new for the Castilians to have good laws, as for their monarchs to observe them.

Peter Martyr, another contemporary witness of the beneficial changes in the government. Opus Epistolarum, (Amstelodami, 1670,) ep. 31.

lib. 3, cap. 16-21.--Marina has made an elaborate commentary on Alfonso's Legislacion de Castilla, (Madrid, 1808,) pp. 269 et seq. The English reader will find a more succinct analysis in Dr. Dunham's History of Spain and Portugal, (London, 1832,) in Lardner's Cyclopaedia, vol. iv. pp. 121-150.--The latter has given a more exact, and, at the same time, extended view of the early Castilian legislation, probably, than is to be found, in the same compass, in any of the Peninsular writers.

satire of the fifteenth century, directed, with considerable humor, against these abuses, which lead the writer in the last stanza to envy even the summary style of Mahometan justice.
"En tierra de Moros un solo alcalde
Libra lo cevil e lo criminal,
E todo el dia se esta de valde
For la justicia andar muy igual:
Alli non es Azo, nin es Decretal,
Nin es Roberto, nin la Clementina,
Salvo discrecion e buena doctrina,
La qual muestra a todos vevir communal." p. 389.

[20] Mendez enumerates no less than five editions of this code, by 1500; a sufficient evidence of its authority, and general reception throughout

works abundantly disprove Asso y Manuel's insinuation, that Montalavo's code was the fruit of his private study, without any commission for it, and that it gradually usurped an authority which it had not in its origin.

indeed, is apparent from the positive declaration of Bernaldez. "Los Reyes

[23] Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 44.--Sempere
See the emphatic language, on this and other grievances, of the Castilian commons, in their memorial to the sovereigns, Apendice, No. 10, of Clemencin's valuable compilation. The commons had pressed the measure, as one of the last necessity to the crown, as early as the cortes of Madrigal, in 1476. The reader will find the whole petition extracted by the Recopilacion of Philip II., lib. 5, tit. 10, cap. 17. See also leyes 3 and 15.

Admiral Enriquez, for instance, resigned 240,000 maravedies of his annual income;--the Duke of Alva, 575,000;--the Duke of Medina Sidonia, 180,000.--The loyal family of the Mendozas were also great losers, but none forfeited so much as the overgrown favorite of Henry IV., Beltran de la Cueva, duke of Albuquerque, who had uniformly supported the royal cause, and whose retrenchment amounted to 1,400,000 maravedies of yearly income.

"No monarch," said the high-minded queen, "should consent to alienate his demesnes; since the loss of revenue necessarily deprives him of the best means of rewarding the attachment of his friends, and of making..."
8, tit. 8, ley 10 et al.–These affairs were conducted in the true spirit of knight-errantry. Oviedo mentions one, in which two young men of the noble houses of Velasco and Ponce de Leon agreed to fight on horseback, with sharp spears (_puntas de diamantes_), in doublet and hose, without defensive armor of any kind. The place appointed for the combat was a narrow bridge across the Xarama, three leagues from Madrid. Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 23.


[33] For example, at the great cortes of Toledo, in 1480, it does not appear that any of the nobility were summoned, except those in immediate attendance on the court, until the measure for the resumption of the grants, which so nearly affected that body, was brought before the legislature.

[34] Conde gives the following account of these chivalric associations among the Spanish Arabs, which, as far as I know, have hitherto escaped
the notice of European historians. "The Moslem _fronteros_ professed
great austerity in their lives, which they consecrated to perpetual war,
and bound themselves by a solemn vow to defend the frontier against the
incursions of the Christians. They were choice cavaliers, possessed of
consummate patience, and enduring fatigue, and always prepared to die
rather than desert their posts. It appears highly probable that the
Moorish fraternities suggested the idea of those military orders so
renowned for their valor in Spain and in Palestine, which rendered such
essential services to Christendom; for both the institutions were
established on similar principles." Conde, Historia de la Dominacion de

[35] See the details, given by Mariana, of the overgrown possessions of
the Templars in Castile at the period of their extinction, in the

The knights of the Temple and the Hospitallers seem to have acquired still
greater power in Aragon, where one of the monarchs was so infatuated as to
bequeath them his whole dominions,—a bequest which, it may well be
believed, was set aside by his high-spirited subjects. Zurita, Anales,
lib. 1, cap. 52.

[36] The apparition of certain preternatural lights in a forest,
discovered to a Galician peasant, in the beginning of the ninth century,
the spot, in which was deposited a marble sepulchre containing the ashes
of St. James. The miracle is reported with sufficient circumstantiality by

1791-3,) lib. 9, cap. 7,) who establishes, to his own satisfaction, the
advent of St. James into Spain. Mariana, with more skepticism than his
brethren, doubts the genuineness of the body, as well as the visit of the Apostle, but like a good Jesuit concludes, "It is not expedient to disturb with such disputes the devotion of the people, so firmly settled as it is." (Lib. 7, cap. 10.) The tutelar saint of Spain continued to support his people by taking part with them in battle against the infidel down to a very late period. Caro de Torres mentions two engagements in which he cheered on the squadrons of Cortes and Pizarro, "with his sword flashing lightning in the eyes of the Indians." Ordenes Militares, fol. 5.

[37] Rades y Andrada, Las Tres Ordenes, fol. 3-15.--Caro de Torres, Ordenes Militares, fol. 2-8.--Garibay, Compendio, tom. ii. pp. 116-118.

[38] Rades y Andrada, Las Tres Ordenes, part. 2, fol. 3-9, 49.--Caro de Torres, Ordenes Militares, fol. 49, 50.--Garibay, Compendio, tom. ii. pp. 100-104.


The sovereigns gave great offence to the jealous grandees who were competitors for the mastership of St. James, by conferring that dignity on Alonso de Cardenas, with their usual policy of making merit rather than birth the standard of preferment.

Riol has given a full account of the constitution of this council, Informe, apud Semanario Erudito, tom. iii. pp. 164 et seq.

The reader will find a view of the condition and general resources of the military orders as existing in the present century in Spain, in tom. v. pp. 102-117.

Most readers are acquainted with the curious story, related by Robertson, of the ordeal to which the Romish and Muzarabic rituals were subjected, in the reign of Alfonso VI., and the ascendancy which the combination of king-craft and priest-craft succeeded in securing to the former in opposition to the will of the nation. Cardinal Ximenes afterwards established a magnificent chapel in the cathedral church of Toledo for the performance of the Muzarabic services, which have continued trans., vol. iii. chap. 1.
apud Semanario Erudito, pp. 92 et seq.

lib. 1, tit. 3, leyes 19, 20; lib. 2, tit. 7, ley 2; lib. 3, tit. 1, ley

6.--Riol, Informe, apud Semanario Erudito, loc. cit.--In the latter part
of Henry IV.'s reign, a papal bull had been granted against the provision

Valencia.

[47] Riol, in his account of this celebrated concordat, refers to the
original instrument, as existing in his time in the archives of Simancas,
Semanario Erudito, tom. iii. p. 95.

Talavera.

104.--See also the similar independent conduct pursued by Ferdinand, three
Anales, tom. iv. fol. 304.

Henry's subjects, cited by Saez, Monedas de Enrique IV., p. 3.--Also the
coarse satire (composed in Henry's reign) of Mingo Revulgo, especially
coplas 24-27.

LEY 22; LIB. 5, TIT. 8, LEY 2; LIB. 6, TIT. 9, LEY 49; LIB. 6, TIT. 10,

LEY 13.--SEE also other wholesome laws for the encouragement of commerce
and general security of property, as that respecting contracts, (LIB. 5,
TIT. 8, LEY 5,)--fraudulent tradesmen, (LIB. 5, TIT. 8, LEY 5,)--
purveyance, (LIB. 6, TIT. 11, LEY 2 ET AL.--RECOPILACION DE LAS LEYES,

PART. 2, CAP. 99.--ZURITA, ANALES, TOM. IV. FOL. 312.--MEM. DE LA ACAD. DE
HIST., TOM. VI. ILUST. 11.)--THE revenue, it appears, in 1477, amounted to
27,415,228 maravedies; and in the year 1482, we find it increased to
150,695,288 maravedies. (IBID., ILUST. 5.)--A survey of the kingdom was
made between the years 1477 and 1479, for the purpose of ascertaining the
value of the royal rents, which formed the basis of the economical
regulations adopted by the cortes of Toledo. Although this survey was

exhibits such a variety of important details respecting the resources and
population of the country, that it must materially contribute towards an
exact history of this period. The compilation, which consists of twelve
folio volumes in manuscript, is deposited in the archives of Simancas.

[52] ONE OF THE statutes passed at Toledo expressly provides for the
erection of spacious and handsome edifices (CASAS GRANDES Y BIEN FECHAS)
for the transaction of municipal affairs, in all the principal towns and

L. MARINEO, COSAS MEMORABLES, PASSIM,--ET AL. AUCT.
"Cosa fue por cierto maravillosa," exclaims Pulgar, in his Glosa on the Mingo Revulgo, "que lo que muchos hombres, y grandes senores no se gobernacion lo hizo en poco tiempo." Copla 21.

The beautiful lines of Virgil, so often misapplied,

"Jam redit et Virgo; redeunt Saturnia regna;
Jam nova progenies," etc.

seem to admit here of a pertinent application.

21.--As one example of the moral discipline introduced by Isabella in her court, we may cite the enactments against gaming, which had been carried

2, tit. 14, ley 31; lib. 8, tit. 10, ley 7.) L. Marineo, according to whom "hell is full of gamblers," highly commends the sovereigns for their efforts to discountenance this vice. Cosas Memorables, fol. 165.

See, for example, the splendid ceremony of Prince John's baptism, to which the gossipping Curate of Los Palacios devotes the 32d and 33d chapters of his History.

CHAPTER VII.
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MODERN INQUISITION.

Origin of the Ancient Inquisition.--Retrospective View of the Jews in Spain.--Their Wealth and Civilization.--Bigotry of the Age.--Its Influence on Isabella.--Her Confessor, Torquemada.--Bull authorizing the Inquisition.--Tribunal at Seville.--Forms of Trial.--Torture.--Autos da Fe.--Number of Convictions.--Perfidious Policy of Rome.

It is painful, after having dwelt so long on the important benefits resulting to Castile from the comprehensive policy of Isabella, to be compelled to turn to the darker side of the picture, and to exhibit her as accommodating herself to the illiberal spirit of the age in which she lived so far as to sanction one of the grossest abuses that ever disgraced humanity. The present chapter will be devoted to the establishment and early progress of the modern Inquisition; an institution, which has probably contributed more than any other cause to depress the lofty character of the ancient Spaniard, and which has thrown the gloom of fanaticism over those lovely regions which seem to be the natural abode of festivity and pleasure.

In the present liberal state of knowledge, we look with disgust at the pretensions of any human being, however exalted, to invade the sacred rights of conscience, inalienably possessed by every man. We feel that the spiritual concerns of an individual may be safely left to himself as most interested in them, except so far as they can be affected by argument or friendly monition; that the idea of compelling belief in particular
doctrines is a solecism, as absurd as wicked; and, so far from condemning
to the stake, or the gibbet, men who pertinaciously adhere to their
conscientious opinions in contempt of personal interests and in the face
of danger, we should rather feel disposed to imitate the spirit of
antiquity in raising altars and statues to their memory, as having
displayed the highest efforts of human virtue. But, although these truths
are now so obvious as rather to deserve the name of truisms, the world has
been slow, very slow, in arriving at them, after many centuries of
unspeakable oppression and misery.

Acts of intolerance are to be discerned from the earliest period in which
Christianity became the established religion of the Roman empire. But they
do not seem to have flowed from any systematized plan of persecution,
until the papal authority had swollen to a considerable height. The popes,
who claimed the spiritual allegiance of all Christendom, regarded heresy
as treason against themselves, and, as such, deserving all the penalties,
which sovereigns have uniformly visited on this, in their eyes,
unpardonable offence. The crusades, which, in the early part of the
thirteenth century, swept so fiercely over the southern provinces of
France, exterminating their inhabitants, and blasting the fair buds of
civilization which had put forth after the long feudal winter, opened the
way to the Inquisition; and it was on the ruins of this once happy land,
that were first erected the bloody altars of that tribunal. [1]

After various modifications, the province of detecting and punishing
heresy was exclusively committed to the hands of the Dominican friars; and
in 1233, in the reign of St. Louis, and under the pontificate of Gregory
the Ninth, a code for the regulation of their proceedings was finally
digested. The tribunal, after having been successively adopted in Italy
and Germany, was introduced into Aragon, where, in 1242, additional
provisions were framed by the council of Tarragona, on the basis of those
of 1233, which may properly be considered as the primitive instructions of
the Holy Office in Spain. [2]

This ancient Inquisition, as it is termed, bore the same odious
peculiarities in its leading features as the Modern; the same impenetrable
secrecy in its proceedings, the same insidious modes of accusation, a
similar use of torture, and similar penalties for the offender. A sort of
manual, drawn up by Eymerich, an Aragonese inquisitor of the fourteenth
century, for the instruction of the judges of the Holy Office, prescribes
all those ambiguous forms of interrogation, by which the unwary, and
perhaps innocent victim might be circumvented. [3] The principles, on
which the ancient Inquisition was established, are no less repugnant to
justice, than those which regulated the modern; although the former, it is
ture, was much less extensive in its operation. The arm of persecution,
however, fell with sufficient heaviness, especially during the thirteenth
and fourteenth centuries, on the unfortunate Albigenses, who from the
proximity and political relations of Aragon and Provence, had become
numerous in the former kingdom. The persecution appears, however, to have
been chiefly confined to this unfortunate sect, and there is no evidence
that the Holy Office, notwithstanding papal briefs to that effect, was
fully organized in Castile, before the reign of Isabella. This is perhaps
imputable to the paucity of heretics in that kingdom. It cannot, at any
rate, be charged to any lukewarmness in its sovereigns; since they, from
the time of St. Ferdinand, who heaped the fagots on the blazing pile with
his own hands, down to that of John the Second, Isabella's father, who
hunted the unhappy heretics of Biscay, like so many wild beasts, among the
mountains, had ever evinced a lively zeal for the orthodox faith. [4]

By the middle of the fifteenth century, the Albigensian heresy had become
nearly extirpated by the Inquisition of Aragon; so that this infernal
engine might have been suffered to sleep undisturbed from want of
sufficient fuel to keep it in motion, when new and ample materials were
discovered in the unfortunate race of Israel, on whom the sins of their
fathers have been so unsparingly visited by every nation in Christendom,
among whom they have sojourned, almost to the present century. As this
remarkable people, who seem to have preserved their unity of character
unbroken, amid the thousand fragments into which they have been scattered,
attained perhaps to greater consideration in Spain than in any other part
of Europe, and as the efforts of the Inquisition were directed principally
against them during the present reign, it may be well to take a brief
review of their preceding history in the Peninsula.

Under the Visigothic empire the Jews multiplied exceedingly in the
country, and were permitted to acquire considerable power and wealth. But
no sooner had their Arian masters embraced the orthodox faith, than they
began to testify their zeal by pouring on the Jews the most pitiless storm
of persecution. One of their laws alone condemned the whole race to
slavery; and Montesquieu remarks, without much exaggeration, that to the
Gothic code may be traced all the maxims of the modern Inquisition, the
monks of the fifteenth century only copying, in reference to the
Israelites, the bishops of the seventh. [5]

After the Saracenic invasion, which the Jews, perhaps with reason, are accused of having facilitated, they resided in the conquered cities, and were permitted to mingle with the Arabs on nearly equal terms. Their common Oriental origin produced a similarity of tastes, to a certain extent, not unfavorable to such a coalition. At any rate, the early Spanish Arabs were characterized by a spirit of toleration towards both Jews and Christians, "the people of the book," as they were called, which has scarcely been found among later Moslems. [6] The Jews, accordingly, under these favorable auspices, not only accumulated wealth with their usual diligence, but gradually rose to the highest civil dignities, and made great advances in various departments of letters. The schools of Cordova, Toledo, Barcelona, and Granada were crowded with numerous disciples, who emulated the Arabians in keeping alive the flame of learning, during the deep darkness of the Middle Ages. [7] Whatever may be thought of their success in speculative philosophy, [8] they cannot reasonably be denied to have contributed largely to practical and experimental science. They were diligent travellers in all parts of the known world, compiling itineraries which have proved of extensive use in later times, and bringing home hoards of foreign specimens and Oriental drugs, that furnished important contributions to the domestic pharmacopoeias. [9] In the practice of medicine, indeed, they became so expert, as in a manner to monopolize that profession. They made great proficiency in mathematics, and particularly in astronomy; while, in the cultivation of elegant letters, they revived the ancient glories of the Hebrew muse. [10] This was indeed the golden age of modern Jewish
literature, which, under the Spanish caliphs, experienced a protection so
benign, although occasionally checkered by the caprices of despotism, that
it was enabled to attain higher beauty and a more perfect development in
the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries, than it has
reached in any other part of Christendom. [11]

The ancient Castilians of the same period, very different from their
Gothic ancestors, seem to have conceded to the Israelites somewhat of the
feelings of respect, which were extorted from them by the superior
civilization of the Spanish Arabs. We find eminent Jews residing in the
courts of the Christian princes, directing their studies, attending them
as physicians, or more frequently administering their finances. For this
last vocation they seem to have had a natural aptitude; and, indeed, the
correspondence which they maintained with the different countries of
Europe by means of their own countrymen, who acted as the brokers of
almost every people among whom they were scattered during the Middle Ages,
afforded them peculiar facilities both in politics and commerce. We meet
with Jewish scholars and statesmen attached to the courts of Alfonso the
Tenth, Alfonso the Eleventh, Peter the Cruel, Henry the Second, and other
princes. Their astronomical science recommended them in a special manner
to Alfonso the Wise, who employed them in the construction of his
celebrated Tables. James the First of Aragon condescended to receive
instruction from them in ethics; and, in the fifteenth century, we notice
John the Second, of Castile, employing a Jewish secretary in the
compilation of a national Cancionero. [12]

But all this royal patronage proved incompetent to protect the Jews, when
their flourishing fortunes had risen to a sufficient height to excite popular envy, augmented, as it was, by that profuse ostentation of equipage and apparel, for which this singular people, notwithstanding their avarice, have usually shown a predilection. [13] Stories were circulated of their contempt for the Catholic worship, their desecration of its most holy symbols, and of their crucifixion, or other sacrifice, of Christian children, at the celebration of their own passover. [14] With these foolish calumnies, the more probable charge of usury and extortion was industriously preferred against them, till at length, towards the close of the fourteenth century, the fanatical populace, stimulated in many instances by the no less fanatical clergy, and perhaps encouraged by the numerous class of debtors to the Jews, who found this a convenient mode of settling their accounts, made a fierce assault on this unfortunate people in Castile and Aragon, breaking into their houses, violating their most private sanctuaries, scattering their costly collections and furniture, and consigning the wretched proprietors to indiscriminate massacre, without regard to sex or age. [15]

In this crisis, the only remedy left to the Jews was a real or feigned conversion to Christianity. St. Vincent Ferrier, a Dominican of Valencia, performed such a quantity of miracles, in furtherance of this purpose, as might have excited the envy of any saint in the Calendar; and these, aided by his eloquence, are said to have changed the hearts of no less than thirty-five thousand of the race of Israel, which doubtless must be reckoned the greatest miracle of all. [16]

The legislative enactments of this period, and still more under John the
Second, during the first half of the fifteenth century, were uncommonly severe upon the Jews. While they were prohibited from mingling freely with the Christians, and from exercising the professions for which they were best qualified, their residence was restricted within certain prescribed limits of the cities which they inhabited; and they were not only debarred from their usual luxury of ornament in dress, but were held up to public scorn, as it were, by some peculiar badge or emblem embroidered on their garments. Such was the condition of the Spanish Jews at the accession of Ferdinand and Isabella. The _new Christians_, or _converts_, as those who had renounced the faith of their fathers were denominated, were occasionally preferred to high ecclesiastical dignities, which they illustrated by their integrity and learning. They were intrusted with municipal offices in the various cities of Castile; and, as their wealth furnished an obvious resource for repairing, by way of marriage, the decayed fortunes of the nobility, there was scarcely a family of rank in the land, whose blood had not been contaminated, at some period or other, by mixture with the _mala sangre_, as it came afterwards to be termed, of the house of Judah; an ignominious stain, which no time has been deemed sufficient wholly to purge away.

Notwithstanding the show of prosperity enjoyed by the converted Jews, their situation was far from secure. Their proselytism had been too sudden to be generally sincere; and, as the task of dissimulation was too irksome to be permanently endured, they gradually became less circumspect, and exhibited the scandalous spectacle of apostates returning to wallow in the ancient mire of Judaism. The clergy, especially the Dominicans, who seem to have inherited the quick scent for heresy which distinguished their
frantic founder, were not slow in sounding the alarm; and the
superstitious populace, easily roused to acts of violence in the name of
religion, began to exhibit the most tumultuous movements, and actually
massacred the constable of Castile in an attempt to suppress them at Jaen,
the year preceding the accession of Isabella. After this period, the
complaints against the Jewish heresy became still more clamorous, and the
throne was repeatedly beset with petitions to devise some effectual means
for its extirpation. [20]

A chapter of the Chronicle of the Curate of Los Palacios, who lived at
this time in Andalusia, where the Jews seem to have most abounded, throws
considerable light on the real, as well as pretended motives of the
subsequent persecution. "This accursed race," he says, speaking of the
Israelites, "were either unwilling to bring their children to be baptized,
or, if they did, they washed away the stain on returning home. They
dressed their stews and other dishes with oil, instead of lard; abstained
from pork; kept the passover; ate meat in lent; and sent oil to replenish
the lamps of their synagogues; with many other abominable ceremonies of
their religion. They entertained no respect for monastic life, and
frequently profaned the sanctity of religious houses by the violation or
seduction of their inmates. They were an exceedingly politic and ambitious
people, engrossing the most lucrative municipal offices; and preferred to
gain their livelihood by traffic, in which they made exorbitant gains,
rather than by manual labor or mechanical arts. They considered themselves
in the hands of the Egyptians, whom it was a merit to deceive and plunder.
By their wicked contrivances they amassed great wealth, and thus were
often able to ally themselves by marriage with noble Christian families."
It is easy to discern, in this medley of credulity and superstition, the secret envy, entertained by the Castilians, of the superior skill and industry of their Hebrew brethren, and of the superior riches which these qualities secured to them; and it is impossible not to suspect, that the zeal of the most orthodox was considerably sharpened by worldly motives.

Be that as it may, the cry against the Jewish abominations now became general. Among those most active in raising it, were Alfonso de Ojeda, a Dominican, prior of the monastery of St. Paul in Seville, and Diego de Merlo, assistant of that city, who should not be defrauded of the meed of glory to which they are justly entitled by their exertions for the establishment of the modern Inquisition. These persons, after urging on the sovereigns the alarming extent to which the Jewish leprosy prevailed in Andalusia, loudly called for the introduction of the Holy Office, as the only effectual means of healing it. In this they were vigorously of Castile. Ferdinand listened with complacency to a scheme, which promised an ample source of revenue in the confiscations it involved. But it was not so easy to vanquish Isabella's aversion to measures so repugnant to the natural benevolence and magnanimity of her character. Her scruples, indeed, were rather founded on sentiment than reason, the exercise of which was little countenanced in matters of faith, in that day, when the dangerous maxim, that the end justifies the means, was universally received, and learned theologians seriously disputed whether it were permitted to make peace with the infidel, and even whether
promises made to them were obligatory on Christians. [22]

The policy of the Roman church, at that time, was not only shown in its perversion of some of the most obvious principles of morality, but in the discouragement of all free inquiry in its disciples, whom it instructed to rely implicitly in matters of conscience on their spiritual advisers. The artful institution of the tribunal of confession, established with this view, brought, as it were, the whole Christian world at the feet of the clergy, who, far from being always animated by the meek spirit of the Gospel, almost justified the reproach of Voltaire, that confessors have been the source of most of the violent measures pursued by princes of the Catholic faith. [23] Isabella's serious temper, as well as early education, naturally disposed her to religious influences. Notwithstanding the independence exhibited by her in all secular affairs, in her own spiritual concerns she uniformly testified the deepest humility, and deferred too implicitly to what she deemed the superior sagacity, or sanctity, of her ghostly counsellors. An instance of this humility may be worth recording. When Fray Fernando de Talavera, afterwards archbishop of Granada, who had been appointed confessor to the queen, attended her for the first time in that capacity, he continued seated, after she had knelt down to make her confession, which drew from her the remark, "that it was usual for both parties to kneel." "No," replied the priest, "this is God's tribunal; I act here as his minister, and it is fitting that I should keep my seat, while your Highness kneels before me." Isabella, far from taking umbrage at the ecclesiastic's arrogant demeanor, complied with all humility, and was afterwards heard to say, "This is the confessor that I wanted." [24]
Well had it been for the land, if the queen's conscience had always been intrusted to the keeping of persons of such exemplary piety as Talavera.

Unfortunately, in her early days, during the lifetime of her brother Henry, that charge was committed to a Dominican monk, Thomas de Torquemada, a native of old Castile, subsequently raised to the rank of prior of Santa Cruz in Segovia, and condemned to infamous immortality by the signal part which he performed in the tragedy of the Inquisition. This man, who concealed more pride under his monastic weeds than might have furnished forth a convent of his order, was one of that class, with whom zeal passes for religion, and who testify their zeal by a fiery persecution of those whose creed differs from their own; who compensate for their abstinence from sensual indulgence, by giving scope to those deadlier vices of the heart, pride, bigotry, and intolerance, which are no less opposed to virtue, and are far more extensively mischievous to society. This personage had earnestly labored to infuse into Isabella's young mind, to which his situation as her confessor gave him such ready access, the same spirit of fanaticism that glowed in his own. Fortunately, this was greatly counteracted by her sound understanding, and natural kindness of heart. Torquemada urged her, or, indeed, as is stated by some, extorted a promise, that, "should she ever come to the throne, she would devote herself to the extirpation of heresy, for the glory of God, and the exaltation of the Catholic faith." [25] The time was now arrived when this fatal promise was to be discharged.

It is due to Isabella's fame to state thus much in palliation of the unfortunate error into which she was led by her misguided zeal; an error
so grave, that, like a vein in some noble piece of statuary, it gives a
sinister expression to her otherwise unblemished character. [26] It was
not until the queen had endured the repeated importunities of the clergy,
particularly of those reverend persons in whom she most confided, seconded
by the arguments of Ferdinand, that she consented to solicit from the pope
a bull for the introduction of the Holy Office into Castile. Sixtus the
Fourth, who at that time filled the pontifical chair, easily discerning
the sources of wealth and influence, which this measure opened to the
court of Rome, readily complied with the petition of the sovereigns, and
expedited a bull bearing date November 1st, 1478, authorizing them to
appoint two or three ecclesiastics, inquisitors for the detection and
suppression of heresy throughout their dominions. [27]

The queen, however, still averse to violent measures, suspended the
operation of the ordinance, until a more lenient policy had been first
tried. By her command, accordingly, the archbishop of Seville, Cardinal
Mendoza, drew up a catechism exhibiting the different points of the
Catholic faith, and instructed the clergy throughout his diocese to spare
no pains in illuminating the benighted Israelites, by means of friendly
exhortation and a candid exposition of the true principles of
Christianity. [28] How far the spirit of these injunctions was complied
with, amid the excitement then prevailing, may be reasonably doubted.
There could be little doubt, however, that a report, made two years later,
by a commission of ecclesiastics with Alfonso de Ojeda at its head,
respecting the progress of the reformation, would be necessarily
unfavorable to the Jews. [29] In consequence of this report the papal
provisions were enforced by the nomination, on the 17th of September,
1480, of two Dominican monks as inquisitors, with two other ecclesiastics, the one as assessor, and the other as procurator fiscal, with instructions to proceed at once to Seville, and enter on the duties of their office. Orders were also issued to the authorities of the city to support the inquisitors by all the aid in their power. But the new institution, which has since become the miserable boast of the Castilians, proved so distasteful to them in its origin, that they refused any co-operation with its ministers, and indeed opposed such delays and embarrassments, that, during the first years, it can scarcely be said to have obtained a footing in any other places in Andalusia, than those belonging to the crown. [30]

On the 2d of January, 1481, the court commenced operations by the publication of an edict, followed by several others, requiring all persons to aid in apprehending and accusing all such as they might know or suspect to be guilty of heresy, [31] and holding out the illusory promise of absolution to such as should confess their errors within a limited period. As every mode of accusation, even anonymous, was invited, the number of victims multiplied so fast, that the tribunal found it convenient to remove its sittings from the convent of St. Paul, within the city, to the spacious fortress of Triana, in the suburbs. [32]

The presumptive proofs by which the charge of Judaism was established against the accused are so curious, that a few of them may deserve notice. It was considered good evidence of the fact, if the prisoner wore better clothes or cleaner linen on the Jewish sabbath than on other days of the week; if he had no fire in his house the preceding evening; if he sat at table with Jews, or ate the meat of animals slaughtered by their hands, or
drank a certain beverage held in much estimation by them; if he washed a
corpse in warm water, or when dying turned his face to the wall; or,
finally, if he gave Hebrew names to his children; a provision most
whimsically cruel, since, by a law of Henry the Second, he was prohibited
under severe penalties from giving them Christian names. He must have
found it difficult to extricate himself from the horns of this dilemma.

[33] Such are a few of the circumstances, some of them purely accidental
in their nature, others the result of early habit, which might well have
continued after a sincere conversion to Christianity, and all of them
trivial, on which capital accusations were to be alleged, and even
satisfactorily established. [34]

The inquisitors, adopting the wily and tortuous policy of the ancient
tribunal, proceeded with a despatch, which shows that they could have paid
little deference even to this affectation of legal form. On the sixth day
of January, six convicts suffered at the stake. Seventeen more were
executed in March, and a still greater number in the month following; and
by the 4th of November in the same year, no less than two hundred and
ninety-eight individuals had been sacrificed in the _autos da fe_ of
Seville. Besides these, the mouldering remains of many, who had been tried
and convicted after their death, were torn up from their graves, with a
hyena-like ferocity, which has disgraced no other court, Christian or
Pagan, and condemned to the common funeral pile. This was prepared on a
spacious stone scaffold, erected in the suburbs of the city, with the
statues of four prophets attached to the corners, to which the unhappy
sufferers were bound for the sacrifice, and which the worthy Curate of Los
Palacios celebrates with much complacency as the spot "where heretics were
burnt, and ought to burn as long as any can be found." [35]

Many of the convicts were persons estimable for learning and probity; and, among these, three clergymen are named, together with other individuals filling judicial or high municipal stations. The sword of justice was observed, in particular, to strike at the wealthy, the least pardonable offenders in times of proscription.

The plague which desolated Seville this year, sweeping off fifteen thousand inhabitants, as if in token of the wrath of Heaven at these enormities, did not palsy for a moment the arm of the Inquisition, which, adjourning to Aracena, continued as indefatigable as before. A similar persecution went forward in other parts of the province of Andalusia; so that within the same year, 1481, the number of the sufferers was computed at two thousand burnt alive, a still greater number in effigy, and seventeen thousand _reconciled_; a term which must not be understood by the reader to signify anything like a pardon or amnesty, but only the commutation of a capital sentence for inferior penalties, as fines, civil incapacity, very generally total confiscation of property, and not unfrequently imprisonment for life. [36]

The Jews were astounded by the bolt, which had fallen so unexpectedly upon them. Some succeeded in making their escape to Granada, others to France, Germany, or Italy, where they appealed from the decisions of the Holy Office to the sovereign pontiff. [37] Sixtus the Fourth appears for a moment to have been touched with something like compunction; for he
rebuked the intemperate zeal of the inquisitors, and even menaced them with deprivation. But these feelings, it would seem, were but transient; for, in 1483, we find the same pontiff quieting the scruples of Isabella respecting the appropriation of the confiscated property, and encouraging both sovereigns to proceed in the great work of purification, by an audacious reference to the example of Jesus Christ, who, says he, consolidated his kingdom on earth by the destruction of idolatry; and he concludes with imputing their successes in the Moorish war, upon which they had then entered, to their zeal for the faith, and promising them the like in future. In the course of the same year, he expedited two briefs, appointing Thomas de Torquemada inquisitor-general of Castile and Aragon, and clothing him with full powers to frame a new constitution for the Holy Office. This was the origin of that terrible tribunal, the Spanish or modern Inquisition, familiar to most readers, whether of history or romance; which, for three centuries, has extended its iron sway over the dominions of Spain and Portugal. [38] Without going into details respecting the organization of its various courts, which gradually swelled to thirteen during the present reign, I shall endeavor to exhibit the principles which regulated their proceedings, as deduced in part from the code digested under Torquemada, and partly from the practice which obtained during his supremacy. [39]

Edicts were ordered to be published annually, on the first two Sundays in lent, throughout the churches, enjoining it as a sacred duty on all, who knew or suspected another to be guilty of heresy, to lodge information against him before the Holy Office; and the ministers of religion were instructed to refuse absolution to such as hesitated to comply with this,
although the suspected person might stand in the relation of parent, child, husband, or wife. All accusations, anonymous as well as signed, were admitted; it being only necessary to specify the names of the witnesses, whose testimony was taken down in writing by a secretary, and afterwards read to them, which, unless the inaccuracies were so gross as to force themselves upon their attention, they seldom failed to confirm. [40]

The accused, in the mean time, whose mysterious disappearance was perhaps the only public evidence of his arrest, was conveyed to the secret chambers of the Inquisition, where he was jealously excluded from intercourse with all, save a priest of the Romish church and his jailer, both of whom might be regarded as the spies of the tribunal. In this desolate condition, the unfortunate man, cut off from external communication and all cheering sympathy or support, was kept for some time in ignorance even of the nature of the charges preferred against him, and at length, instead of the original process, was favored only with extracts from the depositions of the witnesses, so garbled as to conceal every possible clue to their name and quality. With still greater unfairness, no mention whatever was made of such testimony, as had arisen in the course of the examination, in his own favor. Counsel was indeed allowed from a list presented by his judges. But this privilege availed little, since the parties were not permitted to confer together, and the advocate was furnished with no other sources of information than what had been granted to his client. To add to the injustice of these proceedings, every discrepancy in the statements of the witnesses was converted into a separate charge against the prisoner, who thus, instead of one crime,
stood accused of several. This, taken in connection with the concealment
of time, place, and circumstance in the accusations, created such
embarrassment, that, unless the accused was possessed of unusual acuteness
and presence of mind, it was sure to involve him, in his attempts to
explain, in inextricable contradiction. [41]

If the prisoner refused to confess his guilt, or, as was usual, was
suspected of evasion, or an attempt to conceal the truth, he was subjected
to the torture. This, which was administered in the deepest vaults of the
Inquisition, where the cries of the victim could fall on no ear save that
of his tormentors, is admitted by the secretary of the Holy Office, who
has furnished the most authentic report of its transactions, not to have
been exaggerated in any of the numerous narratives which have dragged
these subterranean horrors into light. If the intensity of pain extorted a
confession from the sufferer, he was expected, if he survived, which did
not always happen, to confirm it on the next day. Should he refuse to do
this, his mutilated members were condemned to a repetition of the same
sufferings, until his obstinacy (it should rather have been termed his
heroism) might be vanquished. [42] Should the rack, however, prove
ineffectual to force a confession of his guilt, he was so far from being
considered as having established his innocence, that, with a barbarity
unknown to any tribunal where the torture has been admitted, and which of
itself proves its utter incompetency to the ends it proposes, he was not
unfrequently convicted on the depositions of the witnesses. At the
conclusion of his mock trial, the prisoner was again returned to his
dungeon, where, without the blaze of a single fagot to dispel the cold, or
illuminate the darkness of the long winter night, he was left in unbroken
silence to await the doom which was to consign him to an ignominious
death, or a life scarcely less ignominious. [43]

The proceedings of the tribunal, as I have stated them, were plainly
characterized throughout by the most flagrant injustice and inhumanity to
the accused. Instead of presuming his innocence, until his guilt had been
established, it acted on exactly the opposite principle. Instead of
affording him the protection accorded by every other judicature, and
especially demanded in his forlorn situation, it used the most insidious
arts to circumvent and to crush him. He had no remedy against malice or
misapprehension on the part of his accusers, or the witnesses against him,
who might be his bitterest enemies; since they were never revealed to nor
confronted with the prisoner, nor subjected to a cross-examination, which
can best expose error or wilful collusion in the evidence. [44] Even the
poor forms of justice, recognized in this court, might be readily
dispensed with; as its proceedings were impenetrably shrouded from the
public eye, by the appalling oath of secrecy imposed on all, whether
functionaries, witnesses, or prisoners, who entered within its precincts.
The last, and not the least odious feature of the whole, was the
connection established between the condemnation of the accused and the
interests of his judges; since the confiscations, which were the uniform
penalties, of heresy, [45] were not permitted to flow into the royal
exchequer, until they had first discharged the expenses, whether in the
shape of salaries or otherwise, incident to the Holy Office. [46]

The last scene in this dismal tragedy was the _act of faith_, (auto
da fe,) the most imposing spectacle, probably, which, has been witnessed
since the ancient Roman triumph, and which, as intimated by a Spanish
writer, was intended, somewhat profanely, to represent the terrors of the
Day of Judgment. [47] The proudest grandees of the land, on this occasion,
putting on the sable livery of familiars of the Holy Office and bearing
aloft its banners, condescended to act as the escort of its ministers;
while the ceremony was not unfrequently countenanced by the royal
presence. It should be stated, however, that neither of these acts of
condescension, or, more properly, humiliation, were witnessed until a
period posterior to the present reign. The effect was further heightened
by the concourse of ecclesiastics in their sacerdotal robes, and the
pompous ceremonial, which the church of Rome knows so well how to display
on fitting occasions; and which was intended to consecrate, as it were,
this bloody sacrifice by the authority of a religion, which has expressly
declared that it desires mercy, and not sacrifice. [48]

The most important actors in the scene were the unfortunate convicts, who
were now disgorged for the first time from the dungeons of the tribunal.
They were clad in coarse woollen garments, styled _san benitos_, brought
close round the neck, and descending like a frock down to the knees. [49]
These were of a yellow color, embroidered with a scarlet cross, and well
garnished with figures of devils and flames of fire, which, typical of the
heretic's destiny hereafter, served to make him more odious in the eyes of
the superstitious multitude. [50] The greater part of the sufferers were
condemned to be _reconciled_, the manifold meanings of which soft phrase
have been already explained. Those who were to be _relaxed_, as it was
called, were delivered over, as impenitent heretics, to the secular arm,
in order to expiate their offence by the most painful of deaths, with the
consciousness, still more painful, that they were to leave behind them names branded with infamy, and families involved in irretrievable ruin.

[51]

It is remarkable, that a scheme so monstrous as that of the Inquisition, presenting the most effectual barrier, probably, that was ever opposed to the progress of knowledge, should have been revived at the close of the fifteenth century, when the light of civilization was rapidly advancing over every part of Europe. It is more remarkable, that it should have occurred in Spain, at this time under a government which had displayed great religious independence on more than one occasion, and which had paid uniform regard to the rights of its subjects, and pursued a generous policy in reference to their intellectual culture. Where, we are tempted to ask, when we behold the persecution of an innocent, industrious people for the crime of adhesion to the faith of their ancestors, where was the charity, which led the old Castilian to reverence valor and virtue in an infidel, though an enemy? Where the chivalrous self-devotion, which led an Aragonese monarch, three centuries before, to give away his life, in defence of the persecuted sectaries of Provence? Where the independent spirit, which prompted the Castilian nobles, during the very last reign, to reject with scorn the proposed interference of the pope himself in their concerns, that they were now reduced to bow their necks to a few frantic priests, the members of an order, which, in Spain at least, was quite as conspicuous for ignorance as intolerance? True indeed the Castilians, and the Aragonese subsequently still more, gave such evidence of their aversion to the institution, that it can hardly be believed the clergy would have succeeded in fastening it upon them, had they not
availed themselves of the popular prejudices against the Jews. [52]
Providence, however, permitted that the sufferings, thus heaped on the
heads of this unfortunate people, should be requited in full measure to
the nation that inflicted them. The fires of the Inquisition, which were
lighted exclusively for the Jews, were destined eventually to consume
their oppressors. They were still more deeply avenged in the moral
influence of this tribunal, which, eating like a pestilent canker into the
heart of the monarchy, at the very time when it was exhibiting a most
goodly promise, left it at length a bare and sapless trunk.

Notwithstanding the persecutions under Torquemada were confined almost
wholly to the Jews, his activity was such as to furnish abundant
precedent, in regard to forms of proceeding, for his successors; if,
indeed, the word forms may be applied to the conduct of trials so summary,
that the tribunal of Toledo alone, under the superintendence of two
inquisitors, disposed of three thousand three hundred and twenty-seven
processes in little more than a year. [53] The number of convicts was
greatly swelled by the blunders of the Dominican monks, who acted as
qualifiers, or interpreters of what constituted heresy, and whose
ignorance led them frequently to condemn as heterodox propositions
actually derived from the fathers of the church. The prisoners for life,
alone, became so numerous, that it was necessary to assign them their own
houses as the places of their incarceration.

The data for an accurate calculation of the number of victims sacrificed
by the Inquisition during this reign are not very satisfactory. From such
as exist, however, Llorente has been led to the most frightful results. He
computes, that, during the eighteen years of Torquemada's ministry, there were no less than 10,220 burnt, 6860 condemned, and burnt in effigy as absent or dead, and 97,321 reconciled by various other penances; affording an average of more than 6000 convicted persons annually. [54] In this enormous sum of human misery is not included the multitude of orphans, who, from the confiscation of their paternal inheritance, were turned over to indigence and vice. [55] Many of the reconciled were afterwards sentenced as relapsed; and the Curate of Los Palacios expresses the charitable wish, that "the whole accursed race of Jews, male and female, of twenty years of age and upwards, might be purified with fire and fagot!" [56]

The vast apparatus of the Inquisition involved so heavy an expenditure, that a very small sum, comparatively, found its way into the exchequer, to counterbalance the great detriment resulting to the state from the sacrifice of the most active and skilful part of its population. All temporal interests, however, were held light in comparison with the purgation of the land from heresy; and such augmentations as the revenue did receive, we are assured, were conscientiously devoted to pious purposes, and the Moorish war! [57]

The Roman see, during all this time, conducting itself with its usual duplicity, contrived to make a gainful traffic by the sale of dispensations from the penalties incurred by such as fell under the ban of the Inquisition, provided they were rich enough to pay for them, and afterwards revoking them, at the instance of the Castilian court. Meanwhile, the odium, excited by the unsparing rigor of Torquemada, raised
up so many accusations against him, that he was thrice compelled to send
an agent to Rome to defend his cause before the pontiff; until, at length,
Alexander the Sixth, in 1494, moved by these reiterated complaints,
appointed four coadjutors, out of a pretended regard to the infirmities of
his age, to share with him the burdens of his office. [58]

This personage, who is entitled to so high a rank among those who have
been the authors of unmixed evil to their species, was permitted to reach
a very old age, and to die quietly in his bed. Yet he lived in such
constant apprehension of assassination, that he is said to have kept a
reputed unicorn's horn always on his table, which was imagined to have the
power of detecting and neutralizing poisons; while, for the more complete
protection of his person, he was allowed an escort of fifty horse and two
hundred foot in his progresses through the kingdom. [59]

This man's zeal was of such an extravagant character, that it may almost
shelter itself under the name of insanity. His history may be thought to
prove, that, of all human infirmities, or rather vices, there is none
productive of more extensive mischief to society than fanaticism. The
opposite principle of atheism, which refuses to recognize the most
important sanctions to virtue, does not necessarily imply any destitution
of just moral perceptions, that is, of a power of discriminating between
right and wrong, in its disciples. But fanaticism is so far subversive of
the most established principles of morality, that, under the dangerous
maxim, "For the advancement of the faith, all means are lawful," which
Tasso has rightly, though perhaps undesignedly, derived from the spirits
of hell. [60] it not only excuses, but enjoins the commission of the most
revolting crimes, as a sacred duty. The more repugnant, indeed, such crimes may be to natural feeling, or public sentiment, the greater their merit, from the sacrifice which the commission of them involves. Many a bloody page of history attests the fact, that fanaticism, armed with power, is the sorest evil which can befall a nation.

* * * * *

Don Juan Antonio Llorente is the only writer who has succeeded in completely lifting the veil from the dread mysteries of the Inquisition. It is obvious how very few could be competent to this task, since the proceedings of the Holy Office were shrouded in such impenetrable secrecy, that even the prisoners who were arraigned before it, as has been already stated, were kept in ignorance of their own processes. Even such of its functionaries, as have at different times pretended to give its transactions to the world, have confined themselves to an historical outline, with meagre notices of such parts of its internal discipline as might be safely disclosed to the public.

Llorente was secretary to the tribunal of Madrid from 1790 to 1792. His official station consequently afforded him every facility for an acquaintance with the most recondite affairs of the Inquisition; and, on its suppression at the close of 1808, he devoted several years to a careful investigation of the registers of the tribunals, both of the capital and the provinces, as well as of such other original documents contained within their archives, as had not hitherto been opened to the
light of day. In the progress of his work he has anatomized the most
odious features of the institution with unsparing severity; and his
reflections are warmed with a generous and enlightened spirit, certainly
not to have been expected in an ex-inquisitor. The arrangement of his
immense mass of materials is indeed somewhat faulty, and the work might be
recast in a more popular form, especially by means of a copious
retrenchment. With all its subordinate defects, however, it is entitled to
the credit of being the most, indeed the only, authentic history of the
modern Inquisition; exhibiting its minutest forms of practice, and the
insidious policy by which they were directed, from the origin of the
institution down to its temporary abolition. It well deserves to be
studied, as the record of the most humiliating triumph, which fanaticism
has ever been able to obtain over human reason, and that, too, during the
most civilized periods, and in the most civilized portion of the world.
The persecutions, endured by the unfortunate author of the work, prove
that the embers of this fanaticism may be rekindled too easily, even in
the present century.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Mosheim, Ecclesiastical History, translated by Maclaine, (Charlestown,
1821,) tom. vi. chap. 24-28; tom; vii. chap. 2, 3.--Idem, De la
former of these works M. Sismondi has described the physical ravages of
the crusades in southern France, with the same spirit and eloquence, with
which he has exhibited their desolating moral influence in the latter.
Some Catholic writers would fain excuse St. Dominic from the imputation of having founded the Inquisition. It is true he died some years before the perfect organization of that tribunal; but, as he established the principles on which, and the monkish militia by whom, it was administered, it is doing him no injustice to regard him as its real author.--The Sicilian Paramo, indeed, in his heavy quarto, (De Origine et Progressu Officii Sanctae Inquisitionis, Matriti, 1598,) traces it up to a much more remote antiquity, which, to a Protestant ear at least, savors not a little of blasphemy. According to him, God was the first inquisitor, and his condemnation of Adam and Eve furnished the model of the judicial forms observed in the trials of the Holy Office. The sentence of Adam was the type of the inquisitorial _reconciliation_; his subsequent raiment of the skins of animals was the model of the _san-benito_, and his expulsion from Paradise the precedent for the confiscation of the goods of heretics. This learned personage deduces a succession of inquisitors through the patriarchs, Moses, Nebuchadnezzar, and King David, down to John the Baptist, and even our Saviour, in whose precepts and conduct he finds abundant authority for the tribunal! Paramo, De Origine Inquisitionis, lib. 1, tit. 1, 2, 3.

the Inquisition, translated by Chandler, (London, 1731,) book 1, chap. 24.--Llorente, Histoire Critique de l'Inquisition d'Espagne, (Paris, 1818,) tom. i. p. 110.--Before this time we find a constitution of Peter I. of Aragon against heretics, prescribing in certain cases the burning of heretics and the confiscation of their estates, in 1197. Marca,Marca Hispanica, sive Limes Hispanicus, (Parisiis, 1688,) p. 1384.
[3] Nic. Antonio, Bibliotheca Vetus, tom. ii, p. 186.--Llorente, Hist. de l’Inquisition, tom. i. pp. 110-124.--Puigblanch cites some of the instructions from Eymerich’s work, whose authority in the courts of the Inquisition he compares to that of Gratian’s Decretals in other ecclesiastical judicatures. One of these may suffice to show the spirit of the whole. “When the inquisitor has an opportunity, he shall manage so as to introduce to the conversation of the prisoner some one of his accomplices, or any other converted heretic, who shall feign that he still persists in his heresy, telling him that he had abjured for the sole purpose of escaping punishment, by deceiving the inquisitors. Having thus gained his confidence, he shall go into his cell some day after dinner, and, keeping up the conversation till night, shall remain with him under pretext of its being too late for him to return home. He shall then urge the prisoner to tell him all the particulars of his past life, having first told him the whole of his own; and in the mean time spies shall be kept in hearing at the door, as well as a notary, in order to certify what may be said within.” Puigblanch, Inquisition Unmasked, translated by Walton, (London, 1816,) vol. i. pp. 238, 239.

Llorente, Hist. de l’Inquisition, tom. i. chap. 3.--The nature of the penance imposed on reconciled heretics by the ancient Inquisition was much more severe than that of later times. Llorente cites an act of St. Dominic respecting a person of this description, named Ponce Roger. The penitent was commanded to be "stripped of his clothes and beaten with rods by a priest, three Sundays in succession, from the gate of the city to the door..."
of the church; not to eat any kind of animal food during his whole life; to keep three Lents a year, without even eating fish; to abstain from fish, oil, and wine three days in the week during life, except in case of sickness or excessive labor; to wear a religious dress with a small cross embroidered on each side of the breast; to attend mass every day, if he had the means of doing so, and vespers on Sundays and festivals; to recite the service for the day and the night, and to repeat the _pater noster_ seven times in the day, ten times in the evening, and _twenty times at midnight_"! (Ibid., chap. 4.) If the said Roger failed in any of the above requisitions, he was to be burnt as a relapsed heretic! This was the encouragement held out by St. Dominic to penitence.

[5] Montesquieu, Esprit des Loix, liv. 28, chap. 1.--See the canon of the 17th council of Toledo, condemning the Israelitish race to bondage, in (ed. de la Acad. (Madrid, 1815,) lib. 12, tit. 2 and 3,) is composed of the most inhuman ordinances against this unfortunate people.


[8] In addition to their Talmudic lore and Cabalistic mysteries, the
Spanish Jews were well read in the philosophy of Aristotle. They pretended that the Stagirite was a convert to Judaism and had borrowed his science from the writings of Solomon. (Brucker, Historia Critica Philosophiae, (Lipsiae, 1766,) tom. ii. p. 853.) M. Degerando, adopting similar conclusions with Brucker, in regard to the value of the philosophical speculations of the Jews, passes the following severe sentence upon the intellectual, and indeed moral character of the nation. "Ce peuple, par

dominait chez les Juifs tous les penchans de l'esprit: ils restaient

qu'ils communiquaient avec tous les peuples, et parcouraient toutes les

(Paris, 1822,) tom. iv. p. 299.

of Tudela's celebrated Itinerary, having been translated into the various languages of Europe, passed into sixteen editions before the middle of the last century. Ibid., tom. i. pp. 79, 80.

[10] The beautiful lament, which the royal psalmist has put into the mouths of his countrymen, when commanded to sing the songs of Sion in a strange land, cannot be applied to the Spanish Jews, who, far from hanging their harps upon the willows, poured forth their lays with a freedom and vivacity which may be thought to savor more of the modern troubadour than of the ancient Hebrew minstrel. Castro has collected, under Siglo XV., a few gleanings of such as, by their incorporation into a Christian
[11] Castro has done for the Hebrew what Casiri a few years before did for the Arabic literature of Spain, by giving notices of such works as have survived the ravages of time and superstition. The first volume of his more than seven hundred different works, with biographical sketches of their authors; the whole bearing most honorable testimony to the talent and various erudition of the Spanish Jews.

[12] Basnage, History of the Jews, book 7, chap. 5, 15, 16.--Castro, tom. i. p. 906;--tom. ii. pp. 63, 147, 459.--Samuel Levi, treasurer of Peter the Cruel, who was sacrificed to the cupidity of his master, is reported by Mariana to have left behind him the incredible sum of 400,000 ducats to swell the royal coffers. Tom. ii. p. 82.

[13] Sir Walter Scott, with his usual discernment, has availed himself of these opposite traits in his portraits of Rebecca and Isaac in Ivanhoe, in which he seems to have contrasted the lights and shadows of the Jewish character. The humiliating state of the Jews, however, exhibited in this romance, affords no analogy to their social condition in Spain; as is evinced not merely by their wealth, which was also conspicuous in the English Jews, but by the high degree of civilization, and even political consequence, which, notwithstanding the occasional ebullitions of popular prejudice, they were permitted to reach there.
Calumnies of this kind were current all over Europe. The English reader will call to mind the monkish fiction of the little Christian,

"Slain with cursed Jewes, as it is notable,"

singing most devoutly after his throat was cut from ear to ear, in Chaucer's Prioresse's Tale. See another instance in the old Scottish ballad of the "Jew's Daughter" in Percy's "Reliques of Ancient Poetry."

tom. ii. pp. 186, 187.--In 1391, 5000 Jews were sacrificed to the popular fury, and, according to Mariana, no less than 10,000 perished from the same cause in Navarre about sixty years before. See tom. i. p. 912.

According to Mariana, the restoration of sight to the blind, feet to the lame, even life to the dead, were miracles of ordinary occurrence with had probably ceased by Isabella's time, or the Inquisition might have been spared. Nic. Antonio, in his notice of the life and labors of this Dominican, (Bibliotheca Vetus, tom. ii. pp. 205, 207.) states that he preached his inspired sermons in his vernacular Valencian dialect to audiences of French, English, and Italians, indiscriminately, who all understood him perfectly well; "a circumstance," says Dr. McCrie, in his valuable "History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Spain," (Edinburgh, 1829.) "which, if it prove anything, proves that the hearers of St. Vincent possessed more miraculous powers than himself, and
that they should have been canonized, rather than the preacher." P. 87, note.

[17] They were interdicted from the callings of vintners, grocers, taverners, especially of apothecaries, and of physicians, and nurses.

[18] No law was more frequently reiterated than that prohibiting the Jews from acting as stewards of the nobility, or farmers and collectors of the public rents. The repetition of this law shows to what extent that people had engrossed what little was known of financial science in that day. For (lib. 8, tit. 3.) For the regulations respecting the Jews in Aragon, many of them oppressive, particularly at the commencement of the fifteenth century, see Fueros y Observancias del Reyno de Aragon, (Zaragoza, 1667,) tom. i. fol. 6.--Marca Hispanica, pp. 1416, 1433.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iii. lib. 12, cap. 45.

(Brand of Spain,) tracing up many a noble pedigree to a Jewish or Mahometan root, obtained a circulation, to the great scandal of the country, which the efforts of the government, combined with those of the Inquisition, have not been wholly able to suppress. Copies of it, however, are now rarely to be met with. (Doblado, Letters from Spain, (London, 1822,) let. 2.) Clemencin notices two works with this title, one as ancient as Ferdinand and Isabella's time, and both written by bishops. Mem. de la Acad. de Hist., tom. vi. p. 125.
Some writers are inclined to view the Spanish Inquisition, in its origin, as little else than a political engine. Guizot remarks of the tribunal, in one of his lectures, “Elle contenait en germe ce qu'elle est devenue; mais (Cours d'Histoire Moderne, (Paris, 1828-30,) tom. v. lec. 11.) This statement is inaccurate in reference to Castile, where the facts do not warrant us in imputing any other motive for its adoption than religious zeal. The general character of Ferdinand, as well as the circumstances under which it was introduced into Aragon, may justify the inference of a more worldly policy in its establishment there.


de Hist., tom. vi. Illust. 13.--This anecdote is more characteristic of the order than the individual. Oviedo has given a brief notice of this prelate, whose virtues raised him from the humblest condition to the
highest posts in the church, and gained him, to quote that writer's words,

Quincuagenas, MS., dial. de Talavera.


[26] The uniform tenderness with which the most liberal Spanish writers of
the present comparatively enlightened age, as Marina, Llorente, Clemencin,
etc., regard the memory of Isabella, affords an honorable testimony to the
unsuspected integrity of her motives. Even in relation to the Inquisition,
her countrymen would seem willing to draw a veil over her errors, or to
excuse her by charging them on the age in which she lived.

143-145.--Much discrepancy exists in the narratives of Pulgar, Bernaldez,
and other contemporary writers, in reference to the era of the
establishment of the modern Inquisition. I have followed Llorente, whose
chronological accuracy, here and elsewhere, rests on the most authentic
documents.

part. 2, cap. 77.--I find no contemporary authority for imputing to
Cardinal Mendoza an active agency in the establishment of the Inquisition,
as is claimed for him by later writers, and especially his kinsman and
minister in this affair seems, on the contrary, to have been equally
politic and humane. The imputation of bigotry was not cast upon it, until
the age when bigotry was esteemed a virtue.

[29] In the interim, a caustic publication by a Jew appeared, containing strictures on the conduct of the administration, and even on the Christian religion, which was controverted at length by Talavera, afterwards archbishop of Granada. The scandal occasioned by this ill-timed production undoubtedly contributed to exacerbate the popular odium against the Israelites.

[30] It is worthy of remark, that the famous cortes of Toledo, assembled but a short time previous to the above-mentioned ordinances, and which enacted several oppressive laws in relation to the Jews, made no allusion whatever to the proposed establishment of a tribunal, which was to be armed with such terrific powers.

[31] This ordinance, in which Llorente discerns the first regular encroachment of the new tribunal on the civil jurisdiction, was aimed partly at the Andalusian nobility, who afforded a shelter to the Jewish fugitives. Llorente has fallen into the error, more than once, of speaking of the count of Arcos, and marquis of Cadiz, as separate persons. The possessor of both titles was Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, who inherited the former of them from his father. The latter (which he afterwards made so illustrious in the Moorish wars) was conferred on him by Henry IV., being derived from the city of that name, which had been usurped from the crown.

[32] The historian of Seville quotes the Latin inscription on the portal
of the edifice in which the sittings of the dread tribunal were held. Its
concluding apostrophe to the Deity is one that the persecuted might join
in, as heartily as their oppressors. "Exurge Domine; judica causam tuam;

[34] Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. pp. 153-159.

l'Inquisition, tom. 1, p. 160.--L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 164.--
The language of Bernaldez as applied to the four statues of the
_quemadero_, "_en que_ los quemavan," is so equivocal, that it has led to
some doubts whether he meant to assert that the persons to be burnt were
enclosed in the statues, or fastened to them. Llorente's subsequent
examination has led him to discard the first horrible supposition, which
realized the fabled cruelty of Phalaris.--This monument of fanaticism
continued to disgrace Seville till 1810, when it was removed in order to
make room for the construction of a battery against the French.

MS., cap. 44.--Mariana, lib. 24, cap. 17.--Llorente, Hist. de
l'Inquisition, ubi supra.--L. Marineo diffuses the 2000 capital executions
over several years. He sums up the various severities of the Holy Office
in the following gentle terms. "The church, who is the mother of mercy and
the fountain of charity, content with the imposition of penances,
generously accords life to many who do not deserve it. While those who
persist obstinately in their errors, after being imprisoned on the
testimony of trust-worthy witnesses, she causes to be put to the torture, and condemned to the flames; some miserably perish, bewailing their errors, and invoking the name of Christ, while others call upon that of Moses. Many again, who sincerely repent, she, notwithstanding the heinousness of their transgressions, merely sentences to perpetual imprisonment! Such were the tender mercies of the Spanish Inquisition.

[37] Bernaldez states, that guards were posted at the gates of the city of Seville in order to prevent the emigration of the Jewish inhabitants, which indeed was forbidden under pain of death. The tribunal, however, had greater terrors for them, and many succeeded in effecting their escape.

[39] Over these subordinate tribunals Ferdinand erected a court of supervision, with appellate jurisdiction, under the name of Council of the Supreme, consisting of the grand inquisitor, as president, and three other ecclesiastics, two of them doctors of law. The principal purpose of this new creation was to secure the interest of the crown in the confiscated property, and to guard against the encroachment of the Inquisition on secular jurisdiction. The expedient, however, wholly failed, because most of the questions brought before this court were determined by the principles of the canon law, of which the grand inquisitor was to be sole interpreter, the others having only, as it was termed, a "consultative
324.--Riol, Informe, apud Semanario Erudito, tom. iii. pp. 156 et seq.

[40] Puigblanch, Inquisition Unmasked, vol. i. chap. 4.--Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. chap. 6, art. 1; chap. 9, art. 1, 2.--The witnesses were questioned in such general terms, that they were even kept in ignorance of the particular matter respecting which they were expected to testify. Thus, they were asked "if they knew anything which had been said or done contrary to the Catholic faith, and the interests of the tribunal." Their answers often opened a new scent to the judges, and thus, in the language of Montanus, "brought more fishes into the inquisitors' holy angle." See Montanus, Discovery and Playne Declaration of sundry subtil Practises of the Holy Inquisition of Spayne, Eng. trans. (London, 1569,) fol. 14.

[41] Limborch, Inquisition, book 4, chap. 20.--Montanus, Inquisition of Spayne, fol. 6-15.--Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. chap. 6. art. 1; chap. 9, art. 4-9.--Puigblanch, Inquisition Unmasked, vol. i. chap. 4.

[42] Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. chap. 9, art. 7.--By a subsequent regulation of Philip II., the repetition of torture in the same process was strictly prohibited to the inquisitors. But they, making use of a sophism worthy of the arch-fiend himself, contrived to evade this law, by pretending after each new infliction, of punishment that they had only suspended, and not terminated, the torture!
[43] Montanus, Inquisition of Spayne, fol. 24 et seq.--Limborch, Inquisition, vol. ii. chap. 29.--Puigblanch, Inquisition Unmasked, vol. i. chap. 4.--Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, ubi supra.--I shall spare the reader the description of the various modes of torture, the rack, fire, and pulley, practised by the inquisitors, which have been so often detailed in the doleful narratives of such as have had the fortune to escape with life from the fangs of the tribunal. If we are to believe Llorente, these barbarities have not been decreed for a long time. Yet some recent statements are at variance with this assertion. See, among others, the celebrated adventurer Van Halen's "Narrative of his Imprisonment in the Dungeons of the Inquisition at Madrid, and his Escape in 1817-18."

[44] The prisoner had indeed the right of challenging any witness on the ground of personal enmity. (Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. chap. 9, art. 10.) But as he was kept in ignorance of the names of the witnesses employed against him, and as even, if he conjectured right, the degree of enmity, competent to set aside testimony, was to be determined by his judges, it is evident that his privilege of challenge was wholly nugatory.

[45] Confiscation had long been decreed as the punishment of convicted The avarice of the present system, however, is exemplified by the fact, that those who confessed and sought absolution within the brief term of grace allowed by the inquisitors from the publication of their edict, were
liable to arbitrary fines; and those who confessed after that period,

[46] Ibid., tom. i. p. 216.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 324.--Salazar

part of the odious scheme of the Inquisition the contrivance of the monks,
a class of men, cut off by their profession from the usual sympathies of social life, and who, accustomed to the tyranny of the confessional, aimed at establishing the same jurisdiction over thoughts, which secular tribunals have wisely confined to actions. Time, instead of softening, gave increased harshness to the features of the new system. The most humane provisions were constantly evaded in practice; and the toils for ensnaring the victim were so ingeniously multiplied, that few, very few, were permitted to escape without some censure. Not more than one person, says Llorente, in one or perhaps two thousand processes, previous to the time of Philip III., received entire absolution. So that it came to be proverbial that all who were not roasted, were at least singed.

[47] Montanus, Inquisition of Spayne, fol. 46.--Puigblanch, Inquisition Unmasked, vol. i. chap. 4.--Every reader of Tacitus and Juvenal will remember how early the Christians were condemned to endure the penalty of fire. Perhaps the earliest instance of burning to death for heresy in modern times occurred under the reign of Robert of France, in the early
chap. 4.) Paramo, as usual, finds authority for inquisitorial autos da fe, where one would least expect it, in the New Testament. Among other examples, he quotes the remark of James and John, who, when the village of Samaria refused to admit Christ within its walls, would have called down fire from heaven to consume its inhabitants. "Lo," says Paramo, "fire, the punishment of heretics; for the Samaritans were the heretics of those times." (De Origine Inquisitionis, lib. 1, tit. 3, cap. 5.) The worthy father omits to add the impressive rebuke of our Saviour to his over-zealous disciples. "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. The son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."

[48] Puigblanch, vol. i. chap. 4.--The inquisitors, after the celebration of an auto da fe at Guadaloupe, in 1485, wishing probably to justify these bloody executions in the eyes of the people, who had not yet become familiar with them, solicited a sign from the Virgin (whose shrine in that place is noted all over Spain) in testimony of her approbation of the Holy Office. Their petition was answered by such a profusion of miracles, that Dr. Francis Sanctius de la Fuente, who acted as scribe on the occasion, became out of breath, and, after recording sixty, gave up in despair, unable to keep pace with their marvellous rapidity. Paramo, De Origine Inquisitionis, lib. 2, tit. 2, cap. 3.

[49] _San benito_, according to Llorente, (tom. i. p. 127,) is a corruption of _saco bendito_, being the name given to the dresses worn by penitents previously to the thirteenth century.
Puigblanch, Inquisition Unmasked, vol. i. chap. 4.--Voltaire remarks (Essai sur les Moeurs, chap. 140) that, "An Asiatic, arriving at Madrid on the day of an auto da fe, would doubt whether it were a festival, religious celebration, sacrifice, or massacre;--it is all of them. They reproach Montezuma with sacrificing human captives to the gods.--What would he have said, had he witnessed an auto da fe?"

The government, at least, cannot be charged with remissness in promoting this. I find two ordinances in the royal collection of the date of one of them,) inhibiting, under pain of confiscation of property, such as had been _reconciled_, and their children by the mother's side, and grandchildren by the father's, from holding any office in the privy council, courts of justice, or in the municipalities, or any other place of trust or honor. They were also excluded from the vocations

6.) This was visiting the sins of the fathers, to an extent unparalleled in modern legislation. The sovereigns might find a precedent in a law of Sylla, excluding the children of the proscribed Romans from political honors; thus indignantly noticed by Sallust. "Quin solus omnium, post

The Aragonese, as we shall see hereafter, made a manly though ineffectual resistance, from the first, to the introduction of the Inquisition among them by Ferdinand. In Castile, its enormous abuses provoked the spirited interposition of the legislature at the commencement of the following reign. But it was then too late.
1485-6. (Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. p. 239.)--In Seville, with probably no greater apparatus, in 1482, 21,000 processes were disposed of. These were the first fruits of the Jewish heresy, when Torquemada, although an inquisitor, had not the supreme control of the tribunal.

Llorente afterwards reduces this estimate to 8800 burnt, 96,504 Murcia. (Tom. iv. p. 252.) Zurita says, that, by 1520, the Inquisition of Seville had sentenced more than 4000 persons to be burnt, and 30,000 to other punishments. Another author whom he quotes, carries up the estimate of the total condemned by this single tribunal, within the same term of time, to 100,000. Anales, tom. iv. fol. 324.

By an article of the primitive instructions, the inquisitors were required to set apart a small portion of the confiscated estates for the education and Christian nurture of minors, children of the condemned. Llorente says, that, in the immense number of processes, which he had occasion to consult, he met with no instance of their attention to the fate of these unfortunate orphans! Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. chap. 8.

thought, in every form. In 1490, he caused several Hebrew Bibles to be publicly burnt, and some time after, more than 6000 volumes of Oriental learning, on the imputation of Judaism, sorcery, or heresy, at the autos
da fe of Salamanca, the very nursery of science. (Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. chap. 8, art. 5.) This may remind one of the similar sentence passed by Lope de Barrientos, another Dominican, about fifty years before, upon the books of the marquis of Villena. Fortunately for the dawning literature of Spain, Isabella did not, as was done by her successors, commit the censorship of the press to the judges of the Holy Office, notwithstanding such occasional assumption of power by the grand inquisitor.

Memorables, fol. 164.—The prodigious desolation of the land may be inferred from the estimates, although somewhat discordant, of deserted houses in Andalusia. Garibay (Compendio, lib. 18, cap. 17,) puts these at (Cosas Memorables, fol. 164,) as high as five thousand.

[58] Llorente, Hist. de l'Inquisition, tom. i. chap. 7, art. 8; chap. 8, art. 6.


CHAPTER VIII.
Conquest of Spain by the Arabs.--Cordovan Empire.--High Civilization and Prosperity.--Its Dismemberment.--Kingdom of Granada.--Luxurious and Chivalrous Character.--Literature of the Spanish Arabs.--Progress in Science.--Historical Merits.--Useful Discoveries.--Poetry and Romance.--Influence on the Spaniards.

We have now arrived at the commencement of the famous war of Granada, which terminated in the subversion of the Arabian empire in Spain, after it had subsisted for nearly eight centuries, and with the consequent restoration to the Castilian crown of the fairest portion of its ancient domain. In order to a better understanding of the character of the Spanish Arabs, or Moors, who exercised an important influence on that of their Christian neighbors, the present chapter will be devoted to a consideration of their previous history in the Peninsula, where they probably reached a higher degree of civilization than in any other part of the world. [1]

It is not necessary to dwell upon the causes of the brilliant successes of Mahometanism at its outset,--the dexterity with which, unlike all other religions, it was raised upon, not against, the principles and prejudices of preceding sects; the military spirit and discipline, which it established among all classes, so that the multifarious nations who embraced it, assumed the appearance of one vast, well-ordered camp; [2]
the union of ecclesiastical with civil authority intrusted to the caliphs, which enabled them to control opinions, as absolutely as the Roman pontiffs in their most despotic hour; [3] or lastly, the peculiar adaptation of the doctrines of Mahomet to the character of the wild tribes among whom they were preached. [4] It is sufficient to say, that these latter, within a century after the coming of their apostle, having succeeded in establishing their religion over vast regions in Asia, and on the northern shores of Africa, arrived before the Straits of Gibraltar, which, though a temporary, were destined to prove an ineffectual bulwark for Christendom.

The causes which have been currently assigned for the invasion and conquest of Spain, even by the most credible modern historians, have scarcely any foundation in contemporary records. The true causes are to be found in the rich spoils offered by the Gothic monarchy, and in the thirst of enterprise in the Saracens, which their long uninterrupted career of victory seems to have sharpened, rather than satisfied. [5] The fatal battle, which terminated with the slaughter of King Roderic and the flower of his nobility, was fought in the summer of 711, on a plain washed by the Guadalete near Xerez, about two leagues distant from Cadiz. [6] The Goths appear never to have afterwards rallied under one head, but their broken detachments made many a gallant stand in such strong positions as were afforded throughout the kingdom; so that nearly three years elapsed before the final achievement of the conquest. The policy of the conquerors, after making the requisite allowance for the evils necessarily attending such an invasion, [7] may be considered liberal. Such of the Christians, as chose, were permitted to remain in the conquered territory in undisturbed
possession of their property. They were allowed to worship in their own
way; to be governed, within prescribed limits, by their own laws; to fill
certain civil offices, and serve in the army; their women were invited to
intermarry with the conquerors; [8] and, in short, they were condemned to
no other legal badge of servitude than the payment of somewhat heavier
imposts than those exacted from their Mahometan brethren. It is true the
Christians were occasionally exposed to suffering from the caprices of
despotism, and, it may be added, of popular fanaticism. [9] But, on the
whole, their condition may sustain an advantageous comparison with that of
any Christian people under the Mussulman dominion of later times, and
affords a striking contrast with that of our Saxon ancestors after the
Norman conquest, which suggests an obvious parallel in many of its
circumstances to the Saracen. [10]

After the further progress of the Arabs in Europe had been checked by the
memorable defeat at Tours, their energies, no longer allowed to expand in
the career of conquest, recoiled on themselves, and speedily produced the
dismemberment of their overgrown empire. Spain was the first of the
provinces which fell off. The family of Omeya, under whom this revolution
was effected, continued to occupy her throne as independent princes, from
the middle of the eighth to the close of the eleventh century, a period
which forms the most honorable portion of her Arabian annals.

The new government was modelled on the eastern caliphate. Freedom shows
itself under a variety of forms; while despotism, at least in the
institutions founded on the Koran, seems to wear but one. The sovereign
was the depository of all power, the fountain of honor, the sole arbiter
of life and fortune. He styled himself "Commander of the Faithful," and, like the caliphs of the east, assumed an entire spiritual as well as temporal supremacy. The country was distributed into six governor, with subordinate officers, to whom was intrusted a more immediate jurisdiction over the principal cities. The immense authority and pretensions of these petty satraps became a fruitful source of rebellion in later times. The caliph administered the government with the advice of his _mexuar_, or council of state, composed of his principal _cadis_ and _hagibs_, or secretaries. The office of prime minister, or chief hagib, corresponded, in the nature and variety of its functions, with that of a Turkish grand vizier. The caliph reserved to himself the right of selecting his successor from among his numerous progeny; and this adoption was immediately ratified by an oath of allegiance to the heir apparent from the principal officers of state. [11]

The princes of the blood, instead of being condemned, as in Turkey, to waste their youth in the seclusion of the harem, were intrusted to the care of learned men, to be instructed in the duties befitting their station. They were encouraged to visit the academies, which were particularly celebrated in Cordova, where they mingled in disputation, and frequently carried away the prizes of poetry and eloquence. Their riper years exhibited such fruits as were to be expected from their early education. The race of the Omeyades need not shrink from a comparison with any other dynasty of equal length in modern Europe. Many of them amused their leisure with poetical composition, of which numerous examples are preserved in Conde's History; and some left elaborate works of learning, which have maintained a permanent reputation with Arabian scholars. Their
long reigns, the first ten of which embrace a period of two centuries and a half, their peaceful deaths, and unbroken line of succession in the same family for so many years, show that their authority must have been founded in the affections of their subjects. Indeed, they seem, with one or two exceptions, to have ruled over them with a truly patriarchal sway; and, on the event of their deaths, the people, bathed in tears, are described as accompanying their relics to the tomb, where the ceremony was concluded with a public eulogy on the virtues of the deceased, by his son and successor. This pleasing moral picture affords a strong contrast to the sanguinary scenes which so often attend the transmission of the sceptre from one generation to another, among the nations of the east. [12]

The Spanish caliphs supported a large military force, frequently keeping two or three armies in the field at the same time. The flower of these forces was a body-guard, gradually raised to twelve thousand men, one-third of them Christians, superbly equipped, and officered by members of the royal family. Their feuds with the eastern caliphs and the Barbary pirates required them also to maintain a respectable navy, which was fitted out from the numerous dock-yards that lined the coast from Cadiz to Tarragona.

The munificence of the Omeyades was most ostentatiously displayed in their public edifices, palaces, mosques, hospitals, and in the construction of commodious quays, fountains, bridges, and aqueducts, which, penetrating the sides of the mountains, or sweeping on lofty arches across the valleys, rivalled in their proportions the monuments of ancient Rome. These works, which were scattered more or less over all the provinces,
contributed especially to the embellishment of Cordova, the capital of the empire. The delightful situation of this city, in the midst of a cultivated plain washed by the waters of the Guadalquivir, made it very early the favorite residence of the Arabs, who loved to surround their houses, even in the cities, with groves and refreshing fountains, so delightful to the imagination of a wanderer of the desert. [13] The public squares and private court-yards sparkled with _jets d'eau_, fed by copious streams from the Sierra Morena, which, besides supplying nine hundred public baths, were conducted into the interior of the edifices, where they diffused a grateful coolness over the sleeping-apartments of their luxurious inhabitants. [14]

Without adverting to that magnificent freak of the caliphs, the construction of the palace of Azahra, of which not a vestige now exists, we may form a sufficient notion of the taste and magnificence of this era from the remains of the far-famed mosque, now the cathedral of Cordova. This building, which still covers more ground than any other church in Christendom, was esteemed the third in sanctity by the Mahometan world, being inferior only to the Alaksa of Jerusalem and the temple of Mecca. Most of its ancient glories have indeed long since departed. The rich bronze which embossed its gates, the myriads of lamps which illuminated its aisles, have disappeared; and its interior roof of odoriferous and curiously carved wood has been cut up into guitars and snuff-boxes. But its thousand columns of variegated marble still remain; and its general dimensions, notwithstanding some loose assertions to the contrary, seem to be much the same as they were in the time of the Saracens. European critics, however, condemn its most elaborate beauties as "heavy and
barbarous." Its celebrated portals are pronounced "diminutive, and in very 
bad taste." Its throng of pillars gives it the air of "a park rather than 
a temple," and the whole is made still more incongruous by the unequal 
length of their shafts, being grotesquely compensated by a proportionate 
variation of size in their bases and capitals, rudely fashioned after the 
Corinthian order. [15]

But if all this gives us a contemptible idea of the taste of the Saracens 
at this period, which indeed, in architecture, seems to have been far 
inferior to that of the later princes of Granada, we cannot but be 
astonished at the adequacy of their resources to carry such magnificent 
designs into execution. Their revenue, we are told in explanation, 
amounted to eight millions of _mitcales_ of gold, or nearly six 
millions sterling; a sum fifteen-fold greater than that which William the 
Conqueror, in the subsequent century, was able to extort from his 
subjects, with all the ingenuity of feudal exaction. The tone of 
exaggeration, which distinguishes the Asiatic writers, entitles them 
perhaps to little confidence in their numerical estimates. This immense 
wealth, however, is predicated of other Mahometan princes of that age; and 
their vast superiority over the Christian states of the north, in arts and 
effective industry, may well account for a corresponding superiority in 
their resources.

The revenue of the Cordovan sovereigns was derived from the fifth of the 
spoil taken in battle, an important item in an age of unintermitting war 
and rapine; from the enormous exaction of one-tenth of the produce of 
commerce, husbandry, flocks, and mines; from a capitation tax on Jews and
Christians; and from certain tolls on the transportation of goods. They engaged in commerce on their own account, and drew from mines, which belonged to the crown, a conspicuous part of their income. [16]

Before the discovery of America, Spain was to the rest of Europe what her colonies have since become, the great source of mineral wealth. The Carthaginians, and the Romans afterwards, regularly drew from her large masses of the precious metals. Pliny, who resided some time in the country, relates that three of her provinces were said to have annually yielded the incredible quantity of sixty thousand pounds of gold. [17] The Arabs with their usual activity penetrated into these arcana of wealth. Abundant traces of their labors are still to be met with along the barren ridge of mountains that covers the north of Andalusia; and the diligent Bowles has enumerated no less than five thousand of their excavations in the kingdom or district of Jaen. [18]

But the best mine of the caliphs was in the industry and sobriety of their subjects. The Arabian colonies have been properly classed among the agricultural. Their acquaintance with the science of husbandry is shown in their voluminous treatises on the subject, and in the monuments which they have everywhere left of their peculiar culture. The system of irrigation, which has so long fertilized the south of Spain, was derived from them. They introduced into the Peninsula various tropical plants and vegetables, whose cultivation has departed with them. Sugar, which the modern Spaniards have been obliged to import from foreign nations in large quantities annually for their domestic consumption, until within the last half century that they have been supplied by their island of Cuba,
constituted one of the principal exports of the Spanish Arabs. The silk 
manufacture was carried on by them extensively. The Nubian geographer, in 
the beginning of the twelfth century, enumerates six hundred villages in 
Jaen as engaged in it, at a time when it was known to the Europeans only 
from their circuitous traffic with the Greek empire. This, together with 
fine fabrics of cotton and woollen, formed the staple of an active 
commerce with the Levant, and especially with Constantinople, whence they 
were again diffused, by means of the caravans of the north, over the 
comparatively barbarous countries of Christendom.

The population kept pace with this general prosperity of the country. It 
would appear from a census instituted at Cordova, at the close of the 
tenth century, that there were at that time in it six hundred temples and 
two hundred thousand dwelling-houses; many of these latter being, 
probably, mere huts or cabins, and occupied by separate families. Without 
placing too much reliance on any numerical statements, however, we may 
give due weight to the inference of an intelligent writer, who remarks 
that their minute cultivation of the soil, the cheapness of their labor, 
their particular attention to the most nutritious esculents, many of them 
such as would be rejected by Europeans at this day, are indicative of a 
crowded population, like that, perhaps, which swarms over Japan or China, 
where the same economy is necessarily resorted to for the mere sustenance 
of life. [19]

Whatever consequence a nation may derive, in its own age, from physical 
resources, its intellectual development will form the subject of deepest 
interest to posterity. The most flourishing periods of both not
unfrequently coincide. Thus the reigns of Abderrahman the Third, Alhakem the Second, and the regency of Almanzor, embracing the latter half of the tenth century, during which the Spanish Arabs reached their highest political importance, may be regarded as the period of their highest civilization under the Omeyades; although the impulse then given carried them forward to still further advances, in the turbulent times which followed. This beneficent impulse is, above all, imputable to Alhakem. He was one of those rare beings, who have employed the awful engine of despotism in promoting the happiness and intelligence of his species. In his elegant tastes, appetite for knowledge, and munificent patronage he may be compared with the best of the Medici. He assembled the eminent scholars of his time, both natives and foreigners, at his court, where he employed them in the most confidential offices. He converted his palace into an academy, making it the familiar resort of men of letters, at whose conferences he personally assisted in his intervals of leisure from public duty. He selected the most suitable persons for the composition of works on civil and natural history, requiring the prefects of his provinces and cities to furnish, as far as possible, the necessary intelligence. He was a diligent student, and left many of the volumes which he read enriched with his commentaries. Above all, he was intent upon the acquisition of an extensive library. He invited illustrious foreigners to send him their works, and munificently recompensed them. No donative was so grateful to him as a book. He employed agents in Egypt, Syria, Irak, and Persia, for collecting and transcribing the rarest manuscripts; and his vessels returned freighted with cargoes more precious than the spices of the east. In this way he amassed a magnificent collection, which was distributed, according to the subjects, in various apartments of his palace; and which, if we may credit the Arabian historians, amounted to six hundred thousand
volumes. [20]

If all this be thought to savor too much of eastern hyperbole, still it cannot be doubted that an amazing number of writers swarmed over the Peninsula at this period. Casiri's multifarious catalogue bears ample testimony to the emulation, with which not only men, but even women of the highest rank, devoted themselves to letters; the latter contending publicly for the prizes, not merely in eloquence and poetry, but in those recondite studies which have usually been reserved for the other sex. The prefects of the provinces, emulating their master, converted their courts into academies, and dispensed premiums to poets and philosophers. The stream of royal bounty awakened life in the remotest districts. But its effects were especially visible in the capital. Eighty free schools were opened in Cordova. The circle of letters and science was publicly expounded by professors, whose reputation for wisdom attracted not only the scholars of Christian Spain, but of France, Italy, Germany, and the British Isles. For this period of brilliant illumination with the Saracens corresponds precisely with that of the deepest barbarism of Europe; when a library of three or four hundred volumes was a magnificent endowment for the richest monastery; when scarcely a "priest south of the Thames," in the words of Alfred, "could translate Latin into his mother tongue;" when not a single philosopher, according to Tiraboschi, was to be met with in Italy, save only the French pope Sylvester the Second, who drew his knowledge from the schools of the Spanish Arabs, and was esteemed a necromancer for his pains. [21]

Such is the glowing picture presented to us of Arabian scholarship, in the
tenth and succeeding centuries, under a despotic government and a sensual
religion; and, whatever judgment may be passed on the real value of all
their boasted literature, it cannot be denied, that the nation exhibited a
wonderful activity of intellect, and an apparatus for learning (if we are
to admit their own statements) unrivalled in the best ages of antiquity.

The Mahometan governments of that period rested on so unsound a basis,
that the season of their greatest prosperity was often followed by
precipitate decay. This had been the case with the eastern caliphate, and
was now so with the western. During the life of Alhakem’s successor, the
empire of the Omeyades was broken up into a hundred petty principalities;
and their magnificent capital of Cordova, dwindling into a second-rate
city, retained no other distinction than that of being the Mecca of Spain.
These little states soon became a prey to all the evils arising out of a
vicious constitution of government and religion. Almost every accession to
the throne was contested by numerous competitors of the same family; and a
succession of sovereigns, wearing on their brows but the semblance of a
crown, came and departed, like the shadows of Macbeth. The motley tribes
of Asiatics, of whom the Spanish Arabian population was composed, regarded
each other with ill-disguised jealousy. The lawless predatory habits,
which no discipline could effectually control in an Arab, made them ever
ready for revolt. The Moslem states, thus reduced in size and crippled by
faction, were unable to resist the Christian forces, which were pressing
on them from the north. By the middle of the ninth century, the Spaniards
had reached the Douro and the Ebro. By the close of the eleventh, they had
advanced their line of conquest, under the victorious banner of the Cid,
to the Tagus. The swarms of Africans who invaded the Peninsula, during the
the cause of Christian Spain trembled in the balance for a moment on the memorable day of Navas de Tolosa. But the fortunate issue of that battle, in which, according to the lying letter of Alfonso the Ninth, "one hundred and eighty-five thousand infidels perished, and only five and twenty Spaniards," gave a permanent ascendancy to the Christian arms. The vigorous campaigns of James the First, of Aragon, and of St. Ferdinand, of Castile, gradually stripped away the remaining territories of Valencia, Murcia, and Andalusia; so that, by the middle of the thirteenth century, the constantly contracting circle of the Moorish dominion had shrunk into the narrow limits of the province of Granada. Yet on this comparatively small point of their ancient domain, the Saracens erected a new kingdom of sufficient strength to resist, for more than two centuries, the united forces of the Spanish monarchies.

The Moorish territory of Granada contained, within a circuit of about one hundred and eighty leagues, all the physical resources of a great empire. Its broad valleys were intersected by mountains rich in mineral wealth, whose hardy population supplied the state with husbandmen and soldiers. Its pastures were fed by abundant fountains, and its coasts studded with commodious ports, the principal marts in the Mediterranean. In the midst, and crowning the whole, as with a diadem, rose the beautiful city of Granada. In the days of the Moors it was encompassed by a wall, flanked by a thousand and thirty towers, with seven portals. [22] Its population, according to a contemporary, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, amounted to two hundred thousand souls; [23] and various authors agree in attesting, that, at a later period, it could send forth fifty thousand
warriors from its gates. This statement will not appear exaggerated, if we consider that the native population of the city was greatly swelled by the influx of the ancient inhabitants of the districts lately conquered by the Spaniards. On the summit of one of the hills of the city was erected the royal fortress or palace of the Alhambra, which was capable of containing within its circuit forty thousand men. [24] The light and elegant architecture of this edifice, whose magnificent ruins still form the most interesting monument in Spain for the contemplation of the traveller, shows the great advancement of the art since the construction of the celebrated mosque of Cordova. Its graceful porticoes and colonnades, its domes and ceilings, glowing with tints, which, in that transparent atmosphere, have lost nothing of their original brilliancy, its airy halls, so constructed as to admit the perfume of surrounding gardens and agreeable ventilations of the air, and its fountains, which still shed their coolness over its deserted courts, manifest at once the taste, opulence, and Sybarite luxury of its proprietors. The streets are represented to have been narrow, many of the houses lofty, with turrets of curiously wrought larch or marble, and with cornices of shining metal, "that glittered like stars through the dark foliage of the orange groves;" and the whole is compared to "an enamelled vase, sparkling with hyacinths and emeralds." [25] Such are the florid strains in which the Arabic writers fondly descant on the glories of Granada.

At the foot of this fabric of the genii lay the cultivated _vega_, or plain, so celebrated as the arena, for more than two centuries, of Moorish and Christian chivalry, every inch of whose soil may be said to have been fertilized with human blood. The Arabs exhausted on it all their powers of
elaborate cultivation. They distributed the waters of the Xenil, which flowed through it, into a thousand channels for its more perfect irrigation. A constant succession of fruits and crops was obtained throughout the year. The products of the most opposite latitudes were transplanted there with success; and the hemp of the north grew luxuriant under the shadow of the vine and the olive. Silk furnished the principal staple of a traffic that was carried on through the ports of Almeria and Malaga. The Italian cities, then rising into opulence, derived their principal skill in this elegant manufacture from the Spanish Arabs. Florence, in particular, imported large quantities of the raw material from them as late as the fifteenth century. The Genoese are mentioned as having mercantile establishments in Granada; and treaties of commerce were entered into with this nation, as well as with the crown of Aragon. Their ports swarmed with a motley contribution from "Europe, Africa, and the Levant," so that "Granada," in the words of the historian, "became the common city of all nations." "The reputation of the citizens for trustworthiness," says a Spanish writer, "was such, that their bare word was more relied on, than a written contract is now among us;" and he quotes the saying of a Catholic bishop, that "Moorish works and Spanish faith were all that were necessary to make a good Christian." [26]

The revenue, which was computed at twelve hundred thousand ducats, was derived from similar, but, in some respects, heavier impositions than those of the caliphs of Cordova. The crown, besides being possessed of valuable plantations in the vega, imposed the onerous tax of one-seventh on all the agricultural produce of the kingdom. The precious metals were also obtained in considerable quantities, and the royal mint was noted for
the purity and elegance of its coin. [27]

The sovereigns of Granada were for the most part distinguished by liberal tastes. They freely dispensed their revenues in the protection of letters, the construction of sumptuous public works, and, above all, in the display of a courtly pomp, unrivalled by any of the princes of that period. Each knight seemed less ambitious of the hardy prowess of Christian chivalry, than of displaying his inimitable horsemanship, and his dexterity in the elegant pastimes peculiar to his nation. The people of Granada, like those of ancient Rome, seem to have demanded a perpetual spectacle. Life was with them one long carnival, and the season of revelry was prolonged until the enemy was at the gate.

During the interval which had elapsed since the decay of the Omeyades, the Spaniards had been gradually rising in civilization to the level of their Saracen enemies; and, while their increased consequence secured them from the contempt with which they had formerly been regarded by the Mussulmans, the latter, in their turn, had not so far sunk in the scale, as to have become the objects of the bigoted aversion, which was, in after days, so heartily visited on them by the Spaniards. At this period, therefore, the two nations viewed each other with more liberality, probably, than at any previous or succeeding time. Their respective monarchs conducted their mutual negotiations on a footing of perfect equality. We find several examples of Arabian sovereigns visiting in person the court of Castile. These civilities were reciprocated by the Christian princes. As late as 1463, Henry the Fourth had a personal interview with the king of Granada,
in the dominions of the latter. The two monarchs held their conference under a splendid pavilion erected in the vega, before the gates of the city; and, after an exchange of presents, the Spanish sovereign was escorted to the frontiers by a body of Moorish cavaliers. These acts of courtesy relieve in some measure the ruder features of an almost uninterrupted warfare, that was necessarily kept up between the rival nations. [28]

The Moorish and Christian knights were also in the habit of exchanging visits at the courts of their respective masters. The latter were wont to repair to Granada to settle their affairs of honor, by personal rencontre, in the presence of its sovereign. The disaffected nobles of Castile, among whom Mariana especially notices the Velas and the Castros, often sought an asylum there, and served under the Moslem banner. With this interchange of social courtesy between the two nations, it could not but happen that each should contract somewhat of the peculiarities natural to the other. The Spaniard acquired something of the gravity and magnificence of demeanor proper to the Arabian; and the latter relaxed his habitual reserve, and, above all, the jealousy and gross sensuality, which characterize the nations of the east. [29]

Indeed, if we were to rely on the pictures presented to us in the Spanish ballads or _romances_, we should admit as unreserved an intercourse between the sexes to have existed among the Spanish Arabs, as with any other people of Europe. The Moorish lady is represented there as an undisguised spectator of the public festivals; while her knight, bearing an embroidered mantle or scarf, or some other token of her favor, contends
openly in her presence for the prize of valor, mingles with her in the 
graceful dance of the Zambra, or sighs away his soul in moonlight 
serenades under her balcony. [30]

Other circumstances, especially the frescoes still extant on the walls of 
the Alhambra, may be cited as corroborative of the conclusions afforded by 
the _romances_, implying a latitude in the privileges accorded to the 
sex, similar to that in Christian countries, and altogether alien from the 
genius of Mahometanism. [31] The chivalrous character ascribed to the 
Spanish Moslems appears, moreover, in perfect conformity to this. Thus 
some of their sovereigns, we are told, after the fatigues of the 
tournament, were wont to recreate their spirits with "elegant poetry, and 
florid discourses of amorous and knightly history." The ten qualities, 
enumerated as essential to a true knight, were "piety, valor, courtesy, 
prowess, the gifts of poetry and eloquence, and dexterity in the 
management of the horse, the sword, lance, and bow." [32] The history of 
the Spanish Arabs, especially in the latter wars of Granada, furnishes 
repeated examples not merely of the heroism, which distinguished the 
European chivalry of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, but 
occasionally of a polished courtesy, that might have graced a Bayard or a 
Sidney. This combination of Oriental magnificence and knightly prowess 
shed a ray of glory over the closing days of the Arabian empire in Spain, 
and served to conceal, though it could not correct, the vices which it 
possessed in common with all Mahometan institutions.

The government of Granada was not administered with the same tranquillity 
as that of Cordova. Revolutions were perpetually occurring, which may be
traced sometimes to the tyranny of the prince, but more frequently to the
factions of the seraglio, the soldiery, or the licentious populace of the
capital. The latter, indeed, more volatile than the sands of the deserts
from which they originally sprung, were driven by every gust of passion
into the most frightful excesses, deposing and even assassinating their
monarchs, violating their palaces, and scattering abroad their beautiful
collections and libraries; while the kingdom, unlike that of Cordova, was
so contracted in its extent, that every convulsion of the capital was felt
to its farthest extremities. Still, however, it held out, almost
miraculously, against the Christian arms, and the storms that beat upon it
incessantly, for more than two centuries, scarcely wore away anything from
its original limits.

Several circumstances may be pointed out as enabling Granada to maintain
this protracted resistance. Its concentrated population furnished such
abundant supplies of soldiers, that its sovereigns could bring into the
field an army of a hundred thousand men. [33] Many of these were drawn
from the regions of the Alpujarras, whose rugged inhabitants had not been
corrupted by the soft effeminacy of the plains. The ranks were
occasionally recruited, moreover, from the warlike tribes of Africa. The
Moors of Granada are praised by their enemies for their skill with the
cross-bow, to the use of which they were trained from childhood. [34] But
their strength lay chiefly in their cavalry. Their spacious vegas afforded
an ample field for the display of their matchless horsemanship; while the
face of the country, intersected by mountains and intricate defiles, gave
a manifest advantage to the Arabian light-horse over the steel-clad
cavalry of the Christians, and was particularly suited to the wild
guerilla warfare, in which the Moors so much excelled. During the long hostilities of the country, almost every city had been converted into a fortress. The number of these fortified places in the territory of Granada was ten times as great as is now to be found throughout the whole Peninsula. [35] Lastly, in addition to these means of defence, may be mentioned their early acquaintance with gunpowder, which, like the Greek fire of Constantinople, contributed perhaps in some degree to prolong their precarious existence beyond its natural term.

But, after all, the strength of Granada, like that of Constantinople, lay less in its own resources than in the weakness of its enemies, who, distracted by the feuds of a turbulent aristocracy, especially during the long minorities with which Castile was afflicted, perhaps, more than any other nation in Europe, seemed to be more remote from the conquest of Granada at the death of Henry the Fourth, than at that of St. Ferdinand in the thirteenth century. Before entering on the achievement of this conquest by Ferdinand and Isabella, it may not be amiss to notice the probable influence exerted by the Spanish Arabs on European civilization.

Notwithstanding the high advances made by the Arabians in almost every branch of learning, and the liberal import of certain sayings ascribed to Mahomet, the spirit of his religion was eminently unfavorable to letters. The Koran, whatever be the merit of its literary execution, does not, we believe, contain a single precept in favor of general science. [36] Indeed, during the first century after its promulgation, almost as little attention was bestowed upon this by the Saracens, as in their "days of ignorance," as the period is stigmatized which preceded the advent of
their apostle. [37] But, after the nation had reposed from its tumultuous military career, the taste for elegant pleasures, which naturally results from opulence and leisure, began to flow in upon it. It entered upon this new field with all its characteristic enthusiasm, and seemed ambitious of attaining the same pre-eminence in science, that it had already reached in arms.

It was at the commencement of this period of intellectual fermentation, that the last of the Omeyades, escaping into Spain, established there the kingdom of Cordova, and imported along with him the fondness for luxury and letters that had begun to display itself in the capitals of the east. His munificent spirit descended upon his successors; and, on the breaking up of the empire, the various capitals, Seville, Murcia, Malaga, Granada, and others, which rose upon its ruins, became the centres of so many intellectual systems, that continued to emit a steady lustre through the clouds and darkness of succeeding centuries. The period of this literary civilization reached far into the fourteenth century, and thus, embracing an interval of six hundred years, may be said to have exceeded in duration that of any other literature, ancient or modern.

There were several auspicious circumstances in the condition of the Spanish Arabs, which distinguished them from their Mahometan brethren. The temperate climate of Spain was far more propitious to robustness and elasticity of intellect than the sultry regions of Arabia and Africa. Its long line of coast and convenient havens opened to it an enlarged commerce. Its number of rival states encouraged a generous emulation, like that which glowed in ancient Greece and modern Italy; and was infinitely
more favorable to the development of the mental powers than the far-
extended and sluggish empires of Asia. Lastly, a familiar intercourse with
the Europeans served to mitigate in the Spanish Arabs some of the more
degrading superstitions incident to their religion, and to impart to them
nobler ideas of the independence and moral dignity of man, than are to be
found in the slaves of eastern despotism.

Under these favorable circumstances, provisions for education were
liberally multiplied, colleges, academies, and gymnasiums springing up
spontaneously, as it were, not merely in the principal cities, but in the
most obscure villages of the country. No less than fifty of these colleges
or schools could be discerned scattered over the suburbs and populous
plain of Granada. Seventy public libraries, if we may credit the report,
were counted within the narrow limits of the Moslem territory. Every place
of note seems to have furnished materials for a literary history. The
copious catalogues of writers, still extant in the Escorial, show how
extensively the cultivation of science was pursued, even through its
minutest subdivisions; while a biographical notice of blind men, eminent
for their scholarship in Spain, proves how far the general avidity for
knowledge triumphed over the most discouraging obstacles of nature. [38]

The Spanish Arabs emulated their countrymen of the east in their devotion
to natural and mathematical science. They penetrated into the remotest
regions of Africa and Asia, transmitting an exact account of their
proceedings to the national academies. They contributed to astronomical
knowledge by the number and accuracy of their observations, and by the
improvement of instruments and the erection of observatories, of which the
noble tower of Seville is one of the earliest examples. They furnished their full proportion in the department of history, which, according to an Arabian author cited by D'Herbelot, could boast of thirteen hundred writers. The treatises on logic and metaphysics amount to one-ninth of the surviving treasures of the Escorial; and, to conclude this summary of naked details, some of their scholars appear to have entered upon as various a field of philosophical inquiry, as would be crowded into a modern encyclopaedia. [39]

The results, it must be confessed, do not appear to have corresponded with this magnificent apparatus and unrivalled activity of research. The mind of the Arabians was distinguished by the most opposite characteristics, which sometimes, indeed, served to neutralize each other. An acute and subtile perception was often clouded by mysticism and abstraction. They combined a habit of classification and generalization, with a marvellous fondness for detail; a vivacious fancy with a patience of application, that a German of our day might envy; and, while in fiction they launched boldly into originality, indeed extravagance, they were content in philosophy to tread servilely in the track of their ancient masters. They derived their science from versions of the Greek philosophers; but, as their previous discipline had not prepared them for its reception, they were oppressed rather than stimulated by the weight of the inheritance. They possessed an indefinite power of accumulation, but they rarely ascended to general principles, or struck out new and important truths; at least, this is certain in regard to their metaphysical labors.

Hence Aristotle, who taught them to arrange what they had already
acquired, rather than to advance to new discoveries, became the god of
their idolatry. They piled commentary on commentary, and, in their blind
admiration of his system, may be almost said to have been more of
Peripatetics than the Stagirite himself. The Cordovan Averroes was the
most eminent of his Arabian commentators, and undoubtedly contributed more
than any other individual to establish the authority of Aristotle over the
reason of mankind for so many ages. Yet his various illustrations have
served, in the opinion of European critics, to darken rather than
dissipate the ambiguities of his original, and have even led to the
confident assertion that he was wholly unacquainted with the Greek
language. [40]

The Saracens gave an entirely new face to pharmacy and chemistry. They
introduced a great variety of salutary medicaments into Europe. The
Spanish Arabs, in particular, are commended by Sprengel above their
brethren for their observations on the practice of medicine. [41] But
whatever real knowledge they possessed was corrupted by their inveterate
propensity for mystical and occult science. They too often exhausted both
health and fortune in fruitless researches after the elixir of life and
the philosopher's stone. Their medical prescriptions were regulated by the
aspect of the stars. Their physics were debased by magic, their chemistry
degenerated into alchemy, their astronomy into astrology.

In the fruitful field of history, their success was even more equivocal.
They seem to have been wholly destitute of the philosophical spirit, which
gives life to this kind of composition. They were the disciples of
fatalism and the subjects of a despotic government. Man appeared to them
only in the contrasted aspects of slave and master. What could they know of the finer moral relations, or of the higher energies of the soul, which are developed only under free and beneficent institutions? Even could they have formed conceptions of these, how would they have dared to express them? Hence their histories are too often mere barren chronological details, or fulsome panegyrics on their princes, unenlivened by a single spark of philosophy or criticism.

Although the Spanish Arabs are not entitled to the credit of having wrought any important revolution in intellectual or moral science, they are commended by a severe critic, as exhibiting in their writings "the germs of many theories, which have been reproduced as discoveries in later ages," [42] and they silently perfected several of those useful arts, which have had a sensible influence on the happiness and improvement of mankind. Algebra and the higher mathematics were taught in their schools, and thence diffused over Europe. The manufacture of paper, which, since the invention of printing, has contributed so essentially to the rapid circulation of knowledge, was derived through them. Casiri has discovered several manuscripts of cotton paper in the Escurial as early as 1009, and of linen paper of the date of 1106; [43] the origin of which latter fabric Tiraboschi has ascribed to an Italian of Trevigi, in the middle of the fourteenth century. [44] Lastly, the application of gunpowder to military science, which has wrought an equally important revolution, though of a more doubtful complexion, in the condition of society, was derived through the same channel. [45]

The influence of the Spanish Arabs, however, is discernible not so much in
the amount of knowledge, as in the impulse, which they communicated to the long-dormant energies of Europe. Their invasion was coeval with the commencement of that night of darkness, which divides the modern from the ancient world. The soil had been impoverished by long, assiduous cultivation. The Arabians came like a torrent, sweeping down and obliterating even the land-marks of former civilization, but bringing with it a fertilizing principle, which, as the waters receded, gave new life and loveliness to the landscape. The writings of the Saracens were translated and diffused throughout Europe. Their schools were visited by disciples, who, roused from their lethargy, caught somewhat of the generous enthusiasm of their masters; and a healthful action was given to the European intellect, which, however ill-directed at first, was thus prepared for the more judicious and successful efforts of later times.

It is comparatively easy to determine the value of the scientific labors of a people, for truth is the same in all languages; but the laws of taste differ so widely in different nations, that it requires a nicer discrimination to pronounce fairly upon such works as are regulated by them. Nothing is more common than to see the poetry of the east condemned as tumid, over-refined, infected with meretricious ornament and conceits, and, in short, as every way contravening the principles of good taste. Few of the critics, who thus peremptorily condemn, are capable of reading a line of the original. The merit of poetry, however, consists so much in its literary execution, that a person, to pronounce upon it, should be intimately acquainted with the whole import of the idiom in which it is written. The style of poetry, indeed of all ornamental writing, whether prose or verse, in order to produce a proper effect, must be raised or
relieved, as it were, upon the prevailing style of social intercourse.

Even where this is highly figurative and impassioned, as with the
Arabians, whose ordinary language is made up of metaphor, that of the poet
must be still more so. Hence the tone of elegant literature varies so
widely in different countries, even in those of Europe, which approach the
nearest to each other in their principles of taste, that it would be found
extremely difficult to effect a close translation of the most admired
specimens of eloquence from the language of one nation into that of any
other. A page of Boccaccio or Bembo, for instance, done into literal
English, would have an air of intolerable artifice and verbiage. The
choicest morsels of Massillon, Bossuet, or the rhetorical Thomas, would
savor marvellously of bombast; and how could we in any degree keep pace
with the magnificent march of the Castilian! Yet surely we are not to
impugn the taste of all these nations, who attach much more importance,
and have paid (at least this is true of the French and Italian) much
greater attention to the mere beauties of literary finish, than English
writers.

Whatever may be the sins of the Arabians on this head, they are certainly
not those of negligence. The Spanish Arabs, in particular, were noted for
the purity and elegance of their idiom; insomuch that Casiri affects to
determine the locality of an author by the superior refinements of his
style. Their copious philological and rhetorical treatises, their arts of
poetry, grammars, and rhyming dictionaries, show to what an excessive
refinement they elaborated the art of composition. Academies, far more
numerous than those of Italy, to which they subsequently served for a
model, invited by their premiums frequent competitions in poetry and
eloquence. To poetry, indeed, especially of the tender kind, the Spanish
Arabs seem to have been as indiscriminately addicted as the Italians in
the time of Petrarch; and there was scarcely a doctor in church or state,
but at some time or other offered up his amorous incense on the altar of
the muse. [46]

With all this poetic feeling, however, the Arabs never availed themselves
of the treasures of Grecian eloquence, which lay open before them. Not a
poet or orator of any eminence in that language seems to have been
translated by them. [47] The temperate tone of Attic composition appeared
tame to the fervid conceptions of the east. Neither did they venture upon
what in Europe are considered the higher walks of the art, the drama and
the epic. [48] None of their writers in prose or verse show much attention
to the development or dissection of character. Their inspiration exhaled
in lyrical effusions, in elegies, epigrams, and idyls. They sometimes,
moreover, like the Italians, employed verse as the vehicle of instruction
in the grave and recondite sciences. The general character of their poetry
is bold, florid, impassioned, richly colored with imagery, sparkling with
conceits and metaphors, and occasionally breathing a deep tone of moral
sensibility, as in some of the plaintive effusions ascribed by Conde to
the royal poets of Cordova. The compositions of the golden age of the
Abassides, and of the preceding period, do not seem to have been infected
with the taint of exaggeration, so offensive to a European, which
distinguishes the later productions in the decay of the empire.

Whatever be thought of the influence of the Arabic on European literature
in general, there can be no reasonable doubt that it has been considerable
being confined to the vocabulary, or to external forms of composition, it
seems to have penetrated deep into its spirit, and is plainly discernible
in that affectation of stateliness and Oriental hyperbole, which
characterizes Spanish writers even at the present day; in the subtilties
and conceits with which the ancient Castilian verse is so liberally
bespangled; and in the relish for proverbs and prudential maxims, which is
so general that it may be considered national. [49]

A decided effect has been produced on the romantic literature of Europe by
those tales of fairy enchantment, so characteristic of Oriental genius,
and in which it seems to have revelled with uncontrolled delight. These
tales, which furnished the principal diversion of the East, were imported
by the Saracens into Spain; and we find the monarchs of Cordova solacing
their leisure hours with listening to their _rawis_, or novelists, who
sang to them.

"Of ladye-love and war, romance, and knightly worth." [50]

The same spirit, penetrating into France, stimulated the more sluggish
called forth the imperishable creations of the Italian muse. [51]

It is unfortunate for the Arabians, that their literature should be locked
up in a character and idiom so difficult of access to European scholars.
Their wild, imaginative poetry, scarcely capable of transfusion into a
foreign tongue, is made known to us only through the medium of bald prose
translation, while their scientific treatises have been done into Latin with an inaccuracy, which, to make use of a pun of Casiri's, merits the name of perversions rather than versions of the originals. [52] How obviously inadequate, then, are our means of forming any just estimate of their literary merits! It is unfortunate for them, moreover, that the Turks, the only nation, which, from an identity of religion and government with the Arabs, as well as from its political consequence, would seem to represent them on the theatre of modern Europe, should be a race so degraded; one which, during the five centuries that it has been in possession of the finest climate and monuments of antiquity, has so seldom been quickened into a display of genius, or added so little of positive value to the literary treasures descended from its ancient masters. Yet this people, so sensual and sluggish, we are apt to confound in imagination with the sprightly, intellectual Arab. Both indeed have been subjected to the influence of the same degrading political and religious institutions, which on the Turks have produced the results naturally to have been expected; while the Arabians, on the other hand, exhibit the extraordinary phenomenon of a nation, under all these embarrassments, rising to a high degree of elegance and intellectual culture.

The empire, which once embraced more than half of the ancient world, has now shrunk within its original limits; and the Bedouin wanders over his native desert as free, and almost as uncivilized, as before the coming of his apostle. The language, which was once spoken along the southern shores of the Mediterranean and the whole extent of the Indian Ocean, is broken up into a variety of discordant dialects. Darkness has again settled over those regions of Africa, which were illumined by the light of learning.
The elegant dialect of the Koran is studied as a dead language, even in the birth-place of the prophet. Not a printing-press at this day is to be found throughout the whole Arabian Peninsula. Even in Spain, in Christian Spain, alas! the contrast is scarcely less degrading. A death-like torpor has succeeded to her former intellectual activity. Her cities are emptied of the population with which they teemed in the days of the Saracens. Her climate is as fair, but her fields no longer bloom with the same rich and variegated husbandry. Her most interesting monuments are those constructed by the Arabs; and the traveller, as he wanders amid their desolate, but beautiful ruins, ponders on the destinies of a people, whose very existence seems now to have been almost as fanciful as the magical creations in one of their own fairy tales.

* * * *

Notwithstanding the history of the Arabs is so intimately connected with that of the Spaniards, that it may be justly said to form the reverse side of it, and notwithstanding the amplitude of authentic documents in the Arabic tongue to be found in the public libraries, the Castilian writers, even the most eminent, until the latter half of the last century, with an insensibility which can be imputed to nothing else but a spirit of religious bigotry, have been content to derive their narratives exclusively from national authorities. A fire, which, occurred in the Escorial in 1671, having consumed more than three-quarters of the magnificent collection of eastern manuscripts which it contained, the Spanish government, taking some shame to itself, as it would appear, for its past supineness, caused a copious catalogue of the surviving volumes,
to the number of 1850, to be compiled by the learned Casiri; and the 
result was his celebrated work, "Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana 
Escurialensis," which appeared in the years 1760-70, and which would 
reflect credit from the splendor of its typographical execution on any 
press of the present day. This work, although censured by some later 
Orientalists as hasty and superficial, must ever be highly valued as 
affording the only complete index to the rich repertory of Arabian 
manuscripts in the Escurial, and for the ample evidence which it exhibits 
of the science and mental culture of the Spanish Arabs. Several other 
native scholars, among whom Andres and Masdeu may be particularly noticed, 
have made extensive researches into the literary history of this people. 
Still, their political history, so essential to a correct knowledge of the 
Spanish, was comparatively neglected, until Senor Conde, the late learned 
librarian of the Academy, who had given ample evidence of his Oriental 
learning in his version and illustrations of the Nubian Geographer, and a 
Dissertation on Arabic Coins published in the fifth volume of the Memoirs 
of the Royal Academy of History, compiled his work entitled "Historia de 
Bat unhappily the death of its author, occurring in the autumn of the same 
year, prevented the completion of his design. The two remaining volumes, 
however, were printed in the course of that and the following year from 
his own manuscripts; and although their comparative meagreness and 
confused chronology betray the want of the same paternal hand, they 
contain much interesting information. The relation of the conquest of 
Granada, especially, with which the work concludes, exhibits some 
important particulars in a totally different point of view from that in 
which they had been presented by the principal Spanish historians.
The first volume, which may be considered as having received the last touches of its author, embraces a circumstantial narrative of the great Saracen invasion, of the subsequent condition of Spain under the viceroy, and of the empire of the Omeyades; undoubtedly the most splendid portion of Arabian annals, but the one, unluckily, which has been most copiously illustrated in the popular work compiled by Cardonne from the Oriental manuscripts in the Royal Library at Paris. But as this author has followed the Spanish and the Oriental authorities, indiscriminately, no part of his book can be cited as a genuine Arabic version, except indeed the last sixty pages, comprising the conquest of Granada, which Cardonne professes in his Preface to have drawn exclusively from an Arabian manuscript. Conde, on the other hand, professes to have adhered to his originals with such scrupulous fidelity, that "the European reader may feel that he is perusing an Arabian author;" and certainly very strong internal evidence is afforded of the truth of this assertion, in the peculiar national and religious spirit which pervades the work, and in a certain florid gasconade of style, common with the Oriental writers. It is this fidelity that constitutes the peculiar value of Conde's narrative. It is the first time that the Arabians, at least those of Spain, the part of the nation which reached the highest degree of refinement, have been allowed to speak for themselves. The history, or rather tissue of histories, embodied in the translation, is certainly conceived in no very philosophical spirit, and contains, as might be expected from an Asiatic pen, little for the edification of a European reader on subjects of policy and government. The narrative is, moreover, encumbered with frivolous details and a barren muster-roll of names and titles, which would better become a genealogical table than a history. But, with every deduction, it must be allowed to
exhibit a sufficiently clear view of the intricate conflicting relations
of the petty principalities, which swarmed over the Peninsula; and to
furnish abundant evidence of a wide-spread intellectual improvement amid
all the horrors of anarchy and a ferocious despotism. The work has already
been translated, or rather paraphrased, into French. The necessity of an
English version will doubtless be in a great degree superseded by the
History of the Spanish Arabs, preparing for the Cabinet Cyclopaedia, by
Mr. Southey,—a writer, with whom few Castilian scholars will be willing
to compete, even on their own ground; and who is, happily, not exposed to
the national or religious prejudices, which can interfere with his
rendering perfect justice to his subject.

FOOTNOTES

[1] See Introduction, Section I. Note 2, of this History.

[2] The Koran, in addition to the repeated assurances of Paradise to the
martyr who falls in battle, contains the regulations of a precise military
code. Military service in some shape or other is exacted from all. The
terms to be prescribed to the enemy and the vanquished, the division of
the spoil, the seasons of lawful truce, the conditions on which the
comparatively small number of exempts are permitted to remain at home, are
accurately defined. (Sale's Koran, chap. 2, 8, 9, et alibi.) When the
_ algihed_, or Mahometan crusade, which, in its general design and
immunities, bore a close resemblance to the Christian, was preached in the
mosque, every true believer was bound to repair to the standard of his
chief. "The holy war," says one of the early Saracen generals, "is the ladder of Paradise. The Apostle of God styled himself the son of the sword. He loved to repose in the shadow of banners and on the field of battle."

[3] The successors, caliphs or vicars, as they were styled, of Mahomet, represented both his spiritual and temporal authority. Their office involved almost equally ecclesiastical and military functions. It was their duty to lead the army in battle, and on the pilgrimage to Mecca. They were to preach a sermon, and offer up public prayers in the mosques every Friday. Many of their prerogatives resemble those assumed anciently by the popes. They conferred investitures on the Moslem princes by the symbol of a ring, a sword, or a standard. They complimented them with the titles of "defender of the faith," "column of religion," and the like. The proudest potentate held the bridle of their mules, and paid his homage by touching their threshold with his forehead. The authority of the caliphs was in this manner founded on opinion no less than on power; and their ordinances, however frivolous or iniquitous in themselves, being enforced, as it were, by a divine sanction, became laws which it was sacrilege to...
to the primitive Bedouins, present us with a lively picture of their peculiar habits, which, notwithstanding the influence of a temporary civilization, may be thought to bear great resemblance to those of their descendants at the present day.

[5] Startling as it may be, there is scarcely a vestige of any of the particulars, circumstantially narrated by the national historians (Mariana, Zurita, Abarca, Moret, etc.) as the immediate causes of the subversion of Spain, to be found in the chronicles of the period. No intimation of the persecution, or of the treason, of the two sons of Witiza is to be met with in any Spanish writer, as far as I know, until nearly two centuries after the conquest; none earlier than this, of the defection of Archbishop Oppas, during the fatal conflict near Xerez; and none of the tragical amours of Roderic and the revenge of count Julian, before the writers of the thirteenth century. Nothing indeed can be more jejune than the original narratives of the invasion. The continuation of the Chronicon del Biclarense, and the Chronicon de Isidoro Pacense or de Sagrada, tom. vi. and viii.) afford the only histories contemporary with the event. Conde is mistaken in his assertion (Dominacion de los Arabes, written during that period. Spain had not the pen of a Bede or an Eginhart to describe the memorable catastrophe. But the few and meagre touches of the contemporary chroniclers have left ample scope for conjectural history, which has been most industriously improved.

The reports, according to Conde, (Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. i. p. 36,) greedily circulated among the Saracens, of the magnificence and
general prosperity of the Gothic monarchy, may sufficiently account for its invasion by an enemy flushed with uninterrupted conquests, and whose fanatical ambition was well illustrated by one of their own generals, who, on reaching the western extremity of Africa, plunged his horse into the Atlantic, and sighed for other shores on which to plant the banners of Islam. See Cardonne, Histoire de l’Afrique et de l’Espagne sous la Domination des Arabes, (Paris, 1765,) tom. i. p. 37.

[6] The laborious diligence of Masdeu may be thought to have settled the epoch, about which so much learned dust has been raised. The fourteenth 1783-1805) contains an accurate table, by which the minutest dates of the Mahometan lunar year are adjusted by those of the Christian era. The fall of Roderic on the field of battle is attested by both the domestic chroniclers of that period, as well as by the Saracens. (Incerti Auctoris tom. viii. p. 290.) The tales of the ivory and marble chariot, of the gallant steed Orelia and magnificent vestments of Roderic, discovered after the fight on the banks of the Guadalete, of his probable escape and subsequent seclusion among the mountains of Portugal, which have been thought worthy of Spanish history, have found a much more appropriate place in their romantic national ballads, as well as in the more elaborate productions of Scott and Southey.

[7] "Whatever curses," says an eye-witness, whose meagre diction is quickened on this occasion into something like sublimity, "whatever curses were denounced by the prophets of old against Jerusalem, whatever fell
upon ancient Babylon, whatever miseries Rome inflicted upon the glorious company of the martyrs, all these were visited upon the once happy and prosperous, but now desolated Spain." Pacensis Chronicon, apud Florez,

[8] The frequency of this alliance may be inferred from an extraordinary, though, doubtless, extravagant statement cited by Zurita. The ambassadors of James II., of Aragon, in 1311, represented to the sovereign pontiff, Clement V., that, of the 200,000 souls, which then composed the population of Granada, there were not more than 500 of pure Moorish descent. Anales, tom. iv. fol. 314.

[9] The famous persecutions of Cordova under the reigns of Abderrahman II. and his son, which, to judge from the tone of Castilian writers, might vie with those of Nero and Diocletian, are admitted by Morales (Obras, tom. x. p. 74) to have occasioned the destruction of only forty individuals. Most of these unhappy fanatics solicited the crown of martyrdom by an open violation of the Mahometan laws and usages. The details are given by Florez, in the tenth volume of his collection.


The same taste is noticed at the present day, by a traveller, whose 

vous la reconnaissez de loin au riche et sombre voile de verdure qui

pieuse." Lamartine, Voyage en Orient, tome i. p. 172.

Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. i. pp. 199, 265, 284, 285, 417,
227-230 et seq.

Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. i. pp. 211, 212, 226.--
Swinburne, Travels through Spain, (London, 1787,) let. 35.--Xerif Aledris,

Conde, (Madrid, 1799,) pp. 161, 162.--Morales, Obras, tom. x. p. 61.--

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Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. i. pp 214, 228, 270, 611.--

d'Espagne, tom. i. pp. 338-343.--Casiri quotes from an Arabic historian
the conditions on which Abderrahman I. proffered his alliance to the
Christian princes of Spain, viz. the annual tribute of 10,000 ounces of
gold, 10,000 pounds of silver, 10,000 horses, etc., etc. The absurdity of
this story, inconsiderately repeated by historians, if any argument were
necessary to prove it, becomes sufficiently manifest from the fact, that
the instrument is dated in the 142d year of the Hegira, being a little
more than fifty years after the conquest. See Bibliotheca Arabico-Hispana
Escurialensis, (Matriti, 1760,) tom. ii. p. 104.


117, 127, 131.--Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. i. cap. 44.--Casiri,
Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. i. p. 338.

An absurd story has been transcribed from Cardonne, with little
hesitation, by almost every succeeding writer upon this subject. According
to him, (Hist. d'AFrique et d'Espagne, tom. i. p. 338,) "the banks of the
Guadalquivir were lined with no less than twelve thousand villages and
hamlets." The length of the river, not exceeding three hundred miles,
would scarcely afford room for the same number of farm-houses. Conde's
version of the Arabic passage represents twelve thousand hamlets, farms,
and castles, to have "been scattered over the regions watered by the
Gaudalquivir," indicating by this indefinite statement nothing more than
the extreme populousness of the province of Andalusia.
Among the accomplished women of this period, Valadata, the daughter of the caliph Mahomet, is celebrated as having frequently carried away the palm of eloquence in her discussions with the most learned academicians. Others again, with an intrepidity that might shame the degeneracy of a modern blue, plunged boldly into the studies of philosophy, history, and jurisprudence.

[22] Garibay, Compendio, lib. 39, cap. 3.

[23] Zurita, Anales, lib. 20, cap. 42.


Excelencias de Granada, (Madrid, 1608,) lib. 1.--Pedraza has collected the various etymologies of the term _Granada_, which some writers have traced to the fact of the city having been the spot where the _pomegranate_ was first introduced from Africa; others to the large quantity of _grain_ in which its vega abounded; others again to the resemblance which the city, divided into two hills thickly sprinkled with houses, bore to a half-opened pomegranate. (Lib. 2, cap. 17.) The arms of the city, which were in part composed of a pomegranate, would seem to favor the derivation of its name from that of the fruit.

[26] Pedraza, Antiguedad de Granada, fol. 101.--Denina, Delle Rivoluzioni la Marina, Comercio, y Artes de Barcelona, (Madrid, 1779-92,) tom. iii. p. 218; tom. iv. pp. 67 et seq.--Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. cap. 26.--The ambassador of the emperor Frederic III., on his passage to the court of Lisbon in the middle of the fifteenth century, contrasts the superior cultivation, as well as general civilization, of Granada at this period with that of the other countries of Europe through which he had (Paris, 1818,) tom. ix. p. 405.


[28] A specification of a royal donative in that day may serve to show the
martial spirit of the age. In one of these, made by the king of Granada to
the Castilian sovereign, we find twenty noble steeds of the royal stud,
reared on the banks of the Xenil, with superb caparisons, and the same
number of scimitars richly garnished with gold and jewels; and, in
another, mixed up with perfumes and cloth of gold, we meet with a litter
of tame lions. (Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. pp. 163, 183.)
This latter symbol of royalty appears to have been deemed peculiarly
appropriate to the kings of Leon. Ferreras informs us that the ambassadors
from France at the Castilian court, in 1434, were received by John II.
with a full-grown domesticated lion crouching at his feet. (Hist.
d'Espagne, tom. vi. p. 401.) The same taste appears still to exist in
Turkey. Dr. Clarke, in his visit to Constantinople, met with one of these
terrific pets, who used to follow his master, Hassan Pacha, about like a
dog.

[29] Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. cap. 28.--Henriquez del
two Castilian nobles, in the presence of the king of Granada, as late as
1470. One of the parties, Don Alfonso de Aguilar, failing to keep his
engagement, the other rode round the lists in triumph, with his
adversary's portrait contemptuously fastened to the tail of his horse.

[30] It must be admitted, that these ballads, as far as facts are
concerned, are too inexact to furnish other than a very slippery
foundation for history. The most beautiful portion perhaps of the Moorish
ballads, for example, is taken up with the feuds of the Abencerrages in
the latter days of Granada. Yet this family, whose romantic story is still
repeated to the traveller amid the ruins of the Alhambra, is scarcely
noticed, as far as I am aware, by contemporary writers, foreign or
domestic, and would seem to owe its chief celebrity to the apocryphal
severe sentence of Nic. Antonio, "are fit only to amuse the lazy and the
listless." (Bibliotheca Nova, tom. i. p. 536.)

But, although the Spanish ballads are not entitled to the credit of strict
historical documents, they may yet perhaps be received in evidence of the
prevailing character of the social relations of the age; a remark indeed
predicable of most works of fiction, written by authors contemporary with
the events they describe, and more especially so of that popular
minstrelsy, which, emanating from a simple, uncorrupted class, is less
likely to swerve from truth, than more ostentatious works of art. The long
cohabitation of the Saracens with the Christians, (full evidence of which
is afforded by Capmany, (Mem. de Barcelona, tom. iv. Apend. no. 11,) who
quotes a document from the public archives of Catalonia, showing the great
number of Saracens residing in Aragon even in the thirteenth and
fourteenth centuries, the most flourishing period of the Granadian
empire,) had enabled many of them confessedly to speak and write the
Spanish language with purity and elegance. Some of the graceful little
songs, which are still chanted by the peasantry of Spain in their dances,
and the accompaniment of the castanet, are referred by a competent critic
little hazard, therefore, in imputing much of this peculiar minstrelsy to
the Arabians themselves, the contemporaries, and perhaps the eye-
witnesses, of the events they celebrate.
Casiri (Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. ii. p. 259) has transcribed a passage from an Arabian author of the fourteenth century, inveighing bitterly against the luxury of the Moorish ladies, their gorgeous apparel and habits of expense, "amounting almost to insanity," in a tone which may remind one of the similar philippic by his contemporary Dante, against his fair countrywomen of Florence.—Two ordinances of a king of Granada, cited by Conde in his History, prescribed the separation of the women from the men in the mosques; and prohibit their attendance on certain festivals, without the protection of their husbands or some near relative.—Their _femmes savantes_, as we have seen, were in the habit of conferring freely with men of letters, and of assisting in person at the academical presence of females at the tournaments, and the fortunate knight receiving the palm of victory from their hands.

Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. i. p. 340; tom. iii. p. 119.

Casiri, on Arabian authority, computes it at 200,000 men. Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. i. p. 338.

Mem. de la Acad. de Hist., tom. vi. p. 169.—These ruined fortifications still thickly stud the border territories of Granada; and many an Andalusian mill, along the banks of the Guadayra and Guadalquivir, retains its battlemented tower, which served for the defence of its
inmates against the forays of the enemy.

[36] D'Herbelot, (Bib. Orientale, tom. i. p. 630,) among other authentic traditions of Mahomet, quotes one as indicating his encouragement of letters, viz. "That the ink of the doctors and the blood of the martyrs are of equal price." M. OElsner (Des Effets de la Religion de Mohammed, Paris, 1810) has cited several others of the same liberal import. But such traditions cannot be received in evidence of the original doctrine of the prophet. They are rejected as apocryphal by the Persians and the whole sect of the Shiites, and are entitled to little weight with a European.

[37] When the caliph Al Mamon encouraged, by his example as well as patronage, a more enlightened policy, he was accused by the more orthodox Mussulmans of attempting to subvert the principles of their religion. See Pococke, Spec. Hist. Arabum, (Oxon. 1650,) p. 166.

[38] Andres, Letteratura, part. 1, cap. 8, 10.--Casiri, Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. ii. pp. 71, 251, et passim.

[39] Casiri mentions one of these universal geniuses, who published no less than a thousand and fifty treatises on the various topics of Ethics, History, Law, Medicine, etc.! Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. ii. p. 107.

Sevilla, p. 22.--D'Herbelot, Bib. Orientale, voce _Tarikh_.--Masdeu, cap. 8.
[40] Consult the sensible, though perhaps severe, remarks of Degerando on Arabian science. (Hist. de la Philosophie, tom. iv. cap. 24.)--The reader may also peruse with advantage a disquisition on Arabian metaphysics in Turner's History of England, (vol. iv. pp. 405-449.)--Brucker, Hist. Philosophiae, tom. in. p. 105.)--Ludovicus Vives seems to have been the author of the imputation in the text. (Nic. Antonio, Bibliotheca Vetus, tom. ii. p. 394.) Averroes translated some of the philosophical works of Aristotle from the Greek into Arabic; a Latin version of which translation was afterwards made. Though D'Herbelot is mistaken (Bib. Orientale, art. _Roschd_) in saying that Averroes was the first who translated Aristotle into Arabic; as this had been done two centuries before, at least, by Honain and others in the ninth century, (see Casiri, Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. i. p. 304,) and Bayle has shown that a Latin version of the Stagirite was used by the Europeans before the alleged period. See art. _Averroes_.

1815,) tom. ii. pp. 263 et seq.

[42] Degerando, Hist. de la Philosophie, tom. iv. ubi supra.


use of artillery by the European Christians; although Du Cange, among several examples which he enumerates, has traced a distinct notice of its existence as far back as 1338. (Glossarium ad Scriptores Mediae et Infimae _Bombarda_.) The history of the Spanish Arabs carries it to a much earlier period. It was employed by the Moorish king of Granada at the siege of Baza, in 1312 and 1325. (Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. cap. 18.—Casiri, Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. ii. p. 7.) It is distinctly noticed in an Arabian treatise as ancient as 1249; and, finally, Casiri quotes a passage from a Spanish author at the close of the eleventh Century, (whose MS., according to Nic. Antonio, though familiar to scholars, lies still entombed in the dust of libraries,) which describes the use of artillery in a naval engagement of that period between the Moors of Tunis and of Seville. Casiri, Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. ii. p. 8.—Nic, Antonio, Bibliotheca Vetus, tom. ii. p. 12.

[46] Petrarch complains, in one of his letters from the country, that "jurisconsults and divines, nay his own valet, had taken to rhyming; and he was afraid the very cattle might begin to low in verse;" apud De Sade,

[47] Andres, Letteratura, part. 1, cap. 11.—Yet this popular assertion is contradicted by Reinesius, who states, that both Homer and Pindar were translated into Arabic by the middle of the eighth century. See Fabricius, Bibliotheca Graeca, (Hamb. 1712-38,) tom. xii. p. 753.
says that Sir W. Jones is mistaken in citing the history of Timour by Ebn.

Sismondi who is mistaken, since the English critic states that the Arabs
have no heroic poem, and that this poetical prose history is not accounted
such even by the Arabs themselves.

[49] It would require much more learning than I am fortified with, to
enter into the merits of the question, which has been raised respecting
the probable influence of the Arabian on the literature of Europe. A. V.
Schlegel, in a work of little bulk, but much value, in refuting with his
usual vivacity the extravagant theory of Andres, has been led to
conclusions of an opposite nature, which may be thought perhaps scarcely

Saracens, who, during the Middle Ages, were so far superior in science and
literary culture to the Europeans, could have resided so long in immediate
contact with them, and in those very countries indeed which gave birth to
the most cultivated poetry of that period, without exerting some
perceptible influence upon it. Be this as it may, its influence on the
Castilian cannot reasonably be disputed. This has been briefly traced by
Conde in an "Essay on Oriental Poetry," _Poesia Oriental_, whose
publication he anticipates in the Preface to his "History of the Spanish
Arabs," but which still remains in manuscript. (The copy I have used is in
the library of Mr. George Ticknor.) He professes in this work to discern
in the earlier Castilian poetry, in the Cid, the Alexander, in Berceo's,
the arch-priest of Hita's, and others of similar antiquity, most of the
peculiarities and varieties of Arabian verse; the same cadences and number
of syllables, the same intermixture of assonances and consonances, the
double hemistich and prolonged repetition of the final rhyme. From the
same source he derives much of the earlier rural minstrelsy of Spain, as
well as the measures of its romances and seguidillas; and in the Preface
to his History, he has ventured on the bold assertion, that the Castilian
owes so much of its vocabulary to the Arabic, that it may be almost
accounted a dialect of the latter. Conde's criticisms, however, must be
quoted with reserve. His habitual studies had given him such a keen relish
for Oriental literature, that he was, in a manner, _denaturalized_ from
his own.

[50] Byron's beautiful line may seem almost a version of Conde's Spanish
estilo."--Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. i. p. 457.

derives the jealousy of the sex, the ideas of honor, and the deadly spirit
of revenge, which distinguished the southern nations of Europe in the
fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, from the Arabians. Whatever be thought
of the jealousy of the sex, it might have been supposed that the
principles of honor and the spirit of revenge might, without seeking
further, find abundant precedent in the feudal habits and institutions of
our European ancestors.

Bibliotheca Escurialensis, tom. i. p. 266.
CHAPTER IX.

WAR OF GRANADA.--SURPRISE OF ZAHARA.--CAPTURE OF ALHAMA.

1481-1482.

Zahara Surprised by the Moors.--Marquis of Cadiz.--His Expedition against Alhama.--Valor of the Citizens.--Desperate Struggle.--Fall of Alhama.--Consternation of the Moors.--Vigorous Measures of the Queen.

No sooner had Ferdinand and Isabella restored internal tranquillity to their dominions, and made the strength effective which had been acquired by their union under one government, than they turned their eyes to those fair regions of the Peninsula, over which the Moslem crescent had reigned triumphant for nearly eight centuries. Fortunately, an act of aggression on the part of the Moors furnished a pretext for entering on their plan of conquest, at the moment when it was ripe for execution. Aben Ismael, who had ruled in Granada during the latter part of John the Second's reign, and the commencement of Henry the Fourth's, had been partly indebted for his throne to the former monarch; and sentiments of gratitude, combined with a naturally amiable disposition, had led him to foster as amicable relations with the Christian princes, as the jealousy of two nations, that might be considered the natural enemies of each other, would permit; so that, notwithstanding an occasional border foray, or the capture of a frontier fortress, such a correspondence was maintained between the two
kingdoms, that the nobles of Castile frequently resorted to the court of
Granada, where, forgetting their ancient feuds, they mingled with the
Moorish cavaliers in the generous pastimes of chivalry.

Muley Abul Hacen, who succeeded his father in 1466, was of a very
different temperament. His fiery character prompted him, when very young,
to violate the truce by an unprovoked inroad into Andalusia; and, although
after his accession domestic troubles occupied him too closely to allow
leisure for foreign war, he still cherished in secret the same feelings of
animosity against the Christians. When, in 1476, the Spanish sovereigns
required as the condition of a renewal of the truce, which he solicited,
the payment of the annual tribute imposed on his predecessors, he proudly
replied that "the mints of Granada coined no longer gold, but steel." His
subsequent conduct did not belie the spirit of this Spartan answer.

[1]

At length, towards the close of the year 1481, the storm which had been so
long gathering burst upon Zahara, a small fortified town on the frontier
of Andalusia, crowning a lofty eminence, washed at its base by the river
Guadalete, which from its position seemed almost inaccessible. The
garrison, trusting to these natural defences, suffered itself to be
surprised on the night of the 20th of December, by the Moorish monarch;
who, scaling the walls under favor of a furious tempest, which prevented
his approach from being readily heard, put to the sword such of the guard
as offered resistance, and swept away the whole population of the place,
men, women, and children, in slavery to Granada.
The intelligence of this disaster caused deep mortification to the Spanish sovereigns, especially to Ferdinand, by whose grandfather Zahara had been recovered from the Moors. Measures were accordingly taken for strengthening the whole line of frontier, and the utmost vigilance was exerted to detect some vulnerable point of the enemy, on which retaliation might be successfully inflicted. Neither were the tidings of their own successes welcomed, with the joy that might have been expected, by the people of Granada. The prognostics, it was said, afforded by the appearance of the heavens, boded no good. More sure prognostics were afforded in the judgments of thinking men, who deprecated the temerity of awakening the wrath of a vindictive and powerful enemy. "Woe is me!" exclaimed an ancient Alfaki, on quitting the hall of audience, "the ruins of Zahara will fall on our own heads; the days of the Moslem empire in Spain are now numbered!" [2]

It was not long before the desired opportunity for retaliation presented itself to the Spaniards. One Juan de Ortega, a captain of _escaladores_, or sealers, so denominated from the peculiar service in which they were employed in besieging cities, who had acquired some reputation under John the Second, in the wars of Roussillon, reported to Diego de Merlo, assistant of Seville, that the fortress of Albania, situated in the heart of the Moorish territories, was so negligently guarded, that it might be easily carried by an enemy, who had skill enough to approach it. The fortress, as well as the city of the same name, which it commanded, was built, like many others in that turbulent period, along the crest of a rocky eminence, encompassed by a river at its base, and,
from its natural advantages, might be deemed impregnable. This strength of position, by rendering all other precautions apparently superfluous, lulled its defenders into a security like that which had proved so fatal to Zahara. Alhama, as this Arabic name implies, was famous for its baths, whose annual rents are said to have amounted to five hundred thousand ducats. The monarchs of Granada, indulging the taste common to the people of the east, used to frequent this place, with their court, to refresh themselves with its delicious waters, so that Alhama became embellished with all the magnificence of a royal residence. The place was still which constituted a principal branch of the revenue, and by its various manufactures of cloth, for which its inhabitants were celebrated throughout the kingdom of Granada. [3]

Diego de Merlo, although struck with the advantages of this conquest, was not insensible to the difficulties with which it would be attended; since Alhama was sheltered under the very wings of Granada, from which it lay scarcely eight leagues distant, and could be reached only by traversing the most populous portion of the Moorish territory, or by surmounting a precipitous sierra, or chain of mountains, which screened it on the north. Without delay, however, he communicated the information which he had received to Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, marquis of Cadiz, as the person best fitted by his capacity and courage for such an enterprise. This nobleman, who had succeeded his father, the count of Arcos, in 1469, as head of the great house of Ponce de Leon, was at this period about thirty-nine years of age. Although a younger and illegitimate son, he had been preferred to the succession in consequence of the extraordinary promise which his early youth exhibited. When scarcely seventeen years old, he
achieved a victory over the Moors, accompanied with a signal display of personal prowess. [4] Later in life, he formed a connection with the daughter of the marquis of Villena, the factious minister of Henry the Fourth, through whose influence he was raised to the dignity of marquis of Cadiz. This alliance attached him to the fortunes of Henry, in his disputes with his brother Alfonso, and subsequently with Isabella, on whose accession, of course, Don Rodrigo looked with no friendly eye. He did not, however, engage in any overt act of resistance, but occupied himself with prosecuting an hereditary feud which he had revived with the duke of Medina Sidonia, the head of the Guzmans; a family, which from ancient times had divided with his own the great interests of Andalusia. The pertinacity with which this feud was conducted, and the desolation which it carried not only into Seville, but into every quarter of the province, have been noticed in the preceding pages. The vigorous administration of Isabella repressed these disorders, and after abridging the overgrown power of the two nobles, effected an apparent (it was only apparent) reconciliation between them. The fiery spirit of the marquis of Cadiz, no longer allowed to escape in domestic broil, urged him to seek distinction in more honorable warfare; and at this moment he lay in his castle at Arcos, looking with a watchful eye over the borders, and waiting, like a lion in ambush, the moment when he could spring upon his victim.

Without hesitation, therefore, he assumed the enterprise proposed by Diego de Merlo, imparting his purpose to Don Pedro Henriquez, _adelantado_ of Andalusia, a relative of Ferdinand, and to the alcaydes of two or three neighboring fortresses. With the assistance of these friends he assembled
a force which, including those who marched under the banner of Seville, 
amounted to two thousand five hundred horse and three thousand foot. His 
own town of Marchena was appointed as the place of rendezvous. The 
proposed route lay by the way of Antequera, across the wild sierras of 
Alzerifa. The mountain passes, sufficiently difficult at a season when 
their numerous ravines were choked up by the winter torrents, were 
rendered still more formidable by being traversed in the darkness of 
night; for the party, in order to conceal their movements, lay by during 
the day. Leaving their baggage on the banks of the Yeguas, that they might 
move forward with greater celerity, the whole body at length arrived, 
after a rapid and most painful inarch, on the third night from their 
departure, in a deep valley about half a league from Alhama. Here the 
marquis first revealed the real object of the expedition to his soldiers, 
who, little dreaming of anything beyond a mere border inroad, were 
transported with joy at the prospect of the rich booty so nearly within 
their grasp. [5]

The next morning, being the 28th of February, a small party was detached, 
about two hours before dawn, under the command of John de Ortega, for the 
purpose of scaling the citadel, while the main body moved forward more 
leisurely under the marquis of Cadiz, in order to support them. The night 
was dark and tempestuous, circumstances which favored their approach in 
the same manner as with the Moors at Zahara. After ascending the rocky 
heights which were crowned by the citadel, the ladders were silently 
placed against the walls, and Ortega, followed by about thirty others, 
succeeded in gaining the battlements unobserved. A sentinel, who was found 
sleeping on his post, they at once despatched, and, proceeding cautiously
forward to the guard-room, put the whole of the little garrison to the
sword, after the short and ineffectual resistance that could be opposed by
men suddenly roused from slumber. The city in the mean time was alarmed,
but it was too late; the citadel was taken; and the outer gates, which
opened into the country, being thrown open, the marquis of Cadiz entered
with trumpet sounding and banner flying, at the head of his army, and took
possession of the fortress. [6]

After allowing the refreshment necessary to the exhausted spirits of his
soldiers, the marquis resolved to sally forth at once upon the town,
before its inhabitants could muster in sufficient force to oppose him. But
the citizens of Alhama, showing a resolution rather to have been expected
from men trained in a camp, than from peacefulburghers of a manufacturing
town, had sprung to arms at the first alarm, and, gathering in the narrow
street on which the portal of the castle opened, so completely commanded
it with their arquebuses and crossbows, that the Spaniards, after an
ineffectual attempt to force a passage, were compelled to recoil upon
their defences, amid showers of bolts and balls which occasioned the loss,
among others, of two of their principal alcaydes.

A council of war was then called, in which it was even advised by some,
that the fortress, after having been dismantled, should be abandoned as
incapable of defence against the citizens on the one hand, and the succors
which might be expected speedily to arrive from Granada, on the other. But
this counsel was rejected with indignation by the marquis of Cadiz, whose
fiery spirit rose with the occasion; indeed, it was not very palatable to
most of his followers, whose cupidity was more than ever inflamed by the
sight of the rich spoil, which, after so many fatigues, now lay at their
feet. It was accordingly resolved to demolish part of the fortifications
which looked towards the town, and at all hazards to force a passage into
it. This resolution was at once put into execution; and the marquis,
throwing himself into the breach thus made, at the head of his men-at-
arms, and shouting his war-cry of "St. James and the Virgin," precipitated
himself into the thickest of the enemy. Others of the Spaniards, running
along the out-works contiguous to the buildings of the city, leaped into
the street, and joined their companions there, while others again sallied
from the gates, now opened for the second time. [7]

The Moors, unshaken by the fury of this assault, received the assailants
with brisk and well-directed volleys of shot and arrows; while the women
and children, thronging the roofs and balconies of the houses, discharged
on their heads boiling oil, pitch, and missiles of every description. But
the weapons of the Moors glanced comparatively harmless from the mailed
armor of the Spaniards, while their own bodies, loosely arrayed in such
habiliments as they could throw over them in the confusion of the night,
presented a fatal mark to their enemies. Still they continued to maintain
a stout resistance, checking the progress of the Spaniards by barricades
of timber hastily thrown across the streets; and, as their intrenchments
were forced one after another, they disputed every inch of ground with the
desperation of men who fought for life, fortune, liberty, all that was
most dear to them. The contest hardly slackened till the close of day,
while the kennels literally ran with blood, and every avenue was choked up
with the bodies of the slain. At length, however, Spanish valor proved
triumphant in every quarter, except where a small and desperate remnant of
the Moors, having gathered their wives and children around them, retreated
as a last resort into a large mosque near the walls of the city, from
which they kept up a galling fire on the close ranks of the Christians.
The latter, after enduring some loss, succeeded in sheltering themselves
so effectually under a roof or canopy constructed of their own shields, in
the manner practised in war previous to the exclusive use of fire-arms,
that they were enabled to approach so near the mosque, as to set fire to
its doors; when its tenants, menaced with suffocation, made a desperate
sally, in which many perished, and the remainder surrendered at
discretion. The prisoners thus made were all massacred on the spot,
without distinction, of sex or age, according to the Saracen accounts. But
the Castilian writers make no mention of this; and, as the appetites of
the Spaniards were not yet stimulated by that love of carnage, which they
afterwards displayed in their American wars, and which was repugnant to
the chivalrous spirit with which their contests with the Moslems were
usually conducted, we may be justified in regarding it as an invention of
the enemy. [8]

Alhama was now delivered up to the sack of the soldiery, and rich indeed
was the booty which fell into their hands,—gold and silver plate, pearls,
jewels, fine silks and cloths, curious and costly furniture, and all the
various appurtenances of a thriving, luxurious city. In addition to which,
the magazines were found well stored with the more substantial and, at the
present juncture, more serviceable supplies of grain, oil, and other
provisions. Nearly a quarter of the population is said to have perished in
the various conflicts of the day, and the remainder, according to the
usage of the time, became the prize of the victors. A considerable number
of Christian captives, who were found immured in the public prisons, were restored to freedom, and swelled the general jubilee with their grateful acclamations. The contemporary Castilian chroniclers record also, with no less satisfaction, the detection of a Christian renegade, notorious for his depredations on his countrymen, whose misdeeds the marquis of Cadiz requited by causing him to be hung up over the battlements of the castle, in the face of the whole city. Thus fell the ancient city of Alhama, the first conquest, and achieved with a gallantry and daring unsurpassed by any other during this memorable war. [9]

The report of this disaster fell like the knell of their own doom on the ears of the inhabitants of Granada. It seemed as if the hand of Providence itself must have been stretched forth to smite the stately city, which, reposing as it were under the shadow of their own walls, and in the bosom of a peaceful and populous country, was thus suddenly laid low in blood and ashes. Men now read the fulfilment of the disastrous omens and predictions which ushered in the capture of Zahara. The melancholy _romance_ or ballad, with the burden of _Ay de mi Alhama_, "Woe is me, Alhama," composed probably by some one of the nation not long after this event, shows how deep was the dejection which settled on the spirits of the people. The old king, Abul Hacen, however, far from resigning himself to useless lamentation, sought to retrieve his loss by the most vigorous measures. A body of a thousand horse was sent forward to reconnoitre the city, while he prepared to follow with as powerful levies, as he could enforce, of the militia of Granada. [10]

The intelligence of the conquest of Alhama diffused general satisfaction
throughout Castile, and was especially grateful to the sovereigns, who welcomed it as an auspicious omen of the ultimate success of their designs upon the Moors. They were attending mass in their royal palace of Medina del Campo, when they received despatches from the marquis of Cadiz, informing them of the issue of his enterprise. "During all the while he sat at dinner," says a precise chronicler of the period, "the prudent Ferdinand was revolving in his mind the course best to be adopted." He reflected that the Castilians would soon be beleaguered by an overwhelming force from Granada, and he determined at all hazards to support them. He accordingly gave orders to make instant preparation for departure; but, first, accompanied the queen, attended by a solemn procession of the court and clergy, to the cathedral church of St. James; where Te Deum was chanted, and a humble thanksgiving offered up to the Lord of hosts for the success with which he had crowned their arms. Towards evening, the king set forward on his journey to the south, escorted by such nobles and cavaliers as were in attendance on his person, leaving the queen to follow more leisurely, after having provided reinforcements and supplies requisite for the prosecution of the war. [11]

On the 5th of March, the king of Granada appeared before the walls of Alhama, with an army which amounted to three thousand horse and fifty thousand foot. The first object which encountered his eyes was the mangled remains of his unfortunate subjects, which the Christians, who would have been scandalized by an attempt to give them the rites of sepulture, had from dread of infection thrown over the walls, where they now lay half devoured by birds of prey and the ravenous dogs of the city. The Moslem troops, transported with horror and indignation at this hideous spectacle,
called loudly to be led to the attack. They had marched from Granada with so much precipitation, that they were wholly unprovided with artillery, in the use of which they were expert for that period; and which was now the more necessary, as the Spaniards had diligently employed the few days which intervened since their occupation of the place, in repairing the breaches in the fortifications, and in putting them in a posture of defence. But the Moorish ranks were filled with the flower of their chivalry; and their immense superiority of numbers enabled them to make their attacks simultaneously on the most distant quarters of the town, with such unintermitted vivacity, that the little garrison, scarcely allowed a moment for repose, was wellnigh exhausted with fatigue. [12]

At length, however, Abul Hacen, after the loss of more than two thousand of his bravest troops in these precipitate assaults, became convinced of the impracticability of forcing a position, whose natural strength was so ably seconded by the valor of its defenders, and he determined to reduce the place by the more tardy but certain method of blockade. In this he was favored by one or two circumstances. The town, having but a single well within its walls, was almost wholly indebted for its supplies of water to the river which flowed at its base. The Moors, by dint of great labor, succeeded in diverting the stream so effectually, that the only communication with it, which remained open to the besieged, was by a subterraneous gallery or mine, that had probably been contrived with reference to some such emergency by the original inhabitants. The mouth of this passage was commanded in such a manner by the Moorish archers, that no egress could be obtained without a regular skirmish, so that every drop of water might be said to be purchased with the blood of Christians; who,
"if they had not possessed the courage of Spaniards," says a Castilian writer, "would have been reduced to the last extremity." In addition to this calamity, the garrison began to be menaced with scarcity of provisions, owing to the improvident waste of the soldiers, who supposed that the city, after being plundered, was to be razed to the ground and abandoned.

At this crisis they received the unwelcome tidings of the failure of an expedition destined for their relief by Alonso de Aguilar. This cavalier, the chief of an illustrious house since rendered immortal by the renown of his younger brother, Gonsalvo de Cordova, had assembled a considerable body of troops, on learning the capture of Alhama, for the purpose of supporting his friend and companion in arms, the marquis of Cadiz. On reaching the shores of the Yeguas, he received, for the first time, advices of the formidable host which lay between him and the city, rendering hopeless any attempt to penetrate into the latter with his inadequate force. Contenting himself, therefore, with recovering the baggage, which the marquis's army in its rapid march, as has been already noticed, had left on the banks of the river, he returned to Antequera.

Under these depressing circumstances, the indomitable spirit of the marquis of Cadiz seemed to infuse itself into the hearts of his soldiers. He was ever in the front of danger, and shared the privations of the meanest of his followers; encouraging them to rely with undoubting confidence on the sympathies which their cause must awaken in the breasts of their countrymen. The event proved that he did not miscalculate. Soon
after the occupation of Alhama, the marquis, foreseeing the difficulties of his situation, had despatched missives, requesting the support of the principal lords and cities of Andalusia. In this summons he had omitted the duke of Medina Sidonia, as one who had good reason to take umbrage at being excluded from a share in the original enterprise. Henrique de Guzman, duke of Medina Sidonia, possessed a degree of power more considerable than any other chieftain in the south. His yearly rents amounted to nearly sixty thousand ducats, and he could bring into the field, it was said, from his own resources an army little inferior to what might be raised by a sovereign prince. He had succeeded to his inheritance in 1468, and had very early given his support to the pretensions of Isabella. Notwithstanding his deadly feud with the marquis of Cadiz, he had the generosity, on the breaking out of the present war, to march to the relief of the marchioness when beleaguered, during her husband's absence, by a party of Moors from Ronda, in her own castle of Arcos. He now showed a similar alacrity in sacrificing all personal jealousy at the call of patriotism. [15]

No sooner did he learn the perilous condition of his countrymen in Alhama, than he mustered the whole array of his household troops and retainers, which, when combined with those of the marquis de Villena, of the count de Cabra, and those from Seville, in which city the family of the Guzmans had long exercised a sort of hereditary influence, swelled to the number of five thousand horse and forty thousand foot. The duke of Medina Sidonia, putting himself at the head of this powerful body, set forward without delay on his expedition.
When King Ferdinand in his progress to the south had reached the little
town of Adamuz, about five leagues from Cordova, he was informed of the
advance of the Andalusian chivalry, and instantly sent instructions to the
duke to delay his march, as he intended to come in person and assume the
command. But the latter, returning a respectful apology for his
disobedience, represented to his master the extremities to which the
besieged were already reduced, and without waiting for a reply pushed on
with the utmost vigor for Alhama. The Moorish monarch, alarmed at the
approach of so powerful a reinforcement, saw himself in danger of being
hemmed in between the garrison on the one side, and these new enemies on
the other. Without waiting their appearance on the crest of the eminence
which separated him from them, he hastily broke up his encampment, on the
29th of March, after a siege of more than three weeks, and retreated on
his capital. [16]

The garrison of Alhama viewed with astonishment the sudden departure of
their enemies; but their wonder was converted into joy, when they beheld
the bright arms and banners of their countrymen, gleaming along the
declivities of the mountains. They rushed out with tumultuous transport to
receive them and pour forth their grateful acknowledgments, while the two
commanders, embracing each other in the presence of their united armies,
pledged themselves to a mutual oblivion of all past grievances; thus
affording to the nation the best possible earnest of future successes, in
the voluntary extinction of a feud, which had desolated it for so many
generations.
Notwithstanding the kindly feelings excited between the two armies, a
dispute had wellnigh arisen respecting the division of the spoil, in which
the duke's army claimed a share, as having contributed to secure the
conquest which their more fortunate countrymen had effected. But these
discontents were appeased, though with some difficulty, by their noble
leader, who besought his men not to tarnish the laurels already won, by
mingling a sordid avarice with the generous motives which had promoted
them to the expedition. After the necessary time devoted to repose and
refreshment, the combined armies proceeded to evacuate Alhama, and having
left in garrison Don Diego Merlo, with a corps of troops of the hermandad,
returned into their own territories. [17]

King Ferdinand, after receiving the reply of the duke of Medina Sidonia,
had pressed forward his march by the way of Cordova, as far as Lucena,
with the intention of throwing himself at all hazards into Alhama. He was
not without much difficulty dissuaded from this by his nobles, who
represented the temerity of the enterprise, and its incompetency to any
good result, even should he succeed, with the small force of which he was
master. On receiving intelligence that the siege was raised, he returned
to Cordova, where he was joined by the queen towards the latter part of
April. Isabella had been employed in making vigorous preparation for
carrying on the war, by enforcing the requisite supplies, and summoning
the crown vassals, and the principal nobility of the north, to hold
themselves in readiness to join the royal standard in Andalusia. After
this, she proceeded by rapid stages to Cordova, notwithstanding the state
of pregnancy, in which she was then far advanced.
Here the sovereigns received the unwelcome information, that the king of Granada, on the retreat of the Spaniards, had again sat down before Alhama; having brought with him artillery, from the want of which he had suffered so much in the preceding siege. This news struck a damp into the hearts of the Castilians, many of whom recommended the total evacuation of a place, "which" they said, "was so near the capital that it must be perpetually exposed to sudden and dangerous assaults; while, from the difficulty of reaching it, it would cost the Castilians an incalculable waste of blood and treasure in its defence. It was experience of these evils, which had led to its abandonment in former days, when it had been recovered by the Spanish arms from the Saracens."

Isabella was far from being shaken by these arguments. "Glory," she said, "was not to be won without danger. The present war was one of peculiar difficulties and danger, and these had been well calculated before entering upon it. The strong and central position of Alhama made it of the last importance, since it might be regarded as the key of the enemy's country. This was the first blow struck during the war, and honor and policy alike forbade them to adopt a measure, which could not fail to damp the ardor of the nation." This opinion of the queen, thus decisively expressed, determined the question, and kindled a spark of her own enthusiasm in the breasts of the most desponding. [18]

It was settled that the king should march to the relief of the besieged, taking with him the most ample supplies of forage and provisions, at the head of a force strong enough to compel the retreat of the Moorish
monarch. This was effected without delay; and, Abul Hacen once more breaking up his camp on the rumor of Ferdinand's approach, the latter took possession of the city without opposition, on the 14th of May. The king was attended by a splendid train of his prelates and principal nobility; and he prepared with their aid to dedicate his new conquest to the service of the cross, with all the formalities of the Romish church. After the ceremony of purification, the three principal mosques of the city were consecrated by the cardinal of Spain, as temples of Christian worship. Bells, crosses, a sumptuous service of plate, and other sacred utensils, were liberally furnished by the queen; and the principal church of Santa Maria de la Encarnacion long exhibited a covering of the altar, richly embroidered by her own hands. Isabella lost no opportunity of manifesting, that she had entered into the war, less from motives of ambition, than of zeal for the exaltation of the true faith. After the completion of these ceremonies, Ferdinand, having strengthened the garrison with new recruits under the command of Portocarrero, lord of Palma, and victualled it with three months' provisions, prepared for a foray into the vega of Granada. This he executed in the true spirit of that merciless warfare, so repugnant to the more civilized usage of later times, not only by sweeping away the green, unripened crops, but by cutting down the trees, and eradicating the vines; and then, without so much as having broken a lance in the expedition, returned in triumph to Cordova. [19]

Isabella in the mean while was engaged in active measures for prosecuting the war. She issued orders to the various cities of Castile and Leon, as far as the borders of Biscay and Guipuscoa, prescribing the _repartimiento_, or subsidy of provisions, and the quota of troops,
to be furnished by each district respectively, together with an adequate
supply of ammunition and artillery. The whole were to be in readiness
before Loja, by the 1st of July; when Ferdinand was to take the field in
person at the head of his chivalry, and besiege that strong post. As
advices were received, that the Moors of Granada were making efforts to
obtain the co-operation of their African brethren in support of the
Mahometan empire in Spain, the queen caused a fleet to be manned under the
command of her two best admirals, with instructions to sweep the
Mediterranean as far as the Straits of Gibraltar, and thus effectually cut
off all communication with the Barbary coast. [20]

FOOTNOTES

Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. cap. 32, 34.

Cosas Memorables, fol. 171.--Marmol, Historia del Rebelion y Castigo de
los Moriscos, (Madrid, 1797,) lib. 1, cap. 12.

Lebrija states, that the revenues of Granada, at the commencement of this
war, amounted to a million of gold ducats, and that it kept in pay 7000
horsemen on its peace establishment, and could send forth 21,000 warriors
from its gates. The last of these estimates would not seem to be
exaggerated. Rerum Gestarum Decades, ii. lib. 1, cap. 1.
been unlaced, was suddenly surrounded by a party of Moors. He snatched a sling from one of them, and made such brisk use of it, that, after disabling several, he succeeded in putting them to flight; for which feat, David."

Don Juan, count of Arcos, had no children born in wedlock, but a numerous Prado, the mother of Don Rodrigo. The brilliant and attractive qualities of this youth so far won the affections of his father, that the latter obtained the royal sanction (a circumstance not infrequent in an age when the laws of descent were very unsettled) to bequeath him his titles and estates, to the prejudice of more legitimate heirs.

Memorables, fol. 171.--Pulgar computes the marquis's army at 3000 horse

tom. iii. cap. 34.

[6] Lebrija, Rerum Gestarum Decades, ii. lib. 1, cap. 2.--Carabajal,

Anales, tom. iv. fol. 315.--Cardonne, Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne, tom.

iii. pp. 252, 253.
Arabes, cap. 34.--L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 172.


[10]

"Passeavase el Key Moro
For la ciudad de Granada,
Desde las puertas de Elvira
Hasta las de Bivarambla.
Ay de mi Alhama!

"Cartas le fueron venidas
Que Alhama era ganada.

Y al mensagero matava.
Ay de mi Alhama!

Lloran tan grande perdida.
Lloravan todas las damas
Quantas en Granada avia.
Ay de mi Alhama!
"Por las calles y ventanas
Mucho luto parecia;
Llora el Rey como fembra,
Qu' es mucho lo que perdia.
Ay de mi Alhama!"

The _romance_, according to Hyta, (not the best voucher for a fact,)
caused such general lamentation, that it was not allowed to be sung by the
Moors after the conquest. (Guerras Civiles de Granada, tom. i. p. 350.)
Lord Byron, as the reader recollects, has done this ballad into English.
The version has the merit of fidelity. It is not his fault if his Muse
appears to little advantage in the plebeian dress of the Moorish
minstrel.


Moslem army to 5500 horse, and 80,000 foot, but I have preferred the more
moderate and probable estimate of the Arabian authors. Conde, Dominacion

Ferdinand took the more southern route of Antequera, where he received the tidings of the Moorish king's retreat. The discrepancy is of no great consequence; but as Bernaldez, whom I have followed, lived in Andalusia, the theatre of action, he may be supposed to have had more accurate means.

During this second siege, a body of Moorish knights to the number of forty succeeded in scaling the walls of the city in the night, and had nearly reached the gates, with the intention of throwing them open to their countrymen, when they were overpowered, after a desperate resistance, by
the Christians, who acquired a rich booty, as many of them were persons of rank. There is considerable variation in the authorities, in regard to the date of Ferdinand's occupation of Alhama. I have been guided, as before, by Bernaldez.

CHAPTER X.

WAR OF GRANADA.--UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPT ON LOJA.--DEFEAT IN THE AXARQUIA.

1482-1483.

Unsuccessful Attempt on Loja.--Revolution in Granada.--Expedition to the Axarquia.--Military Array.--Moorish Preparations.--Bloody Conflict among the Mountains.--The Spaniards force a Passage.--The Marquis of Cadiz Escapes.

Loja stands not many leagues from Albania, on the banks of the Xenil, which rolls its clear current through a valley luxuriant with vineyards and olive-gardens; but the city is deeply intrenched among hills of so rugged an aspect, that it has been led not inappropriately to assume as the motto on its arms, "A flower among thorns." Under the Moors, it was defended by a strong fortress, while the Xenil, circumscribing it like a deep moat upon the south, formed an excellent protection against the
approaches of a besieging army; since the river was fordable only in one place, and traversed by a single bridge, which might be easily commanded by the city. In addition to these advantages, the king of Granada, taking warning from the fate of Alhama, had strengthened its garrison with three thousand of his choicest troops, under the command of a skilful and experienced warrior, named Ali Atar. [1]

In the mean while, the efforts of the Spanish sovereigns to procure supplies adequate to the undertaking against Loja had not been crowned with success. The cities and districts, of which the requisitions had been made, had discovered the tardiness usual in such unwieldy bodies, and their interest, moreover, was considerably impaired by their distance from the theatre of action. Ferdinand on mustering his army, towards the latter part of June, found that it did not exceed four thousand horse and twelve thousand, or indeed, according to some accounts, eight thousand foot; most of them raw militia, who, poorly provided with military stores and artillery, formed a force obviously inadequate to the magnitude of his enterprise. Some of his counsellors would have persuaded him, from these considerations, to turn his arms against some weaker and more assailable point than Loja. But Ferdinand burned with a desire for distinction in the new war, and suffered his ardor for once to get the better of his prudence. The distrust felt by the leaders seems to have infected the lower ranks, who drew the most unfavorable prognostics from the dejected mien of those who bore the royal standard to the cathedral of Cordova, in order to receive the benediction of the church before entering on the expedition. [2]
Ferdinand, crossing the Xenil at Ecija, arrived again on its banks before Loja, on the 1st of July. The army encamped among the hills, whose deep ravines obstructed communication between its different quarters; while the level plains below were intersected by numerous canals, equally unfavorable to the manoeuvres of the men-at-arms. The duke of Villa Hermosa, the king's brother, and captain-general of the hermandad, an officer of large experience, would have persuaded Ferdinand to attempt, by throwing bridges across the river lower down the stream, to approach the city on the other side. But his counsel was overruled by the Castilian officers, to whom the location of the camp had been intrusted, and who neglected, according to Zurita, to advise with the Andalusian chiefs, although far better instructed than themselves in Moorish warfare. [3]

A large detachment of the army was ordered to occupy a lofty eminence, at some distance, called the Heights of Albohacen, and to fortify it with such few pieces of ordnance as they had, with the view of annoying the city. This commission was intrusted to the marquises of Cadiz and Villena, and the grand-master of Calatrava; which last nobleman had brought to the field about four hundred horse and a large body of infantry from the places belonging to his order in Andalusia. Before the intrenchment could be fully completed, Ali Atar, discerning the importance of this commanding station, made a sortie from the town, for the purpose of dislodging his enemies. The latter poured out from their works to encounter him; but the Moslem general, scarcely waiting to receive the shock, wheeled his squadrons round, and began a precipitate retreat. The Spaniards eagerly pursued; but, when they had been drawn to a sufficient distance from the redoubt, a party of Moorish _ginetes_, or light cavalry, who had crossed
the river unobserved during the night and lain in ambush, after the wily fashion of Arabian tactics, darted from their place of concealment, and, galloping into the deserted camp, plundered it of its contents, including the lombards, or small pieces of artillery, with which it was garnished. The Castilians, too late perceiving their error, halted from the pursuit, and returned with as much speed as possible to the defence of their camp. Ali Atar, turning also, hung close on their rear, so that, when the Christians arrived at the summit of the hill, they found themselves hemmed in between the two divisions of the Moorish army. A brisk action now ensued, and lasted nearly an hour; when the advance of reinforcements from the main body of the Spanish army, which had been delayed by distance and impediments on the road, compelled the Moors to a prompt but orderly retreat into their own city. The Christians sustained a heavy loss, particularly in the death of Rodrigo Tellez Giron, grand-master of Calatrava. He was hit by two arrows, the last of which, penetrating the joints of his harness beneath his sword-arm, as he was in the act of raising it, inflicted on him a mortal wound, of which he expired in a few hours, says an old chronicler, after having confessed, and performed the last duties of a good and faithful Christian. Although scarcely twenty-four years of age, this cavalier had given proofs of such signal prowess, that he was esteemed one of the best knights of Castile; and his death threw a general gloom over the army. [4]

Ferdinand now became convinced of the unsuitableness of a position, which neither admitted of easy communication between the different quarters of his own camp, nor enabled him to intercept the supplies daily passing into that of his enemy. Other inconveniences also pressed on him. His men were
so badly provided with the necessary utensils for dressing their food, that they were obliged either to devour it raw, or only half cooked. Most of them being new recruits, unaccustomed to the privations of war, and many exhausted by a wearisome length of march before joining the army, they began openly to murmur, and even to desert in great numbers. Ferdinand therefore resolved to fall back as far as Rio Frio, and await there patiently the arrival of such fresh reinforcements as might put him in condition to enforce a more rigorous blockade.

Orders were accordingly issued to the cavaliers occupying the Heights of Albohacen to break up their camp, and fall back on the main body of the army. This was executed on the following morning before dawn, being the 4th of July. No sooner did the Moors of Loja perceive their enemy abandoning his strong position, than they sallied forth in considerable force to take possession of it. Ferdinand's men, who had not been advised of the proposed manoeuvre, no sooner beheld the Moorish array brightening the crest of the mountain, and their own countrymen rapidly descending, than they imagined that these latter had been surprised in their intrenchments during the night, and were now flying before the enemy. An alarm instantly spread through the whole camp. Instead of standing to their defence, each one thought only of saving himself by as speedy a flight as possible. In vain did Ferdinand, riding along their broken files, endeavor to reanimate their spirits and restore order. He might as easily have calmed the winds, as the disorder of a panic-struck mob, unschooled by discipline or experience. Ali Atar's practised eye speedily discerned the confusion which prevailed through the Christian camp. Without delay, he rushed forth impetuously at the head of his whole array
from the gates of Loja, and converted into a real danger what had before
been only an imaginary one. [5]

At this perilous moment, nothing but Ferdinand's coolness could have saved
the army from total destruction. Putting himself at the head of the royal
guard, and accompanied by a gallant band of cavaliers, who held honor
dearer than life, he made such a determined stand against the Moorish
advance, that Ali Atar was compelled to pause in his career. A furious
struggle ensued betwixt this devoted little band and the whole strength of
the Moslem army. Ferdinand was repeatedly exposed to imminent peril. On
one occasion he was indebted for his safety to the marquis of Cadiz, who,
charging at the head of about sixty lances, broke the deep ranks of the
Moorish column, and, compelling it to recoil, succeeded in rescuing his
sovereign. In this adventure, he narrowly escaped with his own life, his
horse being shot under him, at the very moment when he had lost his lance
in the body of a Moor. Never did the Spanish chivalry shed its blood more
freely. The constable, count de Haro, received three wounds in the face.
The duke of Medina Celi was unhorsed and brought to the ground, and saved
with difficulty by his own men; and the count of Tendilla, whose
encampment lay nearest the city, received several severe blows, and would
have fallen into the hands of the enemy, had it not been for the timely

The Moors, finding it so difficult to make an impression on this iron band
of warriors, began at length to slacken their efforts, and finally allowed
Ferdinand to draw off the remnant of his forces without further
opposition. The king continued his retreat without halting, as far as the
from Loja; and, abandoning all thoughts of offensive operations for the present, soon after returned to Cordova. Muley Abul Hacen arrived the following day with a powerful reinforcement from Granada, and swept the country as far as Rio Frio. Had he come but a few hours sooner, there would have been few Spaniards left to tell the tale of the rout of Loja.

The loss of the Christians must have been very considerable, including the greater part of the baggage and the artillery. It occasioned deep mortification to the queen; but, though a severe, it proved a salutary lesson. It showed the importance of more extensive preparations for a war, which must of necessity be a war of posts; and it taught the nation to entertain greater respect for an enemy, who, whatever might be his natural strength, must become formidable when armed with the energy of despair.

At this juncture, a division among the Moors themselves did more for the Christians, than any successes of their own. This division grew out of the vicious system of polygamy, which sows the seeds of discord among those, whom nature and our own happier institutions unite most closely. The old king of Granada had become so deeply enamored of a Greek slave, that the Sultana Zoraya, jealous lest the offspring of her rival should supplant her own in the succession, secretly contrived to stir up a spirit of discontent with her husband's government. The king, becoming acquainted with her intrigues, caused her to be imprisoned in the fortress of the Alhambra. But the sultana, binding together the scarfs and veils belonging to herself and attendants, succeeded, by means of this perilous conveyance, in making her escape, together with her children, from the
upper apartments of the tower in which she was lodged. She was received
with joy by her own faction. The insurrection soon spread among the
populace, who, yielding to the impulses of nature, are readily roused by a
tale of oppression; and the number was still further swelled by many of
higher rank, who had various causes of disgust with the oppressive
government of Abul Hacen. [7] The strong fortress of the Alhambra,
however, remained faithful to him. A war now burst forth in the capital
which deluged its streets with the blood of its citizens. At length the
sultana triumphed; Abul Hacen was expelled from Granada, and sought a
refuge in Malaga, which, with Baza, Guadix, and some other places of
importance, still adhered to him; while Granada, and by far the larger
portion of the kingdom, proclaimed the authority of his elder son, Abu
Abdallah, or Boabdil, as he is usually called by the Castilian writers.
The Spanish sovereigns viewed with no small interest these proceedings of
the Moors, who were thus wantonly fighting the battles of their enemies.
All proffers of assistance on their part, however, being warily rejected
by both factions, notwithstanding the mutual hatred of each other, they
could only await with patience the termination of a struggle, which,
whatever might be its results in other respects, could not fail to open
the way for the success of their own arms. [8]

No military operations worthy of notice occurred during the remainder of
the campaign, except occasional _cavalgadas_ or inroads, on both
sides, which, after the usual unsparing devastation, swept away whole
herds of cattle, and human beings, the wretched cultivators of the soil.
The quantity of booty frequently carried off on such occasions, amounting,
according to the testimony of both Christian and Moorish writers, to
twenty, thirty, and even fifty thousand head of cattle, shows the fruitfulness and abundant pasturage in the southern regions of the Peninsula. The loss inflicted by these terrible forays fell, eventually, most heavily on Granada, in consequence of her scanty territory and insulated position, which cut her off from all foreign resources.

Towards the latter end of October, the court passed from Cordova to Madrid, with the intention of remaining there the ensuing winter. Madrid, it may be observed, however, was so far from being recognized as the capital of the monarchy at this time, that it was inferior to several other cities in wealth and population, and was even less frequented than some others, as Valladolid for example as a royal residence.

On the 1st of July, while the court was at Cordova, died Alfonso de Carillo, the factious archbishop of Toledo, who contributed more than any other to raise Isabella to the throne, and who, with the same arm, had wellnigh hurled her from it. He passed the close of his life in retirement science, especially to alchymy; in which illusory pursuit he is said to have squandered his princely revenues with such prodigality, as to leave them encumbered with a heavy debt. He was succeeded in the primacy by his ancient rival, Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, cardinal of Spain; a prelate whose enlarged and sagacious views gained him deserved ascendency in the councils of his sovereigns. [9]

The importance of their domestic concerns did not prevent Ferdinand and Isabella from giving a vigilant attention to what was passing abroad. The
conflicting relations growing out of the feudal system occupied most
princes, till the close of the fifteenth century, too closely at home to
allow them often to turn their eyes beyond the borders of their own
territories. This system was indeed now rapidly melting away. But Louis
the Eleventh may perhaps be regarded as the first monarch, who showed
anything like an extended interest in European politics. He informed
himself of the interior proceedings of most of the neighboring courts, by
means of secret agents whom he pensioned there. Ferdinand obtained a
similar result by the more honorable expedient of resident embassies, a
practice which he is said to have introduced, [10] and which, while it has
greatly facilitated commercial intercourse, has served to perpetuate
friendly relations between different countries, by accustoming them to
settle their differences by negotiation rather than the sword.

The position of the Italian states, at this period, whose petty feuds
seemed to blind them to the invasion which menaced them from the Ottoman
empire, was such as to excite a lively interest throughout Christendom,
and especially in Ferdinand, as sovereign of Sicily. He succeeded, by
means of his ambassadors at the papal court, in opening a negotiation
between the belligerents, and in finally adjusting the terms of a general
pacification, signed December 12th, 1482. The Spanish court, in
consequence of its friendly mediation on this occasion, received three
several embassies with suitable acknowledgments, on the part of the pope
Sixtus the Fourth, the college of cardinals, and the city of Rome; and
certain marks of distinction were conferred by his Holiness on the
Castilian envoys, not enjoyed by those of any other potentate. This event
is worthy of notice as the first instance of Ferdinand's interference in
the politics of Italy, in which at a later period he was destined to act
so prominent a part. [11]

The affairs of Navarre at this time were such as to engage still more
deeply the attention of the Spanish sovereigns. The crown of that kingdom
had devolved, on the death of Leonora, the guilty sister of Ferdinand, on
her grandchild, Francis Phoebus, whose mother, Magdeleine of France, held
the reins of government during her son's minority. [12] The near
relationship of this princess to Louis the Eleventh, gave that monarch an
absolute influence in the councils of Navarre. He made use of this to
bring about a marriage between the young king, Francis Phoebus, and Joanna
Beltraneja, Isabella's former competitor for the crown of Castile,
notwithstanding this princess had long since taken the veil in the convent
of Santa Clara at Coimbra. It is not easy to unravel the tortuous politics
of King Louis. The Spanish writers impute to him the design of enabling
Joanna by this alliance to establish her pretensions to the Castilian
throne, or at least to give such employment to its present proprietors, as
should effectually prevent them from disturbing him in the possession of
Roussillon. However this may be, his intrigues with Portugal were
disclosed to Ferdinand by certain nobles of that court, with whom he was
in secret correspondence. The Spanish sovereigns, in order to counteract
this scheme, offered the hand of their own daughter Joanna, afterwards
mother of Charles the Fifth, to the king of Navarre. But all negotiations
relative to this matter were eventually defeated by the sudden death of
this young prince, not without strong suspicions of poison. He was
succeeded on the throne by his sister Catharine. Propositions were then
made by Ferdinand and Isabella, for the marriage of this princess, then
thirteen years of age, with their infant son John, heir apparent of their
united monarchies. [13] Such an alliance, which would bring under one
government nations corresponding in origin, language, general habits, and
local interests, presented great and obvious advantages. It was however
evaded by the queen dowager, who still acted as regent, on the pretext of
disparity of age in the parties. Information being soon after received
that Louis the Eleventh was taking measures to make himself master of the
strong places in Navarre, Isabella transferred her residence to the
occupation of that country by her insidious and powerful neighbor. The
defeat of the king of France, which occurred not long after, fortunately
relieved the sovereigns from apprehensions of any immediate annoyance on
that quarter. [14]

Amid their manifold concerns, Ferdinand and Isabella kept their thoughts
anxiously bent on their great enterprise, the conquest of Granada. At a
congress general of the deputies of the hermandad, held at Pinto, at the
commencement of the present year, 1483, with the view of reforming certain
abuses in that institution, a liberal grant was made of eight thousand
men, and sixteen thousand beasts of burden, for the purpose of conveying
supplies to the garrison in Alhama. But the sovereigns experienced great
embarrassment from the want of funds. There is probably no period in which
the princes of Europe felt so sensibly their own penury, as at the close
of the fifteenth century; when, the demesnes of the crown having been very
generally wasted by the lavishness or imbecility of its proprietors, no
substitute had as yet been found in that searching and well-arranged
system of taxation which prevails at the present day. The Spanish
sovereigns, notwithstanding the economy which they had introduced into the
finances, felt the pressure of these embarrassments, peculiarly, at the present juncture. The maintenance of the royal guard and of the vast national police of the hermandad, the incessant military operations of the late campaign, together with the equipment of a navy, not merely for war, but for maritime discovery, were so many copious drains of the exchequer. [15] Under these circumstances, they obtained from the pope a grant of one hundred thousand ducats, to be raised out of the ecclesiastical revenues in Castile and Aragon. A bull of crusade was also published by his Holiness, containing numerous indulgences for such as should bear arms against the infidel, as well as those who should prefer to commute their military service for the payment of a sum of money. In addition to these resources, the government was enabled on its own credit, justified by the punctuality with which it had redeemed its past engagements, to negotiate considerable loans with several wealthy individuals. [16]

With these funds the sovereigns entered into extensive arrangements for the ensuing campaign; causing cannon, after the rude construction of that age, to be fabricated at Huesca, and a large quantity of stone balls, then principally used, to be manufactured in the Sierra de Constantina; while the magazines were carefully provided with ammunition and military stores.

An event not unworthy of notice is recorded by Pulgar, as happening about this time. A common soldier, named John de Corral, contrived, under false pretences, to obtain from the king of Granada a number of Christian captives, together with a large sum of money, with which he escaped into Andalusia. The man was apprehended by the warden of the frontier of Jaen; and, the transaction being reported to the sovereigns, they compelled an
entire restitution of the money, and consented to such a ransom for the
liberated Christians as the king of Granada should demand. This act of
justice, it should be remembered, occurred in an age when the church
itself stood ready to sanction any breach of faith, however glaring,
towards heretics and infidels. [17]

While the court was detained in the north, tidings were received of a
reverse sustained by the Spanish arms, which plunged the nation in sorrow
far deeper than that occasioned by the rout at Loja. Don Alonso de
Cardenas, grand-master of St. James, an old and confidential servant of
the crown, had been intrusted with the defence of the frontier of Ecija.
While on this station, he was strongly urged to make a descent on the
environs of Malaga, by his _adalides_ or scouts, men who, being for
the most part Moorish deserters or renegadoes, were employed by the border
chiefs to reconnoitre the enemy's country, or to guide them in their
marauding expeditions. [18] The district around Malaga was famous under
the Saracens for its silk manufactures, of which it annually made large
exports to other parts of Europe. It was to be approached by traversing a
savage sierra, or chain of mountains, called the Axarquia, whose margin
occasionally afforded good pasturage, and was sprinkled over with Moorish
villages. After threading its defiles, it was proposed to return by an
open road that turned the southern extremity of the sierra along the sea-
shore. There was little to be apprehended, it was stated, from pursuit,
since Malaga was almost wholly unprovided with cavalry. [19]

The grand-master, falling in with the proposition, communicated it to the
principal chiefs on the borders; among others, to Don Pedro Henriquez,
adelantado of Andalusia, Don Juan de Silva, count of Cifuentes, Don Alonso de Aguilar, and the marquis of Cadiz. These nobleman, collecting their retainers, repaired to Antequera, where the ranks were quickly swelled by recruits from Cordova, Seville, Xerez, and other cities of Andalusia, whose chivalry always readily answered the summons to an expedition over the border. [20]

In the mean while, however, the marquis of Cadiz had received such intelligence from his own _adalides_, as led him to doubt the expediency of a march through intricate defiles, inhabited by a poor and hardy peasantry; and he strongly advised to direct the expedition against the neighboring town of Almojia. But in this he was overruled by the grand-master and the other partners of his enterprise; many of whom, with the rash confidence of youth, were excited rather than intimidated by the prospect of danger.

On Wednesday, the 19th of March, this gallant little army marched forth from the gates of Antequera. The van was intrusted to the adelantado Henriquez and Don Alonso de Aguilar. The centre divisions were led by the marquis of Cadiz and the count of Cifuentes, and the rear-guard by the grand-master of St. James. The number of foot, which is uncertain, appears to have been considerably less than that of the horse, which amounted to about three thousand, containing the flower of Andalusian knighthood, together with the array of St. James, the most opulent and powerful of the Spanish military orders. Never, says an Aragonese historian, had there been seen in these times a more splendid body of chivalry; and such was their confidence, he adds, that they deemed themselves invincible by any
force which the Moslems could bring against them. The leaders took care not to encumber the movements of the army with artillery, camp equipage, or even much forage and provisions, for which they trusted to the invaded territory. A number of persons, however, followed in the train, who, influenced by desire rather of gain than of glory, had come provided with money, as well as commissions from their friends, for the purchase of rich spoil, whether of slaves, stuffs, or jewels, which they expected would be won by the good swords of their comrades, as in Alhama. [21]

After travelling with little intermission through the night, the army entered the winding defiles of the Axarquia; where their progress was necessarily so much impeded by the character of the ground, that most of the inhabitants of the villages, through which they passed, had opportunity to escape with the greater part of their effects to the inaccessible fastnesses of the mountains. The Spaniards, after plundering the deserted hamlets of whatever remained, as well as of the few stragglers, whether men or cattle, found still lingering about them, set them on fire. In this way they advanced, marking their line of march with the usual devastation that accompanied these ferocious forays, until the columns of smoke and fire, which rose above the hill-tops, announced to the people of Malaga the near approach of an enemy.

The old king Muley Abul Hacen, who lay at this time in the city, with a numerous and well-appointed body of horse, contrary to the reports of the adalides, would have rushed forth at once at their head, had he not been dissuaded from it by his younger brother Abdallah, who is better known in history by the name of El Zagal, or "the Valiant;" an Arabic epithet,
given him by his countrymen to distinguish him from his nephew, the ruling king of Granada. To this prince Abul Hacen intrusted the command of the corps of picked cavalry, with instructions to penetrate at once into the lower level of the sierra, and encounter the Christians entangled in its passes; while another division, consisting chiefly of arquebusiers and archers, should turn the enemy's flank by gaining the heights under which he was defiling. This last corps was placed under the direction of Reduan Benegas, a chief of Christian lineage, according to Bernaldez, and who may perhaps be identified with the Reduan that, in the later Moorish ballads, seems to be shadowed forth as the personification of love and heroism.

The Castilian army in the mean time went forward with a buoyant and reckless confidence, and with very little subordination. The divisions occupying the advance and centre, disappointed in their expectations of booty, had quitted the line of march, and dispersed in small parties in search of plunder over the adjacent country; and some of the high-mettled young cavaliers had the audacity to ride up in defiance to the very walls of Malaga. The grand master of St. James was the only leader who kept his columns unbroken, and marched forward in order of battle. Things were in this state, when the Moorish cavalry under El Zagal, suddenly emerging from one of the mountain passes, appeared before the astonished rear-guard of the Christians. The Moors spurred on to the assault, but the well-disciplined chivalry of St. James remained unshaken. In the fierce struggle which ensued, the Andalusians became embarrassed by the narrowness of the ground on which they were engaged, which afforded no scope for the manoeuvres of cavalry; while the Moors, trained to the wild
tactics of mountain warfare, went through their usual evolutions, 
retreating and returning to the charge with a celerity that sorely 
distressed their opponents and at length threw them into some disorder. 
The grand master, in consequence, despatched a message to the marquis of 
Cadiz, requesting his support. The latter, putting himself at the head of 
such of his scattered forces as he could hastily muster, readily obeyed 
the summons. Discerning on his approach the real source of the grand 
master's embarrassment, he succeeded in changing the field of action by 
drawing off the Moors to an open reach of the valley, which allowed free 
play to the movements of the Andalusian horse, when the combined squadrons 
pressed so hard on the Moslems, that they were soon compelled to take 
refuge within the depths of their own mountains. [23]

In the mean while, the scattered troops of the advance, alarmed by the 
report of the action, gradually assembled under their respective banners, 
and fell back upon the rear. A council of war was then called. All further 
progress seemed to be effectually intercepted. The country was everywhere 
in arms. The most that now could be hoped, was, that they might be 
suffered to retire unmolested with such plunder as they had already 
acquired. Two routes lay open for this purpose. The one winding along the 
sea-shore, wide and level, but circuitous, and swept through the whole 
range of its narrow entrance by the fortress of Malaga. This determined 
them unhappily to prefer the other route, being that by which they had 
penetrated the Axarquia, or rather a shorter cut, by which the adalides 
undertook to conduct them through its mazes. [24]

The little army commenced its retrograde movement with undiminished
spirit. But it was now embarrassed with the transportation of its plunder, and by the increasing difficulties of the sierra, which, as they ascended its sides, was matted over with impenetrable thickets, and broken up by formidable ravines or channels, cut deep into the soil by the mountain torrents. The Moors were now seen mustering in considerable numbers along the heights, and, as they were expert marksmen, being trained by early and assiduous practice, the shots from their arquebuses and cross-bows frequently found some assailable point in the harness of the Spanish men-at-arms. At length, the army, through the treachery or ignorance of the guides, was suddenly brought to a halt by arriving in a deep glen or enclosure, whose rocky sides rose with such boldness as to be scarcely practicable for infantry, much less for horse. To add to their distresses, daylight, without which they could scarcely hope to extricate themselves, was fast fading away. [25]

In this extremity no other alternative seemed to remain, than to attempt to regain the route from which they had departed. As all other considerations were now subordinate to those of personal safety, it was agreed to abandon the spoil acquired at so much hazard, which greatly retarded their movements. As they painfully retraced their steps, the darkness of the night was partially dispelled by numerous fires, which blazed along the hill-tops, and which showed the figures of their enemies flitting to and fro like so many spectres. It seemed, says Bernaldez, as if ten thousand torches were glancing along the mountains. At length, the whole body, faint with fatigue and hunger, reached the borders of a little stream, which flowed through a valley, whose avenues, as well as the rugged heights by which it was commanded, were already occupied by the
enemy, who poured down mingled volleys of shot, stones, and arrows on the heads of the Christians. The compact mass presented by the latter afforded a sure mark to the artillerу of the Moors; while they, from their scattered position, as well as from the defences afforded by the nature of the ground, were exposed to little annoyance in return. In addition to lighter missiles, the Moors occasionally dislodged large fragments of rock, which, rolling with tremendous violence down the declivities of the hills, spread frightful desolation through the Christian ranks. [26]

The dismay occasioned by these scenes, occurring amidst the darkness of night, and heightened by the shrill war-cries of the Moors, which rose around them on every quarter, seems to have completely bewildered the Spaniards, even their leaders. It was the misfortune of the expedition, that there was but little concert between the several commanders, or, at least, that there was no one so pre-eminent above the rest as to assume authority at this awful moment. So far, it would seem, from attempting escape, they continued in their perilous position, uncertain what course to take, until midnight; when at length, after having seen their best and bravest followers fall thick around them, they determined at all hazards to force a passage across the sierra in the face of the enemy. "Better lose our lives," said the grand master of St. James, addressing his men, "in cutting a way through the foe, than be butchered without resistance, like cattle in the shambles." [27]

The marquis of Cadiz, guided by a trusty adalid, and accompanied by sixty or seventy lances, was fortunate enough to gain a circuitous route less vigilantly guarded by the enemy, whose attention was drawn to the
movements of the main body of the Castilian army. By means of this path, the marquis, with his little band, succeeded, after a painful march, in which his good steed sunk under him oppressed with wounds and fatigue, in reaching a valley at some distance from the scene of action, where he determined to wait the coming up of his friends, who he confidently expected would follow on his track. [28]

But the grand master and his associates, missing this track in the darkness of the night, or perhaps preferring another, breasted the sierra in a part where it proved extremely difficult of ascent. At every step the loosened earth gave way under the pressure of the foot, and, the infantry endeavoring to support themselves by clinging to the tails and manes of the horses, the jaded animals, borne down with the weight, rolled headlong with their riders on the ranks below, or were precipitated down the sides of the numerous ravines. The Moors, all the while, avoiding a close encounter, contented themselves with discharging on the heads of their opponents an uninterrupted shower of missiles of every description. [29]

It was not until the following morning, that the Castilians, having surmounted the crest of the eminence, began the descent into the opposite valley, which they had the mortification to observe was commanded on every point by their vigilant adversary, who seemed now in their eyes to possess the powers of ubiquity. As the light broke upon the troops, it revealed the whole extent of their melancholy condition. How different from the magnificent array which, but two days previous, marched forth with such high and confident hopes from the gates of Antequera! their ranks thinned,
their bright arms defaced and broken, their banners rent in pieces, or
lost,—as had been that of St. James, together with its gallant
_alferez_, Diego Becerra, in the terrible passage of the preceding
night,—their countenances aghast with terror, fatigue, and famine.
Despair now was in every eye, all subordination was at an end. No one,
says Pulgar, heeded any longer the call of the trumpet, or the wave of the
banner. Each sought only his own safety, without regard to his comrade.
Some threw away their arms; hoping by this means to facilitate their
escape, while in fact it only left them more defenceless against the
shafts of their enemies. Some, oppressed with fatigue and terror, fell
down and died without so much as receiving a wound. The panic was such
that, in more than one instance, two or three Moorish soldiers were known
to capture thrice their own number of Spaniards. Some, losing their way,
strayed back to Malaga and were made prisoners by females of the city, who
overtook them in the fields. Others escaped to Alhama or other distant
places, after wandering seven or eight days among the mountains,
sustaining life on such wild herbs and berries as they could find, and
lying close during the day. A greater number succeeded in reaching
Antequera, and, among these, most of the leaders of the expedition. The
grand master of St. James, the adelantado Henriquez, and Don Alonso de
Aguilar effected their escape by scaling so perilous a part of the sierra
that their pursuers cared not to follow. The count de Cifuentes was less
fortunate. [30] That nobleman's division was said to have suffered more
severely than any other. On the morning after the bloody passage of the
mountain, he found himself suddenly cut off from his followers, and
surrounded by six Moorish cavaliers, against whom he was defending himself
with desperate courage, when their leader, Reduan Benegas, struck with the
inequality of the combat, broke in, exclaiming, "Hold, this is unworthy of
good knights." The assailants sunk back abashed by the rebuke, and left
the count to their commander. A close encounter then took place between
the two chiefs; but the strength of the Spaniard was no longer equal to
his spirit, and, after a brief resistance, he was forced to surrender to
his generous enemy. [31]

The marquis of Cadiz had better fortune. After waiting till dawn for the
coming up of his friends, he concluded that they had extricated themselves
by a different route. He resolved to provide for his own safety and that
of his followers, and, being supplied with a fresh horse, accomplished his
escape, after traversing the wildest passages of the Axarquia for the
distance of four leagues, and got into Antequera with but little
interruption from the enemy. But, although he secured his personal safety,
the misfortunes of the day fell heavily on his house; for two of his
brothers were cut down by his side, and a third brother, with a nephew,
fell into the hands of the enemy. [32]

The amount of slain in the two days' actions is admitted by the Spanish
writers to have exceeded eight hundred, with double that number of
prisoners. The Moorish force is said to have been small, and its loss
comparatively trifling. The numerical estimates of the Spanish historians,
as usual, appear extremely loose; and the narrative of their enemies is
too meagre in this portion of their annals to allow any opportunity of
verification. There is no reason, however, to believe them in any degree
exaggerated.
The best blood of Andalusia was shed on this occasion. Among the slain, Bernaldez reckons two hundred and fifty, and Pulgar four hundred persons of quality, with thirty commanders of the military fraternity of St. James. There was scarcely a family in the south, but had to mourn the loss of some one of its members by death or captivity; and the distress was not a little aggravated by the uncertainty which hung over the fate of the absent, as to whether they had fallen in the field, or were still wandering in the wilderness, or were pining away existence in the dungeons of Malaga and Granada. [33]

Some imputed the failure of the expedition to treachery in the adalides, some to want of concert among the commanders. The worthy Curate of Los Palacios concludes his narrative of the disaster in the following manner.

"The number of the Moors was small, who inflicted this grievous defeat on the Christians. It was, indeed, clearly miraculous, and we may discern in it the special interposition of Providence, justly offended with the greater part of those that engaged in the expedition; who, instead of confessing, partaking the sacrament, and making their testaments, as becomes good Christians, and men that are to bear arms in defence of the Holy Catholic faith, acknowledged that they did not bring with them suitable dispositions, but, with little regard to God's service, were influenced by covetousness and love of ungodly gain." [34]

FOOTNOTES

Enamorados_ received its name from a tragical incident in Moorish history. A Christian slave succeeded in inspiring the daughter of his master, a wealthy Mussulman of Granada, with a passion for himself. The two lovers, after some time, fearful of the detection of their intrigue, resolved to mate their escape into the Spanish territory. Before they could effect their purpose, however, they were hotly pursued by the damsel's father at the head of a party of Moorish horsemen, and overtaken near a precipice which rises between Archidona and Antequera. The
unfortunate fugitives, who had scrambled to the summit of the rocks, finding all further escape impracticable, after tenderly embracing each other threw themselves headlong from the dizzy heights, preferring this dreadful death to falling into the hands of their vindictive pursuers. The spot consecrated as the scene of this tragic incident has received the name of _Rock of the Lovers_. The legend is prettily told by Mariana, reflection, that "such constancy would have been truly admirable, had it been shown in defence of the true faith, rather than in the gratification of lawless appetite."

[7] Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. pp. 214-217.--Cardonne, Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne, tom. iii. pp. 262, 263.--Marmol, Rebelion de Moriscos, lib, 1, cap. 12.--Bernaldez states that great umbrage was taken at the influence which the king of Granada allowed a person of Christian lineage, named Venegas, to exercise over him. Pulgar hints at the bloody massacre of the Abencerrages, which, without any better authority that I know of, forms the burden of many an ancient ballad, and has lost nothing


Boabdil was surnamed "el Chico," _the Little_, by the Spanish writers, to distinguish him from an uncle of the same name; and "el Zogoybi," _the Unfortunate_, by the Moors, indicating that he was the last of his race destined to wear the diadem of Granada. The Arabs, with great felicity,
frequently select names significant of some quality in the objects they represent. Examples of this may be readily found in the southern regions of the Peninsula, where the Moors lingered the longest. The etymology of Gibraltar, Gebal Tarik, _Mount of Tarik_, is well known. Thus, Algeziras comes from an Arabic word which signifies _an island_: Alpuxarras comes from a term signifying _herbage_ or _pasturage_: Arrecife from another, signifying _causeway_ or _high road_, etc. The Arabic word _wad_ stands for _river_. This without much violence has been changed into _guad_, and enters into the names of many of the southern streams; for example, Guadalquivir, _great river_, Guadiana, _narrow_ or _little river_, has been retained as a prefix to the names of many of the Spanish towns, as Medina Celi, Medina del Campo, etc. See Conde’s notes to El Nubiense, Navarra, tom. v. p. 11, ed. 1766.—Peter Martyr, Opus Epist., epist. 158.


[12] Aleson, Annales de Navarra, lib. 34, cap. 1.—Histoire du Royaume de Navarre, p. 558. Leonora’s son, Gaston de Foix, prince of Viana, was slain
by an accidental wound from a lance, at a tourney at Lisbon, in 1469. By
the princess Magdeleine, his wife, sister of Louis XI, he left two
children, a son and daughter, each of whom in turn succeeded to the crown
of Navarre. Francis Phoebus ascended the throne on the demise of his
grandmother Leonora, in 1479. He was distinguished by his personal graces
and beauty, and especially by the golden lustre of his hair, from which,
according to Aleson, he derived his cognomen of Phoebus. As it was an
ancestral name, however, such an etymology may be thought somewhat
fanciful.

[13] Ferdinand and Isabella had at this time four children; the infant Don
John, four years and a half old, but who did not live to come to the
succession, and the infantas Isabella, Joanna, and Maria; the last, born
at Cordova during the summer of 1482.

[14] Aleson, Annales de Navarra, lib. 34, cap. 2; lib. 35, cap. 1.--


Besides the armada in the Mediterranean, a fleet under Pedro de Vera was
prosecuting a voyage of discovery and conquest to the Canaries at this
time.
For this important collection, a few copies of which, only, were printed for distribution, at the expense of the Spanish government, I am indebted to the politeness of Don A. Calderon de la Barca.


Juan de Corral imposed on the king of Granada by means of certain credentials, which he had obtained from the Spanish sovereigns without any privity on their part to his fraudulent intentions. The story is told in a very blind manner by Pulgar.

It may not be amiss to mention here a doughty feat performed by another Castilian envoy, of much higher rank, Don Juan de Vera. This knight, while conversing with certain Moorish cavaliers in the Alhambra, was so much scandalized by the freedom with which one of them treated the immaculate conception, that he gave the circumcised dog the lie, and smote him a sharp blow on the head with his sword. Ferdinand, say Bernaldez, who tells the story, was much gratified with the exploit, and recompensed the good knight with many honors.

[18] The _adalid_ was a guide, or scout, whose business it was to make himself acquainted with the enemy's country, and to guide the invaders into it. Much dispute has arisen respecting the authority and functions of this officer. Some writers regard him as an independent
leader, or commander; and the Dictionary of the Academy defines the term _adalid_ by these very words. The Siete Partidas, however, explains at length the peculiar duties of this officer, conformably to the account I have given. (Ed. de la Real Acad. (Madrid, 1807,) part. 2, tit. 2, leyes 1-4.) Bernaldez, Pulgar, and the other chroniclers of the Granadine war, repeatedly notice him in this connection. When he is spoken of as a captain, or leader, as he sometimes is in these and other ancient records, his authority, I suspect, is intended to be limited to the persons who aided him in the execution of his peculiar office.--It was common for the great chiefs, who lived on the borders, to maintain in their pay a number of these _adalides_, to inform them of the fitting time and place for making a foray. The post, as may well be believed, was one of great trust and personal hazard.

173.--Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 320.


The title of _adelantado_ implies in its etymology one preferred or placed before others. The office is of great antiquity; some have derived it from the reign of St. Ferdinand in the thirteenth century, but Mendoza proves its existence at a far earlier period. The adelantado was possessed of very extensive judicial authority in the province or district in which he presided, and in war was invested with supreme military command. His functions, however, as well as the territories over which he ruled, have
varied at different periods. An adelantado seems to have been generally established over a border province, as Andalusia for example. Marina cap. 23. See also Salazar de Mendoza, Dignidades, lib. 2, cap. 15.

Sevilla, fol. 395.--Lebrija, Rerum Gestarum Decades, ii. lib. 2, cap. 2.--
Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 36.


[23] Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. p. 217.--Pulgar, Reyes

636.


fol. 71, 72.
Granada, "states that the scene of the greatest slaughter in this rout is still known to the inhabitants of the Axarquia by the name of _La Cuesta de la Matanza_, or "The Hill of the Massacre."

[30] Oviedo, who devotes one of his dialogues to this nobleman, says of sabio y prudente caballero. Hallose en grandes cargos y negocios de paz y de guerra." Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 36.

[31] Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii, p. 218.--Zurita, Anales, Cardonne, Hist. d'Afrique et d'Espagne, tom. iii, pp. 266, 267.--The count, according to Oviedo, remained a long while a prisoner in Granada, until he was ransomed by the payment of several thousand doblas of gold. Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial 36.

brothers and two nephews of the marquis, whose names he gives, were all slain. Rebelion de Moriscos, lib. 1, cap. 12.

MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 38.--Marmol, Rebelion de Moriscos, lib. 1, cap. 12.
the unfortunate expedition to the Axarquia. His intimacy with the principal persons of the court enabled him, no doubt, to verify most of the particulars which he records. The Curate of Los Palacios, from the proximity of his residence to the theatre of action, may be supposed also to have had ample means for obtaining the requisite information. Yet their several accounts, although not strictly contradictory, it is not always easy to reconcile with one another. The narratives of complex military operations are not likely to be simplified under the hands of monkish bookmen. I have endeavored to make out a connected tissue from a comparison of the Moslem with the Castilian authorities. But here the meagreness of the Moslem annals compels us to lament the premature death of Conde. It can hardly be expected, indeed, that the Moors should have dwelt with much amplification on this humiliating period. But there can be little doubt, that far more copious memorials of theirs than any now published, exist in the Spanish libraries; and it were much to be wished that some Oriental scholar would supply Conde's deficiency, by exploring these authentic records of what may be deemed, as far as Christian Spain is concerned, the most glorious portion of her history.

CHAPTER XI.

WAR OF GRANADA.--GENERAL VIEW OF THE POLICY PURSUED IN THE CONDUCT OF THIS WAR
The young monarch, Abu Abdallah, was probably the only person in Granada who did not receive with unmingled satisfaction the tidings of the rout in the Axarquia. He beheld with secret uneasiness the laurels thus acquired by the old king his father, or rather by his ambitious uncle El Zagal, whose name now resounded from every quarter as the successful champion of the Moslems. He saw the necessity of some dazzling enterprise, if he would maintain an ascendency even over the faction which had seated him on the throne. He accordingly projected an excursion, which, instead of terminating in a mere border foray, should lead to the achievement of some permanent conquest.

He found no difficulty, while the spirits of his people were roused, in raising a force of nine thousand foot, and seven hundred horse, the flower of Granada's chivalry. He strengthened his army still further by the presence of Ali Atar, the defender of Loja, the veteran of a hundred battles, whose military prowess had raised him from the common file up to the highest post in the army; and whose plebeian blood had been permitted to mingle with that of royalty, by the marriage of his daughter with the
young king Abdallah.

With this gallant array, the Moorish monarch sallied forth from Granada. As he led the way through the avenue which still bears the name of the gate of Elvira, [1] the point of his lance came in contact with the arch and was broken. This sinister omen was followed by another more alarming. A fox, which crossed the path of the army, was seen to run through the ranks, and, notwithstanding the showers of missiles discharged at him, to make his escape unhurt. Abdallah's counsellors would have persuaded him to abandon, or at least postpone, an enterprise of such ill augury. But the king, less superstitious, or from the obstinacy with which feeble minds, when once resolved, frequently persist in their projects, rejected their advice, and pressed forward on his march. [2]

The advance of the party was not conducted so cautiously but that it reached the ear of Don Diego Fernandez de Cordova, _alcayde de los donzeles_, or captain of the royal pages, who commanded in the town of Lucena, which he rightly judged was to be the principal object of attack. He transmitted the intelligence to his uncle the count of Cabra, a nobleman of the same name with himself, who was posted at his own town of Baena, requesting his support. He used all diligence in repairing the fortifications of the city, which, although extensive and originally strong, had fallen somewhat into decay; and, having caused such of the population as were rendered helpless by age or infirmity to withdraw into the interior defences of the place, he coolly waited the approach of the enemy. [3]
The Moorish army, after crossing the borders, began to mark its career
through the Christian territory with the usual traces of devastation, and,
sweeping across the environs of Lucena, poured a marauding foray into the
returned, glutted with spoil, to lay siege to Lucena about the 21st of
April.

The count of Cabra, in the mean while, who had lost no time in mustering
his levies, set forward at the head of a small but well-appointed force,
consisting of both horse and foot, to the relief of his nephew. He
advanced with such celerity that he had wellnigh surprised the
beleaguering army. As he traversed the sierra, which covered the Moorish
flank, his numbers were partially concealed by the inequalities of the
ground; while the clash of arms and the shrill music, reverberating among
the hills, exaggerated their real magnitude in the apprehension of the
enemy. At the same time the _alcayde de los donzeles_ supported his
uncle's advance by a vigorous sally from the city. The Granadine infantry,
anxious only for the preservation of their valuable booty, scarcely waited
for the encounter, before they began a dastardly retreat, and left the
battle to the cavalry. The latter, composed, as has been said, of the
strength of the Moorish chivalry, men accustomed in many a border foray to
cross lances with the best knights of Andalusia, kept their ground with
their wonted gallantry. The conflict, so well disputed, remained doubtful
for some time, until it was determined by the death of the veteran
chieftain Ali Atar, "the best lance," as a Castilian writer has styled
him, "of all Morisma," who was brought to the ground after receiving two
wounds, and thus escaped by an honorable death the melancholy spectacle of
The enemy, disheartened by this loss, soon began to give ground. But, though hard pressed by the Spaniards, they retreated in some order, until they reached the borders of the Xenil, which were thronged with the infantry, vainly attempting a passage across the stream, swollen by excessive rains to a height much above its ordinary level. The confusion now became universal, horse and foot mingling together; each one, heedful only of life, no longer thought of his booty. Many, attempting to swim the stream, were borne down, steed and rider, promiscuously in its waters. Many more, scarcely making show of resistance, were cut down on the banks by the pitiless Spaniards. The young king Abdallah, who had been conspicuous during that day in the hottest of the fight, mounted on a milk-white charger richly caparisoned, saw fifty of his loyal guard fall around him. Finding his steed too much jaded to stem the current of the river, he quietly dismounted and sought a shelter among the reedy thickets that fringed its margin, until the storm of battle should have passed over. In this lurking-place, however, he was discovered by a common soldier named Martin Hurtado, who, without recognizing his person, instantly attacked him. The prince defended himself with his scimitar, until Hurtado, being joined by two of his countrymen, succeeded in making him prisoner. The men, overjoyed at their prize (for Abdallah had revealed his rank, in order to secure his person from violence), conducted him to their general, the count of Cabra. The latter received the royal captive with a generous courtesy, the best sign of noble breeding, and which, recognized as a feature of chivalry, affords a pleasing contrast to the ferocious spirit of ancient warfare. The good count administered to the
unfortunate prince all the consolations which his state would admit; and
subsequently lodged him in his castle of Baena, where he was entertained
with the most delicate and courtly hospitality. [5]

Nearly the whole of the Moslem cavalry were cut up, or captured, in this
fatal action. Many of them were persons of rank, commanding high ransoms.
The loss inflicted on the infantry was also severe, including the whole of
their dear-bought plunder. Nine, or indeed, according to some accounts,
two and twenty banners fell into the hands of the Christians in this
action; in commemoration of which the Spanish sovereigns granted to the
count of Cabra, and his nephew, the alcayde de los donzeles, the privilege
of bearing the same number of banners on their escutcheon, together with
the head of a Moorish king, encircled by a golden coronet, with a chain of
the same metal around the neck. [6]

Great was the consternation occasioned by the return of the Moorish
fugitives to Granada, and loud was the lament through its populous
streets; for the pride of many a noble house was laid low on that day, and
their king (a thing unprecedented in the annals of the monarchy) was a
prisoner in the land of the Christians. "The hostile star of Islam,"
exclaims an Arabian writer, "now scattered its malignant influences over
Spain, and the downfall of the Mussulman empire was decreed."

The sultana Zoraya, however, was not of a temper to waste time in useless
lamentation. She was aware that a captive king, who held his title by so
precarious a tenure as did her son Abdallah, must soon cease to be a king
even in name. She accordingly despatched a numerous embassy to Cordova, with proffers of such a ransom for the prince's liberation, as a despot only could offer, and few despots could have the authority to enforce. [7]

King Ferdinand, who was at Vitoria with the queen, when he received tidings of the victory of Lucena, hastened to the south to determine on the destination of his royal captive. With some show of magnanimity, he declined an interview with Abdallah, until he should have consented to his liberation. A debate of some warmth occurred in the royal council at Cordova, respecting the policy to be pursued; some contending that the Moorish monarch was too valuable a prize to be so readily relinquished, and that the enemy, broken by the loss of their natural leader, would find it difficult to rally under one common head, or to concert any effective movement. Others, and especially the marquis of Cadiz, urged his release, and even the support of his pretensions against his competitor, the old king of Granada; insisting that the Moorish empire would be more effectually shaken by internal divisions, than by any pressure of its enemies from without. The various arguments were submitted to the queen, who still held her court in the north, and who decided for the release of Abdallah, as a measure best reconciling sound policy with generosity to the vanquished. [8]

The terms of the treaty, although sufficiently humiliating to the Moslem prince, were not materially different from those proposed by the sultana Zoraya. It was agreed that a truce, of two years should be extended to Abdallah, and to such places in Granada as acknowledged his authority. In
consideration of which, he stipulated to surrender four hundred Christian captives without ransom, to pay twelve thousand doblas of gold annually to the Spanish sovereigns, and to permit a free passage, as well as furnish supplies, to their troops passing through his territories, for the purpose of carrying on the war against that portion of the kingdom which still adhered to his father. Abdallah moreover bound himself to appear when summoned by Ferdinand, and to surrender his own son, with the children of his principal nobility, as sureties for his fulfilment of the treaty. Thus did the unhappy prince barter away his honor and his country's freedom for the possession of immediate, but most precarious sovereignty; a sovereignty, which could scarcely be expected to survive the period when he could be useful to the master whose breath had made him. [9]

The terms of the treaty being thus definitively settled, an interview was arranged to take place between the two monarchs at Cordova. The Castilian courtiers would have persuaded their master to offer his hand for Abdallah to salute, in token of his feudal supremacy; but Ferdinand replied, "Were the king of Granada in his own dominions, I might do this; but not while he is a prisoner in mine." The Moorish prince entered Cordova with an escort of his own knights, and a splendid throng of Spanish chivalry, who had marched out of the city to receive him. When Abdallah entered the royal presence, he would have prostrated himself on his knees; but Ferdinand, hastening to prevent him, embraced him with every demonstration of respect. An Arabic interpreter, who acted as orator, then, expatiated, in florid hyperbole, on the magnanimity and princely qualities of the Spanish king, and the loyalty and good faith of his own master. But Ferdinand interrupted his eloquence, with the assurance that "his
panegyric was superfluous, and that he had perfect confidence that the sovereign of Granada would keep his faith as became a true knight and a king." After ceremonies so humiliating to the Moorish prince, notwithstanding the veil of decorum studiously thrown over them, he set out with his attendants for his capital, escorted by a body of Andalusian horse to the frontier, and loaded with costly presents by the Spanish king, and the general contempt of his court. [10]

Notwithstanding the importance of the results in the war of Granada, a detail of the successive steps by which they were achieved would be most tedious and trifling. No siege or single military achievement of great moment occurred until nearly four years from this period, in 1487; although, in the intervening time, a large number of fortresses and petty towns, together with a very extensive tract of territory, were recovered from the enemy. Without pursuing the chronological order of events, it is probable that the end of history will be best attained by presenting a concise view of the general policy pursued by the sovereigns in the conduct of the war.

The Moorish wars under preceding monarchs had consisted of little else than _cavalgadas_, or inroads into the enemy's territory, [11] which, pouring like a torrent over the land, swept away whatever was upon the surface, but left it in its essential resources wholly unimpaired. The bounty of nature soon repaired the ravages of man, and the ensuing harvest seemed to shoot up more abundantly from the soil, enriched by the blood of the husbandman. A more vigorous system of spoliation was now introduced. Instead of one campaign, the army took the field in spring and autumn,
intermitting its efforts only during the intolerable heats of summer, so that the green crop had no time to ripen, ere it was trodden down under the iron heel of war.

The apparatus for devastation was also on a much greater scale than had ever before been witnessed. From the second year of the war, thirty thousand foragers were reserved for this service, which they effected by demolishing farmhouses, granaries, and mills, (which last were exceedingly numerous in a land watered by many small streams,) by eradicating the vines, and laying waste the olive-gardens and plantations of oranges, almonds, mulberries, and all the rich varieties that grew luxuriant in this highly-favored region. This merciless devastation extended for more than two leagues on either side of the line of march. At the same time, the Mediterranean fleet cut off all supplies from the Barbary coast, so that the whole kingdom might be said to be in a state of perpetual blockade. Such and so general was the scarcity occasioned by this system, that the Moors were glad to exchange their Christian captives for provisions, until such ransom was interdicted by the sovereigns, as tending to defeat their own measures. [12]

Still there was many a green and sheltered valley in Granada, which yielded its returns unmolested to the Moorish husbandman; while his granaries were occasionally enriched with the produce of a border foray. The Moors too, although naturally a luxurious people, were patient of suffering, and capable of enduring great privation. Other measures, therefore, of a still more formidable character, became necessary in conjunction with this rigorous system of blockade.
The Moorish towns were for the most part strongly defended, presenting within the limits of Granada, as has been said, more than ten times the number of fortified places that are now scattered over the whole extent of the Peninsula. They stood along the crest of some precipice, or bold sierra, whose natural strength was augmented by the solid masonry with which they were surrounded, and which, however insufficient to hold out against modern artillery, bade defiance to all the enginery of battering warfare known previously to the fifteenth century. It was this strength of fortification, combined with that of their local position, which frequently enabled a slender garrison in these places to laugh to scorn all the efforts of the proudest Castilian armies.

The Spanish sovereigns were convinced that they must look to their artillery as the only effectual means for the reduction of these strongholds. In this, they as well as the Moors were extremely deficient, although Spain appears to have furnished earlier examples of its use than any other country in Europe. Isabella, who seems to have had the particular control of this department, caused the most skilful engineers and artisans to be invited into the kingdom from France, Germany, and Italy. Forges were constructed in the camp, and all the requisite materials prepared for the manufacture of cannon, balls, and powder. Large quantities of the last were also imported from Sicily, Flanders, and Portugal. Commissaries were established over the various departments, with instructions to provide whatever might be necessary for the operatives; and the whole was intrusted to the supervision of Don Francisco Ramirez, an hidalgo of Madrid, a person of much experience, and extensive military
science, for that day. By these efforts, unremittingly pursued during the whole of the war, Isabella assembled a train of artillery, such as was probably not possessed at that time by any other European potentate.

[13]

Still, the clumsy construction of the ordnance betrayed the infancy of the art. More than twenty pieces of artillery used at the siege of Baza, during this war, are still to be seen in that city, where they long served as columns in the public market-place. The largest of the lombards, as the heavy ordnance was called, are about twelve feet in length, consisting of iron bars two inches in breadth, held together by bolts and rings of the same metal. These were firmly attached to their carriages, incapable either of horizontal or vertical movement. It was this clumsiness of construction which led Machiavelli, some thirty years after, to doubt the expediency of bringing cannon into field engagements; and he particularly recommends in his treatise on the Art of War, that the enemy's fire should be evaded by intervals in the ranks being left open opposite to his cannon. [14]

The balls thrown from these engines were sometimes of iron, but more usually of marble. Several hundred of the latter have been picked up in the fields around Baza, many of which are fourteen inches in diameter, and weigh a hundred and seventy-five pounds. Yet this bulk, enormous as it appears, shows a considerable advance in the art since the beginning of the century, when the stone balls discharged, according to Zurita, at the siege of Balaguer, weighed not less than five hundred and fifty pounds. It was very long before the exact proportions requisite for obtaining the
greatest effective force could be ascertained. [15]

The awkwardness with which their artillery was served, corresponded with the rudeness of its manufacture. It is noticed as a remarkable circumstance by the chronicler, that two batteries, at the siege of Albahar, discharged one hundred and forty balls in the course of a day. [16] Besides this more usual kind of ammunition, the Spaniards threw from their engines large globular masses, composed of certain inflammable ingredients mixed with gunpowder, "which, scattering long trains of light," says an eye-witness, "in their passage through the air, filled the beholders with dismay, and, descending on the roofs of the edifices, frequently occasioned extensive conflagration." [17]

The transportation of their bulky engines was not the least of the difficulties which the Spaniards had to encounter in this war. The Moorish fortresses were frequently intrenched in the depths of some mountain labyrinth, whose rugged passes were scarcely accessible to cavalry. An immense body of pioneers, therefore, was constantly employed in constructing roads for the artillery across these sierras, by levelling the mountains, filling up the intervening valleys with rocks, or with cork trees and other timber that grew prolific in the wilderness, and throwing bridges across the torrents and precipitous _barrancos_. Pulgar had the curiosity to examine one of the causeways thus constructed preparatory to the siege of Cambil, which, although six thousand pioneers were constantly employed in the work, was attended with such difficulty, that it advanced only three leagues in twelve days. It required, says the historian, the entire demolition of one of the most rugged parts of the
sierra, which no one could have believed practicable by human industry.

[18]

The Moorish garrisons, perched on their mountain fastnesses, which, like the eyry of some bird of prey, seemed almost inaccessible to man, beheld with astonishment the heavy trains of artillery, emerging from the passes, where the foot of the hunter had scarcely been known to venture. The walls which encompassed their cities, although lofty, were not of sufficient thickness to withstand long the assaults of these formidable engines. The Moors were deficient in heavy ordnance. The weapons on which they chiefly relied for annoying the enemy at a distance were the arquebus and cross-bow, with the last of which they were unerring marksmen, being trained to it from infancy. They adopted a custom, rarely met with in civilized nations of any age, of poisoning their arrows; distilling for this purpose the juice of aconite, or wolfsbane, which they found in the _Sierra Nevada_, or Snowy Mountains, near Granada. A piece of linen or cotton cloth steeped in this decoction was wrapped round the point of the weapon, and the wound inflicted by it, however trivial in appearance, was sure to be mortal. Indeed, a Spanish writer, not content with this, imputes such malignity to the virus that a drop of it, as he asserts, mingling with the blood oozing from a wound, would ascend the stream into the vein, and diffuse its fatal influence over the whole system! [19]

Ferdinand, who appeared at the head of his armies throughout the whole of this war, pursued a sagacious policy in reference to the beleaguered cities. He was ever ready to meet the first overtures to surrender, in the most liberal spirit; granting protection of person, and such property as
the besieged could transport with them, and assigning them a residence, if
they preferred it, in his own dominions. Many, in consequence of this,
migrated to Seville and other cities of Andalusia, where they were settled
on estates which had been confiscated by the inquisitors; who looked
forward, no doubt, with satisfaction to the time, when they should be
permitted to thrust their sickle into the new crop of heresy, whose seeds
were thus sown amid the ashes of the old one. Those who preferred to
remain in the conquered Moorish territory, as Castilian subjects, were
permitted the free enjoyment of personal rights and property, as well as
of their religion; and, such was the fidelity with which Ferdinand
redeemed his engagements during the war, by the punishment of the least
infraction of them by his own people, that many, particularly of the
Moorish peasantry, preferred abiding in their early homes to removing to
Granada, or other places of the Moslem dominion. It was perhaps a
counterpart of the same policy, which led Ferdinand to chastise any
attempt at revolt, on the part of his new Moorish subjects, the Mudejares,
as they were called, with an unsparing rigor, which merits the reproach of
cruelty. Such was the military execution inflicted on the rebellious town
of Benemaquez, where he commanded one hundred and ten of the principal
inhabitants to be hung above the walls, and, after consigning the rest of
the population, men, women, and children, to slavery, caused the place to
be razed to the ground. The humane policy, usually pursued by Ferdinand,
seems to have had a more favorable effect on his enemies, who were
exaspered, rather than intimidated, by this ferocious act of vengeance.

[20]

The magnitude of the other preparations corresponded with those for the
Isabella, solicitous for everything that concerned the welfare of her people, sometimes visited the camp in person, encouraging the soldiers to endure the hardships of war, and relieving their necessities by liberal donations of clothes and money. She caused also a number of large tents, known as "the queen's hospitals," to be always reserved for the sick and wounded, and furnished them with the requisite attendants and medicines, at her own charge. This is considered the earliest attempt at the formation of a regular camp hospital, on record. [22]

Isabella may be regarded as the soul of this war. She engaged in it with the most exalted views, less to acquire territory than to re-establish the empire of the Cross over the ancient domain of Christendom. On this point,
she concentrated all the energies of her powerful mind, never suffering herself to be diverted by any subordinate interest from this one great and glorious object. When the king, in 1484, would have paused a while from the Granadine war, in order to prosecute his claims to Roussillon against the French, on the demise of Louis the Eleventh, Isabella strongly objected to it; but, finding her remonstrance ineffectual, she left her husband in Aragon, and repaired to Cordova, where she placed the cardinal of Spain at the head of the army, and prepared to open the campaign in the usual vigorous manner. Here, however, she was soon joined by Ferdinand, who, on a cooler revision of the subject, deemed it prudent to postpone his projected enterprise.

On another occasion, in the same year, when the nobles, fatigued with the service, had persuaded the king to retire earlier than usual, the queen, dissatisfied with the proceeding, addressed a letter to her husband, in which, after representing the disproportion of the results to the preparations, she besought him to keep the field as long as the season should serve. The grandees, says Lebrija, mortified at being surpassed in zeal for the holy war by a woman, eagerly collected their forces, which had been partly disbanded, and returned across the borders to renew hostilities. [23]

A circumstance, which had frequently frustrated the most magnificent military enterprises under former reigns, was the factions of these potent vassals, who, independent of each other, and almost of the crown, could rarely be brought to act in efficient concert for a length of time, and broke up the camp on the slightest personal jealousy, Ferdinand
experienced something of this temper in the duke of Medina Celi, who, when he had received orders to detach a corps of his troops to the support of the count of Benavente, refused, replying to the messenger, "Tell your master, that I came here to serve him at the head of my household troops, and they go nowhere without me as their leader." The sovereigns managed this fiery spirit with the greatest address, and, instead of curbing it, endeavored to direct it in the path of honorable emulation. The queen, who as their hereditary sovereign received a more deferential homage from her Castilian subjects than Ferdinand, frequently wrote to her nobles in the camp, complimenting some on their achievements, and others less fortunate on their intentions, thus cheering the hearts of all, says the chronicler, and stimulating them to deeds of heroism. On the most deserving she freely lavished those honors which cost little to the sovereign, but are most grateful to the subject. The marquis of Cadiz, who was pre-eminent above every other captain in this war for sagacity and conduct, was rewarded, after his brilliant surprise of Zahara, with the gift of that city, and the titles of Marquis of Zahara and Duke of Cadiz. The warrior, however, was unwilling to resign the ancient title under which he had won his laurels, and ever after subscribed himself, Marquis Duke of Cadiz.

[24] Still more emphatic honors were conferred on the count de Cabra, after the capture of the king of Granada. When he presented himself before the sovereigns, who were at Vitoria, the clergy and cavaliers of the city marched out to receive him, and he entered in solemn procession on the right hand of the grand cardinal of Spain. As he advanced up the hall of audience in the royal palace, the king and queen came forward to welcome him, and then seated him by themselves at table, declaring that "the conqueror of kings should sit with kings." These honors were followed by the more substantial gratuity of a hundred thousand maravedies annual
"a fat donative," says an old chronicler, "for so lean a treasury."

The young alcaide de los donzeles experienced a similar reception on the ensuing day. Such acts of royal condescension were especially grateful to the nobility of a court, circumscribed beyond every other in Europe by stately and ceremonious etiquette. [25]

The duration of the war of Granada was such as to raise the militia throughout the kingdom nearly to a level with regular troops. Many of these levies, indeed, at the breaking out of the war, might pretend to this character. Such were those furnished by the Andalusian cities, which had been long accustomed to skirmishes with their Moslem neighbors. Such too was the well-appointed chivalry of the military orders, and the organized militia of the hermandad, which we find sometimes supplying a body of ten thousand men for the service. To these may be added the splendid throng of cavaliers and hidalgos, who swelled the retinues of the sovereigns and the great nobility. The king was attended in battle by a body-guard of a thousand knights, one-half light, and the other half heavy armed, all superbly equipped and mounted, and trained to arms from childhood, under the royal eye.

Although the burden of the war bore most heavily on Andalusia, from its contiguity to the scene of action, yet recruits were drawn in abundance from the most remote provinces, as Galicia, Biscay, and the Asturias, from Aragon, and even the transmarine dominions of Sicily. The sovereigns did not disdain to swell their ranks with levies of a humbler description, by promising an entire amnesty to those malefactors, who had left the country in great numbers of late years to escape justice, on condition of their
serving in the Moorish war. Throughout this motley host the strictest
discipline and decorum were maintained. The Spaniards have never been
disposed to intemperance; but the passion for gaming, especially with
dice, to which they seem to have been immoderately addicted at that day,
was restrained by the severest penalties. [26]

The brilliant successes of the Spanish sovereigns diffused general
satisfaction throughout Christendom, and volunteers flocked to the camp
from France, England, and other parts of Europe, eager to participate in
the glorious triumphs of the Cross. Among these was a corps of Swiss
mercenaries, who are thus simply described by Pulgar. "There joined the
royal standard a body of men from Switzerland, a country in upper Germany.
These men were bold of heart, and fought on foot. As they were resolved
never to turn their backs upon the enemy, they wore no defensive armor,
except in front; by which means they were less encumbered in fight. They
made a trade of war, letting themselves out as mercenaries; but they
espoused only a just quarrel, for they were devout and loyal Christians,
and above all abhorred rapine as a great sin." [27] The Swiss had recently
established their military renown by the discomfiture of Charles the Bold,
when they first proved the superiority of infantry over the best-appointed
chivalry of Europe. Their example no doubt contributed to the formation of
that invincible Spanish infantry, which, under the Great Captain and his
successors, may be said to have decided the fate of Europe for more than
half a century.

Among the foreigners was one from the distant isle of Britain, the earl of
Rivers, or conde de Escalas, as he is called from his patronymic, Scales,
by the Spanish writers. "There came from Britain," says Peter Martyr, "a cavalier, young, wealthy, and high-born. He was allied to the blood royal of England. He was attended by a beautiful train of household troops three hundred in number, armed after the fashion of their land with long-bow and battle-axe." This nobleman particularly distinguished himself by his gallantry in the second siege of Loja, in 1486. Having asked leave to fight after the manner of his country, says the Andalusian chronicler, he dismounted from his good steed, and putting himself at the head of his followers, armed like himself _en blanco_, with their swords at their thighs, and battle-axes in their hands, he dealt such terrible blows around him as filled even the hardy mountaineers of the north with astonishment. Unfortunately, just as the suburbs were carried, the good knight, as he was mounting a scaling-ladder, received a blow from a stone, which dashed out two of his teeth, and stretched him senseless on the ground. He was removed to his tent, where he lay some time under medical treatment; and, when he had sufficiently recovered, he received a visit from the king and queen, who complimented him on his prowess, and testified their sympathy for his misfortune. "It is little," replied he, "to lose a few teeth in the service of him, who has given me all. Our Lord," he added, "who reared this fabric, has only opened a window, in order to discern the more readily what passes within." A facetious response, says Peter Martyr, which gave uncommon satisfaction to the sovereigns. [28]

The queen, not long after, testified her sense of the earl's services by a magnificent largess, consisting, among other things, of twelve Andalusian horses, two couches with richly wrought hangings and coverings of cloth of
gold, with a quantity of fine linen, and sumptuous pavilions for himself and suite. The brave knight seems to have been satisfied with this state of the Moorish wars; for he soon after returned to England, and in 1488 passed over to France, where his hot spirit prompted him to take part in the feudal factions of that country, in which he lost his life, fighting for the duke of Brittany. [29]

The pomp with which the military movements were conducted in these campaigns, gave the scene rather the air of a court pageant, than that of the stern array of war. The war was one, which, appealing both to principles of religion and patriotism, was well calculated to inflame the imaginations of the young Spanish cavaliers; and they poured into the field, eager to display themselves under the eye of their illustrious queen, who, as she rode through the ranks mounted on her war-horse, and clad in complete mail, afforded no bad personification of the genius of chivalry. The potent and wealthy barons exhibited in the camp all the magnificence of princes. The pavilions decorated with various-colored pennons, and emblazoned with the armorial bearings of their ancient houses, shone with a splendor, which a Castilian writer likens to that of the city of Seville. [30] They always appeared surrounded by a throng of pages in gorgeous liveries, and at night were preceded by a multitude of torches, which shed a radiance like that of day. They vied with each other in the costliness of their apparel, equipage, and plate, and in the variety and delicacy of the dainties with which their tables were covered. [31]

Ferdinand and Isabella saw with regret this lavish ostentation, and
privately remonstrated with some of the principal grandees on its evil tendency, especially in seducing the inferior and poorer nobility into expenditures beyond their means. This Sybarite indulgence, however, does not seem to have impaired the martial spirit of the nobles. On all occasions, they contended with each other for the post of danger. The duke del Infantado, the head of the powerful house of Mendoza, was conspicuous above all for the magnificence of his train. At the siege of Illora, 1486, he obtained permission to lead the storming party. As his followers pressed onwards to the breach, they were received with such a shower of missiles as made them falter for a moment. "What, my men," cried he, "do you fail me at this hour? Shall we be taunted with bearing more finery on our backs than courage in our hearts? Let us not, in God's name, be laughed at as mere holyday soldiers!" His vassals, stung by this rebuke, rallied, and, penetrating the breach, carried the place by the fury of their assault. [32]

Notwithstanding the remonstrances of the sovereigns against this ostentation of luxury, they were not wanting in the display of royal state and magnificence on all suitable occasions. The Curate of Los Palacios has expatiated with elaborate minuteness on the circumstances of an interview between Ferdinand and Isabella in the camp before Moclin, in 1486, where the queen's presence was solicited for the purpose of devising a plan of future operations. A few of the particulars may be transcribed, though at the hazard of appearing trivial to readers, who take little interest in such details.

On the borders of the Yeguas, the queen was met by an advanced corps,
under the command of the marquis-duke of Cadiz, and, at the distance of a
league and a half from Moclin, by the duke del Infantado, with the
principal nobility and their vassals, splendidly accoutred. On the left of
the road was drawn up in battle array the militia of Seville, and the
queen, making her obeisance to the banner of that illustrious city,
ordered it to pass to her right. The successive battalions saluted the
queen as she advanced, by lowering their standards, and the joyous
multitude announced with tumultuous acclamations her approach to the
conquered city.

The queen was accompanied by her daughter, the infanta Isabella, and a
courtly train of damsels, mounted on mules richly caparisoned. The queen
herself rode a chestnut mule, seated on a saddle-chair embossed with gold
and silver. The housings were of a crimson color, and the bridle was of
satin, curiously wrought with letters of gold. The infanta wore a skirt of
fine velvet, over others of brocade; a scarlet mantilla of the Moorish
fashion; and a black hat trimmed with gold embroidery. The king rode
forward at the head of his nobles to receive her. He was dressed in a
crimson doublet, with _chausses_, or breeches, of yellow satin. Over
his shoulders was thrown a cassock or mantle of rich brocade, and a
sopravest of the same materials concealed his cuirass. By his side, close
girt, he wore a Moorish scimitar, and beneath his bonnet his hair was
confined by a cap or headdress of the finest stuff.

Ferdinand was mounted on a noble war-horse of a bright chestnut color. In
the splendid train of chivalry which attended him, Bernaldez dwells with
much satisfaction on the English lord Scales. He was followed by a retinue
of five pages arrayed in costly liveries. He was sheathed in complete mail, over which was thrown a French surcoat of dark silk brocade. A buckler was attached by golden, clasps to his arm, and on his head he wore a white French hat with plumes. The caparisons of his steed were azure silk, lined with violet and sprinkled over with stars of gold, and swept the ground, as he managed his fiery courser with an easy horsemanship that excited general admiration.

The king and queen, as they drew near, bowed thrice with formal reverence to each other. The queen at the same time raising her hat, remained in her coif or headdress, with her face uncovered; Ferdinand, riding up, kissed her affectionately on the cheek, and then, according to the precise chronicler, bestowed a similar mark of tenderness on his daughter Isabella, after giving her his paternal benediction. The royal party were then escorted to the camp, where suitable accommodations had been provided for the queen and her fair retinue. [33]

It may readily be believed that the sovereigns did not neglect, in a war like the present, an appeal to the religious principle so deeply seated in the Spanish character. All their public acts ostentatiously proclaimed the pious nature of the work in which they were engaged. They were attended in their expeditions by churchmen of the highest rank, who not only mingled in the councils of the camp, but, like the bold bishop of Jaen, or the grand cardinal Mendoza, buckled on harness over rochet and hood, and led their squadrons to the field. [34] The queen at Cordova celebrated the tidings of every new success over the infidel, by solemn procession and thanksgiving, with her whole household, as well as the nobility, foreign
ambassadors, and municipal functionaries. In like manner Ferdinand, on the
return from his campaigns, was received at the gates of the city, and
escorted in solemn pomp beneath a rich canopy of state to the cathedral
church, where he prostrated himself in grateful adoration of the Lord of
hosts. Intelligence of their triumphant progress in the war was constantly
transmitted to the pope, who returned his benediction, accompanied by more
substantial marks of favor, in bulls of crusade, and taxes on
ecclesiastical rents. [35]

The ceremonials observed on the occupation of a new conquest were such as
to affect the heart no less than the imagination. "The royal
_alferez_," says Marineo, "raised the standard of the Cross, the sign
of our salvation, on the summit of the principal fortress; and all who
beheld it prostrated themselves on their knees in silent worship of the
Almighty, while the priests chanted the glorious anthem, _Te Deum
laudamus_. The ensign or pennon of St. James, the chivalric patron of
Spain, was then unfolded, and all invoked his blessed name. Lastly was
displayed the banner of the sovereigns, emblazoned with the royal arms; at
which the whole army shouted forth, as if with one voice, 'Castile,
Castile!' After these solemnities, a bishop led the way to the principal
mosque, which, after the rites of purification, he consecrated to the
service of the true faith." The standard of the Cross above referred to
was of massive silver, and was a present from Pope Sixtus the Fourth to
Ferdinand, in whose tent it was always carried throughout these campaigns.
An ample supply of bells, vases, missals, plate, and other sacred
furniture, was also borne along with the camp, being provided by the queen
for the purified mosques. [36]
The most touching part of the incidents usually occurring at the surrender of a Moorish city was the liberation of the Christian captives immured in its dungeons. On the capture of Ronda, in 1485, more than four hundred of these unfortunate persons, several of them cavaliers of rank, some of whom had been taken in the fatal expedition of the Axarquia, were restored to the light of heaven. On being brought before Ferdinand, they prostrated themselves on the ground, bathing his feet with tears, while their wan and wasted figures, their dishevelled locks, their beards reaching down to their girdles, and their limbs loaded with heavy manacles, brought tears into the eye of every spectator. They were then commanded to present themselves before the queen at Cordova, who liberally relieved their necessities, and, after the celebration of public thanksgiving, caused them to be conveyed to their own homes. The fetters of the liberated captives were suspended in the churches, where they continued to be revered by succeeding generations as the trophies of Christian warfare.

[37]

Ever since the victory of Lucena, the sovereigns had made it a capital point of their policy to foment the dissensions of their enemies. The young king Abdallah, after his humiliating treaty with Ferdinand, lost whatever consideration he had previously possessed. Although the sultana Zoraya, by her personal address, and the lavish distribution of the royal treasures, contrived to maintain a faction for her son, the better classes of his countrymen despised him as a renegade, and a vassal of the Christian king. As their old monarch had become incompetent, from increasing age and blindness, to the duties of his station in these
perilous times, they turned their eyes on his brother Abdallah, surnamed El Zagal, or "The Valiant," who had borne so conspicuous a part in the rout of the Axarquia. The Castilians depict this chief in the darkest colors of ambition and cruelty; but the Moslem writers afford no such intimation, and his advancement to the throne at that crisis seems to be in some measure justified by his eminent talents as a military leader.

On his way to Granada, he encountered and cut to pieces a body of Calatrava knights from Alhama, and signalized his entrance into his new capital by bearing along the bloody trophies of heads dangling from his saddlebow, after the barbarous fashion long practised in these wars. [38] It was observed that the old king Abul Hacen did not long survive his brother's accession. [39] The young king Abdallah sought the protection of the Castilian sovereigns in Seville, who, true to their policy, sent him back into his own dominions with the means of making headway against his rival. The _alfakies_ and other considerate persons of Granada, scandalized at these fatal feuds, effected a reconciliation, on the basis of a division of the kingdom between the parties. But wounds so deep could not be permanently healed. The site of the Moorish capital was most propitious to the purposes of faction. It covered two swelling eminences, divided from each other by the deep waters of the Darro. The two factions possessed themselves respectively of these opposite quarters. Abdallah was not ashamed to strengthen himself by the aid of Christian mercenaries; and a dreadful conflict was carried on for fifty days and nights, within the city, which swam with the blood that should have been shed only in its defence. [40]
Notwithstanding these auxiliary circumstances, the progress of the Christians was comparatively slow. Every cliff seemed to be crowned with a fortress; and every fortress was defended with the desperation of men willing to bury themselves under its ruins. The old men, women, and children, on occasions of a siege, were frequently despatched to Granada. Such was the resolution, or rather ferocity of the Moors, that Malaga closed its gates against the fugitives from Alora, after its surrender, and even massacred some of them in cold blood. The eagle eye of El Zagal seemed to take in at a glance the whole extent of his little territory, and to detect every vulnerable point in his antagonist, whom he encountered where he least expected it; cutting off his convoys, surprising his foraging parties, and retaliating by a devastating inroad on the borders. [41]

No effectual and permanent resistance, however, could be opposed to the tremendous enginery of the Christians. Tower and town fell before it. Besides the principal towns of Cartama, Coin, Setenil, Ronda, Marbella, Illora, termed by the Moors "the right eye," Moclin, "the shield" of Granada, and Loja, after a second and desperate siege in the spring of 1486, Bernaldez enumerates more than seventy subordinate places in the Val de Cartama, and thirteen others after the fall of Marbella. Thus the Spaniards advanced their line of conquest more than twenty leagues beyond the western frontier of Granada. This extensive tract they strongly fortified and peopled, partly with Christian subjects, and partly with Moorish, the original occupants of the soil, who were secured in the possession of their ancient lands, under their own law. [42]
Thus the strong posts, which may be regarded as the exterior defences of the city of Granada, were successively carried. A few positions alone remained of sufficient strength to keep the enemy at bay. The most considerable of these was Malaga, which from its maritime situation afforded facilities for a communication with the Barbary Moors, that the vigilance of the Castilian cruisers could not entirely intercept. On this point, therefore, it was determined to concentrate all the strength of the monarchy, by sea and land, in the ensuing campaign of 1487.

* * * * *

Two of the most important authorities for the war of Granada are Fernando del Pulgar and Antonio de Lebrija, or Nebrissensis, as he is called from the Latin _Nebrissa_.

Few particulars have been preserved respecting the biography of the former. He was probably a native of Pulgar, near Toledo. The Castilian writers recognize certain provincialisms in his style belonging to that district. He was secretary to Henry IV., and was charged with various confidential functions by him. He seems to have retained his place on the accession of Isabella, by whom he was appointed national historiographer in 1482, when, from certain remarks in his letters, it would appear he was already advanced in years. This office, in the fifteenth century, comprehended, in addition to the more obvious duties of an historian, the intimate and confidential relations of a private secretary. "It was the
business of the chronicler," says Bernaldez, "to carry on foreign
correspondence in the service of his master, acquainting himself with
whatever was passing in other courts and countries, and, by the discreet
and conciliatory tenor of his epistles, to allay such feuds as might arise
between the king and his nobility, and establish harmony between them."
From this period Pulgar remained near the royal person, accompanying the
queen in her various progresses through the kingdom, as well as in her
military expeditions into the Moorish territory. He was consequently an
eye-witness of many of the warlike scenes which he describes, and, from
his situation at the court, had access to the most ample and accredited
sources of information. It is probable he did not survive the capture of
Granada, as his history falls somewhat short of that event. Pulgar's
chronicle, in the portion containing a retrospective survey of events
previous to 1482, may be charged with gross inaccuracy. But, in all the
subsequent period, it may be received as perfectly authentic, and has all
the air of impartiality. Every circumstance relating to the conduct of the
war is developed with equal fulness and precision. His manner of
narration, though prolix, is perspicuous, and may compare favorably with
that of contemporary writers. His sentiments may compare still more
advantageously in point of liberality, with those of the Castilian
historians of a later age.

Pulgar left some other works, of which his commentary on the ancient
satire of "Mingo Revulgo," his "Letters," and his "Claros Varones," or
sketches of illustrious men, have alone been published. The last contains
notices of the most distinguished individuals of the court of Henry IV.,
which, although too indiscriminately encomiastic, are valuable
subsidiaries to an accurate acquaintance with the prominent actors of the period. The last and most elegant edition of Pulgar’s Chronicle was published at Valencia in 1780, from the press of Benito Montfort, in large folio.

Antonio de Lebrija was one of the most active and erudite scholars of this period. He was born in the province of Andalusia, in 1444. After the usual discipline at Salamanca, he went at the age of nineteen to Italy, where he completed his education in the university of Bologna. He returned to Spain ten years after, richly stored with classical learning and the liberal arts that were then taught in the flourishing schools of Italy. He lost no time in dispensing to his countrymen his various acquisitions. He was appointed to the two chairs of grammar and poetry (a thing unprecedented) in the university of Salamanca, and lectured at the same time in these distinct departments. He was subsequently preferred by Cardinal Ximenes to were liberally requited, and where he enjoyed the entire confidence of his distinguished patron, who consulted him on all matters affecting the interests of the institution. Here he continued, delivering his lectures and expounding the ancient classics to crowded audiences, to the advanced age of seventy-eight, when he was carried off by an attack of apoplexy.

Lebrija, besides his oral tuition, composed works on a great variety of subjects, philological, historical, theological, etc. His emendation of the sacred text was visited with the censure of the Inquisition, a circumstance which will not operate to his prejudice with posterity.

Lebrija was far from being circumscribed by the narrow sentiments of his
age. He was warmed with a generous enthusiasm for letters, which kindled a
corresponding flame in the bosoms of his disciples, among whom may be
reckoned some of the brightest names in the literary annals of the period.

His instruction effected for classical literature in Spain what the labors
of the great Italian scholars of the fifteenth century did for it in their
country; and he was rewarded with the substantial gratitude of his own
age, and such empty honors as could be rendered by posterity. For very
many years, the anniversary of his death was commemorated by public

The circumstances attending the composition of his Latin Chronicle, so
often quoted in this history, are very curious. Carbajal says, that he
delivered Pulgar's Chronicle, after that writer's death, into Lebrija's
hands for the purpose of being translated into Latin. The latter proceeded
in his task, as far as the year 1486. His history, however, can scarcely
be termed a translation, since, although it takes up the same thread of
incident, it is diversified by many new ideas and particular facts. This
unfinished performance was found among Lebrija's papers, after his
decease, with a preface containing not a word of acknowledgment to Pulgar.

It was accordingly published for the first time, in 1545 (the edition
referred to in this history), by his son Sancho, as an original production
of his father. Twenty years after, the first edition of Pulgar's original
Chronicle was published at Valladolid, from the copy which belonged to
Lebrija, by his grandson Antonio. This work appeared also as Lebrija's.

Copies however of Pulgar's Chronicle were preserved in several private
libraries; and two years later, 1567, his just claims were vindicated by
an edition at Saragossa, inscribed with his name as its author.
Lebrija's reputation has sustained some injury from this transaction, though most undeservedly. It seems probable, that he adopted Pulgar's text as the basis of his own, intending to continue the narrative to a later period. His unfinished manuscript being found among his papers after his death, without reference to any authority, was naturally enough given to the world as entirely his production. It is more strange, that Pulgar's own Chronicle, subsequently printed as Lebrija's, should have contained no allusion to its real author. The History, although composed as far as it goes with sufficient elaboration and pomp of style, is one that adds, on the whole, but little to the fame of Lebrija. It was at best but adding a leaf to the laurel on his brow, and was certainly not worth a plagiarism.

FOOTNOTES

[1]
"Por esa puerta de Elvira
sale muy gran cabalgada:
cuanto del _hidalgo moro_,

* * * * *
Toda es gente valerosa,
y esperta para batalla.

"En medio de todos ellos
va el rey Chico de Granada,
mirando las damas moras
de las torres del Alhambra.

"La reina mora su madre
de esta manera le habla;


d'Afrique et d'Espagne, tom. iii. pp. 267-271.--Bernaldez, Reyes

Marmol, Rebelion de Moriscos, lib. 1, cap. 12.

The _donzeles_, of which Diego de Cordova was alcayde, or captain, were a
body of young cavaliers, originally brought up as pages in the royal
household, and organized as a separate corps of the militia. Salazar
de Mendoza, Dignidades, p. 259.--See also Morales, Obras, tom. xiv. p. 80.
The various details, even to the site of the battle, are told in the usual confused and contradictory manner by the garrulous chroniclers of the period. All authorities, however, both Christian and Moorish, agree as to its general results.

Charles V. does not seem to have partaken of his grandfather's delicacy in regard to an interview with his royal captive, or indeed to any part of his deportment towards him.
[11] The term _cavalgada_ seems to be used indifferently by the ancient Spanish writers to represent a marauding party, the foray itself, or the booty taken in it.

According to Gibbon, the cannon used by Mahomet in the siege of Constantinople, about thirty years before this time, threw stone balls, which weighed above 600 pounds. The measure of the bore was twelve palms.
We get a more precise notion of the awkwardness with which the artillery was served in the infancy of the science, from a fact recorded in the Chronicle of John II., that at the siege of Setenil, in 1407, five lombards were able to discharge only forty shot in the course of a day. We have witnessed an invention, in our time, that of our ingenious countryman, Jacob Perkins, by which a gun, with the aid of that miracle-worker, steam, is enabled to throw a thousand bullets in a single minute.

Ferdinand et Isabelle, (Paris, 1766,) tom. i. p. 273,) have referred the invention of bombs to the siege of Ronda. I find no authority for this. Pulgar's words are, "They made many iron balls, large and small, some of which they cast in a mould, having reduced the iron to a state of fusion, so that it would run like any other metal."

cap. 82.


168. According to Mendoza, a decoction of the quince furnished the most effectual antidote known against this poison.
Pulgar, who is by no means bigoted for the age, seems to think the literal terms granted by Ferdinand to the enemies of the faith stand in need of

cap. 21, 33, 42.--Lebrija, Rerum Gestarum Decades, ii. lib. 8, cap. 6.--
Marmol, Rebelion de Moriscos, lib. 1, cap. 13.


[23] Lebrija, Rerum Gestarum Decades, ii. lib. 3, cap. 6.--Pulgar, Reyes

[24] After another daring achievement, the sovereigns granted him and his heirs the royal suit worn by the monarchs of Castile on Ladyday; a present, says Abarca, not to be estimated by its cost. Reyes de Aragon, tom. ii. fol. 308.

Decades, ii. lib. 2, cap. 10.

[28] Peter Martyr, Opus Epist., lib. 1, epist. 62.--Bernaldez, Reyes


New World had poured its treasures into its lap, was conspicuous for its

Sevilla, p. 183.

supported Isabella’s claims to the crown. Oviedo was present at the siege
of Illora, and gives a minute description of his appearance there. “He
came,” says that writer, “attended by a numerous body of cavaliers and
gentlemen, as befitted so great a lord. He displayed all the luxuries
which belong to a time of peace; and his tables, which were carefully
served, were loaded with rich and curiously wrought plate, of which he had
a greater profusion than any other grandee in the kingdom.” In another

in all his actions princely, maintaining unbounded hospitality among his
numerous vassals and dependents, and beloved throughout Spain. His palaces
were garnished with the most costly tapestries, jewels, and rich stuffs of
gold and silver. His chapel was filled with accomplished singers and
musicians; his falcons, hounds, and his whole hunting establishment,
including a magnificent stud of horses, not to be matched by any other
nobleman in the kingdom. Of the truth of all which," concludes Oviedo, "I
myself have been an eye-witness, and enough others can testify." See
Oviedo, (Quincuagenas, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 8,) who has given the
genealogy of the Mendozas and Mendozinos, in all its endless
ramifications.

Year in Spain" describes, among other suits of armor still to be seen in
the museum of the armory at Madrid, those worn by Ferdinand and his
illustrious consort. "In one of the most conspicuous stations is the suit
of armor usually worn by Ferdinand the Catholic. He seems snugly seated
upon his war-horse with a pair of red velvet breeches, after the manner of
the Moors, with lifted lance and closed visor. There are several suits of
Ferdinand and of his queen Isabella, who was no stranger to the dangers of
a battle. By the comparative heights of the armor, Isabella would seem to
be the bigger of the two, as she certainly was the better." A Year in
Spain, by a young American, (Boston, 1829,) p. 116.

[34] Cardinal Mendoza, in the campaign of 1485, offered the queen to raise
a body of 3000 horse, and march at its head to the relief of Alhama, and
at the same time to supply her with such sums of money as might be
[35] In 1486, we find Ferdinand and Isabella performing a pilgrimage to

MS., cap. 82, 87.

cap. 75.

[38] Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. cap. 37.--Cardonne, Hist.
d’Afrique et d’Espagne, tom. iii. pp. 276, 281, 282.--Abarca, Reyes de
Aragon, tom. ii. fol. 304.

"El enjaeza el caballo
Be las cabezas de fama,"

says one of the old Moorish ballads. A garland of Christian heads seems to have been deemed no unsuitable present from a Moslem knight to his lady love. Thus one of the Zegries triumphantly asks,

O escalado que murallas?

Aveis presentado a damas?"

This sort of trophy was also borne by the Christian cavaliers. Examples of this may be found even as late as the siege of Granada. See, among others,
the ballad beginning

"A vista de los dos Reyes."

[39] The Arabic historian alludes to the vulgar report of the old king's assassination by his brother, but leaves us in the dark in regard to his own opinion of its credibility. "Algunos dicen que le procuro la muerte su hermano el Rey Zagal; pero Dios lo sabe, que es el unico eterno e inmutable."--Conde, Domination de los Arabes, tom. in. cap. 38.

[40] Conde, Dominacion de los Arabes, tom. iii. cap. 38.--Cardonne, Hist.
cap. 9.--Marmol, Rebelion de Moriscos, lib. 1, cap. 12.

"Muy revuelta anda Granada
en armas y fuego ardiendo,
y los ciudadanos de ella
duras muertes padeciendo;

Por tres reyes que hay esquivos,
cada uno pretendiendo
el mando, cetro y corona
de Granada y su gobierno," etc.

See this old _romance_, mixing up fact and fiction, with more of the
former than usual, in Hyta, Guerras de Granada, tom. i. p. 292.

[41] Among other achievements, Zagal surprised and beat the count of Cabra in a night attack upon Moclin, and wellnigh retaliated on that nobleman

48.

cap. 48.--Lebrija, Rerum Gestarum Decades, ii. lib. 3, cap. 5, 7; lib. 4, cap. 2, 3.--Marmol, Rebelion de Moriscos, lib. 1, cap. 12.

END OF VOL. I.