

QUEEN ISABELLA OF SPAIN



**The true history of
Queen Isabella of Castile and
how she cleansed her country
of infidel Moslems and
treacherous Jews**

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ISABELLA OF SPAIN

FOREWORD

This book attempts to tell the amazing story of Queen Isabel of Castile as it appeared to her contemporaries, against the blood-spattered background of her own times. It is a tale so dramatic, so fascinating, that it needs no embellishing or piecing out with the wisdom— or folly— of another age. To probe the inner cosmos of men and women long dead by the light of a pseudo-science, to strip away with pitiless irony all noble or generous appearances, to prize open with an air of personal infallibility the very secret hinges of the door to that ultimate sanctuary of the human conscience which is inviolable even to father confessors— that is an office for which I have neither the taste nor the talent; and if I have fallen unawares into any such pitfalls of the devils of megalomania, I beg forgiveness in advance. Under the naïve rhetoric of the fifteenth-century chroniclers there is ample material for what Joseph Conrad called rendering the vibration of life and Michelet called the resurrection of the flesh, without resorting to subjective interpretation. And it has seemed all the more imperative to follow the sources objectively and let them speak for themselves as far as possible, because, strange as it may appear, the life of Columbus's patron and America's godmother has never been told completely and coherently in our language.

For nearly a century the "official" biography has been Prescott's *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella*. He was a careful and patient scholar to whom we owe a debt of no small size. Yet he was incapable of understanding the spirit of fifteenth-century Spain, because with all his erudition he could never wholly forget the prejudices of an early nineteenth-century Bostonian. And modern research has opened up treasures of source-material unknown to him. Llorente, whom he followed with blind confidence on the Inquisition, has been proved not only wildly inaccurate but deliberately dishonest, and is distrusted by all reliable historians; many of the original documents unearthed by Leal and the extremely valuable ones published by Padre Fidel Fita in the Bulletin of the Royal Academy of History at Madrid were not available until half a century or more after Prescott wrote. The Columbian investigations of Harrisse, Thacher and others have almost completed the portrait of a Discoverer who is human rather than legendary. The studies of Señor Amador de los Rios, Dr. Meyer Kayserling and M. Isidore Loeb have shed new light upon the history of the Spanish Jews. Bergenroth's decoding of the Spanish state papers, many of them still in cipher when Prescott wrote, has provided a new approach to Isabel's relations with France, England, and the Holy Roman Empire.

Nearly all the biographies of Isabel in the English language, and some in French, have followed the conclusions of Prescott and have adopted his attitude, even when they have made use of later material. When not openly hostile they have generally approached the fifteenth century with an air of condescension— the worst possible attitude for an historian, for condescension is not a window, but a wall. Even to begin to understand a person (the representative of an age), you must have enough sympathy to imagine yourself standing in his place, holding the same beliefs, having the same information, feeling the same emotions. You can never achieve more than a caricature of him if you keep reminding yourself that he is a medieval ignoramus with faults and passions that you imagine you do not share. You will understand him better if you say at the outset, "Let us see what he believed about himself and the world, and assume as a working hypothesis that it is true: would I, in his place, have done differently?" Humility is the mother of all virtues, even in the writing of history.

Again, to understand a woman crusader who changed the course of civilization and the aspect of the entire world, as Isabel did, it is essential to begin by visualizing the European stage on which she appeared. When she was born there was no such nation as Spain. She was European, Christian, in consciousness, rather than Spanish.

All the chroniclers of the time— Bernaldez, Pulgar, and a generation later, Zurita— keep the reader informed of what is going on not only in Spain, but in all parts of Europe, as an English or American newspaper records the happenings of the world. Colmenares, writing a history of the city of Segovia, takes notice of the fall of Constantinople. For Christendom, the whole European culture, was an entity more real to the average man than the limits of the country he lived in. Yet some of the modern biographies of Isabel manage to convey the impression that Italy and France were as remote in her scheme of things as Java is in ours. Only by recapturing her concept of a unified Christian civilization can we begin to comprehend the world she was born in.

It was a dying world. The west was like some old ship eaten by intestine fires and ready to founder under the waves of a triumphant Mohammedanism. For Christendom had hardly subdued the barbarism that snuffed out the light of Rome when it was forced to begin a titanic struggle for its very existence— not merely the First Crusade or the Fourth Crusade that our histories mention, but a super crusade that kept Europe on the defensive for a thousand years, from the early eighth to the late seventeenth century. Even the fanaticism and the militarism of our medieval ancestors were imposed upon them by the continual necessity of warding off attacks by fanatical and militaristic foes. After the barbarian migrations came the ravages of Magyars and Vikings; and finally the ruthless millions of Islam.

When Isabel was born, the Turks had been steadily carrying fire and scimitar through eastern Europe, slaying men, women and children; they had reached the Danube, overrun Asia Minor, taken lower Hungary, gobbled up a great part of the Balkans. In Isabel's third year, 1453, they blasted their way into Constantinople and made themselves masters of Greece. Successive Popes exhorted the European rulers to forget their quarrels and jealousies and unite to save Christendom from being overwhelmed. But Christian princes were too busy fighting Christian princes from one end of Europe to the other. France and England, at the end of the Hundred Years' War— it was only twenty years before Isabel's birth that Saint Joan was burned— were exhausted; yet Louis XI was preparing to crush feudalism in France, and England was on the eve of the Wars of the Roses that rent her for a generation. Poland had been desperately defending herself from predatory German barons on the west and Lithuanian heathen on the east. The survivors in Hungary, Albania and the Balkans were rallying to make an almost hopeless resistance to the Mohammedans. Italy was divided into rival states, chief of which were Rome, Naples, Milan, Florence, Genoa, and Venice— all involved in dynastic and commercial feuds, and corrupted by too much wealth and by the paganism that had returned in the shadow of the Renaissance. No one but the people on the first line of defence would listen to the Popes. The Emperor Frederick III, ruler of all central Europe, was too busy planting a garden and catching birds. The King of Denmark stole the money given for a crusade from the sacristy of the cathedral at Roskilde. And all this while Mohammed II, the Grand Turk, was fighting his way to the east shore of the Adriatic, and seemed certain to carry out the threat of a predecessor, Bajezid, nicknamed "Lightning," to feed his horses on the altar of Saint Peter's in Rome.

Meanwhile the Mohammedans had long since driven a wedge into western Europe, by way of Spain. Of the three great peninsulas that Christendom had planted, like colossal feet, in the Mediterranean, they now possessed Greece, and were preparing to assail Italy. But Spain had been their battleground for nearly eight hundred years.

Hardly had the Mohammedan Arabs subdued and organized the Berbers of north Africa when they were invited by the Spanish Jews to cross the nine-mile strip of water at Gibraltar and possess themselves of the Christian kingdom. The plot was discovered, and the Jews sternly punished. A second attempt, however, was successful at a moment when the Visigoth monarchy was perishing of its own follies. "It remains a fact," says the *Jewish Encyclopedia*, "that the Jews, either directly or through their co-religionists in Africa, encouraged the Mohammedans to conquer Spain."² In 709 the Arab general Tarik led an army of Berbers, in which there were many African Jews, across the straits. Defeating and slaying King Roderigo, with the aid of

Christian traitors, at the great battle of Jerez de la Frontera, they carried death in all directions through the peninsula. Wherever they went, the Jews threw open to them the gates of the principal cities, so that in an incredibly short time the Africans were masters of all Spain save the little kingdom of the Asturias in the northern mountains, where the Christian survivors who were unwilling to accept Islam reassembled and prepared to win back their heritage. Meanwhile the Berbers entered France along the Mediterranean coast.³ The whole western culture of Rome was in jeopardy a second time, from the same enemy; for by a striking coincidence it was the same Berber race that had followed Hannibal across the Alps into Italy nearly a thousand years before. The fate of all Christendom hung on the issue of a battle.

The glorious victory of Charles Martel in 732 saved our culture; but Spain remained lost to Christendom for centuries. Christian churches were turned into mosques, old Roman cities were gradually transformed into the oriental pleasure-grounds of the caliphs. Córdoba under the Omniad, Abd er Rahman III, in the tenth century was more beautiful than Bagdad, and next to Constantinople the most magnificent city in Europe. Medicine, mathematics and philosophy were taught in its schools. At a time when the Christians to the north were fighting for the mere right to exist, the caliphs enjoyed an income greater than those of all the kings of Europe combined. Slowly and painfully, but with hope born of their faith, the Christian knights fought their way south into the lands of their ancestors. With much expense of blood they gradually carved out five small Christian states: Castile and Leon on the great central plateau; Navarre in the shadow of the Pyrenees; Aragon, originally a Frankish colony, in the north-east; and Catalonia—remnant of the old Spanish March—on the eastern coast. Alfonso VI of Castile took Toledo in 1085—though the Saracens, reinforced by hordes of Almoravides from Africa, later defeated him. Alfonso Sanchez recovered Saragossa and the sacred site where Saint James the Apostle (Santiago) had built the first Christian church in Spain. Aragon and Catalonia united. Portugal became independent in 1143. And then, in 1160, the military failure of Alfonso VIII placed in peril all that had been gained.

At a critical moment the great voice of Pope Innocent III, summoning all Europe to join in the Spanish Crusade, prevented a second catastrophe. Ten thousand knights and 100,000 infantry came from France and Germany in time to reinforce the armies of Castile and Aragon. They vanquished the mighty Saracen host in the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa in 1212, crushed them utterly, left 200,000 of them dead on the field. It was the turning-point of the age-long Crusade. In the following generation Fernando III, the Saint, recaptured Córdoba, Seville, Jerez and Cádiz. Luxuriant Andalusia, south of Castile, was regained. When the fifteenth century began, nothing was left to the Moors but the Kingdom of Granada in the extreme south. It was, however, the richest, most fertile, most delightful part of Spain, populous and warlike, sustained by abundant farmlands and pasturage, and protected from military attack by the enormous natural fortifications formed by the snowy peaks of the Sierra Nevada. The city of Granada and the score of almost impregnable towns that encircled it could put into the field a well-equipped army of 50,000. But even more menacing to the security of the Christian kingdoms was the fact that the Moors could obtain almost unlimited reinforcements and supplies from the Mohammedan millions of Africa, and at short notice. So long as Islam retained any foothold in Spain, there was perpetual danger that the seven hundred years of heroic effort might yet be lost.

To prevent such a débâcle, to complete the reconquest, Christian Spain had need of political unity under a strong leader. But the problem of unity was far more intricate than the one with which Louis XI was beginning to grapple in France. He, too, had an arrogant feudal nobility to suppress, anarchy to reduce to order, a bankrupt country to make productive. But he had an enormous advantage in the fact that his people were so nearly one in race and were one in religion. There was no such fundamental unity to build upon in Spain, where the Jews constituted a powerful minority resisting all efforts at assimilation. Of the openly professing Jews of the synagogue there were only some 200,000 in 1450, and they were allowed complete freedom of worship. But far more numerous were those Jews—there must have been at least 2,000,000 of them—who observed the rites and customs of the Old Law in secret, while outwardly they

pretended to be Christians. They were called *Conversos* or New Christians. The Jews of the synagogue sometimes called them Marranos, from the Hebrew *Maranatha*, “the Lord is coming,” in derision of their belief, or feigned belief, in the divinity of Jesus Christ. The *Conversos* were assimilated in a superficial sense, for many of them married into the noblest families in Spain, enjoyed all the privileges of Christians, and had gradually gathered into their hands most of the wealth, the political power, and even the control of taxation; but it was generally felt that in a crisis they would prove to be Jews at heart, enemies of the Christian faith, and the allies, as in the past, of the half-oriental and circumcised Moors. How to fuse elements almost as immiscible as oil and water into a unity capable of resolving chaos into order and pushing back to the Mediterranean the western salient of the mighty battle-line of Islam— that was the challenge that the times had hurled at Isabel’s immediate ancestors, and found them wanting. It was a task which, if at all possible, demanded constructive genius of the highest order. By some mysterious ordering of circumstance, by a falling out of events more romantic than fiction, it was committed to the hands of a woman.

NOTES (p. 613)

1 Dr. Lea is so violently prejudiced that his conclusions are untrustworthy and his methods sometimes reprehensible, but he is an indefatigable hunter of facts and documents. His *Inquisition of the Middle Ages* and *History of the Inquisition of Spain* are useful, provided the student takes the trouble to verify his references. Vermeersch justly says of Lea’s *History of the Inquisition in the Middle Ages*, “This book imposes upon many persons by its confused mass of apparent erudition, but it is as deficient in synthesis as in impartiality and accuracy.” I have found the same to be true of *The Inquisition of Spain*, as I shall endeavour to demonstrate later on.— W.T.W.

2 Vol. XI, p. 485.

3 Mariana, *Historia general de España*.

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VI

THE PAPAL COURT IN 1471 – THE REFORMATIONS OF SIXTUS IV – CARDINAL BORGIA’S MISSION TO CASTILE – THE DEATH OF ENRIQUE IV (extract, pp. 124-7)

...and the *Conversos*. For another incident, destined to have sanguinary consequences, had occurred while she was visiting Carrillo at Alcalá.

On March 14, the second Sunday of Lent, the Christians of Córdoba had arranged to have a solemn procession to the Cathedral. From this function the authorities had excluded the New Christians, possibly in connection with the persecution following the Toledo incident of 1467, possibly because the *Conversos* had become so secure in Córdoba that they openly attended the synagogues, and mocked the Christian religion. At any rate, they were excluded. The houses in the old Moorish city were covered with gaudy spring flowers, the streets carpeted and shaded with hundreds of tapestries. The procession, brilliant with many colours, moved slowly through the town to the sound of austere music. At its head was borne a statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As the statue passed the house of one of the wealthiest *Conversos*, a girl threw a bucketful of dirty water from one of the upper windows. It splashed upon the statue.⁸ There was a horrified silence, then a roar of indignation, and cries of “Sacrilege!” and the old cry of “Death to the Marranos!” A blacksmith named Rodriguez set fire to the *Converso*’s house with the taper he was carrying. Men in the procession drew their swords, broke ranks, and rushed into the houses of the secret Jews. The massacre that followed was more bloody than the one in Toledo.

In Córdoba, however, the *Conversos* found a powerful champion in Don Alonzo de Aguilar, lord of Montilla. Their gold is said to have been a convincing argument with him; furthermore, he had married a woman of Jewish descent, a daughter of the Marqués of Villena. He and his brother Gonsalvo de Córdoba drew their swords in defence of the New Christians. The Old Christians, led by the Count of Cabra, besieged Don Alonzo and his partisans in the Alcázar. The battle raged for several days. Don Alonzo and Gonsalvo cut their way out with difficulty.

A virtual state of war persisted for nearly four years between the two factions— Don Alonzo and the *Conversos* on one side, and the Count of Cabra and the Old Christians on the other. But even more deplorable was the reaction in other cities of Andalusia and Castile. The old frenzy against the secret Jews flamed up in a dozen places— Montoro, Adamur, La Rambla, Santaella, Ubeda, Jaen— and everywhere the Marranos were put to the sword. But perhaps the most thorough and brutal of the massacres occurred at Segovia on May 16, 1474. And its direct cause was a crime by which Don Juan Pacheco, Marqués of Villena, brought upon his memory the just scorn of Christians and Jews alike.

None knew better than he what deadly passions slumbered in that rocky city where the stern keep towered over the Jewish *alhama*, the houses of the rich *Conversos*, and the Dominican convent of Santa Cruz. None knew better than he, who had both Jewish and Christian relatives in the vicinity, how little provocation was needed to start a street battle in Segovia. The Jews there had always been numerous and assertive. And they were specially hated by the Christians, in consequence of certain crimes imputed to them. In 1405 Dr. Mayr Alguadés and other prominent Jews were executed for the theft of a consecrated Host from the Cathedral; and certain other Jews, who sought to have the Bishop poisoned in revenge— they bribed his cook— were drawn and quartered.⁹ But in Isabel's recent memory— about the time of her brother's death in 1468— a most acute crisis resulted from the conviction of several Jews accused of a heinous crime in one of the small towns near Segovia. Colmenares records it in his *History of Segovia*:

“At this time in our town of Sepúlveda, the Jews, incited by Salomón Pichón, rabbi of their synagogue, stole a boy in Holy Week, and inflicting upon him the greatest infamies and cruelties (inflicted) upon the Redeemer of the world,¹⁰ put an end to that innocent life: incredible obstinacy of a nation incorrigible to so many chastisements of Heaven and earth! This misdeed, then, like many others in the memorials of the time, leaked out and came to the notice of our Bishop Don Juan Árias de Ávila,¹¹ who, as higher judge at that time in causes pertaining to the Faith, proceeded in this matter and, on investigating the crime, had brought to our city¹² sixteen Jews of the principal offenders. Some finished in the fire;¹³ and the rest were drawn and hanged in that part of the meadow occupied to-day by the monastery of San Antonio el Real. Among them a boy, with signs of repentance and many supplications, begged for Baptism and for his life, that he might do penance by entering and serving in a certain monastery of the city. All his requests were granted— though it is known for certain that as a double apostate he fled within a few days. Better advised were the people of Sepúlveda, who, distrusting those (Jews) who remained there, killed several and forced the rest to go out of that territory, (thus) completely uprooting so pestilent a seed.”¹⁴

This passage, containing as it does the lurid spark of a much greater subsequent conflagration, is highly important in the light it sheds upon the state of public opinion in Segovia during the spring of 1474, when Pacheco cast his acquisitive eyes in that direction. Don Juan Árias de Ávila, son of Jewish parents, was still the bishop there; and the Alcaide, or royal governor, was Cabrera, the friend whom Pacheco had betrayed.

Cabrera was a man of capacity, but he was a *Converso*, and therefore unpopular with the Old Christians. When a gust of rage passed through the cities of Castile after the Córdoba massacre of 1473, the Marqués saw a chance to pay old scores, get rid of Cabrera, and then obtain the rule of Segovia from the King. All this might be done under cover of a popular uprising against the

Conversos. Pacheco, regardless of the Jewish blood that flowed in his own veins, arranged the massacre, sent his troops secretly to Segovia, rode thither himself.¹⁵

On Sunday, May 16, the *Conversos* awoke to find Segovia full of armed men, crying for their blood. Hoofs rang on the pavements, swords rattled, bullets pelted the walls, while Pacheco's men everywhere carried fire and slaughter into the houses of the "converted" Jews. The flames greedily lapped over the hillside, devouring house after house. The corpses lay in great tangled piles on the streets.

Fortunately news of the plot had somehow reached Cardinal Borgia, the Papal Legate, at Guadalajara. He sent a warning to the King, who notified Cabrera at the eleventh hour. The Governor had barely time to snatch his sword, rally some of his troops, and dash to the rescue of the *Conversos*. He fought with reckless bravery and great skill. His men, inspired by his valour, swept the streets clear of Pacheco's men, and then rode down the Old Christian mob. The Marqués and his hirelings fled from the city.

When Isabel and Fernando arrived at Segovia, there were still foul-smelling splotches of blood on the pavements and the walls of houses—the whole place stunk of charred timbers, rotting flesh, carnage, pestilence. Isabel commended Cabrera in the warmest terms, affectionately welcomed his wife Beatriz, passionately denounced those who had been the fanatical tools of Pacheco. On a recent occasion she had already shown, with a spirit reminiscent of her brother Alfonso, that she had no intention of currying popularity by even a tacit approval of the massacres. She had found Valladolid boiling with hatred, the populace ready to fall upon the detested Marranos at the slightest provocation. Some of her partisans, influential cavaliers of the city, began egging on the multitude. Isabel and Fernando fortunately...

NOTES (pp. 615-6)

8 Lea dismisses this occurrence somewhat vaguely as "an accident" without giving his grounds for believing that it was not intentional. But Graetz (*History of the Jews*, Vol. IV, p. 304) admits that it was "either by accident or design" and that the wrath of the people arose from their belief that the girl had poured on the statue "What was unclean."

9 *Fortalitium Fidei*, by Fr. Alonso de Espina; Latin text in *Boletin de la real academia de historia*, Vol. IX, p. 354.

10 "Executando en el cuantos afrentas y crueldades sus mayors en el Redentor del mundo."

11 This bishop was a son of the converted Jew Diego Árias de Ávila, treasurer of Enrique IV.

12 Segovia.

13 This occurred thirteen years before the Inquisition was established in Castile.

14 This important passage has been omitted from several editions of Colmenares. It appears, however, in his original autograph manuscript, in the archives of the Cathedral at Segovia. It is given also in the edition of Diego Diez, Madrid, 1640, and in the edition printed at Segovia in 1921, *cap.* XXXIII, No. 2.

15 Amador de los Rios, *Historia de los Judíos*, Vol. III, pp. 162-3.

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XII

THE CHURCH'S ENEMIES— THE CATHARI— THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE INQUISITION

"INQUISITION"— a terrifying word! In its original Latin it signified "an inquiry," "a formal investigation." But to the modern ear it has become a discord full of sinister overtones, some vague, perhaps, but undeniably sinister. It suggests torture-chambers, flames, persecution, unjustifiable cruelty, fiendish injustice. How could those people, we ask, have done such things? And yet they were men like us. They were our own ancestors. Look at the effigies on some of

those orange-tinted marble tombs in Spain.¹ They are not the faces of yellow Tartars or brown Bushmen or black voodoo doctors. They are the faces of our own western European stock, some of them fine, noble and sensitive; such faces as you might meet in Italy, in France, in Germany, in Poland, in Great Britain or Ireland; among professional men or business men in London or New York clubs. It is difficult when musing on those profiles to retain much of the self-satisfied complacency with which one age looks down upon another. If faces tell anything, these bishops, these cavaliers, these stately ladies lying so silent on pillows of exquisite lace cut marvelously out of stone, were by no means our moral or intellectual inferiors. How then, did they govern by methods so incomprehensible to us? How could a woman such as we know Isabel to have been give even serious consideration to the proposal that she should have people condemned to the stake for offences the Inquisition ever become associated with the Church founded by Jesus and propagated by a few Hebrew fishermen persecuted by their fellow-Jews? The answers to these questions will be veiled to us, and Queen Isabel must remain the enigma of her many biographies, remote from the humanity we know, unless we stand in imagination at the curious cross-roads in history where she paused, and try to see, through those blue-green eyes of hers, the actualities from which arose her problems.

The world to her was a vast battle-ground on which invisible powers and principalities had been locked for centuries in a titanic strife for the possession of men's souls. To her the central and significant fact of history was the Crucifixion. All that had happened in the fifteen centuries since then was explained in her philosophy of history by men's acceptance or rejection of the Crucified, and the key to many riddles lay in two of His utterances: "I came not to send peace, but the sword," and "He who is not with Me, is against Me." The peace promised to His children was in their souls, not in the world about them. The Church seemed to her like a beleaguered city, hated and misunderstood by "the world," even as He had predicted, but unconquerable. This view was an easy one to accept in a country where a crusade had been in progress for eight centuries, nor was it difficult anywhere in Europe for those who knew the strange story of Europe as it appeared in the medieval songs and chronicles. For Christendom actually had been involved for nearly fifteen centuries in a mortal conflict against enemies within and without; chiefly Mohammedanism without, and heresy and Judaism within.

It seemed to her that whenever the Jews had been strong enough, they had persecuted Christians, from the Crucifixion on, and when they were too weak to do so they had fought the Gospel secretly by encouraging those Christian rebellions and secessions that were called heresies. They had stoned Saint Stephen and clamoured for the blood of Saint Paul. They had cut out of the Old Testament the prophecies that seemed to Christians to refer so definitely to Jesus. Because of their turbulence against the first Christian converts, they had been expelled from Rome by the Emperor Claudius.² They had slain 90,000 Christians when the Persians took Jerusalem in 615, and had caused 35,000 others to be dragged into slavery. And whatever sympathy Isabel's human nature might have prompted her to feel for the cruel persecutions that Jews suffered later at the hands of Christians was tempered by her conviction that the children of Israel actually had called down upon themselves at the Crucifixion a very real and tangible curse, from which they must suffer until they acknowledged the Messiah who had been born to them. One can imagine her nodding with approval as she read Saint Luke's account of the labours of Saint Paul at Corinth: "Paul was earnest in preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. But they gainsaying and blaspheming, he shook his garments, and said to them, 'Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean: from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles.'"³ And Paul, the Jew, was in some ways the prototype of those Christian Jews who were so close to Isabel's throne throughout her reign. The dialogues of Pablo (Paul) de Santa Maria, a converted Jew who was Bishop of Burgos under Isabel's father, show vehemently the common attitude toward the historic Jew in her time. The Jews, he wrote, had climbed to wealth and high offices "by Satanic persuasion"; the massacres of 1391 had fallen upon them "because God stirred up the multitudes to avenge the blood of Christ"; and by these massacres He had "touched the hearts of certain Jews, who examined the Scriptures anew and abjured their errors."⁴

For the most part, however, the Jews had continued “gainsaying and blaspheming” through the fifteen weary centuries. When the collapse of Roman Imperial authority left to the Church the enormous task of assimilating and civilizing the barbarian millions, they had already spread through Europe, winning material wealth and influence among people whom they despised as less intelligent, and who hated them as aliens and creditors, and sometimes as extortioners. Their presence increased the difficulties of a Faith which was yet only a leaven in a mass of paganism. The Church, however, did succeed in her gigantic mission of imposing order and harmony upon the barbarians; in fact, by the time she had created the many-sided life of the thirteenth century, she had become virtually identified with society. This was inevitable, unless she was to remain a mere teacher, a clique, an elite group holding aloof from the masses— a conception obviously at variance with the wishes of her Founder. It was inevitable, but it carried with it the penalty of sharing in some measure in the fate of a society made up of human beings with all their follies and weaknesses. And one problem she had never solved was the one involving the children of Israel.

Meanwhile from without fell three great scourges: the Vikings, the Magyars, and the Moslems. The menace of Islam was by all odds the most dangerous and enduring. Like the later Calvinism, it stood nearer to Judaism, in many respects, than to the Catholic Church; in fact, its doctrine, though under such obvious obligations to Christianity that it has been classified by some students as a heretical Christian sect, was partially an imitation of Judaism, having had its inception in the mind of a man influenced by the Jews of Mecca. It was to be expected that the Jews would be more friendly to this cult than to Christianity; and conversely, the Moslems, though they sometimes persecuted Jews, were generally more tolerant of them than Christians were.

Fierce, warlike, intolerant, the cult of Islam spread with incredible rapidity among the despairing peoples of the East. It was in some ways easier to accept than Christianity, for it flattered human nature where Christianity rebuked and disciplined it. It appealed to barbarian warriors because it made women their slaves and because it frankly preached conversion by the sword. Like a fire in a forest of dead trees, it swept over southern and western Asia, penetrated the interior and east of Africa, and ran along the northern coast until it commanded the Mediterranean, facing to the north a Christendom still wrestling with the task of civilizing the barbarians. The nearest, most vulnerable sector in the defence of Christendom was Spain, populous, rich, pacifically inclined, ruled by Christian Visigothic kings. Early in the eighth century, the Spanish Jews, through their brethren in Africa, invited the Moors to come and occupy the country.⁵ Divided by civil disputes, the Goths were easily conquered by an invading army of Saracens.

Like a great dark tidal wave, the Moslem hosts now advanced northward over the whole peninsula. Some of the natives of the conquered territory remained there and became Mohammedans. The loyal Christians, however, driven into the mountains of the extreme north, united there in poverty to face the long and bitter prospect of winning back their lands by centuries of war. It was inevitable that they should link with the hated Moors the Jews who lived so prosperously under Abd er Rahman and other caliphs, serving them faithfully, and especially “trading in silk and slaves, in this way promoting the prosperity of the country.”⁶

But the Moslems did not stop at the Pyrenees. While Muza, their African governor, stood high on the mountain passes of Navarre and imagined himself adding all Europe to the empire that extended from the Oxus to the Atlantic, his men were carrying fire and sword into southern France. They took Carcassonne, Béziers, Agde, Lodève. They held Arles and Avignon for three years. Their raiding parties ascended the Rhône, the Saône, and burned Autun. Though Toulouse repelled them, they marched boldly on Tours. Charles Martel saved Christendom.

In the train of the victorious Arabs, the Jews inevitably followed and, wherever they went, their uncompromising individuality began to influence their environment. An Archbishop of Lyon in the eighth century complained of their “aggressive prosperity” in southern Gaul. There, too, the Moslem culture long persisted. Negro slaves from Africa were sold there long after the Church

had done away with slavery or elevated it to serfdom in most parts of Europe. In fact, the society that the troubadours sang for— rich, artistic, devoted to the good things of this world— had many Asiatic characteristics, derived from both Moslem and Jew. So numerous and influential were the Jews in Languedoc that some of the chroniclers called it “*Judea Secunda.*” 7

In such a society, antagonistic as it was in so many ways to orthodox Christianity, the so-called Albigensian heresy took root. It is important to know who the Albigenses were and what they believed and taught; for the Inquisition, as a permanent tribunal, was called into being to meet the questions they raised. Had there been no Albigenses, there would probably have been no organized Inquisition for Isabel to introduce into Castile.

Up to that time, except for the scattered acts of intolerance by individuals and mobs here and there, the Catholic Church had been committed on the whole for twelve centuries to the principle of toleration. Saint Paul had invoked excommunication only against heretics. Tertullian declared that no Christian could be an executioner, or serve as an officer in the army. Saint Leo, Saint Martin, and others agreed that nothing could justify the Church in shedding blood. There was some disagreement as to how far the Church might be justified in accepting the aid of the State in coercing heretics, but Saint John Chrysostom probably expressed the opinion of most of the bishops of his time when he said, “To put a heretic to death is an unpardonable crime.”

Up to the eleventh century, heretics, unless they belonged to the Manicheans or other sects believed to be antisocial, were seldom persecuted; and, if they were, it was the State, not the Church, which punished them. The use of force as an instrument of intolerance seems to have begun with the Emperor Constantine and his Christian successors, who, true to the Roman imperial tradition, treated heresy as a political crime, a form of high treason. Theodosius laid down the principle that “the just duty of the imperial majesty was to protect the true religion, whose worship was intimately connected with the prosperity of human undertakings.”⁸ Heretics were exiled and their property confiscated by the State; but the death penalty was enforced, generally, only against those who in some way were disturbers of the public peace, such as the Donatists, who organized riots and destroyed Catholic churches.

A change occurred about the year 1000. It was then that the Manicheans, under various names, spread from Bulgaria— hence their nicknames: Bulgars, Bougres and later Buggers— to all parts of Europe. Public resentment against them was strong, and in many places they were lynched by mobs. King Robert had thirteen of them burned at Orleans in 1022. Peter of Bruys, who burned some crosses on Good Friday and roasted meat in the flames, was burned at St. Giles in 1126. But at this time one frequently reads of bishops pleading for the lives of the heretics, and the civil authorities and the mob insisting upon “justice.” In the middle of the eleventh century Pope Leo IX and the Council of Rheims affirmed the historic Catholic principle that the only punishment for heresy must be excommunication. They did, however, approve of imprisonment or banishment by the State, since in their opinion heretics were likely to corrupt the prevailing morality— as in fact many of them did.

It is interesting to note how men under stress of circumstances shift gradually from one point of view to another, believing all the while that they are consistent. In the twelfth century, with its development of canon law— the revival of Roman law that the Renaissance had helped to bring about— there was definite change of Catholic sentiment. From 1140 we find the executions “*secundum canonicas et legitimas sanctiones*”; the canon law has added its authority to the civil; in short, the clergy become perceptibly involved in the persecutions. The Abbot of Vézelay and several bishops condemned nine heretics, of whom seven were burned at the stake. The archbishop of Rheims, Guillaume aux Blanche-Mains, sent two heretical women to the stake.

But it was the pontificate of the great and able Pope Innocent III, commencing in 1198, that marked the real beginning of a general rigour on the part of the Church toward heresy— the rigour that was to find its final and most extreme expression in Spain under Isabel. “Use against

heretics the spiritual sword of excommunication, and if this does not prove effective, use the material sword," he wrote to the French bishops. "The civil laws decree banishment and confiscation: see that they are carried out."

Why the new sternness? Why such words as these from the learned and benevolent statesman who was then the father of Christendom? Fr. Vermeersch, S.J., considers the "material sword" a figure of speech, and cites a similar opinion of Luchaire, the Pope's non-Catholic biographer, who concluded, after a study of Innocent's letters, that he referred to nothing more than "the use of such force as is necessary for the measures of expulsion and expatriation prescribed by his penal code. This code, which appears to us so unmerciful, constituted in comparison with the custom of the time a real progress in a humanitarian direction."

Innocent and the men of his time thought themselves justified by the nature and magnitude of the injury they were preventing the heretics of southern France from doing to society. In the year 1200 the various sects of Manichees, influenced originally by the orientals driven westward by the persecutions of the Empress Theodora, were prospering in a thousand cities and towns of Lombardy and Languedoc. They were especially numerous in Languedoc. Why were they so disliked by orthodox Christians?

Generally they called themselves *Cathari*, or the Pure, to indicate their abhorrence of all sexual relations. They were dualists, asserting that the evil spirit had marred the work of the Creator, so that all matter was an instrument of evil. Human life, therefore, was evil, and its propagation the work of the devil. The Church of Rome was not the Church of Christ. The Popes were not the successors of St. Peter, for he never went to Rome, but of Constantine. The Church of Rome was the Scarlet Woman of Babylon, the Pope was antichrist. They had only one sacrament, a combination of baptism, confirmation, penance and Holy Eucharist; this they called the *consolamentum*. Christ was not present in the Eucharist, and Transubstantiation was the worst of abominations, since matter in any form was the work of the Evil Spirit. The Mass was idolatry, and the Cross should be hated, not revered; love for Jesus should make his followers despise and spit upon the instrument of His torture. Such were the tenets of the Cathari.

They virtually repudiated the State as well as the Church. They refused to take oaths—a position which alone was sure to draw persecution in a feudal age when all loyalty rested upon the oath of allegiance. Some denied the authority of the State, some would not pay taxes, some justified stealing from "unbelievers," others denied the right of the State to inflict capital punishment. They opposed all war. The soldier who defended his country was a murderer.

To join the Cathari—the True Church, they called it—one promised to renounce the Catholic Faith and to receive the *consolamentum* before death. Thus one became a believer. The chief duty of a believer was to venerate the Perfected, or the Cathari, who were entitled to veneration by virtue of the presence of the Holy Spirit within them. A believer became one of the Cathari by receiving the *consolamentum*. After a year's probation he made this promise: "I promise to devote my life to God and to the Gospel, never to lie or swear, never to touch a woman, never to kill an animal, never to eat meat, eggs or milk food; never to eat anything but fish and vegetables, never to do anything without first saying the Lord's prayer, never to eat, travel or pass the night without a *socius*. If I fall into the hands of my enemies or happen to be separated from my *socius*, I promise to spend three days without food or drink. I will never take off my clothes on retiring, nor will I deny my faith even when threatened with death." The Perfected then gave their new brother the kiss of peace, kissing him twice on the mouth, after which he kissed the next man, who passed on the *pax* to all others. If the candidate was a woman, the minister merely touched her shoulder with a book of the Gospels, since he was forbidden to touch women.⁹

The Cathari avoided meat partly because they believed in metempsychosis. But the tenet that chiefly drew on them the wrath and derision of the masses was their condemnation of all marital relations. Carnal intercourse, they held, was the real sin of Adam and Eve; and it was a sin,

because it begot children. A woman with child was possessed of the devil and if she died *enceinte* or in childbirth, she would surely go to Hell. “Pray God,” said one of the Perfected to the wife of a Toulouse lumber-merchant, “that He deliver you from the devil within you.” Marriage was nothing but a perpetual state of sin; it was as great a sin, they declared, as incest with one’s mother or daughter or sister; in fact, marriage was merely prostitution. They argued that cohabitation with one’s wife was a worse crime than adultery, because it was not a temporary weakness to which a man surrendered in secret, but one that caused no shame, hence men did not realize how wicked it was. In times of persecution, however, men and women of the Perfected would live together to avoid detection, sleeping in the same bed while travelling, but never undressing, to avoid contact with each other.

Suicide was another dogma of the Cathari that did not increase their popularity with their Catholic neighbours. The *endura*, as they called it, had two forms: suffocation and fasting. The candidate for death was asked whether he wished to be a martyr or a confessor. If he chose to be a martyr, they placed a handkerchief or a pillow over his mouth, until he died of suffocation. If he desired to be a confessor, the Cathari left him without food, and sometimes without drink, until he perished of starvation. A sick man who asked for the *consolamentum* was urged to make his salvation sure by receiving the *endura*. In the middle of the thirteenth century, the *endura* was applied even to infants. A woman of Toulouse, named Guillemette, began the *endura* by bloodletting, then weakened herself by taking long baths, finally drank poison and, finding herself still alive, swallowed ground glass to perforate her intestines. The records of the Inquisition of Toulouse and Carcassonne show that the *endura* killed more victims than the public courts of the Inquisition.¹⁰ “Had Catharism become dominant, or even had it been allowed to exist on equal terms, its influence could not have failed to become disastrous,” admits Lea... “The conscientious belief in such a creed could only lead man back in time to his original condition of savagism.”

Such beliefs were a serious challenge to both Church and State and Church and State met them with stern measures. The infidel Emperor Frederick II, influenced perhaps by Innocent’s comparison of heretics to traitors, had them burned. It was to prevent the Emperor from usurping the spiritual powers of the Church, as Vermeersch points out, that Pope Gregory IX established “an extraordinary and permanent tribunal for heresy trials”— the institution which became known as the Inquisition. The first attempts to ferret out the Cathari through inquiries by bishops and legates failed because of the secrecy of the sect. At that juncture, the establishment of the two great mendicant orders of Saint Dominic and Saint Francis of Assisi appeared to be “a providential interposition to supply the Church of Christ with what it most sorely needed.”¹¹ To the Dominicans, in particular, since they were learned and skilled in theology, the work of inquiry was committed.¹² The organization they perfected was substantially the one that Isabel was urged to establish in Castile.

When the Inquisitors arrived in a city, they would summon every heretic to appear within a certain time, usually thirty days, known as “the term of grace,” and confess. Those who abjured during this period were treated leniently and “reconciled.” If the heresy was secret, a secret penance was imposed; if public, a short pilgrimage, or one of the usual canonical penances. Heretics who failed to come forward were to be denounced by good Catholics. The number of necessary witnesses was not specified at first. Later two were required. At the start, only witnesses of good repute could testify, but later the Inquisitors, in their eagerness to uncover such a difficult quarry as heresy, took the depositions of criminals and heretics.

The defendant had no witnesses— naturally such persons would themselves be suspected as accomplices. “For the same reason the accused were practically denied the help of counsel. Innocent III had forbidden advocates and scribes to lend aid or counsel to heretics and their abettors. This prohibition, which in the mind of the Pope was intended only for defiant and acknowledged heretics, was gradually extended to every suspect who was striving to prove his

innocence. Heretics or suspects, therefore, denounced to the Inquisition, generally found themselves without counsel before their judge.”¹³

To protect witnesses from being slain by the friends of the accused—and this frequently happened—their names were withheld from the prisoner. The only protection he had against this obvious injustice was that he was allowed to name all his mortal enemies, and if his accusers’ names happened to be among them, their testimony was thrown out. Otherwise he must prove the falsity of the accusation against him— “practically an impossible undertaking. For if two witnesses, considered of good repute by the Inquisitor, agreed in accusing the prisoner, his fate was of course settled: whether he confessed or not, he was declared a heretic.”

To be convicted of heresy meant death, in practice, in about one case out of ten. A prisoner found guilty could abjure his errors and accept a penance, or he could persist in his denial or in his opinion, and take the consequences. If he abjured, the Inquisitor dealt with him as he would with any other type of penitent, imposing a penance not as a punishment, but as “a salutary discipline to strengthen the weak soul and wash away its sin.” He considered himself, in fact, the friend of the penitent—a point of view that the penitent must have found it difficult at times to share. The penance varied according to the degree of the offence: first, prayers, visiting churches, the “discipline,” fasting, pilgrimages and fines; for more serious errors, the wearing of a yellow cross sewed on the garments— this was originally imposed on penitent heretics by Saint Dominic in all kindness to save them from being massacred by the mob— and finally, imprisonment for as long a time as was deemed necessary. One must remember that no stigma was attached to penance in the Middle Ages. Even kings who had sinned sometimes did penance in public, as did Henry II at the tomb of Saint Thomas of Canterbury, and were honoured for it. The Inquisitor never condemned anyone to death. If a prisoner refused to abjure, the Inquisitor pronounced him a hardened and impenitent sinner, a heretic with no hope of conversion, and handed him over to the State, “the secular arm”; and the secular judge, to whom heresy was a major crime similar to treason, sentenced him to be burned. Thus by a legal fiction the Inquisitors persuaded themselves that they had nothing to do with taking the life of the heretic. A similar train of sophistical reasoning has enabled some Catholic writers to argue, as Joseph de Maistre did, that all the cruelty of the Inquisition was the State’s and all the clemency the Church’s. The truth is, however, that certain Popes threatened to excommunicate princes who refused to burn heretics handed over to them by the Inquisition. “It is therefore erroneous,” says Father Vacandard, “to pretend that the Church had absolutely no part in the condemnation of heretics to death. It is true that this participation of hers was not direct and immediate; but, even though indirect, it was none the less real and efficacious.”¹⁴

Evidently the Inquisitors felt uneasy about their own logic, and attempted to free themselves of the responsibility. In abandoning a heretic to the secular arm, they were careful to use the following formula: “We dismiss you from our ecclesiastical forum, and abandon you to the secular arm. But we strongly beseech the secular court to mitigate its sentence in such a way as to avoid bloodshed or danger of death.”

Merciful words, these, and in accord with the best Catholic traditions of the age. “We regret to state, however,” observes Vacandard, “that the civil judges were not supposed to take these words literally. If they were at all inclined to do so, they would have been quickly called to a sense of duty by being excommunicated.” In the beginning the formula was undoubtedly sincere, and Vermeersch believes that it long remained so.¹⁵

If a heretic repented, but later returned to his errors, he was considered “relapsed” and forthwith handed over to the secular arm for burning. Even if he repented before he reached the stake the only mercy shown him was the privilege of being strangled before he was burned.

In general the Church, recognizing the frightful responsibility of the Inquisition, chose the Inquisitors with great care. As far as personnel went, the Inquisition was better than the State

courts. Bernard Gui, a famous Inquisitor of the early fourteenth century, declared that an Inquisitor should be “diligent and fervent in his zeal for religious truth, for the salvation of souls, and for the destruction of heresy. He should always be calm in times of trial and difficulty, and never give way to outbursts of anger or temper. He should be a brave man, ready to face death if necessary, but while never cowardly, running from danger, he should never be foolhardy, rushing into it. He should be unmoved by the entreaties or the bribes of those who appear before his tribunal; still he must not harden his heart to the point of refusing to delay or mitigate punishment, as circumstances may require from time to time. In doubtful cases, he should be very careful not to believe too easily what may appear probable, and yet in reality is false; nor, on the other hand, should he stubbornly refuse to believe what may appear improbable, and yet is frequently true. He should zealously discuss and examine every case, to be sure to make a just decision.... Let the love of truth and mercy, the special qualities of every good judge, shine in his countenance, and let his sentences never be prompted by avarice or cruelty.”

The Inquisitors dealt with murder, sodomy, rape, blasphemy and other crimes as well as simple heresy; and the offender generally fared better than if the State had tried him.

In their attempts to make the procedure just, the Popes encouraged the Inquisitors to call in experts to consult with them, *periti* and *boni viri*. Sometimes as many as forty or fifty, including lawyers and other learned men, would hear evidence and give their verdict. This system, in which appear the beginnings of the modern jury, was unable to dispense true justice in that the jurymen did not have data enough to enable them to decide fairly, since only summaries of the evidence were read to them, and the name of the accused withheld, to avoid prejudice. Evidently it had not occurred to the Inquisitors that a crime must be judged with reference to the mentality and general character of the offender.

Even before trial the accused were sometimes treated with great cruelty. The cells in France were frequently narrow, dark, full of disease, unfit for human habitation; and though the Papal orders were that life should not be endangered, in practice the accused sometimes died as a result of their solitary confinement. On learning of this situation, the Popes attempted to remedy it.

The burning of impenitent heretics is neither medieval nor Christian in origin, as is commonly believed, but is more likely an inheritance from antiquity, either a survival or a revival. Theoris, the Lemnian woman, as Demosthenes calls her, was publicly tried for witchcraft in Athens, and burned. And in the Middle Ages the heretic was so frequently a witch (actually a devil-worshipper, given to obscene rites and often an adept at poisoning) that the two were almost identical in the popular mind.

The use of torture was one of the most sickening abuses of the Inquisition. Perhaps the early Christians remembered Roman torture too painfully to use it against others; at any rate, it was not used until the revival of Roman law restored it during the Renaissance to courts that had known nothing of it during the so-called Dark Ages. “The earliest instances with which I have met,” says Lea,¹⁶ “occur in the Veronese code of 1228 and the Sicilian constitutions, and in both of these the references to it show how sparingly and hesitatingly it was employed.” Innocent IV, in his bull *Ad Extirpanda*, defends the use of torture by classifying heretics with thieves and murderers.

The commonest forms of torture were the rack and the strappado. The rack was a triangular frame on which the prisoner was stretched and bound so that he could not move. Cords, attached to his arms and legs, were connected with a windlass, which when turned dislocated the wrist and ankle joints of the victim. The strappado hoisted the prisoner by a rope tied to his wrists behind his back and attached to a pulley and windlass. After he was raised by the wrists to the top of a gallows, or near the ceiling of the torture chamber, he was suddenly let fall. The rope was pulled taut when he was within a few inches of the ground. Weights were sometimes tied to his feet to increase the shock of the fall.

As the canons of the Church forbade ecclesiastics to take any part in torture, lest they incur “irregularity” and be suspended until they had done penance and were pardoned, the torturing in the early days of the Inquisition was always performed by a civil officer. This scrupulous policy, however, caused so many delays that Alexander IV authorized the Inquisitors and their assistants to grant each other any necessary dispensations for “irregularities.” From that time on— 1260—the Inquisitor did not scruple to appear in the torture chamber.

The investigation ordered by Pope Clement V into the iniquities of the Inquisition at Carcassonne demonstrated that torture was used frequently. True, it was seldom mentioned in the records of the Inquisition, but only because a confession wrung from a victim by torture was invalid. This just provision the Inquisitors managed to evade by reasoning which men of our day find it difficult to follow. The prisoner was shown the instruments of torture and urged to confess. If he refused, mild tortures were used; if he persisted, more painful ones. When at last he confessed, he was unbound and carried into another room, where his confession, made under torture, was read to him, and he was asked to confirm it. If he did not, he was taken back and tortured again. If he did, the confession passed as “a free and spontaneous confession, without the pressure of force or fear.”

Another merciful regulation was that torture was not to be applied to any prisoner for more than half an hour, and never more than once. But in practice, “usually the procedure appears to be that the torture was continued until the accused signified his readiness to confess,” says Vacandard, and as for torturing the victim only once, some Inquisitors evidently tortured him as many times as they thought necessary, explaining that the second torture was not a repetition but a continuance of the first, which had merely been suspended. “This quibbling,” adds Vacandard, “of course gave full scope to the cruelty and the indiscreet zeal of the Inquisitors.”

On the other hand, as Vermeersch remarks, torture “could only be applied to persons already half convicted, and it was only permissible in such moderation as to do no lasting harm. We may add that under the penal laws then in force, judges were anxious not to convict a man except on his own admission. Even then the disadvantages of torture were not disregarded; Eymeric (who prepared a manual for inquisitors) recommends that it should be employed only after careful consideration, describing it as an unsafe and ineffective method of discovering the truth. . . Finally, torture was at least an improvement on the system formerly followed, namely, trial by ordeal.”

Vacandard probably sums up the view of many modern Catholics when he says, after his frank statement of facts, that even if the Church to-day “were to denounce the Inquisition, she would not thereby compromise her divine authority. Her office on earth is to transmit to generation after generation the deposit of revealed truths necessary for man’s salvation. That to safeguard this treasure she used means in one age, which a later age denounces, merely proves that she follows the customs and ideas in vogue around her. But she takes good care that men shall not consider her attitude the infallible and eternal rule of absolute justice.”

Such, at any rate, was the cruel weapon that thirteenth-century European society used to protect its integrity from a cruel and insidious propaganda. A crusade ended the Albigensian heresy in southern France. When some of the Cathari fled across the Pyrenees to Aragon, the Inquisition followed them there. But it had never been tried in Castile. Isabel did not believe that in its traditional form it could operate successfully there. For in the canonical Inquisition, so called, the bishops exercised a strong restraint over the Inquisitors, and she was inclined to believe that in Castile, where many bishops were *Conversos*, or related to *Conversos*, the tribunal would be allowed to die a natural death. She considered various means of preventing this as she rode along the river from Seville to Córdoba.

NOTES (pp. 618-20)

1 There is a fine effigy of the brother of Don Beltran de la Cueva, in the Museum of the Hispanic Society in New York City.

2 Acts of the Apostles, XVIII, 2; Suetonius, *Claudius*, XXV.

3 Acts of the Apostles, XVIII, 6. Pablo de Santa Maria, mentioned just below, was formerly Selemoth Ha-Levi, tutor of Isabel's father. He was converted upon seeing an apparition of the Blessed Virgin.

4 Amador de los Rios, *Historia de los Judios*, Vol. III, p. 66.

5 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. XI, p. 485.

6 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. XI, p. 485. Rabbi Lewis Browne in his *Stranger Than Fiction*, p. 196, says that "under the tolerant rule of the Mohammedans, the Jews began to prosper. They who had been poor and bedraggled pedlars for centuries, now became wealthy and powerful traders. They travelled everywhere, from England to India, from Bohemia to Egypt. Their commonest merchandise in those days was slaves. On every highroad and on every great river and sea, these Jewish traders were to be found with their gangs of shackled prisoners in convoy." Albert M. Hyamson (*A History of the Jews in England*, p. 5) makes the interesting observation that the Jewish slave traders were probably indirectly responsible for the conversion of Britain to Christianity. "The British slaves who, in the Roman market-place, attracted the attention of Gregory, and directed it towards Britain, were most probably introduced into Italy by Jewish merchants."

7 "If the truth were fully known," says Rabbi Lewis Browne in *Stranger Than Fiction* (p. 222), "probably it would be found that the learned Jews in Provence were in large part responsible for the existence of this free-thinking sect (the Albigenses). The doctrines which the Jews had been spreading throughout the land for years could not but have helped to undermine the Church's power." Jewish writers generally boast of the share Jews have had in encouraging heresies within the Catholic Church. "As a whole," says I. Abrahams (*Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*) "heresy was a reversion to Old Testament and even Jewish ideals. It is indubitable that the heretical doctrines of the southern French Albigenses in the beginning of the thirteenth century, as of the Hussites in the fifteenth, were largely the result of friendly intercourse between Christians and educated Jews." See also Graetz, *History of the Jews*, Vol. III, ch. xv, English translation, and Rabbi Newman's *Jewish Influence on Christian Reform Movements*. For a vivid account of Southern France in the thirteenth century, see Hoffman Nickerson, *The Inquisition*. New York, 1923.

8 Lea attributes to Saint Leo an intolerant speech of the Emperor. The fact is that most of the churchmen of the time protested against the death penalty that the Empire decreed for heresy.

9 Vacandard, *The Inquisition*, p. 63. English translation.

10 Vacandard, *The Inquisition*, p. 72.

11 Lea, *The Inquisition in the Middle Ages*.

12 Saint Dominic himself was never an inquisitor, although he preached to the Cathari.

13 Vacandard, *The Inquisition*, English translation. A. Vermeersch, S.J., sharply disagrees with the Abbé Vacandard on this, as upon other points. "Had the person accused of heresy no one to defend him?" he demands. "Let Eymeric answer, whose Directory has become a classic. He says (p. 480) 'An advocate must be given him, and must not be refused him.' And his commentator, Pegna, says, 'It is a matter of simple justice.' . . . Moreover, we must not forget that the law permitted an accused person to object to an Inquisitor for good cause; that it granted a right of appeal from every sentence that was not final; and that even after a final sentence there was always a right of special application to the Sovereign Pontiff. There was no lack of precaution to secure a fair trial for the accused persons.

"But what are we to say," continues Vermeersch, "of the tricks by which certain Inquisitors endeavoured to embarrass the accused and make him contradict himself? Do not the public prosecutors and examining magistrates of the present day follow the objectionable procedure of their medieval predecessors? Need we be surprised to find in a directory for the use of Inquisitors a warning as to the subtleties of heretics and the best means of defeating them? In dealing with

a sect whose members were trained in craft and duplicity a little cunning seems to be logically permissible, and can offend no one except those of the falsely-styled chivalrous school, who would always give an advantage to the criminal in his struggle against authority.”— *Tolerance*, pp. 134-5, English translation.

14 Vacandard, *The Inquisition*.

15 Vermeersch, after criticizing Vacandard for unfairly attacking St. Thomas while flattering the bigoted Dr. Lea, says, “The Church has always insisted on expressing her opinion that the shedding of blood was incompatible with the clerical character of her judges; but it was the general opinion at that period that what was inconsistent with the office of a judge was not necessarily so with that of a legislator, and we can understand the distinction.”

16 Lea, *The Inquisition in the Middle Ages*.

ISABELLA OF SPAIN

XIV

THE JEWS’ ACTIVITIES IN SPAIN— THEIR PERSECUTION IN EUROPE— THE CONVERSOS— ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SPANISH INQUISITION

IN MEDIEVAL Spain the Jews came nearer to building a New Jerusalem than at any time or place since their dispersion after the Crucifixion. Had they succeeded— and several times they came perilously near success— they might conceivably have managed, with Mohammedan aid, to destroy the Christian civilization of Europe. Their ultimate failure was caused chiefly by the life-work of Isabel.

The date of their first migrations to the peninsula is disputed; but the evidence appears to indicate that they arrived not long after Saint James the Greater first preached the gospel of Christianity in Saragossa in A.D. 42. Some of those expelled from Rome by Claudius may have settled in Spain. Certain it is that they spread through the country very early in the Christian era, and multiplied so rapidly that their presence constituted a serious problem for the Arian (unorthodox Christian) Visigoths. They were not at first persecuted by the Christians; but, after the discovery that they were plotting to bring the Arabs from Africa for the overthrow of the Gothic kingdom, they were condemned to slavery by one of the councils of Toledo. Nevertheless by the beginning of the eighth century they were numerous in all the chief cities, enjoyed power and wealth, and even obtained through bribery certain privileges denied to Christians.

That they played an important part in bringing the Saracens from Africa in 709 is certain. In the invading army there were many African Jews. Everywhere the Spanish Jews opened the gates of cities to the conquerors, and the Moslems rewarded them by turning over to them the government of Granada, Seville and Córdoba. “Without any love for the soil where they lived, without any of those affections that ennoble a people, and finally without sentiments of generosity,” says Amador de los Rios,¹ “they aspired only to feed their avarice and to accomplish the ruin of the Goths; taking the opportunity to manifest their rancour, and boasting of the hatreds that they had hoarded up so many centuries.” This is a severe indictment, and it would be most unfair to place all the blame for the Mussulman invasion at the door of the Jews. Neither their intrigues nor the Moorish arms could have prevailed, perhaps, if the Christian Visigoth monarchy had not fallen first into heresy and then into decadence. King Witiza led an unsavoury life, published an edict permitting priests to marry, and so far flouted the Christian beliefs of his subjects that he denied the authority of the Pope. His successor, Roderigo, violated the daughter of Count Julian, who thereupon crossed into Africa and joined the Jews in prevailing upon the Moors to conquer Spain. The sons of Witiza, persecuted by Roderigo, also joined the enemy. And at the critical moment of the battle of Jerez de la Frontera, Bishop Oppas, who had a grudge against Roderigo, went over to the Saracens and gave them the victory.

In the new Moslem state the Jews found themselves highly esteemed. It was under the caliphs that they attained the height of their prosperity. They studied and taught in the Arab universities, excelling particularly in astrology and medicine. Through their connections with Asiatic Jews, they were able to get the best drugs and spices; and through their wealth, acquired chiefly through usury, barter and the huge traffic in slaves, they obtained leisure for the pursuit and diffusion of culture. They expounded the philosophy of Aristotle, which flourished among the Arabs, before the Stagirite was known in Christian Europe.²

In Granada the Jews became so numerous that it was called “the city of the Jews.” But the Saracens persecuted them at times. On December 30, 1066, the Moslems of Granada, infuriated by their exploitations, arose against them and slew 4,000. One of the caliphs expelled all Jews from Granada.

The gradual reconquest of the peninsula by the Christians did not at first trouble their marvellous prosperity. When Saint Fernando took Seville in 1224, he gave the Jews four Moorish mosques to convert into synagogues; he allowed them one of the pleasantest sections for their homes, and imposed no conditions except to refrain from proselytizing among Christians and from insulting the Christian religion.³ The Jews observed neither of these conditions. Yet several of the later kings, usually those of lukewarm faith or those especially in need of money, showed them high favour. Alfonso VIII made one of them his treasurer.

In spite of persecution now and then, they multiplied and prospered until, toward the end of the thirteenth century, they were a power, almost a state within the State, gradually retarding the reconquest. In Castile alone they paid a poll-tax of 2,561,855 maravedis in 1284.⁴ As each adult male Jew was taxed three gold maravedis, there must have been 853,951 men alone; hence the total Jewish population may well have been from four to five millions— and this leaves out of account large communities in Aragon and other sections. There are no accurate figures for the total population of Spain, but most of the estimates generally accepted are ridiculously low. More probably there were at least 25,000,000 and perhaps as many as 30,000,000 people in all the Spanish kingdoms at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Probably a fifth, or even a fourth were Jews— a large minority, and they possessed an influence out of proportion to their numbers. They became so powerful that the laws against blasphemy could not be enforced against them. It was so plain that they were above the law that the Cathari of Leon used to circumcize themselves that they might freely teach as Jews the heresy for which they would be punished as Christians.⁵

The capital and commerce of the country were largely in their hands, for they were almost the only bankers and money-lenders in an age when usury was forbidden by the Church. In Aragon they generally charged twenty per cent., in Castile thirty-three and one-third percent. During the famine of 1326 the Jewish *alhama* of Cuenca refused to lend money or wheat for sowing, unless they received forty per cent. interest, and the town council was compelled by the distress of the people to pay it. Carlos III of Navarre paid thirty-five per cent. for a loan of 2,000 florins in 1401, and in 1402 his wife, Queen Leona, paid her Jewish physician four florins a month for a loan of seventy florins, giving him her silver plate as security. As the interest on the seventy florins amounted to eighty-four florins after twenty-one months, she protested, and the Jew accepted thirty florins.⁵ The citizen with taxes to pay, the farmer with no money to buy seed for his planting, the burgher held for ransom by a turbulent noble, turned in desperation to the Jewish money-lender and became his economic slave.

The government gradually passed into Jewish hands. Though the common people, the debtor class, hated them, the kings and great feudatories protected them, since it was convenient at times to borrow from them. Whenever the Jews made a loan, however, they asked for security, and frequently for some political concession. For example, a Jew would ask the King to “farm out” to him the taxes of a certain city or district; or the King, in desperate need of funds, would offer the privilege to the highest bidder, and a Jew usually got it. The profit of farming the taxes

depended on the amount that the collectors could extort from the people. Isabel's brother Enrique carried the hated policy so far that he gave two of his Jewish tax collectors the power of life and death over the citizens whom they exploited. The Church in vain attempted to prevent the employment of Jews in public offices. The services they rendered to the monarchs as money-lenders, administrators, physicians and scientists made them indispensable. The people protested; the kings promised relief, but seldom gave it.

Confident and secure, the Jews lived with all the oriental ostentation of which their luxurious nature is capable. They took no particular pains to conceal their contempt for the lesser breeds without the law, who paid them tribute; they overdressed, they lived in grand houses, they entertained lavishly. Alfonso V of Portugal once said to Rabbi Ibn Yachia, "Why do you not stop your people from displaying a magnificence that Christians attribute to thefts committed at their expense? But you need not answer me! I know that nothing but a massacre can cure them of that fatal pride of theirs."

With the reign of Pedro the Cruel in the middle of the fourteenth century, the history of the Jews in Castile enters on a new phase. Pedro, who was intensely hated, was popularly believed to have been a Jewish child, substituted in the cradle for the lawful heiress by Queen María, whose husband had threatened to kill her if she did not bear a boy. He was denounced by Pope Urban I as a rebel to the Church, "a fautor of Jews and Moors, a propagator of infidelity, and a slayer of Christians." He gave the Jews complete control of his government. They financed his war with his bastard brother Henry of Trastamara, Isabel's great-great-grandfather. The Moors also recognized a friend in Pedro, for 87,000 of them marched from Granada to help him in 1368. When Henry slew him— calling him *el fi de puta judio*— it was an unlucky day for both Jews and Moors.

As if their wealth and ostentation were not sure sooner or later to cause a repetition of their sad history, there fell on the Israelites a terrible misfortune such as no man could have predicted. All men suffered from it, but the Jews more cruelly than the rest.

The Black Death, which slew at least half the entire population of Europe within two years, was probably the worst catastrophe that had ever befallen Christendom. But the Jews suffered doubly. For they had hardly buried their dead when the populace, half crazed with fear and grief, revived the old cry, "Down with the Jews! The Jews did it! The Jews poisoned the wells!"

Straightway, all over Europe, the Israelites were put to the sword. In vain did Pope Clement VI attempt by pleadings and threats of excommunication to stay the fanatics, particularly in Germany. Following the example, as he said, of Calixtus II, Eugenius III, Alexander III, Clement III, Celestine III, Innocent III, Gregory IX, Nicholas III, Honorius IV and Nicholas IV, he denounced the tales attributing the calamity to the Jews as lies, and pointed out that the plague had been just as virulent in lands where no Jews lived. The massacres, however, continued.⁶

In Castile, the Jews escaped the major persecution until the Archdeacon of Ecija, Ferran Martinez, preached against them. In June, 1391, there was a general uprising in Seville; the mob rushed into the *juderia*, slew 4,000 and compelled the survivors to accept baptism. The furore spread to other cities. The total number of victims has been estimated as high as 50,000, probably, as Lea says, an exaggeration.⁷

These massacres created a new class of citizens: the *Conversos*, who were referred to derisively as Marranos. Thirty-five thousand were converted by the eloquence of Saint Vincent Ferrer, 4,000 being baptized in Toledo in one day. What his sermons and his miracles failed to accomplish, the fear of further atrocities effected. The Jewish population in Isabel's time had shrunk from some 5,000,000 or more to about 200,000.

What had become of the 4,800,000? If the Black Death slew, say 2,000,000, another two and a half million, at least, had become New Christians. Some conversions were sincere; more of them were actuated by fear under persecution, or by motives of self-interest. "Their conversion was, however, only external, or feigned; at heart they adhered loyally to their ancestral religion. Though outwardly Christians, they secretly practised the rites of the Jewish faith."⁸ With the intelligence of their race, they saw that as acknowledged Jews they would be segregated, forced to wear a badge of inferiority and pay a poll-tax, forbidden to have social or business relations with Christians, or to hold office in Church or State. But as professing Christians who heard Mass on Sunday, even though they privately attended the synagogue on Saturday, they could hold office, they could follow any career for which their abilities fitted them, they could even intermarry with the noble (but sometimes needy) families of Spain.

By the time of Isabel and Fernando, a great many of the ancient houses of the peninsula had Jewish relatives. *Limpia sangre*, "clean blood," was a distinction which many claimed but not all had. The de Lunas, the Mendozas, the Guzmans, the Villahermosas, all had Hebrew strains. Certain Jewish traditions have gone so far as to include even the maternal grandmother of King Fernando; but the claim is based upon a misunderstanding, as Zurita and Mariana clearly prove. What cannot be questioned, however, is that *Conversos* and their kin everywhere controlled business, government, taxation, all that was valuable, just as their ancestors had as Jews. Thus the massacres had only substituted for one problem another and much more intricate one. For as *Conversos*, the Jews were now capable of doing greater injury to Christianity through their influence upon the Old Christians with whom they mingled.

Even the Catholic Church in Spain was being directed and exploited to an astonishing extent by Jews when Isabel became Queen. As "Christians" they could now become priests, if otherwise eligible. A Jewish "convert" anxious to show his loyalty to his new religion, would dedicate one of his sons to the Church. And in the Church the Jews excelled just as they did in other fields; they mounted the hierarchy so rapidly that in Isabel's reign an impressive number of the bishops were of Jewish descent. Every church, every chapter, every monastery had influential Jewish connections; and in some dioceses Jews collected the ecclesiastical revenues.

To attribute all the corruption in the Church to them, as their enemies did, was of course unfair. Clerical discipline had broken down in other countries where the Jews were few; the Church had had to lower the standard of her priesthood after the Black Death; and the seventy-five years' exile of the Popes at Avignon as prisoners of the French Kings, had paralysed the whole structure. But in Spain there was an additional cause of laxity and immorality, of cynicism and hypocrisy, in the presence of so many priests who did not believe the doctrines they taught.

It is not difficult to understand the indignation of Catholics against priests who made a mockery of the sacraments they pretended to administer. "No man could tell how many priests there were like Andres Gomalz, parish priest of San Martin de Talavera, who, on his trial at Toledo in 1486, confessed that for fourteen years he had been secretly a Jew, that he had no 'intention' when he celebrated Mass, nor had he granted absolution to the penitents who confessed to him."⁹

And there were others like Fray Garcia de Tapate, prior of the Jeronymite monastery of Toledo, who, when he elevated the Host at Mass, used to say, "Get up, little Peter, and let the people look at you," instead of the words of consecration; and who always turned his back on his penitents while he pretended to give them absolution.

The New Christians, by another irony, became the bitterest persecutors of the poor despised Jews who had clung to the law of Moses at the risk of their lives. The Cortes of 1405, directed by ambitious *Conversos*, passed new and cruel laws against the people of the *juderias*. All bonds of Christians held by Jews were declared void; debts due them were reduced one half; they must wear red circles on their clothing except when travelling. The ordinance of Queen Catalina in 1412 forbade them to shave or cut the hair round, to change abodes, to be farmers or collectors

of taxes, physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, pedlars, blacksmiths, furriers, carpenters, tailors, barbers, or builders; to carry arms; to hire Christians; to eat with or bathe with Christians. "From the earliest times," says Lea, "the hardest blows endured by Judaism had always been dealt by its apostate children whose training had taught them the weakest points to assail, and whose necessity of self-justification led them to attack these mercilessly." Converted Jews had egged on the mobs in 1391. *Conversos* would be found high in the council of the Inquisition, directing its activities. Sometimes the Jews avenged themselves on the New Christians by falsely testifying against them before the Inquisition, and getting them burned as heretics. Isabel proceeded against such false witnesses with the utmost rigour. As an example she had eight of them executed, their flesh having been torn first with red-hot pincers.

The *Conversos* were hated by the Old Christians even more than the Jews were. Bernaldez expresses his aversion to them in a famous passage that is, no doubt, a faithful reflection of the public opinion of his time.¹⁰

"Those who can avoid baptizing their children, do so, and those who have them baptized wash them as soon as they return home.... You must know that the customs of the common people before the Inquisition were neither more nor less those of the ill-smelling Jews, on account of the continual communication they have with them; thus they are gluttons and feeders, who never lose the Judaical habit of eating delicacies of onions and garlic fried in oil, and they cook their meat in oil, using it in place of lard or fat, to avoid pork; and oil with meat is a thing that makes the breath smell very bad, and so their houses and doorways smell most offensively from those tit-bits; and hence they have the odour of the Jews, as a result of their food and their not being baptized. And notwithstanding that some have been baptized, yet the virtue of the baptism having been destroyed in them by their credulity and by Judaizing, they smell like Jews. They do not eat pork unless they are compelled; they eat meat in Lent and on the vigils of feasts and on ember days; they keep the Passover and the Sabbath as best they can. They send oil to the synagogues for the lamps. They have Jews who preach to them secretly in their houses, especially to the women very secretly; and they have Jewish rabbis whose occupation is to slaughter their beasts and fowls for them. They eat unleavened bread during the Jewish holidays, and meat chopped up. They follow all the Judaical ceremonies secretly so far as they can.

"The men as well as the women always avoid receiving the sacraments of Holy Church voluntarily. When they confess, they never tell the truth; and it happened that one confessor asked a person of this tribe to cut off a piece of his garment for him, saying, 'Since you have never sinned, I should like to have a bit of your garment for a relic to heal the sick.' There was a time in Seville when it was commanded that no meat be weighed on Saturday, because all the *Conversos* ate it on Saturday night, and they ordered it to be weighed on Sunday morning.

"Not without reason did Our Redeemer call them a wicked and adulterous generation. They do not believe that God rewards virginity and chastity. All their endeavour is to increase and multiply. And in the time when this heretical iniquity flourished, many monasteries were violated by their wealthy men and merchants, and many professed nuns were ravished and mocked, some through gifts and some through the lures of panders, they not believing in or fearing excommunications; but they did it to injure Jesus Christ and the Church. And usually, for the most part, they were usurious people, of many wiles and deceits, for they all live by easy occupations and offices, and in buying and selling they have no conscience where Christians are concerned. Never would they undertake the occupations of tilling the soil or digging or cattle-raising, nor would they teach their children any except holding public offices, and sitting down to earn enough to eat with little labour. Many of them in these realms in a short time acquired very great fortunes and estates, since they had no conscience in their profits and usuries, saying that they only gained at the expense of their enemies, according to the command of God in the departure of the people of Israel to spoil the Egyptians.... Of all this the King and Queen were assured while they were at Seville."¹¹

To some extent, at least, Isabel must have shared these views, so that in yielding to an overwhelming pressure of public opinion in the early autumn of 1480 she was doing no violence to her own convictions. Mendoza's catechism had failed to accomplish the miracle he had hoped for; it had only stirred the *Conversos* to new laughter and blasphemies, and the Cardinal was compelled to agree that no way remained but force.

Finally, on a cool day in September, the Queen unlocked one of the cunningly carved wooden chests in which her State papers were kept, and drew from it a document that had reposed there in profound secrecy since the last days of 1478. It was a piece of parchment, with a leaden seal hung on threads of coloured silk. It was a bull issued at Rome on November 1, 1478, by Pope Sixtus IV. From its text it is possible to form an intelligent conjecture as to how the Spanish envoy at Rome had represented the situation to the Holy Father. After the usual preamble, the Pope wrote:

“The genuine devotion and sound faith manifested in your reverence for us and the Roman Church demand that, as far as we can in the sight of God, we grant your requests, particularly those which concern the exaltation of the Catholic Faith and the salvation of souls. We learn from your letter recently shown to us that in various cities, sections and regions of the Spanish kingdoms, many of those who of their own accord were born anew in Christ in the sacred waters of Baptism, while continuing to comport themselves externally as Christians, yet have secretly adopted or returned to the religious observances and customs of the Jews, and are living according to the principles and ordinances of Jewish superstition and falsehood, thus renouncing the truths of the orthodox faith, its worship, and belief in its doctrines, and incurring, without hesitation or fear, the censures and penalties pronounced against followers of heretical perversity, in accordance with the constitutions of Pope Boniface VIII, our predecessor of happy memory. Not only do they persist in their blindness but their children and their associates are infected with the same perfidy, and thus their numbers increase not a little. Owing to the crimes of these men and, as is piously believed, to the forbearance of this Holy See and of those ecclesiastical prelates whose duty it is to examine into such matters, with God's permission, war and homicide and other misfortunes are oppressing those same regions to the offence of the Divine Majesty, the contempt of the aforesaid Faith, the danger of souls and the scandal of many. On this account you have humbly implored our apostolic kindness to extirpate this dangerous sect root and branch from out your kingdoms....

“We rejoice in the Lord over your praiseworthy zeal for the Faith and for the salvation of souls and express the hope that you will exert every effort not only to drive this perfidy, from your realms, but also in our own times to subject to your rule the kingdom of Granada and the territories that border on it. We likewise trust that you will strive through the workings of Divine Mercy to bring about the conversion to the true faith of the infidels who are in these territories. Thus, what your predecessors, owing to various obstacles, found impossible of accomplishment, you will bring to pass unto the prosperity of the same true faith, the salvation of souls, your own great glory, and the assurance of eternal happiness, for which you so earnestly pray. We wish to grant your petitions and to apply suitable remedies to the evils you mention. Yielding therefore to your entreaties, we willingly permit the appointment of three, or at least two, bishops or archbishops or other approved men, who are secular priests, or religious of the mendicant or the non-mendicant orders, above forty years of age, of good conscience and exemplary life, masters or bachelors in theology, or doctors in canon law or licentiates carefully examined, God-fearing men, whom you shall consider worthy to be chosen, for the time being, in each city and diocese of the aforesaid kingdoms according to the needs of the places.... Furthermore to the men thus designated we grant, in regard to those accused of these crimes, and in regard to all who aid and abet them, the same judicial authority, peculiar rights and jurisdiction as law and custom allow to Ordinaries and Inquisitors of heretical perversity.”¹²

This text makes it clear that Isabel's agent in Rome had represented the Inquisition to the Pope as a necessary war measure during a crusade; a temporary one— “for the time being”; and one

that would be conducted in co-operation with the bishops, according to the practice that experience had taught was needed to prevent abuses. As the royal petition reached the Pope, the only new feature of it appeared to be the request that he permit the sovereigns to name the Inquisitors. That was unusual, but so were the conditions in Spain. Sixtus could have had no idea that the Spanish tribunal would exist for three centuries to come.

During the panic over the fall of Otranto— on September 26, 1480— the King and Queen published the bull as part of an edict establishing the Inquisition in Castile. The text of this document shows that their purpose was not merely to punish or to persecute for the sake of intolerance; it was in part at least to prevent a repetition of the ghastly massacres of the *Conversos*. The aim of the new court, the edict stated, was not only to punish the Judaizers who sought to draw simple-minded Christians from the true faith, but also “to protect faithful Christians” among the *Conversos* “from unjust suspicion and persecution.” Two Inquisitors were appointed: Fray Juan de San Martin, bachelor of theology, and Fray Miguel de Morillo, master of theology. They were given to understand in the plain language of the edict that their responsibility was no longer to the Pope but to the royal Crown. “We command you,” said the edict, “to accept this office.” Failure on their part to carry out the royal commands would be punished by the confiscation of their goods, and the loss of their citizenship; they could be removed at any time by the King and Queen.¹³

Isabel, and Fernando may not have been aware at this stage that their ambassador at Rome had in reality tricked the Pope into granting them powers that would be used to the glory of the State and the discredit of the Church. Isabel, at least, despised all double-dealing; and it may be significant that her name appears less frequently than the King’s on the correspondence with Sixtus. “Fernando had so contrived that the duty, which the Church was bound to perform, and which the Pope could neither refuse nor evade, of declaring where errors in faith existed, should be made subservient to the State purpose of detecting high treason, then identical with Judaism; while the Church itself could exercise no controlling influence whatsoever to stay the terrible retributions awarded by the criminal courts of the realm.”¹⁴ In short, the Inquisition, as Fernando arranged matters, was religious in form only; in spirit and purpose it was the instrument of the new Caesarism to which events had gradually led him. Its judges were to be Dominican friars; but the friars were servants of the State, not of the Church.

It is entirely possible that Fernando carried Isabel, as well as Sixtus, into deeper waters than she realized. Nevertheless, the Queen never shirked her share of the responsibility for the Holy Office. And there is no contemporary evidence to support the theory by which most of her biographers, anxious to reconcile her natural kindness and rectitude with her severity against the *Conversos*, have attributed her long delay to what would now be called “humanitarian.” motives. All such well-intentioned efforts arise from a failure to understand the perilous conditions in which, she laboured— the war psychology of Spain, the challenge of the secret Jews allied to a nation within the new nation, the intensity of the popular distrust of them, and the extent to which the Queen probably shared it. She was, after all, the daughter of that uncompromising Queen who had pursued de Luna, the friend of Jews and *Conversos*, to his doom. She was the girl who had turned with disgust from the immoralities of Enrique’s court where the *Conversos* held the palm, who had shuddered at the bare thought of being embraced by that lecherous *Converso* Don Pedro Giron, who had sickened on hearing men accuse that other *Converso* Juan Pacheco of poisoning her brother Alfonso. She had in her, after all, the blood of those Plantagenets who were so ruthless that men called them devils, of William the Conqueror, who, when his wife reminded him once too often of his bastardy, was said to have tied her long hair to the tail of his horse and to have dragged her about, to teach her the duty of a wife.

Isabel, the maid, had resolved to complete the reconquest and rehabilitation of Spain, and only the Moors and the *Conversos* stood in her way. And the mature woman who had calmly ordered the executions of so many thieves and murderers in the Jew-ridden city of Seville would hardly hesitate to exact conformity from those who were guilty of an offence which she considered even

worse than theft or murder—heresy. To most people of the twentieth century the word “heresy” connotes merely an independence of thought, a difference of opinion. We are likely to forget that the mass of men in the Middle Ages nearly always associated it with some group whose tenets and activities appeared antisocial. In a dominantly Christian society, as Europe once was, heresy seemed something monstrous, diabolical. Men thought of heretics as respectable middle-class folk of our day think of militant anarchists. Even so gentle and charitable a woman as Saint Teresa of Ávila considered heresy worse than any other sin. Comparing the human soul to a mirror, she, wrote, “When a soul is in mortal sin, this mirror becomes clouded with a thick vapour, and utterly obscured, so that Our Lord is neither visible nor present, though He is always present in the conservation of its being. In heretics, the mirror is, as it were, broken in pieces, and that is worse than being dimmed.”¹⁵ Isabel would have agreed with this statement; it would have seemed to her only a logical conclusion from the premises contained in the teachings of Christ in her hand-illuminated New Testament.

In associating *Conversos* with the traditional foes, the sensual Mussulmans, Spanish Christians even to this day have imputed to them certain vices against which Christian communities have always reacted with severity. A modern Spanish scholar writes that “these unworthy practices, always existent, have epochs of recrudescence, as in the fifteenth century through contact with the Moors, making necessary the *cedula* of the Catholic Queen, with the terrible chastisement of the bonfire.”¹⁶ A popular tract written by a converted Jew during the first years of the Inquisition went so far as to make the ridiculous assertion that “the Marranos invented sodomy.” In the very nature of the case it was impossible for the Spanish Christian to be fair to the *Converso*; he saw in him only the ally of his ancient enemy. And it must be said that the deeds of the *Conversos* and of the Jews from time to time lent some colour to the popular prejudices. After the massacres of 1473 the *Conversos* of Córdoba had attempted to purchase Gibraltar from King Enrique. It was generally believed that they intended to use it as a base for bringing hordes of Moors from Africa to reconquer all Spain.

Another reason for Isabel’s delay was probably the simple fact that she did not feel herself quite strong enough to proceed until after the conclusion of peace with Portugal and the Cortes of Toledo. And it may be inferred that the *Conversos* who were so powerfully entrenched in her court did not see the royal hand raised above their heads without making strenuous efforts to avert the blow. Her closest friend, Beatriz, had married a *Converso*. Her confessor was of Jewish descent. Almost all her privy councillors and secretaries had Jewish ancestors on one side or the other— or both. Fernando’s *escribano de racion*, a sort of treasurer, was the acute lawyer Luis de Santángel, one of a great family with ramifications all over Aragon and Castile. He was descended from the Jewish rabbi Azarias Zinello; an uncle, Pedro Martin, had been Bishop of Mallorca; other members of the family were farmers of taxes and of the royal salt works. King Fernando’s government, in fact, was virtually in the hands of the *Conversos*. His *maestre racional* or Chief Treasurer, Sancho de Paternoy, his confidential friends and advisers, Jaime de la Caballeria and Juan de Cabrera; his cup-bearer Guilleo Sanchez, his steward Francisco Sanchez, his treasurer Gabriel Sanchez— all were of the seed of Abraham. It would have been strange if these shrewd and powerful politicians had not made every effort to dissuade the King and Queen from the step they were contemplating.

NOTES (p. 621)

1 Amador de los Rios, *Estudios sobre los Judíos de España*, p. 21.

2 Although the Catholic Church owes a debt to both Arabs and Jews for the Hellenic thought they transmitted to her, it must be said that Aristotelianism in Islam and Judah remained sterile, whereas the Catholic philosophers of the Middle Ages made it the point of departure for a new synthesis which was brilliant, original and profound. In view of the familiar charge that the Church stifled independent thinking, it is interesting to notice that the greatest Jewish and Mohammedan philosophers were usually laymen, often opposed and persecuted by the rabbis and priests. In Catholic Europe, on the other hand, the most daring philosophers were commonly

priests and monks, often of high station in the hierarchy, and much honoured by the official Church— Thomas Aquinas, for example, was canonized. The vitality of Saint Thomas’s thought is indicated by the fact that in our day it has been reconciled to modern science by the late Cardinal Mercier and other neo-Thomists. See McNabb, *The Catholic Church and Philosophy*, in the Calvert Series, pp. 33 *et seq.*; also Olgiati-Zybura, *The Key to the Study of St. Thomas*. St. Louis, 1925.

3 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. XI.

4 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*.

5 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*.

6 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*.

7 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*.

8 Dr. Meyer Kayserling, *Christopher Columbus and the Participation of the Jews in the Spanish and Portuguese Discoveries*.

9 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*.

10 Sabatini gives a somewhat garbled translation of this passage in his *Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition*. For example, he translates the word *manjarejos*, which means “delicacies,” as “garbage”; and *oler*, which has a neutral connotation like our word “smell,” as “stink.”

11 Bernaldez, *Historia*, cap. xl.iii.

12 The complete Latin text is given in the *Boletin*, Vol. IX, p. 172.

13 The Spanish text of this edict is published in the *Boletin*, Vol. XV, p. 448 *et seq.*

14 Dublin Review, Vol. IX, p. 172.

15 Autobiography, chap. xl, par. 9.

16 Paz y Melia, *El Cronista Alonso de Palencia*.

ISABELLA OF SPAIN

XV

THE JEWISH CONSPIRACY— PUNISHMENT OF THE RINGLEADERS— SPAIN SWEEPED BY THE PLAGUE

WHEN Morillo and San Martin arrived in Seville late in October, they presented their credentials to the chapter, and were escorted by the municipal council from the chapter house to the City Hall. The rich *Conversos* who controlled Seville looked on with sullen and sceptical indifference, and though they showed every outward courtesy to the emissaries of the King and Queen, managed to throw various difficulties in their way; for, as late as December 27, Fernando and Isabel found it necessary to issue a sharp *cedula* commanding all officials to render every possible aid. Meanwhile the court was being organized with Dr. Juan Ruiz de Medina as assessor, and Juan del Barco, one of the Queen’s chaplains, as *promotor fiscal* or prosecuting officer. On the following May 13, were added Diego de Merlo, *asistente* or chief magistrate of Seville, and the licentiate Ferrand Yafiez de Lobon, as receivers of confiscations. It is evident that from the very outset the King and Queen counted upon the Inquisition to supply them with funds for the war against the Moors in Granada.

Meanwhile the Inquisitors had been taking much secret evidence and making some arrests. The *Conversos*, thoroughly alarmed at last, began to flee from Seville, as the Sevillanos had fled in 1477 from Queen Isabel’s *audiencias*. Many went to the country estates of the great nobles, offering them money for protection, and the lords as usual accepted it. Hearing this the two friars issued a proclamation, January 2, 1481, commanding the Marqués of Cádiz and other *grandes* to search their territories, seize all strangers and newcomers, and deliver them within fifteen days at the prison of the Inquisition; also to sequester their property, have it inventoried, and entrust it to reliable persons who should be accountable to the King and Queen. Failure to comply would result in the excommunication of the nobles, forfeiture of rank and property, prosecution by the Inquisition, and the release of their vassals from allegiance and taxes.¹

The Marqués, must have read this pronouncement with some amazement. Five years before he would have torn it in pieces and laughed to scorn the two simple friars who dared take such a tone with men accustomed to address kings on almost equal terms. Five years before two friars would probably not have dared send such a manifesto to Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon. But times had changed.

The Marqués, though married to a daughter of the *Converso* Juan Pacheco, seized the New Christians and sent them to Seville. When the convent of San Pablo became overcrowded with the prisoners, the Inquisitors moved their headquarters across the river, to the great fortress of Triana. There in the gloomy, damp dungeons below the level of the river lay some of the richest and most influential men and women in Seville. The early Spanish Inquisition was one of the few persecutions in history in which the victims were chiefly millionaires and the common people applauded.

The trials commenced at once.

Since there was no longer any doubt that the Queen was serious, several of the most powerful *Conversos* met in the church of San Salvador— a Catholic church— to discuss means for protecting themselves. Catholic priests, priors, magistrates, government officials— all *Conversos* and secret enemies of the Church— were present. There were three of the “Twenty-Four” who ruled Seville, there were the major-domo of the church, the Alcaide of Triana, and many other rich and powerful *Conversos*. Diego de Susan, a rabbi and a leading citizen of Seville, whose fortune was estimated at 10,000,000 maravedis, made a fiery speech demanding that they resist the Inquisition by force. He cried: “Are we not the principal men of this city in standing, and the best esteemed of the people? Let us assemble troops; and if they come to take us, let us start an uprising with the troops and the people; and so we will kill them and avenge ourselves on our enemies!” All applauded this belligerent appeal, and they organized, under leaders, some to collect troops, others to buy arms, and others to raise money. Susan’s proposal was generally commended, and plans were made for the uprising.²

Unhappily for him, Diego de Susan had a daughter so beautiful that she was known in Seville, a city of lovely women, as la *hermosa fembra*. She betrayed her father’s secret to a Christian cavalier who was her paramour. Within twenty-four hours the Inquisitors knew the whole story. The *Conversos* had played into their hands. Even if the plot had succeeded, there would probably have been the usual massacre in reprisal. As it was, their action seemed to confirm Queen Isabel’s conviction that the *Conversos* considered themselves above the law and could not be reached by the ordinary processes of justice. Diego de Merlo proceeded to arrest the most notable men in Seville. One of the conspirators seized was Pedro Fernandez Venedera, major-domo of the cathedral, in whose house were found hidden enough weapons to arm a hundred men. Susan and his accomplices were tried before a jury of lawyers— the traditional medieval *consulta de fé*. Several of the conspirators who confessed were given penances according to the degree of the offence, and six men and women of the ringleaders were condemned to be burned alive. If the sentence seems barbarous, it must be remembered that in other countries where there was no Inquisition, all who had any share in a plot to resist royal authority would have been cruelly executed for high treason— in England hanged, drawn and quartered, in France, boiled alive.

The first *auto de fé* in Castile was held February 6, 1481. The weather was damp, a sense of helplessness had settled down upon the city, and only a few stragglers followed the procession, for the pestilence had returned and people were afraid of catching it. Two by two the civil officers and friars marched from the fort of Triana across the chill Guadalquivir to the marketplace of Seville, followed by the conspirators in the custody of men-at-arms. Mass was said in the cathedral, followed by a sermon by Fray Alonso de Hojedas who at last saw success rewarding his years of effort. The repentant Judaizers confessed their errors, received their penances, and were reconciled to the Church. The assembly left the the [sic] cathedral and the *auto de fé* was over.

Outside the church the six condemned were delivered to civil officers of the city of Seville, who conducted them to the Campo de Tablada, beyond the walls. The six were tied to stakes, faggots were piled about them and the executioner approached, while the Dominicans made a last passionate appeal to the obdurate to repent and be reconciled. The torches were lighted, the flames flickered over the faggots and licked the feet of the condemned, the smoke curled round them. There were screams, the smell of burning flesh and hair, groans, a sickening silence.

A few days later three other prisoners were burned, including Diego de Susan, who, according to Bernaldez, who was in Seville at the time, “died a good Christian.” If this be true, his execution must have been political, for high treason, rather than for heresy; for the Spanish Inquisition at this period did not execute the condemned, if they confessed even at the stake. Later such “relapsed” heretics were strangled before being burned.

La Hermosa fembra found herself penniless, since her father’s property was confiscated. She was hated by Jews as a parricide; but the Bishop of Tiberias took an interest in her and obtained admission for her to a convent. Her voluptuous nature eventually led her out of the cloister to a life of shame. Age withered her marvellous beauty, and she died in poverty, requesting that her skull be placed over the door of the house in the Calle de Ataud where she had plied her trade, as an example to others and a punishment for her sins.⁴

A new panic now scattered the *Conversos* in all directions. But the Inquisitors had guards placed at all the gates, and captured many. In one of the early *autos de fe* in Seville, 700 confessed, were reconciled to the Church and marched as penitents in a great procession.⁵ Thousands, however, fled to the castles of nobles, to Portugal, and even to Italy.

The plague was now raging with violence, striking down Jew and Christian and *Converso* impartially. It was the same pestilence that periodically ravaged Europe during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, perhaps a less virulent form of the Black Death, certainly very similar to what occasionally appears in our day as the bubonic plague. The first symptom was a bluish black boil under the armpit or on the palm of the hand. Then followed headache, vertigo, tottering gait, deafness, various pains and convulsions, swelling of glands and formation of buboes, coughing up of blood. The victim usually died in about ten days.

At the first appearance of the dreadful disease in any town, all fled who could. Those who had to remain built great bonfires on public squares and other open spaces, to purify [sic] the air, as they supposed, and prevent the spread of the infection. Processions were formed. Men and women did public penance for their sins. By the end of the century there were isolation hospitals in the principal cities, under plague doctors, volunteers; but in 1481 the sick were dependent

upon the variable charity of their friends. The dead were buried by monks or by members of societies organized for the purpose by pious people.

“This year of 1481,” wrote the curate of los Palacios, “was not propitious for the human race, but very contrary, and of very general pestilence.” In Seville alone, 15,000 persons died of the plague during the summer. There were so many funerals that the Inquisition, by comparison, must have seemed a trivial affair, like the occasional shootings and decapitations of criminals. Beautiful Seville, that half-oriental pleasure-ground, was like a deserted charnel house. From the low whitewashed houses, made for love-songs and the strummings of lutes, came the wailings of the bereaved; no women laughed in the balconies, the gaudy flowers went to seed uncut, the oranges shrivelled on the trees. Every day there were grim and silent processions of penitents in black hoods, horrible impersonations of death stalking through the crooked winding streets, bearing litters containing the corpses that no one else, not even kinsfolk, would bury.

The *Conversos* begged Diego de Merlo to let them leave the city until the pest moderated. He mercifully granted the request, giving passes by which they might depart provided they took only

personal effects needed for immediate use. More than 8,000 *Conversos*, mounted on horses, fled to Mairena, Marchena, Palacios; some continued to Portugal, others fled to Rome to appeal to the Pope. Many were hospitably received by the Marqués of Cádiz and the Duke of Medina Sidonia.

To escape the plague the Inquisitors moved their headquarters from Triana to Aracena.⁶ There they delivered twenty-three Judaizers, both men and women, to the secular arm, to be burned by the State. They burned the effigies of many *Conversos* who had fled the country, and the bones of condemned heretics exhumed from the churchyards. When the pestilence began to die out, they returned to Seville.

That summer they proclaimed a term of grace. It was customary in the earlier Inquisition to hold it at the beginning—perhaps the Susan conspiracy prevented. It was announced that during two months any heretic who voluntarily came forward and confessed would be pardoned, reconciled, given a penance and treated with mercy, provided he told all he knew of other Judaizers or apostates. Hundreds of *Conversos* rushed in to confess. In their fear they betrayed friends and relatives, even mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, sons and daughters. When they realized what they had done it was too late to draw back. Having confessed, they ran the risk of being “relapsed” and burned if they could not satisfy the Inquisitors of the complete sincerity of their conversions. In one *auto de fé* alone 1,500 of these penitents were reconciled, each wearing a yellow garment with a crimson cross on it, and walking barefoot to a church, where he showed his contrition and accepted his penance.

Even the Inquisitors were astonished to discover during the term of grace how extensive were the ramifications of the evil they were trying to suppress; they obtained names of suspects in Toledo, Córdoba, and even as far north as Burgos. They reported to the King and Queen that the *Conversos* were evidently almost all secret Jews engaged in undermining the Christian religion which they professed; and they demanded the extension of the Holy Office to other cities, wherever Jewish influence was strong. In Córdoba, the Inquisitors— four of them— began investigations in 1482. The first *auto de fé* was held there in 1483; and on February 28, 1484, Pedro Fernandez de Alcaudete, treasurer of the cathedral there, was burned, his servants having killed an *alguacil* of the Inquisition when he was arrested for judaizing.⁷

There was no Inquisition in Toledo until 1485, perhaps because Archbishop Carrillo had already appointed a diocesan Inquisitor there. Instead, trials were held at Ciudad Real, commencing late in 1483 with an edict of grace. At the first *auto de fé*, November 16, 1483, the penitents who had taken advantage of the edict of grace were reconciled. Four persons were burned on February 6, 1484, and thirty later in that month. When this tribunal was moved to Toledo in 1486, the *Conversos* organized a plot to cause a riot and slay the Inquisitors and the chief Christian citizens and seize the city during a procession on the Feast of Corpus Christi.⁸ The conspiracy was betrayed, and the six ringleaders were hanged.

When an assembly of the Inquisition was held in November, 1484, four years after Isabel had established the Holy Office in Seville, only four cities were represented: Seville, Córdoba, Jaen, and Ciudad Real. The tribunal at Segovia appears to have been established later, and in spite of the vigorous protests of the Bishop, Juan Arias de Ávila, the same who had met Isabel at the gates one hot day in 1476. But one of the first acts of the Inquisitors there was to condemn his Jewish mother and father and grandmother as heretics and Judaizers. He drove them out of his diocese and sent a furious remonstrance to Queen Isabel, When she refused to interfere with the processes of the court, the Bishop, realizing that the bones of his ancestors would be publicly burned, went one night to the churchyard of la Merced, dug them up, hid them where they could not be found, and fled to Rome to appeal to Pope Sixtus, who protected him. Isabel wrote to her ambassadors at Rome, telling them what they were to say to the Pope as to the complaints of the Bishop. He had dug up his ancestors’ bones, she declared, to conceal the fact that they were buried after the Jewish manner, though they professed Christianity. She maintained that she

acted only out of zeal for the Faith) and denounced those who said her purpose was to gain money for her own purse through confiscations. Any share of the confiscations appropriated by her had been used to educate and give marriage portions to the children of the condemned.

The true history of the Spanish Inquisition has never been written. Unfortunately most accounts until recently have been based upon the work of Llorente, an employee of the Holy Office in Spain, who was dismissed for alleged embezzlement, and sought revenge by destroying records that did not support his contentions, and using the others as the basis for an hysterical and highly exaggerated account. Sectarian prejudice seized upon his wild figures and built around them a monstrous legend of fanaticism.⁹ The actual records of the Holy Office, wherever found, have compelled the most drastic revisions of his figures. Altogether in Isabel's reign about 2,000 persons were burned in all of Spain.¹⁰ The contemporary accounts are few and meagre. Public opinion undoubtedly approved of the Queen's measures, and the chroniclers appear to take the whole business as a matter of course, dismissing it briefly in a few pages. Bernaldez, chaplain to the second Inquisitor General, says that in Seville, from 1481 until 1488, 700 from all parts of Andalusia were burned and more than 5,000 cast into "perpetual" imprisonment, though these last were released five years later and compelled to wear *sanbenitos*. Among those burned were three priests, three or four friars, and a doctor of divinity who was a friar of the Trinity, called Savariego, "a great preacher and a great falsifier and heretical impostor, for he refused to come on Good Friday to preach the Passion, and stuffed himself with meat." The curate of los Palacios had no reason to minimize the achievements of the Inquisition, for he heartily approved of it.

Pulgar, Isabel's *Converso* secretary, says that more than 15,000 accepted penance and were reconciled in his time; while others "who were guilty and would not confess" were executed. "And of these were burned at various times and in several cities and places nearly two thousand men and women".... The sons of Judaizers were barred from public office and from inheriting the goods of the guilty. Even the property of heretics long dead was confiscated. The sums thus realized, and fines collected from the reconciled, were considerable, and "the King and Queen commanded," wrote Pulgar, "that they should not be distributed for any purpose except in the war against the Moors, and in other things that were for the exaltation of the Catholic Faith." In the latter category she naturally included the share of the confiscations mentioned in her letter to her ambassador at Rome.

Four thousand families left the Andalusian country about Seville and Córdoba, to the injury of Queen Isabel's future revenues; "but estimating the diminution of her revenues very little, and holding very highly the cleansing of her lands, she said she put above any interest the ridding of the land of heresy, for she understood that this was for God's service and hers."

Isabel would have been greatly astonished if some prophetic angel had lifted a corner of the curtain of futurity and showed her the modern denunciations, sincere or pharisaical, of the court that she believed so necessary and so beneficent. She would have read that the Inquisition was responsible for almost all the imaginable ills of Spain except perhaps the cold winters and the hot summers; that it killed true religion, stifled literature and art, kept the people ignorant and brutal, crippled commerce and industry. The greenish-blue eyes would undoubtedly have blazed with indignation, and with some reason. For the intellectual life of Spain was never more vigorous than in the century following the establishment of the Holy Office. The most brilliant epoch in her literature, the period that produced her three great poets, Cervantes, Lope de Vega and Calderon, coincides, curiously enough, with the time in which the Inquisition was most powerful. It was during that period that her greatest schools and universities were established, that foreign scholars flocked to Spain and were honoured, that medicine and other sciences made their most notable gains. And in the material and political fields there was a parallel development. Never were the industries and commerce of Spain so prosperous, never was order so well maintained at home and prestige abroad than during the sixteenth century when Spain became the head of a new empire that overshadowed all Europe and the Americas. It would be grotesque to attribute all these results to the Inquisition. But the Inquisition certainly did not

prevent their coming into being, and it did make possible the political unity that enabled the new nation to take advantage of the opportunities of the changing world.

Beyond a doubt the Inquisition completed the reform of the Church in Spain. In so doing, it also accomplished some less admirable ends. It imprisoned Saint Ignatius, and impeded his work. It long threatened to suppress the autobiography of Saint Teresa. It annoyed other saints and writers in various ways. It perpetuated the absolutism and unwieldy bureaucracy of Spain long after the need for them had ceased. It was one of the instruments used by the enemies of the Society of Jesus to blacken it and bring about its suppression, especially in Portugal.

But of these matters the Queen foresaw nothing in the moment of her triumph. At no time, then, or later, did she express the slightest regret over the instrument she had endowed with such powers. On the contrary, she frequently referred to it with pride, and a few years later we find her ambassador in England suggesting to Henry VII that "it is a pity, when Spain is purged of heresy, that Flanders and England should still be infected"; whereupon Henry, laying both hands on his breast, "swore that he would prosecute without mercy any cursed Jew or heretic that the Queen of Spain could point out in his dominions."¹¹ This promise he never kept, and the Inquisition made no headway in England or other parts of Europe. Save for the early tribunal against the Cathari, and the sporadic functioning of the Roman Inquisition, it was almost entirely a Spanish institution.¹²

NOTES (p. 622)

1 Complete text, including Pope Sixtus's bull of November 1, 1478, and the royal order of September 26, 1480, is printed in the *Boletin*, Vol. XV, p. 453 *et seq.*

2 Amador de los Rios, *Historia de los Judíos*, Vol. III, p. 248.

3 Bernaldez, *Historia*.

4 Amador de los Rios, *Historia de los Judíos*, Vol. III, p. 249, note.

5 Bernaldez, *Historia*.

6 Bernaldez, *Historia*.

7 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*.

8 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*. See also *Boletin*, Vol. XI, p. 293.

9 Prescott followed Llorente's errors with blind confidence, but undoubtedly in good faith. It remained for later investigators to expose the dishonest methods of the dismissed secretary of the Inquisition who wrote in a spirit of spite, first carefully destroying the documents that did not support his thesis.

10 The later Inquisition, of course, does not fall within the scope of this work.

11 Bergenroth, *State Papers*, Vol. I.

12 The Inquisition was invoked in England only in the case of the Templars.

ISABELLA OF SPAIN

XVI

DEATH OF MOHAMMED II— THE INQUISITION INCURS THE POPE'S CENSURE— THE MOORS TAKE THE OFFENSIVE

OF THE actual workings of the Inquisition during its first year, Isabel and Fernando saw little or nothing, for they were not in Andalusia. Having arranged matters there for the time being, they deemed it necessary to go to Aragon, first to have Prince Juan formally acknowledged as heir to that kingdom, and second, to expedite the sailing of the great armada against the Turks. They left Córdoba about the time when the plague returned to Andalusia. The King rode east to visit his father's kingdoms. The Queen and the Prince went north to Valladolid, perhaps because the

delicate young boy was less likely to catch the pest on the dry hills of Old Castile. They arrived in February, about the time when Susan was being burned at Seville.

A month later, Isabel and her son departed on horseback for a three-hundred-mile journey over arid wastes and bleak mountains to the east coast. Arriving on April 16, they were received with great ceremony by the people of Calatayud, where King Fernando had already summoned the Cortes. The delegates met in the Church of San Pedro de los Francos on Monday, April 30. There was much discussion about the Turkish atrocities in Italy, for the gravity of the danger was now realized everywhere in Spain; and the Catalans, always independent with their sovereigns, aired some of their domestic grievances. It was not until May 19 that they took the solemn oath of allegiance to little Prince Juan, exacting in return the oaths of the King and Queen to respect their privileges— an obligation that the Prince himself was to renew at the age of 14. King Fernando then departed for Barcelona, to preside at the Cortes there, while Queen Isabel remained as his lieutenant-general to dismiss the Cortes at Calatayud.¹ It was the first time in the history of Aragon that a woman had ruled, even temporarily. There was much murmuring and shaking of heads among the sticklers for precedent, but the Queen's composure and spirit of command as usual carried off the situation.

Meanwhile there were endless details to be arranged before the fleet could set sail against the barbarians. During May there was an assembly of fifty well-armed vessels in the port of Laredo, under the command of Don Francisco Enriquez, son of the Admiral of Castile; and reinforcements from Galicia and Andalusia swelled the total to seventy. On June 22, a cool sunny day, a solemn High Mass was celebrated on the dock, the ensigns and standards were blessed, the great dark galleys with their high poops and bellied hulls weighed anchor, the canvas fluttered to the halyards, and under the cross of the crusade and the colours of Saint James and the King and Queen, the armada stood majestically out to sea.

It was October 2 before the ships, having joined the fleet from Portugal, reached Otranto. The danger, when they arrived, had been averted, partly by the recapture of the city by the young Duke of Calabria, but chiefly in consequence of the unexpected death of Mohammed II.

Isabel heard of this event on her way from Calatayud to Saragossa to attend another Cortes. Saragossa was almost delirious with joy at the news. The popular satisfaction, in which Isabel and Fernando shared, was recorded with undisguised fervour by the faithful Bernaldez:²

“On the feast of the Holy Cross in the year 1481, there died and descended into Hell the Grand Turk, Emperor of Constantinople, called Mahomet Ottoman, who for more than thirty years had been waging war very cruelly against the Christians of Greece and its neighbours.... All Christendom in general took pleasure in this death, for no one can imagine the great terror that barbarous prince had instilled in the hearts of all Christians, because of the lands he had conquered, and those that he would desire and gain each day.... The King and Queen held great processions through the city, and sacrifices, and many other devotions and alms, because it pleased God to deliver Christendom from so mighty an enemy.”

About the same time came intelligence of the death of King Alfonso V of Portugal, Isabel and Fernando had a solemn High Mass of Requiem sung for their former enemy, and prayed for the repose of his soul. Wars between Christian nations left no such bitterness as those with the Moslem.

Before the Court left Saragossa to continue its triumphal progress, ten of the leading Jews of the place waited upon the King and Queen and begged them to accept a gift. Bernaldez has left a detailed description of it: twelve heifers, twelve fine sheep sumptuously bedecked with ribbons and cloth of gold; and after these, an enormous silver vessel of singular design and skilful workmanship, whose argent legs were borne by twelve Jews, while a thirteenth held over it a rich

cup full of gold coins, castellanos, and a fourteenth carried a beautiful jar full of silver. "And the King and Queen were delighted, and gave much thanks."

From Saragossa the royal party rode 160 miles to Barcelona, and then zoo miles to Valencia. At each place the chief nobles, prelates and commons tendered their homage both to the sovereigns and to the little Prince. The feasts at Valencia lasted fifteen days. At the end of the year the Court left Aragon to resume its long journey back to Castile. The Queen and the Prince arrived in Medina del Campo early in January.

In ten months she had ridden some 2,000 miles on horseback, had attended three parliaments, had assisted in launching an armada, had seen the Castilian and Aragonese kingdoms cemented in closer friendship by the oaths to Prince Juan. She had also conceived for the fourth time. The child was expected in the summer of 1482.

On reaching Medina, Isabel at once received an accounting from the Admiral and Count Haro, the regents she had left in charge, on the condition of her kingdoms. Civic peace had been restored everywhere... criminals were remarkably few... the plague had abated in Seville and Córdoba... there had been heavy rains in the south... the crops had been good and seed was abundant... the Moors of Granada were said to be preparing for war.... the Inquisitors at Seville had reconciled some thousands of penitents... about a hundred *Conversos* from various parts of Andalusia had been burned.

Morillo and San Martin had taken the royal commands only too literally, proceeding with a zeal which seemed even to some Christians to be more vindictive than judicial, and assuredly going far beyond what either the Pope or the sovereigns had intended. Convinced that they were dealing with an insidious and intangible slayer of souls who worked by word of mouth instead of by steel or poison, they and their subordinates went to great pains to get evidence, and prosecuted the rich and powerful as rigorously as they did the lowly. Their psychology will seem familiar to anyone who recalls the vagaries of mob psychology during the World War. In Boston the love-letters of a German orchestra-conductor were made public because he was suspected, and unjustly, of being a spy. An inflamed public imagination in Connecticut became almost hysterical when the senile governor announced in a speech that Germans were secretly drilling and collecting arms in that state. An inoffensive German musician near Hartford had a concrete foundation built for a new chicken-coop; ah! a gun-base from which the Germans would shell the capitol! A wagonload of wire arrived for his chicken-yard; anyone could see that he was installing a wireless, to send military information to Berlin, and cause the death of American soldiers! It was a wonder the poor fellow was not hanged by the mob— there were many willing to assist, but fortunately they lacked leaders. The man's business, however, was ruined; he was arrested on a technicality, and kept in jail some months until his innocence was completely proved; meanwhile his wife and four children were left destitute.

The recollection of such incidents— they were common enough in America in 1918— will help us to recreate the scene in Spain in 1481, and to realize that the Castilians and Andalusians of Isabel's time were not the monsters they have been painted, but poor human creatures, like ourselves. And so it happened that any Christian who dressed or acted like a Jew, or followed Jewish customs even of the most indifferent sort, was at once suspected. The out-and-out Jews, of course, were not troubled by the Inquisition. But if any Christian of Jewish descent bought his meat of a rabbi, or washed the blood from it in the Jewish manner, or gave his children Hebrew names, or wore his best clothes on Saturday, instead of Sunday, he was very likely to be denounced by his neighbours and dragged before the Inquisitors to be asked all sorts of questions in the hope that if he was a heretic he would betray himself. Many of the accused were released; others, who confessed to being secret Jews or to enticing others to adopt Jewish instead of Christian customs, were given penances; those who were convicted but refused to confess, or who lapsed after once being reconciled, were burned. On Saturdays the agents of the Holy Office climbed the roofs in certain sections of Seville where the *Conversos* dwelt, and noted which

houses had smoking chimneys, and which not. The good Christians, of course, would be cooking as usual. But those who were secretly Jews would be observing the Sabbath.

Several hundreds of the suspected New Christians who had fled from Seville in the autumn and winter without waiting to be arrested, went to Rome, always the safest refuge of the persecuted Jews, and presented themselves, with tears and lamentations, before Pope Sixtus.

It happened that about the same time, while Isabel and Fernando were still in Aragon, they decided that the activities of the *Conversos* in Saragossa and other eastern cities warranted an extension of the Holy Office to cover all the territories of the crown of Aragon; and they petitioned the Pope to permit them to appoint Inquisitors there. After questioning many of the *Conversos*, Sixtus came to the conclusion that the Inquisition in Seville— it has been called the abnormal or uncanonical Inquisition— was not at all the court of inquiry that he had intended it to be; that it was persecuting the innocent as well as the guilty, and ignoring the rules of canon law by which the earlier Inquisition had attempted to safeguard the legal rights of the accused. Morillo and San Martin had neglected to follow the Papal command that they should co-operate with the diocesan ordinaries. Furthermore, Sixtus believed that he had been tricked in 1478 by the Spanish ambassador at Rome.

On January 29, 1482, he despatched a brief to the sovereigns, flatly refusing to permit them to name Inquisitors for Aragon, and demanding an immediate reform of the tribunal in Seville to accord with the terms of his bull of 1478. He contemplated removing Morillo and San Martin from office, but out of consideration for Fernando and Isabel he would leave them their authority for the present, on condition that the abuses ceased. The Pope's indignation blazed unmistakably under the polite formulas of the Roman curia:

“To our very dear children in Christ, health and apostolic benediction:

“We have never doubted that your original request for authority from us to appoint Inquisitors of heretical perversity in the kingdoms of Castile and Leon was motivated by zeal for the Catholic Faith and by the sincere and worthy purpose of leading to an acknowledgment of the way of truth, through the diligent efforts of these Inquisitors, those who externally professed themselves Christians, yet did not hesitate to follow in practice the teachings of Judaical law and superstition. At the time your request was made our own great zeal for the faith led us to give the order that documents be drawn up granting this deputation of authority. However, through the instrumentality of that man who at the time in your name petitioned the despatch of these documents, it came about that since the explanation he gave us of their contents was vague and confused and not as complete and definite as was proper, the documents themselves contained much that contradicted the decrees and customary procedure of the Holy Fathers our Predecessors. This has led to numerous expressions of regret and to complaints as much against us for issuing such documents as against your Majesties and against our beloved sons, Michael de Morillo, Master of Theology, and John de San Martin, Bachelor of Theology, whom, under the pretext of the above-mentioned documents, you have named Inquisitors in your city of Seville. The accusation is made that hasty action and disregard of legal procedure on the part of these Inquisitors have brought about the unjust imprisonment and even severe torturing of many innocent persons who have been unjustly condemned as heretics, despoiled of their possessions and made to pay the extreme penalty...”

Many of the fugitives, the Holy Father continued, “profess themselves to be Christians and true Catholics.” They have fled to the Holy See, “the refuge of all the oppressed everywhere,” and have appealed to him “with much shedding of tears.” He has discussed the situation with the Cardinals, many of whom are of the opinion that Morillo and San Martin ought to be removed. Nevertheless, rather than embarrass the sovereigns by seeming to condemn their appointments publicly, the Pope is willing to let the two men retain office, on the express condition that they adhere to the rules of the canon law in future, “bearing in mind that if they conduct themselves

otherwise than with zeal for the faith and the salvation of souls, or less justly than they ought," they will be removed, and others substituted for them. Sixtus concludes by earnestly exhorting Fernando and Isabel to give him their assurance that they will obey his stipulations, "as Catholic Kings ought" so that henceforth "you will deserve to be commended before God and men."³

Isabel investigated, and on finding that some of the complaints against Morillo and San Martin were only too well founded, insisted upon their proceeding in accordance with the canon law. But even before she received the Pope's reprimand, the Inquisition was pushed well into the background of Castilian affairs by sudden and dramatic developments. The long-expected war with Granada had begun at last.

During the three years of the truce there had always been intermittent raids and minor butcheries on the frontier. As the time approached for the expiration of the agreement, Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marqués of Cádiz, took it upon himself to organize an incursion of more than customary effect. One fine October morning he led his cavaliers against Villaluenga, burned it to the ground, harried several villages of the Sierra, slept under the very walls of Ronda, levelled the tower of the Mercadillo, and after wasting some corn fields and burning a few orchards, returned to his castle in high spirits, feeling that he had at least partially requited Muley Abou'l Hassan for his depredations in Andalusia.⁴ The event appeared to be purely of local significance. Such raids had always been permitted under the terms of the truce. But there was something more ominous in the air as the fateful year of 1481 drew to its close.

That year the rains began early in Andalusia and Castile, and continued ceaselessly. Seville, already chastised by the fires of the Inquisition, decimated by the plague that had increased in virulence since August, was set upon even by the elements; for in December the swollen Guadalquivir engulfed el Copero and other suburbs, and surrounded the low flats of the city so menacingly that for three days and nights the terrified Christians, *Conversos* and Jews expected to perish in the muddy waters.

On Christmas Day a heavy rain pelted all the orchards of Andalusia; and in the mountains between Christian Spain and Granada a howling tempest raged for three days and nights. It was under cover of that storm, when men and beasts were huddled beneath what shelter they could find, that Muley Abou'l Hassan began the war in earnest. He accomplished what all men believed impossible. He took Zahara.

Within fifty miles of Seville to the southeast, this fortress was the most powerful Christian outpost defending Christian Andalusia on the one side, and menacing the approach to Moorish Ronda a few miles to the east. The walled castle was perched on the top of a rocky mountain so high that no birds flew there, and the clouds drifted below it, hugging the broken cliffs on the side of the mountain. The very streets and many of the houses were hewn out of solid rock. There was only one gate, at the west, surrounded by massive bulwarks and turrets, and the only approach to it was by a winding steep road so jagged that in places it looked like a stairway cut out of granite. The place was considered impregnable, so much so that in all parts of Spain a woman of irreproachable virtue was called a *zaharena*. Hence the Alcaide kept a careless watch, and a small garrison. A Christian renegade carried the news to Muley Abou'l Hassan.

On the night after Christmas, while Záhara sat securely in the clouds above the roaring of the tempest, Muley led a picked band of Moors from Ronda up the mountain side, planted scaling ladders on the wet walls, and entered the sleeping town. There were no sentinels on the walls and the Moors were in the streets, with naked scimitars, before the alarm was given. The cry, "El Moro! El Moro!" brought out the sleepy Spaniards, drawing their swords; but it was too late. Some were mowed down by the dark foe in the windy darkness, while others in panic leapt over the walls to death. At dawn, the women and children and old men, nearly 200 of them, were herded, half dressed, into the public square, and there in the cold rain, they were informed by Muley that they were to be taken to Granada as slaves. According to Washington Irving, the

Moors drove them like cattle through the mountains and the broad *vega*. Those who fell were despatched by a black fellow with a spear or a scimitar; the rest were goaded through the gates of Granada to be sold, while Muley rode to the Alhambra to receive congratulations on his feat of arms, and to send *alfaquis* to Africa, to inform the Barbary kings that the war had begun, and to ask their help. Lucio Marineo, a contemporary, says the Moors slew all the women and children.⁵

Being three hundred miles to the north of Záhara, Isabel and Fernando heard nothing of the disaster until a messenger arrived at Medina del Campo a week later, while they were hearing Mass. They had expected something of the sort, but there was nothing to be done in a military way until spring. Meanwhile they sent orders to the governors of castles on the frontier to strengthen their garrisons and maintain a strict watch.

Isabel had reached another great crisis in her life, and she saw clearly that a long and difficult task lay before her. She proposed to conquer a rich fertile kingdom of some 3,000,000 Moors, extending from Seville in the west to the Mediterranean; in the east to Murcia through mountains difficult of access, interspersed with warm luxuriant valleys. In the very centre of this kingdom, more than half a mile above sea level, stood the high-walled city of Granada on the slope of the Sierra Nevada, looking out to the west on the long *Vega de Granada* by the River Jenil, and protected on the other side by the Sierras, whose peaks of Veleta and Mulhacen, to the southeast, are well over 11,000 feet high, so that little was to be feared in that quarter. All about, in a great circle, were a score of powerfully fortified mountain cities, many of them considered impregnable. To lay siege to Granada alone would require months, perhaps years, and no invader could afford to remain long within sight of the red roofs of the Alhambra with strong garrisons before him, ready to sally forth and cut his communications, without first battering down, systematically, each of the subsidiary places. Mountains walled Granada from the sea, and to the southwest were the Moorish ports of Malaga and Velez Malaga, and to the southeast Almeria; to the west Illora and Loja, Alhama, Ronda, Benameji and Antequera; to the north, Moclin and Baza and Guadix; to the east, more mountains; on all sides, mountains, with vines and gardens at their feet and cowls of snow on their heads. The Arab city sat secure like a king on a chessboard, well protected by bishops, knights and pawns; like some Castle Perilous, defended at many passes by champions.

What all good Castilian kings had dreamed of doing, what her father had attempted and what the weaklings like her half-brother had forgotten, Isabel proposed, with God's help, to accomplish. Fernando would lead the Christian host, and she, in her magnificent prime at thirty, would be recruiting agent, commissary, purchaser of munitions, field nurse and hospitaller, and propaganda bureau, all in one. Her labours in the Portuguese War had been only a novitiate, to prepare her for the crusade. Whatever the cost, however long it might take, she was resolved to conquer Granada. Like the men of Argos when they disembarked beside Ilion, she saw only the glimmer of victory. There was no soothsayer Calchas to foretell that the years of blood between her and her desire would number ten.

NOTES (p. 622)

1 Zurita, *Anales de la Corona de Aragon*, Lib. XX, cap. xli.

2 *Historia*, cap. xlv.

3 The Latin text followed is that published in the *Boletin de la real academia de la historia*, Vol. XV, p. 459. A long sentence in the part of the text quoted has been broken up for the convenience of modern readers unaccustomed to Latin style.

4 Bernaldez, *Historia*.

5 *Sumario*, p. 88.

ISABELLA OF SPAIN

XIX

CENSURE OF THE SPANISH INQUISITION BY POPE
SIXTUS IV— ITS REFORM BY TORQUEMADA

POPE SIXTUS IV, like Saint Peter, was a fisherman and the son of a fisherman who arose from obscurity to eminence through merit. On account of his nepotism and his connection with the Spanish Inquisition, he has been represented by historians following the seventeenth-century English tradition as cruel, unprincipled, tyrannical, avaricious— a composite of all unchristian traits. To find out how much truth there may be in this picture, we must discard all the partial, distorted and falsified summaries of his correspondence with Queen Isabel, and go back to the original texts.¹ They are exceedingly difficult to read, for a single sentence, though perfectly constructed, will run on sometimes for two whole pages of supple and beautifully cadenced Renaissance Latin. But out of these firsthand records, if one takes the trouble to translate them, emerges a very definite personality.

The first important disagreement between this Pope and Queen Isabel— and for this our principal authority must be the chronicle of her secretary Pulgar— occurred early in 1482, when Sixtus decided to bestow the vacant see of Cuenca upon his nephew, Raffaello Sansoni, Cardinal of San Giorgio. Queen Isabel had already planned to ask for the appointment of her own chaplain, Alonso de Burgos. She wrote to the Pope, reminding him that in the past Rome had allowed the kings of Castile to make ecclesiastical appointments as a special privilege, “considering that with great cost of their blood as Christian princes they had won back the land from the Moors;”² furthermore, as some of the benefices included fortified places of strategic importance on the Moorish frontier, it was necessary to commit them to trustworthy men familiar with the situation.³

Sixtus replied, according to Pulgar, that in making appointments to spiritual offices he was not bound to consider the wishes of any prince on earth, except as he might deem it advisable for the service of God and the welfare of the Church .⁴

Isabel’s ambassador hastened to assure the Pope that she did not wish to set any limit to his authority; “but it would be a reasonable thing to consider the arguments previously alleged.”⁵

Sixtus declined to change his decision. Fernando and Isabel then commanded all their subjects at Rome to leave the city, under pain of having their property in Spain confiscated by the State, and threatened to call a general council of all the princes of Christendom “on this and other matters.” The Spaniards at Rome obeyed the injunction.⁶

Sixtus was not anxious to have a general council, for there was always the possibility that it might end in another schism. Therefore he commissioned a layman, Domingo Centurion, to visit the court at Medina del Campo and attempt to reach an understanding. The King and Queen replied to this envoy, however, “that the Pope had dealt with them more unjustly than with any Catholic prince, and they would seek what remedies they could and ought,”⁷ and ordered him to leave the country, though they were careful to add that any messenger of the Sovereign Pontiff naturally would receive safe-conduct and immunity. But Domingo Centurion, instead of retiring from the field, wrote a conciliatory reply that “somewhat tempered the indignation of their majesties.”⁸

Meanwhile he found a powerful intercessor in Cardinal Mendoza, who begged Fernando and Isabel, for the sake of the unity of Christendom, to make peace with the Pope. The Cardinal also wrote to the Holy Father, explaining the peculiar situation in Spain with such good effect that Sixtus consented to revoke the appointment of Sansoni to the see of Cuenca, and to recognize Isabel’s candidate.⁹

The Queen henceforth nominated all bishops appointed in her realms, and it is generally agreed that she named “learned men of good lives, and preachers of good doctrines, whose lives were an example to others,”¹⁰ and often forced bishoprics on men so humble and unselfish that they preferred to remain in monasteries. But from the Catholic standpoint, whatever the political exigencies of Spain may have been, the Pope was right and Isabel was wrong in this controversy. The privilege she demanded had often been abused by other rulers, to the great detriment of the Church; and Sixtus was contending for the principle for which Saint Gregory VII had toiled and Saint Thomas of Canterbury had died, the principle now universally accepted in the Catholic Church. It was unfortunate that nepotism was involved in his invocation of it.

A controversy of far greater moment commenced in the same year, 1482, with the Pope’s bull of January 29 threatening to remove the Inquisitors unless the King and Queen insisted upon their following the canon law. The King and Queen, through their ambassador at Rome, probably explained the abuses of Morillo and San Martin to the Pope by representing that the cases of heresy were so numerous that no two men could possibly give adequate attention to all; for on February 11, 1482, Sixtus appointed eight Inquisitors for Castile and Leon, saying that they had been recommended to him by the sovereigns “for their purity of life, love and zeal for religion, gentleness of manners, extensive learning and other virtues.”¹¹ The seventh man he named was *Thomas de Turrecremata, baccalaureus*— Tomás de Torquemada, prior of the Dominican convent of Santa Cruz at Segovia.

It would seem that some at least of the newly appointed— including Torquemada, for we know that he refused a bishopric— were by no means eager to assume the arduous and perilous labours of an Inquisitor, for the Pope deemed it necessary to command them, “for the remission of their sins and the love of God,” to lay aside all fear and accept the office “in a spirit of fortitude” because of the expediency of the affair “and in hope of eternal reward... that the inner root of this perversity may be torn up through your care and solicitude, and the vineyards of the Lord, after the little foxes have been driven off, may bear abundant fruit”¹²— referring to a verse in the Canticle of Canticles, “Catch us the little foxes that destroy the vines; for our vineyard hath flourished.”¹³

Sixtus again mentioned the complaints he had had of Morillo and San Martin, and repeated with emphasis that the letters authorizing their appointment contained much that was contrary to the opinions of the Church fathers and the common observance of the Church, because the situation had been “confusedly” explained to him by the Spanish ambassador. The Inquisitors had proceeded indiscreetly and unjustly in Seville, he said, and in disregard of proper legal procedure. He commanded the eight new Inquisitors to proceed “prudently and carefully,” within the rules prescribed by the canons.

A sharp change of policy is observable in this document. Previously Sixtus had allowed Fernando and Isabel to appoint the Inquisitors. Now, although he accepted their nominations, he made the appointments himself, and reserved to himself or his successors the right to revoke them. His distrust of Caesar becomes increasingly apparent.

Two months later, April 17, 1482, he permitted Fernando to extend the Inquisition to Aragon; but in October he suspended the permission, no doubt on receipt of new and more forceful complaints from the *Conversos* flocking to Rome, and perhaps as a rebuke to the impatience of the King. For on May 13, while the Court was at Córdoba, Fernando had written His Holiness a vigorous letter, protesting against the letters of pardon that Sixtus continued to give the fugitives in Rome. Some of the New Christians returned to Spain with their letters, only to find their estates confiscated and their lives in danger. Fernando asked the Pope to revoke the concessions made, saying they had been obtained by “the importunate and astute persuasions” of the *Conversos*, and that he did not intend to honour them; but he signed himself, “Your Holiness’s very humble and devoted son, who kisses your holy feet and hands, the King of Castile and Aragon.”¹⁴

In September of the same year Queen Isabel wrote to the Pope independently of Fernando, and later, probably in December, sent an autograph letter, assuring Sixtus of her filial obedience and devotion, protesting that the *Conversos* in Rome, with their usual duplicity, had deceived him about their “conversions” and the situation in Spain generally, and suggesting that a remedy for existing abuses be sought in the creating of a Court of Appeals, not at Rome but in Spain, where the judges would be familiar with the peculiar local conditions. The text of her communication has not been found, but its tenor is clear from the reply of Pope Sixtus, dated February 23, 1483, to “your letter written by your own hand.” Cardinal Borgia, the Vice-Chancellor, had read the Queen’s letter to him some while before, he said, but ill health had prevented his making an earlier reply. After approving of her nomination of Cardinal Mendoza to the see of Toledo to succeed Carrillo, he continued:

“Your letter is full of your piety and singular devotion to God. We rejoice exceedingly, daughter very dear to our heart, that so much care and diligence are employed by Your Highness in those matters so eagerly desired by us”—evidently, from the context, justice and mercy. Yet the Pope assured the Queen that he was not wholly lacking in sympathy for her attitude toward the Judaizers in Spain, and had not been deceived by them. “We have always striven to apply suitable remedies for the wretched folly of those people, as for a pernicious disease,” he wrote, and a little later he referred to them as a “treacherous and wicked kind of men.” He approved of the Inquisition as such, and even in its extension, provided the Inquisitors did not act cruelly and against the provisions of canon law.

Evidently Isabel had written that she had made every effort to follow the Pope’s wishes, for he replied, “It is most gratifying to us that you should conform to our desire, in punishing the offences against the Divine Majesty with such care and devotion. Indeed, very dear daughter, we know that your person is distinguished by many, royal virtues, through the divine munificence, but we have commended none more than your devotion to God and your enduring love for the orthodox faith.”

Though she seemed to fear he might believe that in punishing “those faithless men who, pretending to the name of Christians, blaspheme and crucify Christ with Judaical treachery,” she was actuated “more by ambition and by greed for temporal goods than by zeal for the faith and for Catholic truth, or by the fear of God,” the Pope added, “be assured that we have had no such suspicion.¹⁵ For if there are not lacking those who, to cover up their own crimes, indulge in much whispering, yet nothing from that source can persuade us of any evil on your part, or that of our very dear son, above-mentioned, your illustrious consort. Your sincerity and devotion to God are known to us. We do not believe every spirit. If we lend our ears to the complaints of others, we do not necessarily lend our mind.”¹⁶

The Pope promised to discuss with the Cardinals the Queen’s petition for a Court of Appeal in Spain; “and according to their advice, so far as we may be able before God, we shall endeavour to grant your will. Meanwhile, very dear daughter, be of good spirit, and, cease not. to pursue this pious work, so pleasing to God and to us, with your usual devotion and diligence; and be assured that nothing will be denied to Your Highness that can honourably be granted by us.”

The Pope made it clear, however, that while he did not blame the King and Queen personally for the abuses at Seville, he was far from being convinced that all the complaints of the New Christians were groundless or hypocritical. “Since we behold, not without wonder, that which proceeds, not from your intention or that of our previously mentioned beloved son, but from your officials, who, having put aside the fear of God, do not shrink from laying the scythe to an unseemly harvest, from breaking our provisions and the apostolic mandates... without being hindered or retarded, as is obvious, by any regard for censures—this, since it is offensive to us, and foreign to your custom and station, and the respect due to us and to the apostolic chair and your own equity, we have caused to be written to Your Serenity. Therefore we urge and require that you carefully avoid censures of this kind, to be feared by any of the faithful whomsoever,

nor suffer so evident an injury to be inflicted upon us and upon this Holy See; and in this manner let it be carefully provided that the liberty and apostolic right which your illustrious progenitors, to their great glory, were zealous to defend and increase, may not appear to be wronged or diminished in the time of Your Highness. For thus the Lord, in whose power are kings themselves, will direct your desire, the favour of the Apostolic See aiding you; He will cause your posterity and your affairs to flourish; and all things will happen to Your Highness, walking in the right way, according to your wish.”

With these solemn words the Pope concluded. He discussed the matter with the Cardinals, and in consequence decided to try the expedient suggested by the Queen. On May 25, 1483, he issued a bull saying that “although it is the sole and peculiar right of the Roman See, over which we preside, not by our own merits but by the Lord’s disposing, to receive the complaints and appeals of all that are heavily oppressed, and take them to the bosom of our mercy,” yet in the present instance he was willing to appoint as judge for Castile and Leon, the learned Inigo Manrique, Archbishop of Seville, with authority to receive all appeals, including those pending in the Roman Curia, and to extend protection to those deserving it.

Sixtus did not allow Fernando and Isabel to appoint Manrique, but named him directly, and notified him personally of the appointment in a brief despatched the same day, bidding the Archbishop accept the burden of the office. It would be grievous and laborious, said Sixtus, but his merit would be all the greater in the eyes of God and of the Holy See.

On the same day the Pope removed from office Christopher de Galves, Inquisitor in Valencia, who, he said, had acted impiously and imprudently. The Pope notified both the sovereigns and Manrique of his decision, and asked the Archbishop to co-operate with the Crown in seeing to it that the harsh activities of Galves ceased immediately.

The new Court of Appeals was not successful, possibly on account of the age of the Archbishop and the magnitude of his task, possibly on account of the interference of King Fernando. Fugitive *Conversos* from Seville continued to arrive in Rome, asking the protection of the Pope and asserting that the Court of Appeals was so severe that they dared not appeal to it.

Although Sixtus received them with great kindness, his health was now failing and he was beset with many vexing problems. In 1482 his nephew Girolamo Riario had joined the Venetians in their war against Ferrara and Naples, and Papal troops under Roberto Malatesta had defeated the Neapolitans near Nettuna. The Pope made peace, to prevent Venice from growing too powerful for the future security of Italy. In retaliation, the angry Venetians threatened in 1483 to bring the Turks back into Italy. Their ambassador left Rome in February, 1483. Sixtus proclaimed an interdict against Venice, and Louis XI expelled the Venetian ambassadors from Paris. The Venetians then threatened to call a general council to depose Sixtus. He replied that he was willing to have a general council, provided it was held in the Lateran at Rome.

All this while the Pope had kept an anxious eye on the progress of the new Court of Appeals at Seville. Morillo was probably removed from office, for when an assembly of the Inquisition was held in 1483, that domineering official had disappeared. And on August 2, 1483, the Pope issued a pronouncement of historic importance, which definitely put an end to the uncanonical or abnormal inquisition. In a bull ten pages long, addressed not to the sovereigns but “*ad futuram rei memoriam*,” he reviewed the Spanish Inquisition at some length, summarized his previous bulls, as a matter of record, and recalled the reasons why he had appointed Manrique. He professed himself entirely displeased with the experiment. Cases before the Archbishop or his deputies had been subject to long and unfair delays, on the pretext that the Archbishop himself would give attention to them, but the royal officers had shown contempt for his authority. In future, said the Pope, “we wish that the said Archbishop shall proceed not by himself only, but through, the official jurisdiction of his ordinaries, with the said Inquisitors,” in expediting appeals. Complaints from Seville indicated that the rigour of the Inquisitors “exceeded the

moderation of law.” The accused were denied safe access to the Court of Appeals, and many *Conversos* of both sexes who had Papal letters of pardon were afraid to present them, since they heard that their effigies had been burned by the secular officials.

After conferring with the most learned of the Cardinals, the Pope decided to have all such cases reopened, heard, and determined with justice and expedition. “And meanwhile, because the shame of public correction has led the erring ones into such a wretched state of despair that they choose rather to die with their sin than to live in disgrace, we have resolved that such persons must be relieved, and the sheep who are lost must be led through the clemency of the Apostolic See to the fold of the true Shepherd, Our Lord Jesus Christ.” Therefore he commanded that complete freedom of appeal be guaranteed all persons, and that all penitents, whether heretics or Judaizers, be received, absolved and admitted to penance secretly and circumspectly. Even those pronounced heretics or burned in effigy or otherwise punished must be allowed the full liberty of appeal, and when absolved and penanced must be completely reinstated and unmolested in any way. *Conversos* whose appeals were pending in the Roman Curia must not be prosecuted under any pretext. “They must be treated and considered as true Catholics.”

Anticipating the lines that Shakespeare¹⁷ put into the mouth of Portia a century later, Sixtus concluded:

“Although human nature is surpassed in all things by the divine nature, *it is mercy alone that makes us like to God*, in so far as human nature itself is capable... and therefore we ask and exhort the said King and Queen in the heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, that imitating Him, whose way is always to pity and to spare, they should wish to spare their citizens of Seville and the natives of that diocese who recognize their error and implore mercy, so that if henceforth they (the penitents) wish to live, as they promise, according to the true and orthodox faith, they may obtain indulgence from their majesties just as they receive it from God... and that they may remain, abide, live and pass safely and securely, night and day, with their goods and their families, as freely as they could before they were summoned on account of the crimes of heresy and apostasy.” Any who oppose the Pope’s desires are threatened with the indignation of God and the most severe censures and penalties of the Church.¹⁸

Eleven days later, August 13, 1483, Sixtus dispatched a brief suspending the operation of the bull of August 2, explaining that some to whom he had shown it had raised new objections which he wished to consider more fully. Historians have dealt most unjustly with Sixtus on this score, without giving any English versions by which the reader might form his own opinion of what the Pope actually said. Lea ridicules the claim that “the Papacy sought to mitigate the severity of the Spanish Inquisition,” but passes over in silence all the fervent and obviously sincere utterances of Sixtus and other Popes that prove his statement false. Llorente makes the error of saying that Sixtus “revoked” the bull of August 2— as if a suspension with the intent to reconsider and perhaps amend were equivalent to revocation. The Jewish historian Graetz, whose prejudiced work has poisoned the whole Jewish world, informs us that Sixtus “recalled the bull,” saying “that it had been issued with too great haste.” Bergenroth states that Sixtus suspended his bull *the following day*, as if he had whimsically changed his mind overnight! The more popular Sabatini informs his wide public that “the brief” (*sic*) of August 2 “does not appear to have been even dispatched.” Yet it was dispatched, for we know that it was received by the bishop of Évora in Portugal and published by him on January 7, 1484— five months after its temporary suspension on August 13— a strong indication that after due consideration Sixtus permitted his first text to stand;¹⁹ and the Bishop later cited this bull of August 2 in censuring the Inquisitors of his diocese for their severity. Since Lea and Sabatini, at least, had access to the documents published by the Royal Academy of History of Madrid in 1889— they mention them— their misrepresentation of Sixtus cannot be attributed to ignorance alone. After all the efforts that have been made to paint this Pope as black as possible, the fact remains on record that Sixtus, after his merciful plea of August 2, continued receiving appeals and granting letters of indulgence, in the spirit of his bull of that date. It is on record, too, that the succeeding Popes Innocent VIII and

Alexander VI both insisted upon the observance of the merciful principles laid down by Sixtus in that document. But the argument is clinched in a still more emphatic way, as will appear later, by no less a personage than Torquemada himself.

The controversy between the Holy See and the Spanish crown had now reached what appeared to be an acute stage. Sixtus felt that he had taken the only position possible for the head of the Church with the information before him. But Isabel and Fernando still believed that the Pope did not fully understand the gravity of the Jewish problem in Spain, and that his policy, if carried out, would throw the Inquisition ultimately into the hands of the Spanish Bishops, so many of whom were of Jewish descent that, granting their faith to be sound, their natural sympathies would be fatal in the end to the Holy Office. This, in fact, was exactly what had happened in the past, and Sixtus himself had recognized the difficulty to the extent of requesting, early in 1483, that bishops and ordinaries of Jewish descent refrain from any participation in the Inquisition.

The upshot of all this was a compromise. Queen Isabel probably pleaded that the abuses could be eliminated by a complete reorganization of the Holy Office under a responsible head, and at the suggestion of the invaluable Cardinal Mendoza she recommended to the Pope Fray Tomás de Torquemada, Prior of the Dominican convent of Santa Cruz at Segovia, whose qualifications had been amply demonstrated during the year and a half since his appointment as one of the eight. In October, 1483, Sixtus appointed this man Inquisitor General for Castile and Leon, and a few days later added Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia to his jurisdiction. By virtue of his office, the Prior became a member of "Our Council" and confessor to their Majesties.

Few men in history have been more cruelly caricatured by ignorance and malice than this self-effacing man of prayer who had vast and terrifying powers thrust upon him against his wish. A search of contemporary sources discloses no facts to support the monstrous legend that sectarian and rationalistic prejudice has built up about his memory. The genesis of the legend is not difficult to trace. Propagandists eager to discredit Spain and the Church began by judging the Inquisition on partial or false evidence, by the standards of another age, and pronounced it wholly evil. From that point they reasoned that any man involved in it must have been wicked. The Inquisitor General must therefore have been a Nero of iniquity. A similar reasoning in the year 2300— assuming for the sake of argument that, say, capital punishment should be abolished before that date— could brand as bloodthirsty scoundrels and hypocrites all the judges who have pronounced sentence of death during our age. Thus our historians have dealt with Torquemada. But when one follows the legend back to the fifteenth century, it gradually dissolves, leaving a picture of a pleasant, kindly, industrious, able and modest man whose chief ambition in life was to imitate Jesus Christ.

The modern man who gasps incredulously at this essential and incontrovertible conception has probably fallen into the common but very unhistorical fallacy that sees only one side, the merciful side, of the complex character of the Redeemer. But to Torquemada the Christ was not some remote character in history, but an ever-present and living God. He held that mystical concept of the Crucifixion which is at least as old as Saint Augustine and as modern as a certain striking sonnet by E. A. Robinson: that the Passion of Christ was perpetuated as long as there were ambitious Caesars, fickle rabbles, Caiaphases and Annases, denying Peters and betraying Judases in the world.

During the long years in his bare cell at Segovia the Dominican friar had meditated on this idea; and though the Christ to whom he prayed daily was merciful above all things, He was not only the pardoner of the woman taken in adultery, not only the preacher of the Sermon on the Mount, not only the healer and the divine consoler, but He also it was who foretold the terrible destruction of Jerusalem and the punishment of the Jews for rejecting Him; who said that it would be better not to be born than to give scandal to a child; who spoke of an actual Hell and a day of judgment; who scourged the moneychangers out of the Temple on that first memorable Palm Sunday when He solemnly reminded the Jews of the prophecy that *the stone rejected by*

the builders would become the head of the corner, and concluded with this startling prediction: “Therefore I say to you, that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation yielding the fruits thereof. *And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.*”

Fray Tomás, like Queen Isabel, like all devout Catholics, had often pondered on such words as these, set down by one of the first Jewish Christians; and he had read in the same chronicle that five days afterward the Jewish multitude, deceived by their leaders, had cried, “His blood be upon us and upon our children.” And looking beyond his monastery walls, the friar had beheld for many years the rocky city of Segovia, where Don Juan Árias de Ávila had had the seventeen Jews executed in 1468 for the murder of a Christian boy on Good Friday, where the unscrupulous Pacheco had incited the massacre of 1474, and where every day the powerful Jews and *Conversos* continued to reject the Crucified, openly mocked and blasphemed Him, and by their exploitation of Church and State strove to bring His work to nought. That some strong hand should intervene to prevent the total wreckage of the Christian culture by its most determined enemies seemed to him only reasonable and just. This was perhaps the dominant idea in the man’s mind; and it is particularly important to notice it, since it was also the key to the psychology of Queen Isabel, who is chiefly responsible for making him an historical character. Whether Torquemada himself had Jewish blood in his veins has been disputed. Pulgar, himself a New Christian, said that he had. Zurita denies this, saying that he was “a person of holy life, and of clean and noble lineage.”²⁰ He was a nephew of the illustrious Cardinal Torquemada, and was born in Valladolid in 1420. At the time of his appointment as Inquisitor General, therefore, he was sixty-three years of age.

For twenty years he had been quietly presiding over an exemplary monastery and giving his monks the example of a selfless and studious life. Strict as he was with others, he was even more so with himself, for he never ate meat, he slept upon a bare plank, he wore no linen next to his skin. He was industrious and persistent. He was incorruptible by either bribes or flattery, and thus immune from one of the most telling weapons of the Jews and the crypto-Jews. Nor could the violence to which they resorted when other means failed deter him from doing his duty as he saw it, for he was fearless. The spiteful paragraph that Lea devotes to his character mentions that he went about with a retinue of 250 armed familiars of the Holy Office and 50 horsemen, and that he was so fearful of assassination that he always kept on his desk the horn of the unicorn, supposed to have mysterious powers of discovering and neutralizing poisons. Thus is added the touch of superstition needed to complete the conventional lampoon of a medieval friar. But it is clear that Lea follows the vindictive Llorente in taking these details from Paramo. Contemporary evidence is lacking— although it is probable enough, to be sure, that Queen Isabel insisted on the Prior’s having an adequate guard to prevent his assassination.

The chroniclers of his time— and they are frank enough in laying bare the weaknesses of great men— unanimously pay tribute to his lofty character, his administrative efficiency, and the confidence he inspired in the King and Queen. Two Popes, Sixtus IV and Alexander VI, praised his zeal and his wisdom. Severe he was with those whom he believed guilty, that is undeniable. But it is not true that he enjoyed inflicting pain for the mere sake of persecuting; nor was he a fanatic, as Savonarola was. A fanatic is a man from whom some idea, true or false, has shut out part of reality. But Torquemada saw the world about him very clearly, and knew just what he was doing. And money meant so little to him that he spent all the great sums given him by the grateful King and Queen, out of the confiscations, on various charitable and religious works— built the beautiful monastery of Saint Thomas Aquinas at Avila, enlarged that of Santa Cruz at Segovia, and erected some fine buildings in his native town of Torquemada.

The selection of Torquemada, as Lea admits, “justified the wisdom of the sovereigns.”²² He commenced with calm energy to reform and reorganize the Holy Office. He discharged Inquisitors who were unjust or temperamentally unfit, and named others in whom he had confidence. In general he made the procedure of the tribunal more lenient, and he seems to have

striven in every way possible to avoid the mistakes and abuses of the earlier French Inquisitors. He forbade the Inquisitors and other persons attached to the Holy Office to receive presents, under pain of excommunication, dismissal, restitution and a fine of double the gift— and he was a man to enforce his regulations. He insisted upon clean and well-ventilated prisons which were far better than those maintained by the civil authorities all over Europe. Every effort was made to safeguard the legal rights of the accused person; he was allowed counsel, and he could name his enemies, whose testimony, if they were among the witnesses, was then discarded. Torture was used, but sparingly, and only when other means failed to elicit a confession from one against whom there was strong evidence. Secret absolution was allowed where the crime had been secret. To provide funds for the Moorish war, the Inquisition adopted some expedients that are offensive to all our notions of equity. If an accused person did not appear when summoned he could be condemned as a heretic, his effigy could be burned, his goods could be confiscated and his children thus not only disgraced but deprived of their heritage. A dead man, known to have died a heretic, could be exhumed and burned, and all his property confiscated, even if his children were orthodox, though they generally were not. Torquemada ruled, however, that if a man executed as a heretic had children under age, part of their father's property must be granted to them and their education entrusted to proper persons. Queen Isabel was particularly interested in this aspect of the matter, and in numerous cases provided for the children of the deceased.

If we remember that heresy was considered very much high treason, and that high treason was punished everywhere in Europe not only by the most cruel kind of death but by confiscation of the estates of the guilty, the attitude of the Spanish sovereigns and of the Holy Office seems moderate by contrast. Compare the notarial records of a trial in the Spanish Inquisition under Torquemada, for instance, with those of some of the treason trials in England under Henry VII, Henry VIII, or Queen Elizabeth— consider, for instance, how Sir Edward Coke discredited the testimony of Sir Walter Raleigh, on trial for his life, on the ground that he was already guilty of the crime for which he was being tried!— and the advantage is all on the side of the Inquisition.²³ The royal correspondence concerning the affairs of the Holy Office appears to have been conducted chiefly by King Fernando. That he used the Inquisition as a source of revenue to finance the Moorish crusade can hardly be doubted. According to a memorial address to Charles V by the Licenciado Tristan de Leon in 1524, the enormous sum of 10,000,000 ducats was realized from the confiscations of condemned heretics during the period of the war. Yet Fernando seems to have been sincere in his efforts to repress harshness and delay on the part of Inquisitors, even when he lost money by interfering. His letters to them, urging leniency and justice, could not have been hypocritical, for they were meant to be confidential, and remained hidden for centuries. His scrupulous attention to the smallest appeals, even from obscure condemned persons in remote places, and his many orders revoking confiscations or granting alms to the children of the accused, show a desire to be merciful and just that even Lea, no friend of the Holy Office, repeatedly acknowledges with praise.

Many of the victims of Torquemada would undoubtedly have been put to death by the criminal courts of the State, even if there had been no Inquisition. For he enlarged the scope of the tribunal to include numerous offences that were only “implicit” heresy. Thus the Inquisition punished bigamists, blasphemers, church robbers, priests who married women and deceived them as to their status, priests who seduced women and induced them not to confess the sin, usurers, employees of the Inquisition who violated female prisoners, mixers of love potions, pretended saints and mystics, and “all who speculated on the credulity of the public.”²⁴

If an institution is to be judged, as de Maistre insisted, not only by the evils it caused but by those it prevented, the verdict of history must be that in the long run the Spanish Inquisition proved to be a life-saving organism, in the sense that it averted more deaths than it caused. Not only was Spain free from the terrible religious wars that cost hundreds of thousands of lives in the countries where Protestantism obtained a foothold, but she escaped almost completely the terrors of witchburning, which claimed 100,000 victims in Germany and 30,000 in Great Britain.²⁵ When the witch-hunting craze swept over Protestant Europe, Spain was not immune from that

curious impulse to persecute; but the Inquisitors claimed jurisdiction over witchcraft and necromancy, and after an investigation they announced that the whole business was a delusion. A dabbler in the black art was whipped or penanced here and there, but few if any lives were lost.²⁶

If Vacandard is right in estimating that about one-tenth of the persons accused were executed in the early Inquisition against the Cathari, it would appear that Torquemada's courts were far more merciful. For during his whole regime more than 100,000 persons were placed on trial, but only one per cent.— about 1,000— were put to death. In other words, Torquemada's Inquisition was only a tenth as deadly as the thirteenth-century tribunal.

On taking office, the Prior of Santa Cruz. proclaimed an edict of grace, during the term of which thousands of Judaizers confessed and were reconciled. After he formed a Suprema, or High Court, he organized four inferior tribunals at Seville, Córdoba, Jaen and Ciudad Real, and in 1484 he held a general synod of all Inquisitors at Seville, in the presence of the King and Queen, to impress upon all of them the need of fairness and uniformity. Several of the instructions issued by the assembly— numbers 3, 8, 10, 23, and 24— plainly are intended to carry out the merciful requests made by Pope Sixtus in his bull of August 2, 1483. And in December of the same year the Inquisitor General issued fourteen instructions that have somehow escaped the attention of most historians of the Inquisition, perhaps because Llorente omitted them. One paragraph in particular sheds illumination on two or three controversies of first importance. It proves beyond a doubt the falsity of Lea's contention that the Popes did not "attempt to mitigate the severity of the Spanish Inquisition." It indicates clearly that while Torquemada submitted to the supreme authority of the Holy See, he found as a Spanish judge that the merciful rulings of Pope Sixtus were something of a hindrance to him in his difficult task. It demonstrates that Sixtus not only allowed his bull of August 2, 1483 to stand, but in so doing created a precedent that Innocent VIII followed. It shows too, that while Isabel and Fernando went so far as to prepare an order forbidding the use of Papal letters of indulgence in Castile, they forbore to publish it pending an appeal to Innocent.

"Since in the time of Pope Sixtus IV of good memory," wrote Fray Tomás, "there emanated from the Roman court certain orders and bulls and excessive rules for penitence against equity *to the detriment of the Inquisition and its ministers*, Their Highnesses command that letters and provisions be read which together are general for all the realm, by which are prevented and can justly be prevented the execution of the said orders and bulls if any persons ask for them and desire to use them *until the Pope may be consulted* and informed of the truth by command of Their Highnesses; for it is not to be presumed that the intention of the Holy Father would be to cause any hindrance to the affairs of the holy Catholic faith; *but the said provisions of Their Highnesses shall not be published until it is seen whether Pope Innocent VIII, newly elected, will concede certain bulls and mandates in place of those which have been sent from his court to the detriment of the Holy Inquisition.*"²⁷

There could hardly be a more convincing testimony of the delicacy of Torquemada's position, his temptation and that of the sovereigns to sacrifice the interests of the Church to the royal supremacy, and the restraint the Popes exercised over the Holy Office and over the impatience and the pride of kings than this complaint of an Inquisitor General that the Roman Curia had issued excessively merciful rules "to the detriment of the Inquisition." The decision of Innocent was adverse, and both Torquemada and the sovereigns were compelled to accept it.

A month later Torquemada issued fourteen additional instructions, chiefly concerned, like the first, with carefully safeguarding the imposition of fines and confiscations, and preventing the negligence, corruption or excessive rigour of the Inquisitors. He commands them to send full information of all the affairs of the Holy Office either to "our lord the King, or to me." The confiscations, he says, are "to pay the costs of the war and of other pious works, and to pay the salaries of the Inquisitors and other ministers engaged in the Holy Inquisition." Accused persons

who are sick or have some other good excuse when summoned before the Inquisition must be treated mercifully even if they appear after the expiration of the edict of grace. . .

When the King and the Queen went to Tarazona early in 1484 to preside at the Aragonian Cortes, they took Torquemada with them to make arrangements for the revival of the Inquisition there; and because the opposition was even greater than it had been at Seville, they first took the precaution of demanding from all the delegates a promise to accept the jurisdiction of the Holy Office. On the fourth of May, Torquemada appointed as Inquisitors for Aragon Fray Gaspar Juglar, a Dominican, and Maestre Pedro Arbues of Épila, a member of the Order of Canons Regular, attached to the metropolitan church at Saragossa.²⁸ The Inquisitor General himself apparently arranged the first *auto da fe*, held in the Cathedral at Saragossa, and four persons were penanced and reconciled. There were no executions.²⁹

The penitents were fined, however, and the New Christians, who had been so secure in their wealth and power that they had openly attended the synagogues and mocked the Christian religion, saw clearly that the King and Queen counted on them for a large pecuniary harvest. They began to organize to prevent the threatened confiscations. Most of the political power of Saragossa and of all Aragon was theirs. The governor of Aragon was a *Converso*; so were most of the members of the Cortes, most of the judges, most of the lawyers. Aragon, in fact, was being ruled by a Jewish plutocracy operating through the crypto-Jews who professed Christianity.

With such influence it was not difficult for them to organize a formidable protest against the Inquisition on the ground that it was contrary to the *fueros*, or charters of liberties, to confiscate property for heresy, or to prosecute without giving the names of witnesses. This was calculated to appeal to the strong national pride and independence of the Aragonese. A great meeting of the four estates of the realm was held in protest, and two monks were sent to Córdoba, whither the sovereigns had returned, to ask them to suppress the Holy Office.³⁰

When these protests failed to move Fernando and Isabel, the Jews had recourse to a weapon they had often found useful in Spain. They collected huge sums of money to bribe officials of the Court to influence the King and Queen. It appears that they even attempted to bribe the sovereigns themselves. "They offered large sums of money," says Zurita, "and (promised) on that account to perform a certain designated service, if the confiscation were removed; *and especially they endeavoured to induce the Queen, saying that she was the one who gave the more favour to the General Inquisition.*"³¹ But the Queen had made up her mind, and could be neither persuaded nor bribed.

It is strange that when bribery failed the Jews were not deterred by the unfortunate ending of the Susan conspiracy in Seville from a similar resort to violence. Perhaps their greater political authority persuaded them that they could defy the double Crown. A large group of Jewish millionaires who outwardly professed Christianity held a meeting in the Mercado in the residence of Luis de Santángel, head of the numerous family of bankers, money-lenders, lawyers and farmers of taxes, who were descended from the converted Rabbi Azarías Ginello. Among them, besides Santángel himself, were Sancho de Paternoy, Chief Treasurer (Maestre Racional) of Aragon, who had a seat in the synagogue of Saragossa, though he pretended to be a Catholic; Juan Pedro Sanchez, brother of King Fernando's treasurer; Alfonso de la Caballeria, Vice-Chancellor of Aragon; Pedro de Almazan, Mateo Ram, Juan de la Badia, and others— all men of high influence. They decided to have the Inquisitors murdered, as a warning to the sovereigns. Don Blasco d'Alagon undertook to collect a fund of 10,000 reals to reward the assassins. Juan de la Badia assumed the direction of the affair, and hired several desperadoes.

The conspirators sent a letter to Gabriel Sanchez, King Fernando's treasurer for Aragon, who was then with the Court at Córdoba, telling him the whole plan. He replied, giving his approval, and predicting that the murder would end the Inquisition in Aragon.

The original plan was to kill Pedro Arbues de Épila, the Assessor Martin de la Raga, and the new Inquisitor Micer Pedro Frances— for Juglar died soon after his appointment, poisoned, it was said, by some *rosquillas* (sweet cakes) given him by some crypto-Jews.³² Gradually, however, the plans appear to have centred more and more about the person of Pedro Arbues.

All accounts agree that he was a holy and learned man of retiring disposition, who had accepted the office of Inquisitor at the royal command with the greatest reluctance, having no taste for authority and knowing how perilous the task would be. His activities so far had consisted largely in obtaining evidence of Judaizing. He was an eloquent preacher and had preached at the second *auto*, June 3, 1484. He is said also to have had the gift of prophecy.

Plans for his assassination were carefully developed for several months, during which, considering the large number of accomplices of both sexes, secrecy was preserved with remarkable success. Three times the cut-throats assembled at various churches to waylay the Inquisitors, but each time the victims escaped. On one occasion they planned to throw the Assessor Martin de la Raga into the river, but he happened to have two cavaliers with him.

On the night of September 14, 1485, the assassins sought Pedro Arbues at his lodgings, and later at the church, where he was accustomed to pray; but he eluded them. The following night they hid themselves in the church and waited for him in the darkness among the pillars.

At midnight a dim white figure came through the door of the cloister. It was the Inquisitor Arbues, and in one hand he held a short lance— for he evidently knew of the design upon his lodgings— and in the other a lantern. Walking to a spot below the pulpit on the epistle or right side of the altar, he laid his lantern and the lance beside a pillar, and kneeling down before the Blessed Sacrament was soon lost in prayer, saying the office of Matins. The assassins crept slowly along the dark aisles until they came to the flickering edge of the circle of light in the centre of which knelt Pedro Arbues in his white robe.

“There he is, give it to him!” whispered de la Badia to the French Jew, Vidau Durango. Stealing up behind the priest from the choir, Durango leaped forward and stabbed him in the back of the neck. The other ruffians closed in, and Esperandeo ran the kneeling man twice through the body with a sword. Pedro Arbues cried out, “Praised be Jesus Christ, that I die for His holy faith!”³³ and fell, while the assassins fled.

When the clergy of the Church came running in with lanterns, the wounded man repeated the same words, says Zurita, “and others in praise of Our Lady, whose hours he had been reciting.” Before dawn, the streets were crowded with angry men, crying, “To the fire with the *Conversos!*” and undoubtedly one of the periodic massacres would have ensued, if Don Alonso de Aragon, the Archbishop and King Fernando’s natural son, had not mounted a horse and ridden among the mob, assuring the people that justice would be done.

Peter Arbues died in the middle of the following night. During the twenty hours since the assault he had spoken no word against his murderers, “but always glorified Our Lord till his soul left him.” He was buried the following Saturday³⁴ in the Cathedral close to the spot where he had fallen. As he was laid in the sepulchre in the presence of a great throng, some of his blood which had fallen profusely on the flagstones and had dried there, suddenly liquefied and bubbled up; and to this fact, says Zurita, “Juan de Anchias and Antic de Bages and other notaries who were present testified with public acts.” Lea suppresses the highly important fact that records were made by eye witnesses of considerable intelligence, and dismisses the miracle with a characteristic sneer.

From the day of his death Peter Arbues was venerated in Saragossa as a martyr. It was said that the holy bell of Villela had tolled for the fourth time, untouched by human hands, on the night of his murder. In 1490 the city government of Saragossa commanded that lamps be kept burning

day and night at his tomb; and King Fernando and Queen Isabel caused to be built on the spot a fine statue bearing the inscription, "Happy Saragossa! Rejoice that here is buried he who is the glory of the martyrs." He was canonized on June 29, 1867, by Pope Pius IX. Thousands of persons still pray at his sepulchre, which, by an interesting coincidence, is near the spot where Saint James the Apostle first preached the gospel of Christ in Spain.

Far from having the effect that the Jews had hoped for, the assassination of Saint Peter Arbues gave the Inquisition a free hand in Aragon. As soon as the King and Queen learned of the event, they sent orders through Torquemada from Córdoba that every one concerned in the crime must be tracked down and punished. Scores of fugitives, including whole families of prominent Jews, fled to France and other countries. The chief offenders, however, were caught before they crossed the borders and executed at various times during the following three years. On June 30, 1486, the hands of Vidau Durango were cut off and nailed to the door of the House of Deputies, after which he was beheaded and quartered. Juan de Esperandeo suffered a similar fate. Juan de la Badia, another of the chief assassins, committed suicide in prison by breaking a glass lamp into pieces, and swallowing the fragments, on the day before he was to have been executed in January, 1487. His corpse was dragged through the streets and beheaded. Mateo Ram, who supervised the murder, had his hands cut off and was then burned.³⁵

With public opinion now strongly on its side, the Holy Office proceeded with vigour to prosecute the powerful New Christians who had been openly insulting and ridiculing the Christian religion. In a series of inexorable trials, during which every effort at bribery and corruption failed, Torquemada little by little shattered the power of the great Jewish plutocracy of Aragon, and turned the proceeds of the numerous confiscations into the war chest of the Moorish Crusade. In this he had the whole-hearted support of King Fernando and Queen Isabel.

NOTES (pp. 623-5)

1 Fita has published authenticated texts of the bulls of Sixtus pertaining to the Inquisition in the *Boletin*, Vol. XV, pp. 442-490, and has pointed out numerous errors and omissions in the versions given by Llorente.

2 Pulgar, *Crónica*.

3 Pulgar, *Crónica*.

4 Pulgar, *Crónica*.

5 Pulgar, *Crónica*.

6 Dr. Hefele, in *Der Cardinal Ximenes*, says that the Spanish left Rome as a protest against the Pope's leniency toward the *Converso* fugitives, but the evidence does not appear to support this view.

7 Pulgar, *Crónica*.

8 Pulgar, *Crónica*.

9 Pulgar, *Crónica*.

10 Pulgar, *Crónica*.

11 *Boletin*, Vol. XV, p. 462.

12 *Boletin*, Vol. XV, p. 462.

13 *Canticle of Canticles*, II, 15.

14 Bergenroth, in the introduction to the first volume of his *Calendar of State Papers*, quotes Fernando directly as saying, "*Haec concessionibus sunt importunae et eis nunquam locum dare intendo. Caveat igitur Sanctitas Vestra impedimenta sancto officio concedere.*" What the King actually wrote was, "*Et si per dictorum neophitorum importunas et astutas persuasions la comcessa forsitan fuerint eis nunquam locum dare intendo. Caveat igitur S. V. contra dicti negotii prosecutionem; (sic) quicquid impedimenta concedere et si quid concessum fuerit revocare et de nobis ipsius negotii cura confidere non dubitare.*" Bergenroth's misquotation has made the King call the Pope's concessions importunate, whereas it is obvious that Fernando was referring to the "importunate and astute persuasions" of the *Conversos*. It is to be hoped that Bergenroth was more accurate in decoding and translating the diplomatic correspondence of Fernando and Isabel, for his work is still the only available source on certain aspects of their

relations with Henry VII and others. The complete text of Fernando's letter is published by Lea in the appendix of his *History of the Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. 1. Bergenroth gives the same reference, *Arch. Gen. de la corona de Aragon in Barcelona, Registros*, Vol. 3684.

15 This document has been very generally misrepresented. The *Jewish Encyclopedia* informs us that Sixtus hinted that Queen Isabel was urged to rigour "by ambition and greed for earthly possessions, rather than by zeal for the faith and true fear of God." The Pope said just the opposite. And Prescott makes the equally absurd statement (Vol. I, p. 313) that Sixtus was "quieting the scruples of Isabella respecting the appropriation of the confiscated property."

16 *Boletin*, Vol. V, p. 468.

17 See *Shakespeare, Actor-Poet*, by Clara Longworth de Chambrun, for an interesting study of the sources of Shakespeare's philosophy. His tutor was the Jesuit martyr, Father Edward Hall.

18 *Boletin*, Vol. XV, pp. 477-487. Llorente's text is defective.

19 The text published by Fita in the *Boletin*, and followed in this work, is the one received by the Bishop of Evora. Royal officials prevented the copying and publishing of the bull in Spain. See *Boletin*, Vol. XV, pp. 477-87, *et seq.*

20 *Anales de la corona de Aragon*, Vol. XX, *cap.* 49: "Era varon de santa vida, y de limpia y noble linage." The word "limpia" (clean) was used of blood in which there was no Jewish admixture.

[sic; no f/n 21]

22 *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, p. 174.

23 The evidence of an actual trial under the Inquisition of Torquemada will be summarized in its proper place in Chapter xxv.

24 Hefele, *Der Cardinal Ximenes*, p. 356, Dalton's translation.

25 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*.

26 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. IV, pp. 217-24.

27 Lea published the Spanish text of these instructions in the appendix of the first of his four volumes on the Inquisition of Spain. He was the first to publish them, but his English text does not show that he took advantage of his valuable find to correct the obvious errors he makes at the expense of the Papacy and of the truth.

28 Zurita, *Anales, Lib. XX, cap.* 65.

29 At a second *auto*, June 3, two men were executed. According to a *Memoria de diversos autos* that Lea publishes, Pedro Arbues preached the sermon. There is no evidence in the document that he imposed the sentences. This is the only *auto* that he could have had any connection with, for no others were held for eighteen months, and his death occurred in September, 1485. Lea considers the *Memoria* authentic, though he admits that the handwriting is of the seventeenth or eighteenth century, and that there are discrepancies with other records.

30 Zurita, *Anales, Lib. XX, cap.* 65.

31 Zurita, *Anales, Lib. XX, cap.* 65.

32 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, p. 244.

33 Lea omits these words, though he makes liberal use of other parts of Zurita's narrative. See *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, p. 250, for a very prejudiced account of the whole affair.

34 Zurita, *Anales, Lib. XX, cap.* 65. Lea says, on his own authority, that the funeral was two weeks later, but gives no reason for controverting Zurita's statement that it occurred "on the following Saturday."

35 *Memoria de diversos autos*, Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, Appendix.

ISABELLA OF SPAIN

XXV

THE TRIAL OF BENITO GARCIA—EXPULSION OF THE JEWS—RITUAL MURDER

ISABEL and Fernando signed their names on March 31, 1492, to a document commencing thus:

“You know, or ought to know, that since we were informed that there were certain evil Christians in these our realms who Judaized and apostatized from our Holy Catholic Faith, on account of the considerable communication of Jews with Christians, we commanded the said (Jews) in the Cortes which we held in the city of Toledo in the past year 1480, to go apart in all the cities, towns and places of our realms... and gave them Jewries and separate places where they might live, hoping that with their segregation the matter might be remedied. And moreover we have endeavoured and given orders to have inquisition made in our said realms and seignories; which, as you know, has been done for more than twelve years, and is done; and many guilty persons have been sentenced by it, as is well known... (Yet) there remains and is apparent the great injury to the Christians which has resulted and does result from the participation, conversation and communication which they have held and hold with the Jews, who have demonstrated that they would always endeavour, by all possible ways and manners, to subvert and draw away faithful Christians from our Holy Catholic Faith, and separate them from it, and attract and pervert them to their wicked belief and opinion, instructing them in the ceremonies and observances of their law, holding fasts during which they read and teach them what they have to believe and observe according to their law, causing them and their sons to be circumcised... notifying them of the Passover feasts before they come... giving them and taking to them from their houses unleavened bread and meat slaughtered with ceremonies... persuading them as far as possible to hold and observe the law of Moses, giving them to understand that there was no other true law but that; the which is clear from many utterances and confessions, not only by the Jews themselves, but by those who were perverted and injured by them, which has resulted in great harm, detriment and opprobrium to our Holy Catholic Faith.”

Although they had long known of this situation, the sovereigns had hoped that the expulsion of the Jews from Andalusia, where they were doing the greatest harm, would suffice. But it had been plainly demonstrated that the crimes and offences of the Jews against the Faith were increasing daily, and that nothing would remove the root of the trouble but to drive them from the kingdom. “For when *some serious and detestable crime* is committed by certain ones of a certain college or university, it is right that the college or university be dissolved and annulled, and that the lesser be punished for the greater and the ones for the others; and that those who pervert the good and honest life of cities and towns by the contamination that can injure others be expelled from among the people, even for more trifling causes which are injurious to the Republic. How much more so for the greatest, most perilous and most contagious of crimes, as this is?

“On this account, we with the counsel and advice of many prelates and noblemen and cavaliers of our realms, and of other persons of knowledge and conscience in our council, having given much deliberation to the subject, have decided to command all of the said Jews, men and women, to leave our kingdoms, and never to return to them.” All but those who chose to be baptized must depart by July 1 and not come back under pain of death and confiscation. Anyone who received or sheltered the Jews after the date assigned would have all his goods confiscated. But until the time appointed for the exodus, all Jews would remain under the royal protection, and no one must hurt them or their property under pain of death. The Jews must take out of Spain no gold, silver, minted money, “nor other things forbidden by the laws of our kingdoms, save in merchandise not prohibited or concealed.”

For more than four centuries historians have been condemning this law and its authors without deigning to examine the reasons why the King and Queen took so radical a step and under what circumstances. Public opinion in Spain at that time was undoubtedly with them. It was widely believed that the edict was the direct result of a request by the young Prince Don Juan. According to a story in the Libro Verde de Aragon, King Fernando’s Jewish physician, Maestre Ribas Altas, used to wear about his neck a golden ball hung on a gold chain. One day when he was calling at the palace, the Prince opened the ball and found inside a tiny parchment on which was painted a figure of the crucified Christ with one of the physician in an unspeakably obscene and insulting posture. Don Juan was so shocked and disgusted that he became ill, and did not recover until his

father promised to expel all the Jews. This tale has been pretty generally rejected. Yet the fact remains that Fernando and Isabel did permit their personal physician to be burned at the stake. We know this from the account of the penancing of a woman named Aldonza at Saragossa in 1488, for Judaizing; the record says she was the mother of Doctor Ribas Altas, the King's physician, who was burned previously on account of the picture that Prince Juan found in the gold ball, and that this was the cause of the expulsion of the Jews.¹ Lea concludes that the doctor's execution could have had nothing whatever to do with the exodus, since it happened some years before the edict of 1492.² But Lea forgets— though he himself mentioned it on the previous page³— that Fernando and Isabel had been contemplating the expulsion of the Jews for several years. They had issued an edict expelling the Jews from Andalusia in 1482, the second year of the Inquisition, though they had later suspended the order; and Fernando, in 1486, had caused all Jews to be expelled from the archbishopric of Saragossa, where Ribas Altas was burned. No final conclusion can be formed on this matter until further evidence is obtained.

However this may be, and granting that innumerable lies were circulated about the Jews, it is a great mistake to assume their complete innocence of all the crimes attributed to them. In June 1485, at the critical time when Queen Isabel almost broke down in the tower of Vaena on hearing of the defeat of the Count of Cabra near Moclin, the Jews and crypto-Jews of Toledo planned to seize that city during a procession on the feast of Corpus Christi and murder many Christians; but the plot was detected and punished by the Inquisition.⁴ On Good Friday, 1488, a rabbi and several Jews mocked a large wooden crucifix at Casar de Palomero and toppled it over in the dust. Three of them were stoned to death in the ensuing riot, and the rabbi was burned by the Duke of Alba.⁵

Very deeply rooted was the belief of the Spanish Christians that Jews sometimes showed their hatred for Christ and his teachings by crucifying Christian boys on Good Friday, or by vituperating wax images of the Redeemer. In fact, a Cortes under one of Isabel's ancestors had passed a law saying:

“And because we have heard it said that in some places the Jews have made and do make remembrance of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ in a scandalous fashion, stealing boys and placing them on the cross, or making wax images and crucifying them when they could not obtain boys, we command that if such a thing be done henceforth in any place in our seignory, if it can be ascertained, all those who are implicated in the deed shall be arrested and brought before the King; and when he shall know the truth, he ought to command that they be put to death very ignominiously, as many of them as there may be.”⁶

We have here, of course, a variation of the old “ritual murder” charge which has followed the Jews in their wanderings in many times and places. Let it be said at once that there is no evidence that murder or any other iniquity has ever been part of any official ceremony of the Jewish religion. Several Popes and Catholic historians have defended the Jews from the blood accusation. “For some years,” wrote Pope Paul III in 1540, “certain magistrates and other officials, bitter and mortal enemies of the Jews, blinded by hate and envy, or as is more probable, by cupidity, pretend, in order to despoil them of their goods, that the Jews kill little children and drink their blood.”

It does not follow by any means, however, that Jewish individuals or groups never committed bloody and disgusting crimes, even crimes motivated by hatred of Christ and of the Catholic Church; and the historian, far from being obliged to make wholesale vindication of all Jews accused of murder, is free, and in fact bound, to consider each individual case upon its merits. With all possible sympathy for the innocent Jews who have suffered from monstrous slanders, one must admit that acts committed by Jews sometimes furnished the original provocation. And the charge given legal sanction in the law of Alfonso the Wise cannot be dismissed as an example merely of fanaticism or propaganda without the observation that from time to time the Spanish courts, justly or unjustly, did find certain Jews guilty of atrocious crimes. It was the Bishop Juan

Árias de Ávila, son of Jewish converts, who passed sentence of death on seventeen Jews of Segovia in 1468 for the crucifixion of a Christian boy.

Another case of the same sort during the most anxious years of the Moorish War— 1487 or 1488— gave Torquemada a powerful argument for the expulsion of the Jews, and was one of the chief factors, if not the decisive one, in the decision of Fernando and Isabel. It was the “serious and detestable crime” referred to indirectly in their edict of March 31.⁷ Only four months previously, in November of 1491, the whole nation had been stirred to wrath by the publication of the sentence. The burning of the two Jews and six *Conversos* who were convicted did not appease public opinion and the grave danger of another general massacre as horrible as that of 1391 must be reckoned among the weighty considerations that urged the King and Queen to their decision.⁸

The complete record of testimony in the trial of one of the accused has been available since Fidel Fita published it in 1887 in the Bulletin of the Royal Academy at Madrid from the original manuscript in his possession.⁹ Since then it has been no longer possible to pretend successfully that it was a popular myth or a bit of anti-Jewish propaganda released by the Inquisitor General to justify the edict of March 31. Yet almost no notice has been taken of this invaluable source-material outside of Spain. Mr. Sabatini gives a lengthy account of it in his *Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition*, but makes two omissions of the gravest character. And in Lea’s four fat volumes on the Spanish Inquisition, the whole case is dismissed with a sneer in one paragraph. Lea records that “in June, 1490, a *Converso* named Benito Garcia... was arrested at Astorga on the charge of having a consecrated wafer in his knapsack. The episcopal vicar, Dr. Pedro de Villada, *tortured him repeatedly* till he obtained a confession implicating five other *Conversos* and six Jews in a plot to effect a conjuration with a human heart and a consecrated Host, whereby to cause the madness and death of all Christians, the destruction of Christianity and the triumph of Judaism. Three of the implicated Jews were dead, but the rest of those named were promptly arrested and their trial was carried on by the Inquisition. After *another year spent in torturing the accused, there emerged a story of the crucifixion at La Guardia of a Christian child*, whose heart was cut out for the purpose of the conjuration. The whole tissue was so evidently the creation of the torture chamber that it was *impossible to reconcile the discrepancies* in the confessions of the accused.... The Inquisitors finally abandoned the attempt to frame a consistent narrative, and on November 16, 1491, the accused were executed at Ávila.”¹⁰

If this be true— let us keep in mind the italicized words and see whether or not the record confirms them— there is a ruthlessly logical conclusion which appears to have escaped the notice of Lea and some of the others. If the Inquisitors sent eight men to a shameful death without being convinced beyond a reasonable doubt of their guilt, the honest verdict of history cannot shrink from finding not only Torquemada and his judges but King Fernando and Queen Isabel, Cardinal Mendoza and several of the most illustrious professors of Salamanca University guilty of complicity in one of the most brutal judicial murders on record. But let us see, if possible, what really happened before venturing an opinion. Whatever our verdict may be, the evidence will at least throw more light on the actual operations of the Spanish Inquisition than any number of general assertions for or against it.

In June, 1490, a wool-comber named Benito Garcia, a *Converso* of about sixty years, stopped at an inn at Astorga. Some drunkards rifled his knapsack and found in it what appeared to be a Host from the altar of a Catholic Church. They dragged him to the vicar, Dr. Villada, who had him tortured twice— once with the “water cure” and once by two twists of a rope. The record we have of his confession on Trinity Sunday, June 6, says nothing of the Host or of any murder, but gives at some length what Benito revealed about the Judaizing of certain friends. In his youth he had voluntarily become a Christian, but about five years ago a secret Jew named Juan de Ocafia had urged him to give up Christianity, “saying that he should not believe in Jesus Christ, nor Holy Mary, and that the Law of Moses was the true one... and he believed it, and... performed many Judaical actions,” such as staying away from Mass, eating meat on Fridays, and so on. He

observed certain Jewish rites in the house of Ca Franco and his son Yucé, two Jews of Tembleque.¹¹ And ever since then he had been really a Jew at heart. During the past five years he had made false confessions to the curate at La Guardia, and had never received Holy Communion, believing that “it was all humbug, the *corpus Christi*,” and that “when he saw the *corpus Christi*, or they took it to any sick person, he despised it and spat.”¹²

On the first day of July, 1490, Ca Franco and his son Yucé, a lad of twenty, were arrested in consequence of Benito’s revelations, and taken to the prison of the Inquisition at Segovia. This prison had formerly been the house of the Marqués and Marquesa of Moya, who had donated it to the Holy Office.¹³ The use of a former residence of the Queen’s personal friend, Beatriz de Bobadilla and her husband Cabrera, suggests how scrupulously Torquemada had sought to avoid one of the abuses that had crept into the thirteenth-century Inquisition. The prisoners were kept on the two lower floors, and the Inquisitors had their offices above. From now on Yucé becomes the chief character in the mystery, for the dossier of his trial is the only one so far discovered, out of eight. Parts or fragments of others, such as the above confession of Benito, are included only as they have a bearing on the case of Yucé.

During July the young Jew became ill, and thought he was going to die. The Inquisitors sent a physician, Antonio de Ávila, a resident of Segovia, to prescribe for him. This Antonio was probably a converted Jew, for he understood Hebrew, and Yucé begged him to ask the Inquisitors to send him “a Jew who would say to him the things that the Jews say when they wish to die.” Here was an opportunity which the Inquisitors were not slow to grasp. On July 19, 1490, they sent one “Rabbi Abraham” to console the young prisoner. In reality the rabbi was a learned master of theology, Fray Alonso Enriquez, also a converted Jew whose name originally was Abraham Shesheth.¹⁴ During the conversation the “rabbi” asked why Yucé had been arrested. Yucé answered evasively, and as a matter of fact he had no definite knowledge on the point, for no charge had been made against him. The rabbi then said that if Don Abraham Senior knew of the case, he might get Yucé off, and he himself would ask him. Now, Don Abraham Senior was none other than the chief rabbi of Castile, a member of the synagogue of Segovia, and a man so rich, powerful and capable that the King and Queen had made him their factor general. The mention of his name encouraged Yucé to confide to the “rabbi” that he had been arrested for the *mita* (death) of a *nahar* (boy) after the manner of *otohays* (that man), and he was willing to have Don Abraham Senior know it, but no one else, “for the love of the Creator.” The “rabbi” departed, promising to return.

On the same day the physician Antonio de Ávila made a sworn deposition before a notary that he had overheard Yucé tell the “rabbi” that he had been arrested for the murder of a *nahar* after the manner of *otohays*, which he took to refer to Jesus Christ, “for so the Jews call Him in vituperation.” According to Antonio, Yucé said this happened about eleven years before. Here is a discrepancy, for all other references to the crime place it about 1488. But as Fita reasonably suggests, Antonio’s hearing may have been bad, or he may have confused the Hebrew words for “eleven” and “two,” which have similar sounds. Fray Alonso confirmed this conversation under oath on October 26, 1490, and added that he visited the prisoner a second time eight days later, but could get nothing out of him. On that occasion Yucé appeared to be in great fear of Antonio, the physician, he said.

What had happened in the meantime? Had some intimation of Yucé’s startling admission reached the synagogue of Segovia, and had some influential person found a way to warn the young Jew to say nothing? This is Fita’s conjecture. But when Yucé made a sworn deposition more than a year afterward—September 16, 1491—describing his conversation with the “rabbi” and confirming the statements of Fray Alonso and Antonio, he apparently had no idea that he had been imposed upon.

Whether or not Benito had spoken of a murdered boy in his confession at Astorga we may not know until his dossier has been found. But the striking admission of Yucé to the “rabbi” must

have shown the Inquisitors at Segovia that they were on the track of big game. Undoubtedly they went directly with their evidence to the Inquisitor General, who was then in Segovia at the convent of Santa Cruz, of which he was still prior. He considered the case so important that when the King and Queen summoned him to Court, on their leaving Cordoba for Granada on August 20, he deferred his journey for several days to organize the investigation.

On August 27, 1490, Torquemada commanded three of his most trustworthy judges to take charge of the case— Doctor Pedro de Villada, abbot of San Millan and San Marciel; Juan Lopes de Cigales, canon of Cuenca, and Fray Ferrando de Santo Domingo. He directed them to take possession of the persons and property of Yucé and Ca Franco, of Rabbi Mosé Abenamías of Zamora, of the four Franco brothers of La Guardia (New Christians, not related to Yucé and Ca); and of Juan de Ocafia and Benito Garcia, both *Conversos* of La Guardia. “And since at present we are occupied in many and arduous affairs,” wrote the Inquisitor General, “we cannot act in person, but confide in your fidelity, knowledge, experience and good conscience” to investigate thoroughly, “sentence and relax to the secular arm those whom you find guilty, and absolve and set free those who are without blame.” This is the usual calm and judicial language of Torquemada. Yet the Jewish historian Graetz would have us believe that he was “a priest whose heart was closed to every sentiment of mercy, whose lips breathed only death and destruction, and who united the savagery of the hyena with the venom of the snake.”¹⁵

The arduous business mentioned by Torquemada was probably the summons to Granada. We know, too, that about this time he had a conversation with Don Abraham Senior, in which he pleaded for certain tax concessions for the citizens of his native town of Torquemada. The great rabbi refused, saying he had already assigned the revenues of Torquemada for that year to Diego de la Nuela, but would do otherwise in future. It is a pity that we have no complete record of the conversation of the two powerful opponents, the rabbi and the inquisitor, disguising their hostility under polite phrases.

The dossier of Yucé now shows a lapse of two months, which may perhaps have been caused by efforts of influential Jews to have the proceedings quashed. The next examination of the prisoner by the Inquisitors was on October 27, 1490. He told them that about three years before, “more or less,” he had gone to La Guardia in the archbishopric of Toledo, to buy wheat to make unleavened bread for the Passover, of Alonso Franco, a shepherd, one of the four brothers. Alonso asked why it was necessary to have unleavened bread, and Yucé explained. They talked of one thing and another, until at last Alonso made the extraordinary confidence that he and his brothers one Good Friday had crucified a boy “in the form in which the Jews had crucified Jesus Christ.”

All this time there is no indication of any attempt to torture Yucé. When at last he was *threatened* with torture a whole year later, the fact was set down very casually, as a matter of course; and from time to time the torture of other prisoners was faithfully recorded by the notaries. The Spanish Inquisition seem to have had none of the squeamishness of their thirteenth-century forerunners about mentioning the “*tormentos*” by which evidence was obtained. When nothing is said of torture in connection with a confession, therefore, it is safe to assume that no torture was applied.

After another unexplained delay, during which the Inquisitors were proably [sic] examining the Francos of La Guardia, they transferred Yucé and the others to Ávila. The reason for this does not appear. Perhaps the prison at Segovia was too near the wealthy synagogue to which Don Abraham Senior belonged. Hernando de Talavera, former confessor to the Queen, must have given his consent to the transfer, for he was then Bishop of Ávila and his approval was necessary. *Six months and a half after Benito’s arrest*— Friday, December 17, 1490— Yucé was placed on trial and formally accused of Judaizing and murder by the Promotor Fiscal (or prosecutor) Guevara, who declared that the young Jew had attracted Christians to his belief, told them “that the law of Jesus Christ was a false and pretended law and that no such law was ever imposed or

established by God. *And with faithless and depraved mind he was associated with others in crucifying a Christian boy on a Good Friday, somewhat in the same way and with such enmity and cruelty as his ancestors had crucified Our Redeemer Jesus Christ, mocking him and spitting upon him and giving him many blows and other wounds to scorn and ridicule our holy Catholic Faith and the Passion of our Saviour Jesus Christ.*” Finally, the Promotor Fiscal said that Yucé had been engaged, as a principal actor, in an outrage upon a consecrated Host, with the intent of causing the Christians to go insane and die, and the Christian religion to perish, and the Jews to gain possession of the goods of all the Catholic Christians. He demanded sentence of death, saying, “And I swear before God and before this cross, on which I place my right hand, that I do not make this demand and accusation against the said Yucé Franco maliciously, but believe him to have committed all that I have said.”

“It is the greatest falsehood in the world,” replied Yucé, according to the notary Martin Peres; and he denied every charge the Promotor had made.

The Inquisitors then asked him whether he desired counsel, and he said yes. They appointed the Bachelor Sanç and Juan de Pantigoso— for under Torquemada’s rulings each prisoner was allowed two lawyers— to represent him. Five days later, December 22, Yucé asked for Martin Vasquez of Ávila as additional counsel, and the request was granted at once. On the same day Vasquez read to the Court the reply that the Bachelor Sang had drawn up in rebuttal of the Promotor’s charges. It was a vigorous and able defence, obviously the work of a good lawyer. First, he denied the jurisdiction of the court of Ávila, since Yucé lived in the diocese of Toledo. Further, he said the charge was “very general, vague and obscure; for in his accusation the said Fiscal does not express, nor clearly, the places, years, months, days, times, nor persons in which and with whom he says my client committed the crimes he accuses him of.” And Yucé, being a Jew, could not properly be accused of heresy or apostasy. If the Inquisitors admitted the accusation, it would be prejudicial to their consciences, and if they did, Sanç would appeal from their decision. Finally, he entered a complete denial of all the charges. His client was but a boy so ignorant that he did not even know the Law of Moses, and so engrossed in his trade of shoemaker that he had no desire to Judaize among Christians. If he had offended, he had done so unwittingly. Certainly he had nothing to do with crucifying a boy or making a charm with a Host. The attorney demanded that Yucé be set free, and his good name and all his property restored to him. Otherwise he asked that the Promotor Fiscal be instructed to give a bill of particulars, with names and places.

On January 22, the Fiscal replied that he was not obliged to be more specific than he had been, in such a case as this, and asked that testimony be admitted and the case put to the proof. The Inquisitors ordered both sides to present evidence in thirty days.

Sanç had scored a point for the defence when he denied the jurisdiction of the Court, and Torquemada, who was always a stickler for regularity, had to send to Cardinal Mendoza, then at Guadalajara, for permission to try Yucé at Ávila instead of at Toledo. The Cardinal wrote a letter on February 12, 1491, delegating his faculties as ordinary to the Inquisitors at Ávila.

On the ninth of April following, Benito Garcia was placed in a room directly under Yucé’s, and the two conversed, as ,the Inquisitors had intended they should, through a hole in the floor.

“Jew,” said Benito, “have you a needle to give me?”

“Only a shoemaker’s needle,” replied Yucé. “Where are you?”

“In this prison, below. And know that your father, Don Ca Franco, is here.”

“He could not be!”

Benito said he had seen him, for the *padres* had confronted them to see whether they knew each other. Benito, who seems to have been a garrulous fellow, said among other things that “he had become a wool-comber in an evil hour, and that the devil had led him there; and the dog of a

doctor (Villada), had given him two hundred lashes in Astorga, and a torment of water; and another night two *garrotes*." The lashes, as will appear presently, were not a torture, but a punishment. A *garrote* was the twisting of a cord about the arms or legs of a prisoner. It would appear from this statement that Benito was tortured twice at Astorga. He told Yucé that he had told them enough to burn him.

Presently Yucé began playing on a guitar.

"Do not play!" cried Benito from below. "Have sorrow for your father, for the Inquisitors have told him that little by little they are getting enough to burn him."

Benito heard Yucé say his morning prayer commencing, "*Helohay nesamá,*" and on one occasion he asked the young Jew to pray to the Creator to take them out of this prison, but he had little hope of it; for under torture he had said "more than he knew"—*mas de lo que sabia*, a phrase that might mean "more than was true" or "more than he meant to tell."

On the following Sunday Benito remarked that these Inquisitors were gods, and Yucé answered— according to what he told the Inquisitors afterwards— "Do not say so!"

"I say that they are worse than antichrists," insisted Benito. And he added that antichrist was he who was a Jew and turned Christian; and that his father had cursed him when he turned Christian forty years before. Presently he asked Yucé to lend him a knife that he might mutilate himself in such a way as to remove the evidence of his having been circumcised. [sic]

"Do not do that, you will die," said Yucé.

"To hell with death!"¹⁶ retorted Benito. "I had rather die that way than be burned."

He then scoffed at the Christian religion at some length, saying it was all idolatry, and asked several questions about the Jewish religion, which Yucé answered. "The Prior of Santa Cruz is the greatest antichrist," declared Benito. He advised Yucé, if he ever got free, to tell the Alcaide Pena of La Guardia, who had influence with the Queen and would get them all out of prison. The two hundred lashes given him at Astorga, he said, were for beating his children because they had gone to a Catholic church. And all the reward he had ever got for contributing to a new holy-water font for a church was the water cure at Astorga. He declared that "for the eyes that he had in his face he would not confess or know anything; that he, for what he had known, had lost body and soul; that they held him prisoner for his property, and for no other reason; and that if he got free, he would go to Judea."

This, at least, was what Yucé related to the Inquisitors when they made him a visit later on the same day. So far he had been careful not to incriminate his father or himself, any living Jews. He sealed the fate of the *Converso* Benito, however, by telling the Inquisitors, on the same day, that Maestre Yucá Tazarte, a Jewish physician, then deceased, had told him that he had asked Benito to get a consecrated Host, and Benito had got it by stealing the keys of the church of La Guardia and hiding them in the river. On that occasion Benito was arrested, but managed to get himself cleared after two days in jail. Tazarte, who it appears was a wizard as well as a doctor, told Yucé that he had planned to make the Host into a cord with certain knots, and to send it to Rabbi Peres, a Jewish physician of Toledo.

On the next day, April 10, 1491, the young cobbler told the Inquisitors that about four years before, more or less, his brother Mosé, now dead, told him that he and Tazarte, the four Christian Francos of La Guardia and Benito had made an agreement to use a consecrated Host in a charm to bring it about that "the justice of the Christians" could not harm them. Mosé asked Yucé to join them, saying he had the Host in his possession. Yucé replied that he was on his way to

Murcia, and did not care to. The conjuration failed. Two years later Mosé said that he and Tazarte had been to La Guardia to arrange for a second one.

Yucé voluntarily sent for the Inquisitors on May 7, 1491, saying he wished to declare more. He now remembered that he had asked his brother Mosé where the conspirators could hold the conjuration without knowledge of their wives, who were all Catholics. Mosé replied, in some caves between Dosbarrios and La Guardia, on the road going to Ocaña.

A month later, June 9, Yucé told the Inquisitors that about four years before he had gone “one evil day” to Tembleque to be bled by Maestre Yucá Tazarte. And he heard Mosé say that Tazarte and the Francos of La Guardia had made a charm *with the heart of a Christian boy* and a consecrated Host, that the Inquisitors might die if they attempted to take any action against the conspirators.

After a few more weeks in prison, Yucé made some highly interesting revelations on July 19, 1491, asking immunity for himself, and being promised it on condition that he told the whole truth. He explained his failure to confess previously by saying that all the conspirators had sworn an oath that, if they were arrested, they would tell nothing for a year, the period within which Tazarte promised that the Inquisitors would die, should they attempt anything. As Yucé had been arrested July 1, 1490, the year was up, and he had waited a few more days, evidently for good measure.

Put under oath according to the Jewish form, he said that about three years before all the prisoners were present in a cave between La Guardia and Dosbarrios, a little apart from the road on the right hand side going from La Guardia to Dosbarrios. Alonso Franco, one of the “Christians” of La Guardia, showed them the heart of a boy, which seemed not many days out of the body, and a Host, which he said was consecrated, both in a wooden box. Tazarte took them in his hand and went to a corner, where he said he had to make a certain conjuration to cause the Inquisitors to go mad and die within a year after they attempted anything.

The Inquisitors asked where the heart came from. Yucé replied that he did not know. But Alonso Franco said that he and some of his brothers had crucified a Christian boy and taken the heart from him. On a later occasion they had given a second consecrated Host, wrapped in parchment and tied with purple silk, to Benito, to take to a Jew named Mosé Abenamías, a rabbi, in Zamora, with a letter saying they were sending him a yard of cloth. Yucé thought Benito had gone first to Santiago, and then to Astorga, where he was arrested.

That afternoon Yucé remembered having seen the Conversos—the Francos, Benito and Juan de Ocaña—take a Christian boy, three or four years old, into the cave, and after they had stripped him, they crucified him on some crossed poles, and gagged him, buffeted him, pulled his hair, whipped him, spat on him, and crowned him with some thorns from a gorse bush. Alonso Franco opened the veins of both his arms and let him bleed for half an hour, and caught the blood from one arm in a copper cauldron, and that from the other in a “yellow cup such as they call *toscas* in Ocaña.” Lopé Franco whipped the boy, and Juan de Ocaña crowned him with thorns. Juan Franco opened the little victim’s side with a knife. Garcia Franco, the fourth brother, took out the heart from under the breast and put a little salt on it. Benito gave the boy buffets and pulled his hair. Maestre Tazarte spat on him, struck him, and pulled his hair. So did Mosé, the dead brother of Yucé. But Yucé and his father Ca did nothing; they were only innocent onlookers.

Garcia and Juan Franco took the small corpse from the cave, Juan holding the hands and Garcia the feet. Yucé didn’t know where they buried him, but later heard Tazarte say they had buried him in the valley of La Guardia. Yucé told Tazarte that it was *mal siglo de Dios* when he and his father got mixed up in such business.

Alonso kept the heart until they all gathered in the cave a second time, when Tazarte made his *conjuero*. Was it day or night? asked the Inquisitors. Night, said Yucé; and they had candles of white wax in the cave, and hung a cloak over the entrance to keep the light from being seen.

Asked whether any boy had been missing thereabouts at that time, he said he heard one was lost in Lillo, and one in La Guardia had gone with his uncle to the vineyards, and had never after been seen. The Francos in their business came and went to Murcia. They could easily have got a boy on the road, and no one would know. They had sardine barrels on their wagon, and some were empty. A boy could have been hidden in one of them.

All this was told by Yucé little by little in answer to numerous questions. Afterwards his deposition was read to him, and he confirmed it under oath.

Armed with the information they had, the Inquisitors turned their attention to Yuce's father, Ca, whom Yucé had definitely placed in the cave; and on the next day the old man— he was eighty— was sworn after the Jewish manner. He admitted that he and Yucé were in the cave between La Guardia and Dosbarrios, and that they saw the others bring a Christian boy and crucify him. It was the *Conversos*, however, who did this. He and his son Yucé were only spectators. The notary, summarizing his deposition, added "And he saw his son Yucé Franco give a little push to the boy, as is more fully set forth in the confession of the said Don Ca Franco, Jew." The dossier of Ca, containing his full confession, has not yet been found. But it is clear that he implicated Yucé. Probably the Inquisitors told him enough of Yucé's confession to make him believe that all was known, and further denial useless. Nothing is said of Ca's being tortured on this occasion.

During July, Benito was again placed under Yucé's room, and their conversations were carefully noted by an *alguacil*, who was listening. Yucé asked "Why did you accuse me?" and Benito replied, "Keep quiet, for I have not said anything about you."

On September 16 Yucé was asked whom he had talked with in the prison at Segovia. He related his conversation with "Rabbi Abraham." What had he meant by the *mita* of a *nahar* after the manner of *otohays*? The crucifixion of the boy in the cave by the Francos of La Guardia, said Yucé.

During the last week in September, the torture was applied to Benito, to Juan Franco, and to Juan de Ocaña, separately. All confessed, and their confessions agreed with Yucé's in all essentials. The discrepancies are slight, and such as commonly occur between two eye-witnesses of one event. Garcia Franco, placed under Yucé's room, told him that Benito had been tortured. If any of the others were tortured, he said, they must deny everything.

All this time the Inquisitors were trying to learn more about the identity of the murdered boy, and to incriminate Rabbi Abenamías at Zamora. He was examined later by another tribunal, but exculpated himself.

Three of the prisoners— Yucé, Benito and Juan de Ocaña— were asked separately on October 12 whether each would repeat his confession in the presence of the others. On consenting, they were confronted, and all repeated what they had said before. The stories agreed in all the main points, as to the boy, the crucifixion in the cave, the time. Yucé and his father and Juan Franco were confronted on the seventeenth, with similar results. "They said it was true enough," wrote the Notary Juan de Leon. Juan Franco admitted having cut out the child's heart.

All that had directly implicated Yucé so far had been his father's statement about the "little push" he gave the boy; but Benito now proceeded to draw him further into the vortex. He told the Inquisitors on October 20 that Yucé had pulled the child's hair and whipped him with the rest, saying they should crucify him, that "it was all humbug, the law of the Christians," that the

enchantment would cause all Christians to die and end their law, that they were all idolaters, and so were their saints. Benito confirmed this next day under oath.

On the same day Juan de Ocaña confessed that when the little victim was being scourged, his executioners all addressed him as though he were Jesus Christ, saying, “Traitor, deceiver, who, when you preached, preached lies against the law of Moses, now you shall pay here for the things you said in that time!” And the five Jews— Ca and his two sons and Tazarte and David— all said: “Now you shall pay here what you did in another time. For you thought to undo us and exalt yourself. All the worse for you! You have thought to destroy us, but we will destroy you as a false deceiver!” And when they crucified him, said Juan de Ocaña, *Yucé drew blood* from his arm with a little knife. Asked where the boy was from, the witness said Mosé, deceased brother of Yucé, had brought him from Quintanar to Tembleque on the back of an ass; and that he was the son of Alonso Martin of Quintanar, so Mosé said; and that Mosé and Yucé and their father Ca and Tazarte had brought him to the cave on the ass. In fact, it was Yucé who summoned the Franco brothers of La Guardia and Benito to the cave.

Here is the most serious discrepancy, for Yucé had said that Alonso Franco had obtained the boy. But as Sabatini has suggested, it is possible that Juan de Ocaña suspected or was told by the Inquisitors that Yucé had incriminated him, and in his fury sought revenge by placing both Yucé and Ca in major rôles, to ensure their being burned with him. This view is supported by the fact that one of the Franco brothers of La Guardia afterwards confessed to having obtained the boy. On October 21, 1491, the Promotor Fiscal Guevara added, to his indictment of Yucé, the charge of having vituperated Christ in the person of the boy, accused him of being a principal in the crime, and demanded judgment.

Now comes a most important part of the trial, of which absolutely no mention is made in Sabatini’s long account or in Lea’s summary paragraph. It is highly important not only in its bearing upon the probable guilt or innocence of the accused, but in the new light it throws upon Torquemada’s methods. The Inquisitor Fray Ferrando took all the evidence in the case to Salamanca, to the monastery of Saint Stephen, where Columbus had been received with such kindness after his rejection by the Junta of Córdoba; and there, on Tuesday, October 25, he submitted the whole dossier to a jury, including several noted Renaissance scholars who occupied the principal chairs at the University of Salamanca. There were seven members of this jury— Maestre Fray Juan de Santispiritus, professor of Hebrew; Maestre Fray Diego de Bretonia, professor of Sacred Scripture; Fray Antonio de la Pena, Prior of the monastery and candidate for a master’s degree in theology; Señor Doctor Anton Rodriguez Cornejo, professor of canon law; Doctor Diego de Burgos, professor of civil law; Doctor Juan de Covillas, professor of canon law in the college of the city of Salamanca, and Fray Sebastian de Hueta, religious of Saint Stephen’s monastery.¹⁶ Probably some of these men had discussed Columbus’s plan with him, and had helped to have his case reopened.

Each member of the jury was placed under oath, laying his hand on the cross and the Holy Gospels, and swearing to keep the proceedings secret until sentence was determined, and to “determine and speak the truth and vote on this process according to God and their consciences.” After three days they returned a unanimous verdict of guilty against Yucé and declared that he ought to be relaxed to the secular arm and all his goods confiscated.¹⁸ All that we have is their verdict in Yucé’s case; but it is a fair assumption that all eight dossiers were submitted to them. On October 26, the day after the meeting of the jury, the Promotor Fiscal and Yucé both appeared before the Inquisitor Villada, and demanded access to the depositions of all witnesses. The Inquisitor ordered copies and transcriptions of all the depositions to be given to each of the parties, with all facts and circumstances by which the names of witnesses could be learned omitted— this was customary to prevent the murder of witnesses by the relatives of the accused and gave the parties three days to file objections.

Yucé asked— probably under instructions from his counsel— for the names as well as the depositions of the witnesses against him, with a declaration of the day, month, year and place “of each thing”; for he admitted nothing except what he had already confessed, and still denied active participation in the crime. If the names and details were withheld, he would appeal “to whom the law provided” and he called upon the said notary to witness it. Guevara, the Promotor, objected, threatening to appeal on his side if the Inquisitor granted Yucé’s request. But the Inquisitor overruled the objections of the Promotor, “for he was ready to do justice,” he said, and he ordered the depositions given to Yucé, with the new details. The names apparently were withheld, however, for three days later he complained on this score when he presented a long and skilful defence drawn up by the Bachelor Sanç. He proceeded on the assumption that the chief witnesses against him were Juan Franco, Benito, and Juan de Ocaña, and he demanded that their testimony be excluded because of its discrepancies, because they had already confirmed his confession in his presence, and because they were all criminals and accomplices in the crime and hence untrustworthy. Under the rules of the Inquisition, wrote Sanç, the evidence of criminals could be admitted only when it concurred so indubitably as to force upon the judges the conviction of its truth; but such was not the case here.

Sanç made the further point that, since the witnesses against Yucé had previously sworn to the contrary of what they now confessed, they were perjurers: “and being such, no faith ought to be given them or can be attributed to them.” Their testimony was given with malice and hate on account of the truth that he spoke against them before the Inquisitors. “Since they know that their condemnation is certain, they wish that I likewise should be condemned with them.” He pleaded that he was a Jew and only a boy when the crime was committed, and repeated that though he was present he was only an innocent onlooker.

Taking up the testimony of his enemies individually, Yucé said that Juan Franco’s was vague and general, and did not state anything specific that Yucé had done to make him a principal. Benito had deposed that Yucé struck the boy and drew blood from his arm with a little knife, but he was the only one who said so. As for Juan de Ocaña, he testified that Yucé struck the boy and spat in his face, whereas it was Juan de Ocaña himself who had done these things.

Yucé’s defence was that of a man fighting desperately for his life, and under the circumstances it was a good one. The Inquisitors allowed the Promotor Fiscal three days in which to reply to it. He entered a general denial, and demanded that since it was obvious that Yucé was not speaking the truth, the Inquisitors formally put him to the *cuestión de tormento*, since “in a case of law of this kind it is demanded and permitted.”

The Inquisitor Villada said that he had heard all the Promotor had said, and that he felt obliged to deny his request for the torture of Yucé. A second request of the Promotor must have been granted, however, for four days later we find Yucé being taken to the torture chamber for the first time. The Inquisitors urged him “affectionately, with all humanity” to tell the truth. If he did so they would treat him mercifully, so far as conscience and justice would allow. As Yucé’s reply was not convincing, they ordered Diego Martin to take him to “the house where the torments were given,” and there he was stripped and tied to a ladder by hands and feet. This form of torture, known as the “water cure,” had been substituted by Torquemada for the more violent methods used in the thirteenth century; and barbarous as it appears to us, it was undoubtedly far less dangerous to life and limb than the strappado and the rack had been, nor did it inflict the excruciating mental torment of certain “third degree” methods used by the police in some American cities. The prisoner’s nostrils were gagged, his jaws held apart by an iron prong, and a piece of linen placed over his mouth. Water was slowly poured into the cloth, carrying it into the throat. The prisoner must swallow what water he could to make room for air to pass into his lungs. He experienced all the fear and some of the sensations of suffocation without actually suffocating; and if he struggled, the cords hurt his limbs. Furthermore, if he proved too stubborn, the attendant gave the cords a twist or a *garrote*.

Yucé was now informed that if he would not confess all he knew he alone would be responsible for whatever happened to him; and the young Jew, rather than take the “water cure,” said he would tell all he knew. Fifteen questions, formally drawn up in advance, were propounded to him. Where had Juan Franco obtained the boy? In Toledo; Juan had told him so before the others; and had kept the child in the inn called La Hos at La Guardia a whole day until the night of the crucifixion. Juan had said that when he went to Toledo to sell a cartload of wheat, he saw the boy in a doorway, and enticed him away with sweetmeats.

The Inquisitors were still curious as to why they had crucified the boy, instead of killing him in some other way to obtain the heart. Yucé replied that it was to insult Jesus Christ; and at this point, under fear of torture, he attributed to Benito and to the four Franco brothers some very lewd and blasphemous gibes, spoken to the child but intended for the person of Jesus. The murderers jeered also at the Blessed Virgin, and repeated a scurrilous account of the Incarnation that had been current among Jews for centuries.

In each case it was Tazarte the wizard who spoke first, and the others— all but Yucé and Ca— imitated him. Pressed further by the Inquisitors, Yucé now admitted that he and his father had joined in the chorus of foul insults. Tazarte had spoken first, then the Jews followed, and finally the Christians took up the vituperations, crying, “Villain, traitor, trickster,” and more scurrilous epithets.¹⁹

Asked further about the Host sent to Zamora, Yucé said that Rabbi Abenamías himself was not to perform the second enchantment, but was to have it done by a certain “wise man” of that town. Where had the Host been obtained? Alonso Franco had got it in, the Church of Romeral, from the sexton or sacristan. This was the Host given to Tazarte with the boy’s heart. But where did the other Host come from, that they had given to Benito? Alonso Franco said he had got it from the Church in La Guardia. Yucé didn’t know who had given the Host to Alonso. It was Alonso who first set the plot in motion by appealing to Tazarte for supernatural aid after he had been made to march in a procession as a penitent by the Inquisitors of Toledo.²⁰

Two days later, when Yucé was asked to confirm this confession he asked to have it read to him, and when it was read, said it was all correct, except that Garcia Franco and Juan Franco together had brought the boy to the cave, one remaining with him at La Hos, the other going to La Guardia and saying that he had broken the cart and had left the axle (no doubt the one used as part of the cross) to be repaired. And Yucé added further that he had been one of the six signers of the letter that had been given Benito to take to Zamora with the Host. Also, Tazarte had told them a filthy anecdote about the person of Jesus Christ.

The day after Yucé’s confession, his old father was summoned. After the usual formula, he said that it was Tazarte who had invited him and his sons to join the plot, saying that it was necessary to have five Jews in it as well as five Christians, to ensure its complete efficacy. The old Jew was now placed on the *escalera* and given a jar of water. Then, his tongue having been loosened, he was asked what words were spoken to the crucified boy. He confirmed Yucé’s testimony, saying that all had cried, “This villainous preacher!” and “You, why do you call yourself God, why do you do it? Are you not a man like us and the son of a man?... Go for a rogue! Why do you deceive the people? What a traitor you are, swindler, seducer of the world, liar— preaching such things!” First Tazarte said these things, then the Jews, then the Christians.

Why were such things said? To vituperate Jesus Christ, said Ca. Why had they crucified the boy instead of killing him some other way? This was necessary to cause all Christians to go insane and die, so that the Jews would remain lords of the land.

That same day Juan Franco was placed on the *escalera*. Asked what the vituperations were, he said they had all cried, “Death to this little traitor, our enemy who goes deceiving the world with his words and calls himself Saviour of the world and King of the Jews!”

In all these torture scenes— which are frankly described in contrast to the evasive methods used earlier in France— it is significant that the tenor of the answer is never suggested by the form of the Inquisitor's question. There are no queries such as "Did any one call Jesus Christ a traitor? Did any one deny that he was the Saviour of the world? Did any one do this or say that?" On the contrary, what our lawyers call leading questions appear to have been very carefully excluded by the scrupulous Torquemada. The questions are of this sort: "Who was present? What did they do? Why was this done? Who did it first?" It is impossible to believe after reading the testimony in Yucé's dossier that the evidence came from any source except from the prisoners themselves. The claim of Jewish writers that it was concocted by the Inquisitors for propaganda purposes might be more plausible if the testimony had been made public; but the fact that it remained hidden for four centuries strongly supports the internal evidence of its authenticity.

Benito was questioned again— without torture— on November 4, and he now remembered that all had said, "Crucify this enchanter who called himself our King and said our temple had to be destroyed! Crucify him, this dog, crucify him!" And they called him "deceiver and enchanter," and said "that he was the son of a corrupt woman, and the son of Joseph, and that he wished to destroy the Jews and their law, but they would destroy him." Otherwise he confirmed what Yucé and Ca had said.

It will be noted that all the confessions agree as to the tenor of the vituperations, but differ somewhat in phraseology. This is all the more convincing. If the recollections of various witnesses corresponded word for word, the fact would be highly suspicious. But human testimony does vary in just this way.

On November 11, 1491, the Inquisitors submitted their evidence to a second jury of learned men in Ávila. There were five of them: the Licentiate Álvaro de Sant Estevan, Queen Isabel's corregidor for the town of Ávila; Ruy Garcia Manso, Bishop Talavera's provisor; Fray Rodrigo Vela, guardian or head of the Franciscan monastery at Ávila; and Doctor Tristan, Canon of Ávila: the Bachelor Juan de Sant Estevan, son of the corregidor. The notary Martin Peres was instructed to ask each of them separately two questions: first, whether the Inquisitors had jurisdiction over Yucé and Ca and could lawfully pass judgment on them; and second, whether the accused were guilty and ought to be relaxed to the justice of the secular arm. Each of the learned men, "according to God and his conscience," gave an affirmative answer to both questions.

Twelve educated men, all under oath, passed judgment upon the evidence in this case in addition to the three Inquisitors, and all voted for conviction. Must we assume that they were all murderous fanatics, willing to sacrifice innocent men, and that Dr. Loeb, Dr. Lea, and on the Catholic side the somewhat too credulous Ábbe Vacandard were better qualified to weigh the evidence after the lapse of four centuries? If it is impossible to-day to prove that the accused were guilty, it is equally rash, with only part of the record available, to assert their innocence, and the stupidity or criminality of their learned contemporaries who expressed belief in their guilt. Sabatini is inclined to believe that the crime was committed, though he regards it not as ritual murder, but as black magic. It is worth noting that Dr. Lea arrives at his verdict of "innocent" only by distorting the evidence, as I have shown elsewhere, and by changing a date of vital importance.

On November 14 four of the prisoners— Yucé and Ca, Benito, and Juan de Ocaña— were confronted. Their confessions were repeated, and all agreed and were ratified. Juan Franco was then brought in, and in the presence of the others he admitted that he had brought the boy from Toledo. It was he, too, who had taken out the boy's heart, and his brother Alonso had opened the veins in the arm. And he and Alonso had taken the boy from the cave, Juan holding the feet and Alonso the arms, and had buried him near Santa Maria de Pera— "as he had said in his confessions" wrote the notary— and that they buried him with a large hoe which their brother Lopé brought along. Juan also said (and Benito admitted this) that Benito had helped him to look

for a boy in Toledo, but it was Juan who found one at the Door of the Pardon in the Cathedral at Toledo. Afterward—and this we learn from a letter of the notary Gonzalez to the officials of La Guardia, November 17— Juan Franco took the Inquisitors to the place where the child was buried, and they found a hole there; but nothing is said of the finding of any remains. However, if Fita's conjecture is correct that the Jews of the synagogue of Segovia knew of Yucé's first confession, it is not unlikely that some one of the prisoners may have got word to friends outside, who removed the evidence. In a book written later by the parish priest of La Guardia, the belief is expressed that since the Holy Child, as he became known immediately, had shared in the passion of Jesus Christ, he had also been permitted to share in the glory of His Resurrection.

The case was now complete, and justice followed swiftly. The *auto de fe* was held on Wednesday, November 16, in the presence of all the citizens of Ávila and a great number of people from villages for many miles around, for the whole country was now ablaze with horror and wrath. The sentence of the Court, reviewing the evidence at some length, was read, and the prisoners relaxed to the secular arm. After they were given into the custody of Queen Isabel's corregidor, Álvaro de Sant Estevan, they were tied by his men to the stakes. All of them then made final confessions of guilt, which were taken down by the notary Anton Gonzalez and which confirmed all their previous admissions. Benito, in spite of his previous boast that he would die a Jew, now declared that he was sorry for his sins and wished to die a Christian. He was reconciled to the Church by one of the friars; and so were two other *Conversos*, Juan Franco and Juan de Ocaña. These three, therefore, were strangled before they were burned.

Yucé and his father Ca, however, died as Jews, roasted over a slow fire.

The notary Gonzalez, writing to the officials of La Guardia the following day, urged them to set up a suitable monument on the spot where Juan Franco had pointed out the grave of the boy, and not to allow anyone to plough there or otherwise disturb the spot, "since Their Highnesses (the King and Queen) and Cardinal Mendoza had yet to visit it." An inscription on a tablet erected in La Guardia in 1569 gives the name of the *Santo Niño* as "Juan, son of Alonso Pasamontes and Juana La Guindera." Monuments were erected to his memory, and he was venerated by many people as a saint.

Two days after the *auto de fe*, the Inquisitors examined one Juan, who was sacristan of the Church of Santa Maria at La Guardia, where according to Yucé's confession, Alonso Franco had obtained the second Host. Why Villada put off interviewing this witness until after the executions remains one of the puzzles of the case, but the notarial record clearly gives the date as November 18.

The sacristan, evidently a New Christian, confessed that he himself had promised the Host to Alonso, who was his uncle, and who had asked for it on two occasions. But Alonso sent Benito for the Host, and Benito assured him they were going to do no harm with it, but much good would come of it. This was about two years ago, he thought. Asked whether he believed that the consecrated Host was the true body of Jesus Christ, Juan said he always believed it; but Benito told him that while it would be a sin to give him the Host, it would not be heresy, so that the Inquisition could not punish him. He took the keys from an earthenware vessel where the priests kept them, and opened the pyx containing the Host. There were two consecrated Hosts in it, and he gave one to Benito. Benito offered him an unconsecrated Host to put in the place of the one taken, but the sacristan refused to do that. Here the record breaks off, and we do not know what happened to the sacristan. We do know, however, that he corroborated the strange story of Yucé Franco.²¹

The testimony was not published, but Yucé's sentence was read the following Sunday from the pulpit of the Church at La Guardia, and the news spread rapidly from village to village. There were riots everywhere against the Jews, and at Ávila a Jew was cruelly stoned to death by the angry mob.

Torquemada must inevitably have presented the sentence of the Court, and probably the whole record of the case, to the King and Queen as the most powerful kind of evidence to justify the course he advocated—the expulsion of all the Jews. We know for a certainty that their Majesties had the case brought to their attention in various ways. The Jews of Ávila appealed to them for protection against the infuriated populace, and Isabel and Fernando sent them a letter of safe-conduct from Córdoba, December 16, 1491, forbidding anyone to harm the Jews or their property, under extreme penalties, ranging from a fine of 10,000 maravedis to possible death.²² “This merciful step was taken by the King and Queen during the ferment of the last month of the siege of Granada. Two weeks later they entered the Moorish capital in triumph; but just before they did so they took time to commend and reward the Inquisitor General and the three Inquisitors of the Court at Ávila for the excellent work they had done in bringing Yucé, Ca Franco and his accomplices to justice. The La Guardia crime is not specifically mentioned in the royal edict of January 4, 1492, but there can be no doubt that it is the one referred to. It commends “the devout father Fray Tomás de Torquemada, prior of the monastery of Santa Cruz of Segovia, our confessor and of our council” and states that certain judicial powers are delegated to him “in the Bishopric of Ávila and its diocese.” He is given authority to transfer and sell all the property confiscated for the use of Their Highnesses—presumably in the La Guardia case—and to use the money “for the expenses and salaries of the Señores Inquisitors and their officers” and for other extraordinary expenses.²³

During the next few weeks, while Columbus was unsuccessfully negotiating with the sovereigns for his titles and profits, Fray Tomás of Torquemada was also at the Alhambra, urging them to do what they had long contemplated doing—to go to the very heart of the Jewish problem by expelling all Jews from Spain. This they decided to do, and on March 31 they issued the famous edict.

Naturally the Jews, through their powerful friends at Court, made every effort to avert the catastrophe. The millionaire Abraham Senior, chief rabbi of Castile, and Isaac Abravanel may have offered the sovereigns 30,000 ducats, as the story goes, to revoke the edict; but the assertion that Torquemada prevented their accepting by throwing a crucifix on the table and shouting that they were betraying Christ for 30,000 pieces of silver as Judas did for thirty is extremely improbable and must be dismissed as a legend of later fabrication. There is no contemporary evidence for it, and it is not consistent with what we know of the sovereigns and Torquemada in this connection.²⁴

The Jews, however, would naturally mobilize their great wealth to prevent the final destruction of their dominion in Spain. “They lived mostly in the larger cities,” wrote Bernaldez... “and in the most wealthy and prosperous and fertile lands... and all of them were merchants and vendors, and lessors and farmers of taxing privileges and stewards of manors, cloth-shearers, tailors, cobblers, leather-dealers, curriers, weavers, spicers, pedlars, silk-merchants, jewellers, and had other similar occupations. Never did they till the soil, nor were they labourers, nor carpenters, nor masons; but all sought easy occupations and ways of making money with little work. They were a very cunning people, and people who commonly lived on gains and usuries at the expense of Christians, and many of the poor among them became rich in a short time. They were very charitable among themselves, one to another. If in need, their councils, which they called *alhamas*, provided for them. They were good masters to their own people.... They had among them very rich men, who had great wealth and estates, worth a million or two million, as for example Abraham Senior, who leased most of Castile.”²⁵

When it became evident that the King and Queen, who were all-powerful now that the war was over, would undoubtedly enforce the edict, Abraham Senior and his son became Christians rather than relinquish their great wealth and power. The Chief Rabbi of Castile was baptized June 15, 1492, at Santa Maria de Guadalupe. His sponsors were the King and Queen and Cardinal Mendoza, and he took the name of Ferrand Perez Coronel. The distinguished Spanish Catholic family of that name are his descendants.

Most of the Jews, however, began selling their goods and preparing to leave. “When the gospel was preached to them,” wrote Bernaldez, “their rabbis preached the opposite to them, and encouraged them with vain hopes, telling them they considered it certain that all this trial came from God, who wished to lead them from captivity and bring them to the Promised Land; and that in this exodus they would see how God would perform many miracles for them, and lead them from Spain with wealth and honour. And if they had any mishap or misfortune on land, they would see that when they went upon the sea, God would guide them, as he had guided their ancestors out of Egypt. The rich Jews paid the expenses for the exodus of the poor Jews, and showed much charity for one another, so that only a very few, and those of the most needy, were converted. It was a common belief among the Jews, the simple as well as the learned, that wherever they wished to go the strong hand and extended arm of God would follow with much honour and riches, as God through Moses had miraculously led the people of Israel from Egypt.” Obligated to dispose of all their property that was not portable within three months, the Jews were virtually at the mercy of their purchasers, who, it may be inferred, included large numbers of the rich *Conversos*. The prohibition against carrying gold and silver out of the country increased the difficulty. Hence, says Bernaldez, a Jew would give a house for an ass, and a vineyard for a tapestry or a piece of linen. Nevertheless “it is true that they took an infinite amount of gold and silver secretly, especially cruzados and ducats ground between the teeth, which they swallowed and took in their bellies.... The women in particular swallowed more, and one person is said to have swallowed thirty ducats at one time.”

When the appointed day approached—the time had been extended by the King and Queen to August 2, the Israelites caused all the boys and girls over twelve years of age to marry, so that each girl might go under the protection of a husband. And so, “putting all their glory behind them, and confiding in the vain hope of their blindness,” wrote the curate of Los Palacios, “they gave themselves over to the travail of the road, and went forth from the lands of their birth, little and great, old and young, on foot and on horses and asses and other beasts, and in carts, each one pursuing his way, to the port to which he had to go. They stopped on the roads and in the fields, with many labours and misfortunes, some falling down, others getting up, some dying, some being born, and others sick; and there was no Christian who did not grieve for them. Everywhere the people invited them to be baptized ... but the rabbis encouraged them and caused the women and boys to sing and play tambourines and timbrels to make the people merry.

“When those who were to embark from Puerto de Santa Maria and Cádiz saw the sea, both men and women shrieked and cried out, praying for God’s mercy and thinking they would see some miracles; but they stayed there several days and had so much misfortune they wished they had never been born.” At last they set sail in twenty-five ships, but had to bribe the pirate Fragosa with 10,000 ducats—evidently they had found some way to defeat the royal order concerning money—to let them sail for Cartagena. Some, however, returned to Castile and were baptized. But most went to Arcilla, and thence to Fez.²⁶

Others proceeded to Portugal and were allowed, on payment of a large tax, to enter. Some went to Navarre, others straggled as far as the Balkans, where their descendants to this day speak a dialect containing many fifteenth-century Spanish words. A large group finally settled at Salonika, and formed there a colony which persisted until 1910, when the members were compelled to migrate, and went to New York, where they still keep many of the characteristics of the Spanish Jews. But most of the exiles, as Bernaldez said, “had sinister luck, being robbed and murdered wherever they went.”

The most terrible sufferings of the wanderers were inflicted by the lust and cruelty of the Moors on those who sailed from Gibraltar to the Kingdom of Fez. The Jews had once been very powerful in that kingdom, and one of them, a man named Aaron, “so enjoyed the protection of the King of Fez,” said Bernaldez, “that he conducted himself and gave orders in the kingdom as he pleased, and the Moors were angry, and made a riot against the King and the Jews, and killed the King and Aaron, and then went into the *juderia*, in which there were over 2,000 households

in the city, and put them (the Jews) to the sword, and killed and plundered, and left only those who said they would be Moors”.... but “many of the Jews remained secret Jews, as in Spain before the Inquisition, and the new King said he would find out whether they were Moors or no, and he commanded that those who wished to be Moors” might remain and be free, but the Jews must be subject to certain severe conditions, always going on foot, wearing distinctive garb, and so on. And “the Jews, fearing to be killed, became Moors, but remained secretly Jews.”²⁷ Thus in Mohammedan Fez the story of the Jews parallels that of their brothers in Christian Spain. On this occasion the King of Fez offered to protect the Jews, and allowed them to hire bands of Moorish soldiers for the purpose; but he secretly gave orders to the men to rob them on the road. Having seized all the property of the exiles, the Mussulmans violated the women and girls under the very eyes of their husbands, fathers and brothers, and slew any of the men who dared to protest. Evidently these barbarians, too, had heard the tale, widely circulated, that the Jewish women had swallowed gold, for after dishonouring them they ripped their bellies with scimitars to search for the ducats.

Some of the survivors staggered on till they reached Fez, naked, starving and swarming with vermin. Others returned to Arcilla, and begged the Count of Borva, the Spanish governor, “to have them baptized, for the love of Jesus Christ, in whom they believed, and to let them return to Spain.” He received them with much kindness, fed and clothed them, and had them baptized. So many were baptized that the priests had to sprinkle them with a hyssop in groups. During the next three years bands of them continued to straggle back to Spain, convinced that their sufferings were a punishment for their rejection of Christ.

Bernaldez obtained estimates from the rabbis who returned to Spain of the total number of exiles; and to-day, after the wild computations of Llorente have been rejected, the figures of the curate are generally accepted as authentic, by both Jewish and Gentile scholars. A “very acute” rabbi named Zentollo, one of the ten or twelve rabbis that Bernaldez baptized, told him that in Castile there were more than 30,000 Jewish households, and in Aragon 6,000—making a total of more than 160,000 persons.²⁷ These figures, of course, dispose of the legend that the expulsion of the Jews directly caused the economic ruin of Spain.

“A hundred of them came here to this place of Los Palacios,” wrote Bernaldez, “and I baptized them, including some rabbis,” whose eyes, he added, were at last open to the truth of the prophecies of Isaias “and many other prophecies of the advent, incarnation, birth, passion and resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ which they confessed in Hebrew to be true and to have been accomplished in the coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ, whom they admitted they truly believe to be the true Messiah, of whom they said they had been ignorant through the hindrance of their ancestors, who had forbidden them, under pain of excommunication, to read or hear the Scriptures of the Christians.”

NOTES (pp. 627-9)

1 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, p. 133.

2 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, p. 133.

3 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, p. 132.

4 *Boletin de la real academia*, Vol. XI, pp. 292-3; also Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, p. 168.

5 Lea, *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I.

6 *Partidas*, VII, tit. xxiv, ley 2. This law was passed under King Alfonso the Wise.

7 *Boletin*, Vol. IX, pp. 353-40.

8 *Boletin*, Vol. IX, pp. 353-40.

9 *Boletin*, Vol. XI, pp. 7-160.

10 *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, pp. 133-4. In a footnote Lea refers the reader to his more extended discussion of the La Guardia case in *Chapters from the Religious History of Spain*. A perusal of the twenty pages he devotes to the trial of Yucé Franco will convince the careful

student of Dr. Lea's intellectual dishonesty. Not only does he omit all mention of the two juries to which Torquemada, in his desire to be just, caused the evidence to be submitted, but he clearly falsifies the record. He says (p. 452) that *on December 17, 1490*, the Prosecutor Guevara simply charged Yucé with "a conspiracy to procure a consecrated Host with which, and the heart of a child, a magic conjuration was to be wrought. . . Curiously enough," adds Dr. Lea sagely, "up to this time the crucifixion of the victim and the insults offered to Christ, which ultimately formed so prominent a part of the story, seem not to have been thought of. . . It was not until the close of the trial... that on October 21, 1491, the Promotor Fiscal asked permission to make to his denunciation an addition which charged the crucifixion of the child, with the blasphemies addressed to Christ." If this contention of Lea were true, the case against Yucé would stand on flimsy foundations indeed. But the record plainly gives the lie to Dr. Lea. It was *on December 17, 1490*, that Guevara swore a solemn oath in court that he believed that Yucé "was associated with others in crucifying a Christian boy one Good Friday... mocking him and spitting upon him and giving him many blows and other injuries to scorn and ridicule our holy Catholic Faith and the Passion of our Saviour Jesus Christ." The crime was committed, said Guevara, "somewhat in the way, and with the same enmity and cruelty with which the Jews, his ancestors, crucified our Redeemer Jesus Christ— *quasi de la forma é con aquella enemiga é crueldad que los judíos sus antepasados crucificaron á nuestro Redentor ihesu christo, escarne ciendole é escupiendole é dandole muchas bofetadas é otras feridas por vituperar é burlar de nuestra santa fe católica é de la pasion de nuestro Salvador ihesu christo.*" See *Boletin*, Vol. XI, p. 14.

11 Benito said Mosé and Yucé Franco, but later corrected his error. Mosé was the brother of Yucé.

12 *Boletin*, Vol. XI.

13 *Boletin*, Vol. XXIII, p. 411.

14 *Boletin*, Vol. XXIII, p. 420.

15 *Boletin*, Vol. XI, p. 69.

16 "*E el dicho benito le respondió que moriese con el diablo; que más quería morir así que ser quemado.*"— *Boletin*, Vol. XI, p. 36.

17 *Boletin*, Vol. XI, p. 69.

18 *Boletin*, Vol. XI, pp. 81-87.

19 Fita believes that this was probably early in 1487.

20 *Boletin*, Vol. XI, p. 109.

21 *Boletin*, Vol. XI, p. 420.

22 *Boletin*, Vol. XXIII, p. 427.

23 The earliest authority for this legend seems to be Paramo, p. 144.

24 Bernaldez, *Historia*, cap. cx.

25 Bernaldez, *Historia*, cap. cx.

26 Bernaldez, *Historia*, cap. cx.

27 Lea says that "the estimate of Bernaldez is probably as nearly correct an estimate as we can find."— *The Inquisition of Spain*, Vol. I, p. 142, M. Isidore Loeb estimated that 165,000 emigrated, 50,000 accepted baptism, and 20,000 died. Lea considers these figures too high.

ISABELLA OF SPAIN

XXXII

THE DIVISION OF NAPLES – SPAIN DOMINATES ITALY

— REVOLT IN GRANADA

(extract, pp. 586-7)

... gold and glory, some of the cities of the peninsula were actually depopulated, and the Venetian ambassador, Andrea Navagiero, who travelled through the country in 1525, recorded that in Seville scarcely any inhabitants were left but the women.⁶ The gold that ultimately came by shiploads from the mines of Mexico and Peru hardly compensated for so great a loss in man

power. In many ways, indeed, it proved a curse to the nation that Isabel had just instructed in peaceful toil and frugality. Prices rose with the circulation of money, and the new demand for foreign products crippled some Spanish industries and eventually ruined others. A new class of wealthy parvenus, to whom titles were given with foolish prodigality, perpetuated a mischievous tradition that toil was dishonourable.

There appears to be one more cause, which for some mysterious reason has been passed over in complete silence by all our historians.

“There can be no doubt,” says the Jewish Encyclopedia, “that the decline of Spanish commerce in the seventeenth century was due in large measure to the activities of the Marranos of Holland, Italy and England, who diverted trade from Spain to those countries.... When Spain was at war with any of these countries, Jewish intermediation was utilized to obtain knowledge of Spanish naval activity.”⁷ Furthermore, it appears from the same source that the Spanish *Conversos* who settled in London acquired within a century an almost complete monopoly of English trade with the Levant, the Indies, Brazil, and especially with the Netherlands, Spain and Portugal. “They formed an important link in the network of trade spread especially throughout the Spanish and Portuguese world by the Marranos or secret Jews. Their position enabled them to give Cromwell and his secretary, Thurloe, important information as to the plans of Charles Stuart in Holland and of the Spaniards in the New World. Outwardly they passed as Spaniards and Catholics; but they held prayer meetings at Cree Church Lane, and became known to the government as Jews by faith.”⁸

There is a suggestion here of a fascinating and unexplored chapter of history, in which the tragic figure of the wandering Jew, defeated in his attempt to destroy the Catholic Church and build a New Jerusalem on its ruins in medieval Spain, is seen playing a large part in bringing low the greatest Catholic nation of Europe at the moment of its triumph, and transferring the dominion of the seas and of world politics to the anti-Catholic power of modern England. It would be interesting to know to what extent they instigated or encouraged the revolt in the Netherlands which Philip II attempted to suppress by the Inquisition. That they had something to do with these matters is highly probable, for they supported Calvinism and other anti-Catholic movements just as they had the primitive heresies and the Mohammedanism of the Middle Ages. It is one of the curiosities of history that they paid off the score of the Spanish Inquisition at the strategic moment when Spain, in spite of all her phenomenal powers of recuperation, had exhausted herself at last like a good mother in the stupendous effort to colonize and civilize vast portions of the western hemisphere.

NOTES (p. 632-3)

6 *Viagge fatto in Espagna*.

7 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. XI, p. 501.

8 *Jewish Encyclopedia*, Vol. V, p. 168. “Cromwell was by no means unacquainted with the resources and wide activities of the rich Sephardi Jews of the Continent,” says Albert M. Hyamson in his *History of the Jews in England*, p. 176. “The Spanish and Portuguese trade was in their hands; the Levant trade also to a considerable extent. Jews had helped to found the Hamburg Bank, and were closely connected with the Dutch East and West Indian Companies. As bullion merchants, also, Jews were prominent, and, in addition, many of them owned fleets of merchantmen. The second reason for Cromwell’s favour was the great assistance these crypto-Jews of London and their agents on the Continent were to the government of the Commonwealth. And, when employing them on secret service, he was well aware of their true faith.” Carvajal, a secret Jew, who went to England as Portuguese Ambassador, was enormously wealthy, and placed a whole army of continental agents and spies at the disposal of Cromwell. The share of the Jews in promoting the Protestant Reformation is pointed out by Rabbi Lewis Browne in *Stranger than Fiction*, p. 248, *et seq.* Luther, he observes, studied Hebrew with Reuchlin, a pupil of Jewish scholars in Italy, and the Jews, “by their very presence in Europe...

had helped to bring the heresy into being. But once it was born, they let it severely alone.” Browne is right, too, in discerning that Liberalism is of Jewish origin. “It was little wonder that the enemies of social progress, the monarchists and the Churchmen, came to speak of the whole liberal movement as nothing but a Jewish plot,” he says on p. 305. Liberalism, he adds, “was the Protestant Reformation in the world of politics... Incidentally, however, it brought complete release at last to the Jew.” The *Jewish Encyclopedia* recalls that Luther was said to be “a Jew at heart,” and that he remarked on one occasion, “If I were a Jew I would rather be a hog than a Christian.” Adler (*A History of the Jews in London*) recalls that Henry VIII summoned a Jewish scholar from Rome and another from Venice, to advise him that his marriage to Catherine of Aragon was unlawful. Abrahams (*Jewish Life in the Middle Ages*) points out that the Reformation “drew its life-blood from a rational Hebraism”; and says elsewhere that “on the whole, heresy was a reversion to Old Testament and even Jewish ideals.”



Queen Isabella Of Spain



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