

# The Life of Spain's Queen Isabel



By  
**Willie Martin**

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### Chapter 1

**TOWARDS THE END OF AN AUTUMN DAY IN 1461, A SMALL MOUNTED CAVALCADE WAS CANTERING ALONG THE NARROW WINDING ROAD BETWEEN MADRIGAL AND AREVALO IN OLD CASTILE.** Slightly in advance of a column of armed men, rode a middle-aged man in armour, evidently a hidalgo, or one of the lower nobility. Beside him, on a pair of strong mules, were two girls of about ten years of age. One was dark, with restless black eyes and a smiling mouth that was never long at rest.

The other was of a fairer northern type, with light reddish hair, a determined chin somewhat too large for her other features and blue eyes in which there were greenish lights flecked with gold. Both were wrapped in long woollen cloaks to keep out the cold wind that cut diagonally across the road, whipping away the grey powdered dust that arose in a cloud from the hooves of the horses. Under their small, jaunty hats, each had a silken kerchief, or cawl, tied around hair and ears and bound under the chin.

The dark girl, taller of the two, wore newer clothing of a somewhat finer quality. She was Beatriz de Bobadilla, daughter of the royal governor of the castle of Arevalo. Yet she showed a certain deference to her shabbier companion and never failed to address her as "Dona Isabel." Even at ten years old, one was taught in Castile what was due a princess of the blood royal and granting that Lady Isabel lived with her mother, the Dowager Queen, in very straightened circumstances, almost forgotten by her half brother, King Enrique IV, the fact remained that she was the daughter of the late Juan II by his second wife and that when she grew up would probably marry some powerful noble. Indeed there had already been talk of betrothing her to Prince Fernando of Aragon.

To all the chatter of Beatriz, Dona Isabel listened with a serene self-possession uncommon in a child. She liked to listen, it appeared, rather than talk. When she spoke, it was briefly and to the point. Even at that age she had a majestic presence, which was not surprising perhaps, considering that she was descended from Alfred the Great, William the Conqueror, the Plantagenet kings of England, St. Louis, King of France, and St. Fernando, King of Castile.

Yet it seemed unlikely that she would ever be a queen. Her younger brother Alfonso, was nearer to the throne than she, but even he seemed unlikely ever to sit upon it, there were formidable obstacles. Beatriz had much to talk about that day, for her father the governor, had taken them to Medina del Campo, where the greatest fair in Spain was held three times a year and they had seen merchants from all over southern Europe buying choice Castilian wools, grains and blooded steers also horses and mules from Andalusia. They had seen cavaliers from Aragon, sailors from Catalonia on the east coast, mountaineers from the north, turbaned Moors from Granada in the south, bearded Jews in gaberdines, peasants even from Provence and Languedoc and an occasional blond German or Englishman. Now they were on their way back to Arevalo, to resume the routine which the Dowager Queen had prescribed.

In spite of the King's neglect and the fact that she and her mother often lacked money for food, clothing and other necessities, and were obliged to live like peasants, Dona Isabel was receiving the usual education of daughters of noblemen in Spain at that period. She had learned to speak Castilian musically and with elegance and to write it with a touch of distinction. She studied grammar, rhetoric, painting, poetry, history and philosophy. She embroidered intricate designs on velour and cloth of gold and skilfully illuminated prayers in Gothic letters on parchment. A missal that she painted and some banners and ornaments she made for the altar in her chap 1, are still in the cathedral at Granada.

She had inherited from her father a passionate love for music and poetry and she undoubtedly read the works of his favourite poet, Juan de Mena and probably a Spanish translation of Dante. From her tutors, who had studied at Salamanca University which was soon to be called the Athens

o Spain, she learned much of the philosophy of Aristotle and of S. Thomas of Aquinas. If she read the Vision deleytable, composed especially that year for the instruction of Prince Charles of Vienna, to whom she was betrothed by the King, she probably learned that motion as the cause of heat and a great deal else on what makes the winds blow, why climates differ, why materials are unlike one another; what causes the sensations of smell, taste, and hearing; what are the properties of medicine, and why some plants are large and others small, all this sugar coated in the form of a novel, to introduce the silence of the period as pleasantly as possible into the young royal brain.

Spanish versions of The Odyssey and The Eneid were popular in her brother's court. She was especially interested in the songs, or concioneros, that had been so dear to her father. From these she learned the heroic story of her crusading ancestors.

Even in sleepy Arevalo, it was known that all Europe was threatened with conquest by the pitiless barbarians ho had been disturbing the peace and prosperity of western men for nigh upon a thousand years. For nearly eight centuries, in truth, Christendom had been fighting for its very existence. In Isabel's childhood the fanatical Mohammedans had reached the Danube, overrun Asia Minor, seized lower Hungary and a greater part of the Balkans a d devastated all Greece, after battering their way into Constantinople , the key to the West. In a Europe where kings and princes too often placed their own selfish interests before the common good of Christendom, only the Pope could speak with universal moral authority.

Although one pontiff after another solemnly called upon all Christian men to unite in defence of their homes, little attention was paid to he warnings, except by the wretched people on the first line of defense. The Emperor Frederick III, ruler of all central Europe, as too busy planting a garden and catching birds. England was on t e eve of the War of the Roses. When the people of Denmark raised money to support the crusade, their king stole it from the sacristy of he cathedral at Roskilde. Meanwhile, the terrible Mohammed II, known as the Grand Turk, whose very name evoked terror in European hamlets, was fighting his way towards Italy,

striking at the very heart of civilization. Isabel knew only too well that Spain had bled under the heel of the Mohammedans for more than seven hundred years. **Certain Spanish Jews, Who Hated Christianity and Wished to See Its Influence Destroyed, Had Invited the Berbers to Cross Narrow Strait from Africa and to Possess Themselves of the Lands of the Christians. The Invitation Was Accepted. The Mohammedans Carried Fire and Sword through the Peninsula and Wherever They Went, Jews Opened the Gates of the Cities to the Mohammedans While Other Jews, Tragically Enough Were Fighting in the Army of the Christian Visigoths.**

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When the Berbers had conquered all Spain except a mountainous strip in the north, where the remaining Christians took refuge, they invaded France and would probably have completed the conquest of Europe if Charles Martel had not defeated them in a desperate eight day battle near Tours in 732. For seven centuries the Spanish Christians had been slowly

winning back the lands of their ancestors from the invaders. Year by year, century by century, they had driven the enemies of Christ back toward the Mediterranean. Isabel knew from many a song how Christians, fighting against overwhelming odds near Clavijo, had conquered by the help of one of the Apostles of Christ who, appearing on a white horse, led the broken ranks to victory.

He was St. James the Greater, or as he is call in Spain, Santiago, who had been the first to preach the Gospel in Spain and whose body, after his martyrdom in Jerusalem, had been brought to Spain by his followers according to the Spanish tradition, after being lost for eight centuries, had been miraculously found, and was venerated at the celebrated shrine of Compostela.

From then on, st. James was the patron of Spain, and in battle after battle the Crusaders rode to victory with the war cry, "For God and Santiago!" until the Moslems retained no political power save in the rich and powerful kingdom of Granada, among the mountains of the south. There they remained a constant menace to the Christian kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, for at any time they might bring new hordes of fanatics from Africa and reconquer all Spain.

At this moment, there was need for a strong and able king in Castile to unite the various Christian states and complete the reconquest. Yet the scepter of St. Fernando had fallen into the hands of a weakling, for Isabel's half-brother was a degenerate known throughout Europe as Enrique the Impotent.

When the little cavalcade from Medina reached Arevalo that evening, the children and the Governor found the sleepy castle and village in a strange state of excitement. The King, the King of Castile, had come unexpectedly to visit his poor relations.

Enrique was a pathetic, rather repulsive, awe-inspiring creature, loose jointed, tall and awkward. His long woollen cloak fell from him in slovenly folds and his feet, which were too small for so large a man, were not cased in boots, such as the Castilian cavaliers wore, but in buskins, like those

of the Moors. There was always mud on them, making them look all the more peculiar on the ends of his long legs. His eyes were blue and somewhat too large, his nose, wide, flat, and crooked. In his forehead were two vertical furrows into which his bushy eyebrows curled most oddly.

Even his shaggy beard with auburn streaks in it stuck out so queerly that it made his profile look concave. A flattering courtier wrote that the King's "aspect was fierce like that of a lion which by its very look strikes terror to all its beholders." But another chronicler of the time wrote that his eyes were restless, like those of a monkey.

Isabel's mother, who was a Portuguese princess, disliked and distrusted Enrique intensely.

She was a person of high principle and strong will. Years ago, as the most beautiful woman in Spain, she had influenced her weak husband Juan II, to free Castile from the tyranny of his favourite Don Alvaro de Luna, by having that charming but dissolute and unscrupulous gentleman beheaded. Since the death of King Juan however, she had suffered from a form of melancholia, which was becoming chronic and was destined to end in a mild form of insanity.

Like many others of the nobility, the Dowager Queen deplored the fact that Enrique, to whom the people had looked to deliver them from the menace of new Mohammedan invasions was, to say the least, a lukewarm and indifferent Christian.

His favourite companions were enemies of the Catholic faith, Moors, Jews, and Christian renegades. It was said that the favourite pastime at his table was the invention of new blasphemies and obscene jokes about the Holy Eucharist, the Blessed Virgin and the saints. The King attended Mass, but never confessed or received Communion. He had a Moorish guard, which he paid more generously than he did his Christian soldiers. When, in response to popular demand, he organized a crusade in 1457, he led his thirty thousand troops through the beautiful southern countryside in such a flippant fashion that his Christian subjects suspected him of having secretly assured the Moors that he intended them no harm.



Enrique professed to be a pacifist, who abhorred bloodshed. Yet he gave employment to a drunken highwayman named Bassasa who, with another footpad known as Alonzo the Horrible, had assassinated a wayfarer and peeled the skin off his face to prevent his identification. He gave a place in his Moorish guard to an apostate who had participated in the murder of forty Christians. Hence the Catholic nobility were inclined to regard the King's pacifism less as a virtue than as a symptom of degeneracy.

The King was fatuously generous to his favorites. To please them, he had reduced his country to a state of bankruptcy and anarchy. He had farmed out the privilege of collecting taxes to the wealthy Rabbi Josef of Segovia and to Diego Arias de Vala, a converted Jew, to whom he gave the most astonishing powers, including the right to exile citizens for nonpayment of taxes and even to put them to death without a hearing. The nobles, despising the King's character, began to flout his authority, to wage petty wars with one another and to coin their own money. Usurers wrung the last maravedi from the farmers, labourers and merchants, while robber barons and bandits preyed upon them, burned their houses and violated their women.

In Sevilla, a beautiful city of the south with a large Jewish population, the King turned over certain taxing privileges to Xamardal, Rodrigo de Marchena and other greedy extortioners. Civilization seemed on the brink of destruction under a king whose abnormal vices were the scandal of all Europe and whose court was a stench in the nostrils of all decent people.

His Majesty's most intimate friends, at this period, were Juan Pacheco, Marqués of Villena and his brother Don Pedro Giron, who were therefore, the two most powerful persons in the realm and who went about in such magnificent state that they made the King look insignificant by comparison. They wore fine silks, bordered with cloth of gold and splendid Jewels cunningly ornamented by smiths in Córdoba. In a later age these gentlemen would have been described by journalists as self made men, for they had risen to high power from obscure origins. They were descended on both sides from a Jew named Ruy Capon but, like many others of the large Jewish population of Spain, outwardly professed themselves as Catholics.

The Marqués of Villena had once been a page in the household of Don Alvaro de Luna, who had introduced him at court, where he had won the favour of Prince Enrique. He was a man who could be very charming when he chose to be. There was a likeable twinkle in his shrewd eyes, his beard and moustache had been curled not ingeniously and he smelled fragrantly of ambergris.

There is a picture of him kneeling in prayer, with a most pious expression. His long, aquiline nose was quite hooked in the middle and pointed at the tip and somewhat too near the base of it a narrow mouth with full lips, gave a curiously cherubic expression to his whole face. His carefully waxed and twisted moustache drooped on either side and then of a sudden turned out and up in two jaunty points. He was the King's most intimate companion and advisor.

His brother Don Pedro Giron, was a sleek, well fed man with a sensual nature and a very bad reputation. He was not considered by Catholics to be an ornament to their religion, which he professed. Yet he had capitalized it to the greatest advantage to himself, so that he had risen even to the illustrious post of Grand Master of the Order of Calatrave. His income, like that of his brother, was enormous. One of those men in whose presence women feel uncomfortable, he permitted his heavy eyes to rest upon the fair skin and silken hair of the little Princess Isabel with a sort of gloating anticipation.

If there was anyone in the world whom Isabel's mother despised more than the King, it was this same Don Pedro Giron who, according to court gossip, had once made her an indecent proposal, at the instigation of no less a personage than the cynical Enrique himself. It is not strange that she felt that she would rather see her daughter in her coffin than married to this middle aged rake. However, the King had already begun making arrangements for Isabel's future.



## Chapter II

Even in her seclusion at Arévalo, the Princess Isabel was being used as a pawn on the political chess board of Europe by the Marqués of Villena, who was virtually ruler of the Castle.

Villena was skilful in arranging matters to suit his own interest. It was he who had sent a Jewish physician to Portugal to arrange a second marriage for King Enrique, after his accession to the throne in 1454. Enrique had already been married, at the age of fourteen to Blanche, the gentle daughter of King Juan of Aragon, but the marriage had been annulled on the grounds of importance. Villena was afraid that Enrique, who needed an heir, would contract another marriage with the house of Aragon.

This would never do, for Villena had persuaded Enrique to give him certain Castilian estates belonging to the King of Aragon and he had no intention of giving them up. A Portuguese alliance pleased him better. Consequently, in 1455 there arrived in Córdoba as Enrique's second bride, the lovely princess Juana, a witty and vivacious girl of fifteen, sister of the fat and chivalrous King Alfonso V.

Juana, as might have been expected, had a most unhappy life with her dissolute husband. But she endured her lot patiently until he began to pay public attention to one of her ladies in waiting, Doña Guiomar de Castro. This was too much for the Queen's pride. She slapped Guiomar's face with her fan in the presence of the whole court. The King packed his favourite off to a country estate.

Enrique now posed as the lover of the corrupt and notorious Catalina de Sandoval. When he grew tired of her, he got rid of her by removing the pious Abbess of the Convent of San Pedro de las Dueñas in Toledo and bestowing the office on his former mistress, sardonically explaining that the convent needed to be reformed. Catalina proceeded to reform the nuns.

This expedient had the additional advantage of irritating the Archbishop of Toledo. As Primate of Spain, Don Alfonso Carrillo had already the

King, first in private and then in public, for the evils of his personal life and the scandals of his court and government. Enrique had retorted by curtailing the Archbishop's jurisdiction and by ridiculing him and the ceremonies of the Church. The Archbishop now threw the weight of his authority on the side of a group of noblemen who were uniting in an attempt to get rid of the tyranny of the hated Marqués of Villena. Chief among them was Don Fadrique Enriquez, the admiral of Castile. He was a small man physically but blunt, fearless and outspoken. He had lately increased his prestige as one of the great landowners of Castile, by marrying his daughter Juana Enriquez to King Juan of Aragon.

Villena now looked for help to the enemies of the King of Aragon who, as luck would have it, had quarreled with Carlos of the Viani, his own son by a former marriage. Villena made an alliance with Carlos of Viani, his own son by a former marriage. Villena made an alliance with Carlos and sealed it by the promise of the hand of the Princess Isabel.

This was by no means pleasing to Juana Enriquez, second wife of the King of Aragon, for it was her chief ambition to bring about the marriage of Doña Isabel to her son Fernando. She persuaded her aged husband to have his son Carlos cast into prison. Carlos, a scholar forty years old, was so much loved in Catalonia that the Catalans rebelled and forced the King to release him. Father and son were reconciled and signed a treaty. Soon after however, Carlos died and the people declared that he had been poisoned by command of his father and step-mother. The charge was probably unjust as Carlos had long been tubercular.

His death and the death soon after of his two sisters, left little Prince Fernando of Aragon with a clear field and his mother renewed her efforts to arrange a match for him with the royal house of Castile. The Catalans however, pursued her and Fernando to Gerona and besieged them in a tower there for several days.

The old King of Aragon was unable to rescue them, but in his anxiety he obtains seven hundred French lances with archers, artillery and a loan of two hundred thousand crowns from Louis XI, King of France. Louis demanded, for security of the loan, the two provinces of Roussillon and

Cerdagne, in northern Spain. He hoped that the King of Aragon would not be able to redeem them. Thus were sown the seeds of much later discord.

Meanwhile, in Castile the conspirators discouraged by the entanglements in which their ally the King of Aragon had become involved, gave up their schemes for the time being and King Enrique, who had been desperately frightened, sat more securely on his shaky throne. Moreover, about this time his beautiful young wife gave birth to a daughter under circumstances which provoked much unsavoury gossip.

For some time past, the king's favourite Don Beltran de la Cueva, has been appearing in public with both Their Majesties and he was generally believed to have won the affections of the Queen. He was tall, robust and florid of countenance, expert with sword and lance and quick to quarrel or to engage in a friendly joust. His influence over the weak King was astonishing even in that ill-regulated court. He would rage against His Majesty and as if he were master of the palace, would knock down porters and kick them if they did not open doors quickly enough. Other nobles envied the new favourite for his power and detested him for his arrogance and insolence. It goes without saying that Marqués of Villena, whose star was entering an eclipse, saw no virtue in him at all.

One day as the King and Queen were riding toward Madrid, they found the road barricaded. In an adjoining field there were tiers of scaffolding, crowded with spectators and in the open space, holding it against all comers was Don Beltran de la Cueva in silvered armor. He had been there since early morning, challenging each knight who went that way to tilt six rounds with him, or else to leave his left glove on the ground as token of his cowardice. This he did to vindicate the beauty of his lady over all the other women in the world.

The King, in commemoration of the day's sport, commanded a monastery to be built on the spot and San Jerónimo del Paso (St. Jerome of the Passage of Arms) stands there to this day. Nevertheless he himself incurred a great deal of ridicule, for it was believed that Don Beltran's lady, whose name he had discreetly kept to himself, was no less a personage than Her

Majesty. In March 1462, after seven childless years, Queen Juana gave birth to her baby girl. The child was named after her mother Juana, but the courtiers called her La Beltraneja, meaning the daughter of Beltran.

Archbishop Carrillo of Toledo baptized the infant princess with great pomp and magnificence. The godfathers were the Marques of Villena and the French Ambassador. The godmother was the Princess Isabel, a grave determined child of eleven, who had come from Arévalo for the purpose. After a meeting of the Cortes, or Parliament a few days later, when representatives of seventeen cities took the oath of allegiance to Juana as heiress to the throne of Castile, Isabel was the first to kiss the baby princess's hand. After the ceremony she returned to Arévalo.

For a little while she continued her education with Beatriz de Bobadilla. She learned the ride horseback and to hunt hares and wild boars with the governor. She received her first Holy Communion and became like her mother, a devout and very sincere Catholic. It seemed likely that her life would be spent in a fairly agreeable obscurity. But destiny had a more heroic task prepared for her.

During that same year, a courier came from Madrid with a message that fell like a bombshell on the ears of the Dowager Queen and her little court. King Enrique commanded her to send the Princess Isabel and Prince Alfonso to the court, that they might be more virtuously brought up under his personal care.

The Queen Dowager knew how virtuous Enrique's court was. Even in sleepy Arévalo, she had heard something of the fantastic actions of the King and his intimates. Some of the ruffians of the Moorish guard had violated several young women and girls and when the fathers went to the King demanding vengeance, he had them whipped on the streets, declaring that they had evil minds and were insane.

Unnatural vices of the Moors and of the King himself and some of his courtiers were matters of common report. No mother would wish her daughter to live among such unspeakable surroundings. Yet the King's authority was absolute. Isabel and her brother sadly took leave of their

heartbroken mother and sadly rode in the midst of armed men along the King's highway to Madrid.

## Chapter III

The massive gate of the old Moorish Alcazar at Madrid swung slowly open with a groan and a church. From within came the sound of female voices, young and shrill, shrieking with laughter and the beating of many hoofs on pavement. A dozen small mules in gold and crimson trappings came galloping through the gate, each bearing a damsel in a low cut sleeveless gown, with skirts so short that when the wind flapped them back, the bare thighs of the riders were revealed. The hucksters and beggars who had fled from the middle of the narrow street with hoarse cries and curses saw that the legs of all were painted with cosmetics, brilliantly white in the afternoon sunshine.

The girls wore costumes of the most varied character. One had a saucy bonnet, another went bare headed and let her bobbed, reddish hair stream in the wind. There was still another with a Moorish turban of silken gauze woven with threads of gold and yet another whose black hair was covered with a little kerchief in the Visayan manner. One was girded about the breast with leathern thongs taken from a crossbow. One had a dagger in her girdle, one carried a sword, several had knives of Vittoria hung around their necks.

Such were the young women of Enrique's court, according to a contemporary chronicler and such were the companions among whom Isabel and her brother were to spend the most impressionable years of their lives. Madrid was in a fever of balls, tourneys, pageants, comedies, and bull-fights, intrigues, and scandals. The children could hardly have lived so long in the royal palace without hearing a great deal that they had never dreamed of at Arávelo and much that would have reduced their worried mother to the last degree of despair. They must have heard of the new blasphemy that Don Beltran invented every day and of the Queen's indiscretions and the king's follies. Yet it is generally agreed that both Isabel and Alfonso walked through the fetid atmosphere of that foul court without contamination and emerged from it with a lifelong hatred of the

prevalent immorality and of its causes, among which they reckoned the influence of Moslems and Jews.

When Queen Juana urged Isabel, somewhat later (she was sixteen), to join in the debaucheries of the court, the little princess fled in tears to her brother. Alfonso, though only fourteen, strode to the Queen's apartment and forbade her to mention any further evil to his sister, after which he visited certain of Her Majesty's ladies-in-waiting and threatened them with death if they ever again attempted to corrupt her.

The King meanwhile, had not been wholly neglectful. Isabel was instructed in music, painting, poetry, sewing and grammar. Alfonso learned the accomplishments of a cavalier, which consisted chiefly of exercise on horseback with sword and lance. He also studied with a tutor, who is said to have made unsuccessful efforts to corrupt him.

All this time the royal children were playing an unconscious role in political intrigues. As the Catholic nobility and the common people grew more disgusted with the flabby King and the blasphemous Don Beltran, they began to see the possibility of playing off Isabel and Alfonso against La Beltraneja, whose legitimacy was now generally doubted. The King did not improve the situation when he removed Prince Alfonso from the Grand Mastership of the Order of St. James, an office of such power and wealth that it had always been reserved for one of the royal family and bestowed it upon Don Beltran.

Villena was enraged, for he desired the honor for himself. He was even more highly incensed when he learned that the King, the Queen and Don Beltran had taken Dona Isabel to Gibraltar to meet King Alfonso V of Portugal, who welcomed them with great pomp and magnificence. Alfonso was a very fat, middle aged gentleman noted for his valour and his weak judgment. He was so pleased with the pink and white beauty and the placid wisdom of the twelve year old princess, that he invited her to become Queen of Portugal. Isabel, thanking him for the honour, informed him tactfully that according to the laws of Castile and the King her father, now with God, she could not marry without the consent of the three estates of Castile assembled in a Cortes.



On returning to Madrid Isabel was shocked to learn that her brother had been seized at the King's orders and locked up in a secret chamber of the Alcazar. All his attempts to communicate with her had failed but, he had managed to get an appeal to the Archbishop of Toledo, who sent him a promise of help.

Carrillo, who was a product of his time and was more fitted perhaps, to be a warrior than a priest, kept his word. He appeared on a huge black war horse armed cap-a-pie in gleaming mail, wearing over his cuirass a crimson cloak with a great white cross emblazoned on it. He joined other discontented nobles at Burgos in drawing up a series of memorable representations publicly addressed to the King.

They censured him in plain terms for his unchristian opinions and conduct and for his blasphemous and infidel associates, to whose influence they attributed the abomination and corruption of sons so heinous that they are not fit to be named, for they corrupt the very atmosphere and are a foul blot upon human nature; sins so notorious that their not being punished makes one fear the ruin of the realms; and many other sins and injustices and tyrannies have increased in your reign, that did not exist in the past.

They declared that the King's Moorish guard and others to whom he had given power had raped married women and corrupted and violated virgins, men and boys against nature. Good Christians who dared to complain were publicly whipped. They accused him of allowing in his court open gibes and blasphemies about holy places and the sacraments—especially the Sacrament of the body of our good and very mighty Lord.—This is a heavy burden on your conscience, by whose example countless souls have gone and will go to perdition.

They charged that the King had destroyed the property of the Christian labouring classes by allowing Moors and Jews to exploit them. He had caused prices to rise unreasonably by debasing the currency, that he had allowed his officials to practice bribery and extortion on a huge scale. He had made a mockery of the justice and government by vicious appointments and by allowing hideous crimes to go unpunished. He had corrupted the Church by casting good bishops out of their sees and

replacing them by hypocrites and politicians. Moreover, they denounced the influence of Don Beltran and plainly told the King; Dona Juana, the one called the Princess, is not your daughter.

Finally, they made the grave charge that Don Beltran had used the King's authority to gain possession of the Princess Isabel and her brother Alfonso and was plotting to have them put to death to ensure the succession to the throne for his daughter, Las Beltraneja.

The King, greatly frightened, called a council of his supporters and there were many who, though they despised him, remained loyal to the legitimate monarch. The aged Bishop of Cuenca, who had been a counsellor of King Juan II, declared that a king could have no dealings with rebels who defied him, except to offer them battle. Enrique sneered. Those who need not fight nor lay hands on their swords, he declared, are always free with the lives of others.

The old Bishop arose, his voice trembling with anger. Henceforth, you will be called the most unworthy King Spain has ever known and you will repent of it Señor, when it is too late!

The pacifist King however, privately sent an appeal to his old favourite, the Marqués of Villena and that dexterous conspirator, quick to see his own advantage, offered to make peace between the two factions. In a treaty known as the Concord of Medina del Campo, Enrique virtually repudiated La Beltraneja by recognizing Alfonso as Prince of the Asturias and lawful heir to the throne of Castile; and he agreed to confess his sins and receive Holy Communion at least once a year.

Isabel's brother had suddenly become a personage. The King, with amazing short sightedness, now delivered him into the custody of the Marqués. This gave Villena an enormous advantage. Together with Archbishop Carrillo and Admiral Enriquez, he had Alfonso proclaimed King of Castile at Valladolid. Early in July the rebels rode to Avila with the little prince at their head. As the long cavalcade passed through the city and out into the plain, the populace followed crying Long live King

Alfonso! They rode down through a bleak and arid country where all was gray. The shadows, the earth, the rocks, even the sunlight wherever it managed to penetrate, had a greyish tinge. On they went through the old river bed, past piles of granite boulders that had been polished by the floods of the centuries, out into a wide, treeless waste on which the shadows lie like great waves of greyness, that sometimes seemed to heave like the swelling of an infinite sea, stretching out to the dark, white capped mountains in the distance.

In the middle of the plain, or vega, there was a platform on which arose a throne, occupied by a stuffed effigy of King Enrique IV, wearing a mantle lined with miniver over a black mourning robe, bearing a crown, the sceptre and the great sword of justice of the Kings of Castile. After the Archbishop of Toledo had said Mass, certain of the conspirators relieved the scarecrow of the crown, sceptre and sword and then kicked the lamp body into the dust. Alfonso was then led to the empty throne and crowned the King of Castile.

When Enrique heard of the outrage, he quoted mournfully the words of Job: Naked came I out of my mother's womb and naked shall I return thither! He shut himself up, strummed his lute and sang some sad songs. He was sorry now that he had offended the Marques of Villena.

There was a considerable reaction in favor of the weak King however, because the people of Castile respected the idea of kingship and felt that the rebels had gone too far. Villena now offered to go over to the King's side and furnish him money and soldiers, besides the custody of Prince Alfonso, if the King would banish Don Beltran from the court and give the Princess Isabel in marriage to the Marqués brother, Don Pedro Giron. **the King Coolly Listened to This Proposal of a Marrano (a so-called converted Jew) of Unsavory Reputation to Ally Himself with Castilian Royalty and Gave His Consent.**

Isabel was accustomed to playing the part of principal in royal matchmaking schemes. She had been promised at various times to Fernando of Aragon, Carlos of Vienna, Alfonso V of Portugal and there was talk at one time of marrying her to a brother of Edward IV of England,

probably that Earl of Gloucester who became so notorious as King Richard III. But all these had royal blood, all had qualities she could respect. Don Pedro Giron had neither. The young princess was almost in despair. It was characteristic of her to turn to God for help in her difficulty. She locked herself in her room and fasted for three days. During the next three days and nights she knelt almost continually before a Crucifix, passionately begging God to give death either to her or Don Pedro Giron.

Beatriz de Bobadilla, to whom the Princess had confided her grief, decided to take the matter into her own hands. Brandishing a dagger, she declared that she would kill Don Pedro before she allowed him to marry the Princess. God will never permit it, she cried? And neither will I!

Meanwhile a courier came from Don Pedro, saying that the King's instructions pleased him well and that he was setting forth from his castle at Almagro.

## Chapter IV

On the evening after his departure from Almagro with a gaudy retinue and flying pennons, Don Pedro Giron came to Villarubia, a hamlet near Villareal. Anxious though he was to press on, he was obliged to stop for the night, for it was growing dark and the roads were bad and dangerous. He promised himself however, that he would soon be master of a royal bride and through her of a greater destiny than any man could foresee.

But no man, even a Grand Master of Calatrava, is wholly of his own destiny. During that night Don Pedro became violently ill. Doctors diagnosed his illness as quinsy, but they could do nothing to stop its progress. All night it seemed as if an invisible hand was slowly choking the sick man. When Don Pedro finally realized the hopelessness of his condition and was urged to see a priest, a wild frenzy seized him. He cast aside all pretence of being a Christian, refused to receive the Sacraments or to say any prayers and on the third day after his joyous departure he died, blaspheming God for refusing to add only forty more days to his forty-three years, that he might enjoy his royal bride. It was with silent

worms that Don Pedro made his bed and all his treasures and titles passed into the hands of his three bastard sons.

Doña Isabel received the news of his death with tears of joy and gratitude then hastened to the Chapel to give thanks to God. But was otherwise with King Enrique and the Marqués of Villena. The death of Don Pedro had spoiled all their plans. Villena, feeling that he had nothing more to expect from the King, deserted him once more and hearing that the conspirators were again in the field, hastened to join them. Enrique had now to choose between fighting or giving up his throne. Finding that he had seventy thousand infantry and fourteen thousand calvary, he decided to fight.

Castile was in a pitiful state during that summer of 1467. Robberies, burnings and murders were daily occurrences. A church in which three hundred and fifth men, women, children and tenants of the Count of Benavente, had taken refuge, was burned by the Count's enemies and all within perished.

**In Toledo There Was a State of Warfare between the Jewish Christians (Conversos, or Marranos, as they were called) and the Old Christians. The Canons of the Cathedral There, Some of Whom Were Conversos, Controlled the Revenues of the Neighbouring Town of Maqueda, Including a Tax on Bread. This Privilege, so Hateful to the Half-starving Poor, They Sold at Auction to Certain Jews.**

**A Catholic Magistrate, or Alcalde, Beat the Jews and Drove Them Out of the City. The canons had the alcalde arrested, but while they were deliberating as to his punishment, Fernando De La Torre, a Rich Leader of the A Converted Jews, Decided to Take the Law into His Own Hands. A Rash and Violent Man, He Announced That He and His Friends Had Secretly Assembled Four Thousand Well Armed Men, Six Times as Many as the Old Christians Could Muster. On July 21 He Led His Forces to Attack the Cathedral. The Crypto Jews Burst through the Great Doors of the Church, Crying a Kill Them! Kill Them! This Is No Church, but Only a Congregation of Evil and Vile Men! The Catholics in the Church Drew Swords and Defended Themselves a Bloody Battle Was Fought before the High Altar.**

**Reinforcements of Christians Now Came Galloping from Nearby Towns and Launched a Counter Attack on the Luxurious Section Where Most of the Conversos Lived. They Burned the Houses on Eight Streets. They Hanged Fernando De La Torre and His Brother, Then Massacred the Conversos Indiscriminately.**

A few days later Isabel's brother arrived at Toledo with Villena and the Archbishop. A delegation of Old Christians, still smarting from their recent conflict with the secret Jews, waited on the King if he would approve of the massacre and of further measures they planned against the now terrified and disarmed Conversos.

God forbid that I should countenance such injustice! cried Prince Alfonso. Much as I love power, I am not willing to purchase it at such a price.

On another occasion the Prince declared that the nobles ought to be shorn of their power to defy kings and to tyrannize over the people. This was not likely to please so turbulent a nobleman as Villena. However, the Marqués held a trump card in the person of the little Prince and he decided to make good use of him before he grew old enough to be troublesome. He and his friends marched to meet the King's Army at a field near Olmed. With their defiance to Enrique they sent word to Don Beltran that forty cavaliers had sworn to kill him. Don Beltran sent them back a detailed description of the armour he intended to wear.

The battle was fought on Thursday, August 20. Don Beltran slew many of his sworn executioners and escaped unhurt. Little Prince Alfonso appeared in the thick of the battle, in full armour, accompanied by the fiery Archbishop Carrillo in his scarlet cloak emblazoned with a white cross. All day the conflict raged. The rebels finally retreated, but when Don Beltran and his companions looked for the King to congratulate him, he had disappeared, having run away from the battle. He was found hiding the next day several miles away. Both sides claimed the victory.

Isabel meanwhile was staying at Segovia with Queen Juana and La Beltraneja. During the following July she was hastily summoned to the village of Cardenosa, where her brother had suddenly become seriously

ill. When she arrived, he was dead. Some said that a trout he had eaten on July fourth had been poisoned. But it is possible that he died of summer fever, which killed many in Castile that summer, or he may have had acute ptomain poisoning.

Isabel returned to Avila after the funeral and remained at the Cistercian Convent of St. Ann. There the Archbishop of Toledo sought her out, to offer her the allegiance of the rebels and their support of her claim to the throne of Castile against Enrique. The young Princess replied that her brother King Enrique, was the lawful King, having received the scepter from her father, King Juan II. Although she did not condemn her brother Don Alfonso, for anything he had done, she would never seek power by an unconstitutional means, lest in doing so she lose the grace and blessing of God. To all Carrillo's pleadings she returned a quiet but adamant refusal.

The rebel barons, having no leader, were compelled to make peace with the King. However, the terms of the treaty of Tours de Guisando were very favourable to Isabel, for the fickle King acknowledge her as his heiress, agreed to summon a Cortes within forty days to ratify her title and promised never to compel her to marry against her wishes providing she would agree not to marry without his consent.

Having signed the agreement, he embraced Isabel affectionately and all the nobles advanced to kiss her hand. It soon appeared, however, that the King, prompted by Villena, was playing a double game. He summoned the Cortes, as he had promised, but dissolved it without ratifying the treaty. He now decided to marry off the Princess as soon as possible to King Alfonso V or Portugal. Alfonso sent an embassy, under the Archbishop of Lisbon, to obtain Isabel's consent.

The Princess now had two suitors, in addition to Alfonso V, the Duke of Guyenne, brother and heir apparent to King Louis XI of France and Prince Fernando of Aragon, to whom she had once before been promised in early childhood. She sent her chaplain secretly to Paris and to Saragossa to observe them at close range. He returned after many weeks, bringing word that the French duke was a feeble, effeminate prince, with limbs so emaciated as to be almost deformed and eyes so weak and watery that he

was unfit for all knightly pursuits. Don Fernando, on the other hand, was a very proper youth, comely in face and symmetrical in figure, with a spirit that is equal to anything he might desire to do.

What girl of sixteen could hesitate between such alternatives? Isabel wished to marry Prince Fernando and in this design she received the strong encouragement of Archbishop Carrillo, who foresaw that a marriage with Fernando might unite the great kingdoms of Castile and Aragon into one of the powerful nations in Europe, it was such an alliance. Consequently Isabel temporised with the Portuguese embassy, telling the Archbishop of Lisbon that she might consider marrying King Alfonso, if they were not related within the degrees forbidden by the Church. Enrique therefore, had to send to Rome for a dispensation and this took time, which was exactly what Isabel needed. With the advice of the Archbishop and others, she sent two messengers to Aragon, secretly notifying Prince Fernando of her consent.

Villena somehow caught wind of the departure of Isabel's emissaries and the king immediately ordered the arrest of the Princess. She was then at Ocaña. The people of the town seized arms and defied the royal troops to arrest her. Even the children waved the flags of Aragon and Castile in the streets, for the suit of Prince Fernando was popular, and sang;

**Flores de Aragon  
Dentro castilla son!  
Pendon de Aragon!  
Pendon de Aragon!**

Isabel fled from Ocaña to Madrigal, the place of her birth. There she remained until the return of her two envoys from Aragon. They brought word that conditions in Aragon were so disturbed that Prince Fernando could not come to marry her at present. His aged father had gone blind, his mother was ill with cancer and the Catalans, encouraged by Louis XI of France, were again in rebellion. Nevertheless, Fernando had signed the marriage agreement and sent Isabel, as a dowry a pledge of his sincerity, a necklace of pearls and balas rubies, worth forty thousand gold florins and eight thousand florins in gold coin. The necklace, belonging to his



mother had been pawned, but Fernando had borrowed money from some of the rich Jews of Aragon to redeem it.

All this time the spies of Villena and the King had been watching Isabel at Madrigal and there too, the messengers of the King of Portugal found her again. Once more she gave them an evasive answer saying, Before all things I shall beg God in all my affairs and especially this one which touches me so nearly, that he will show me His will and raise me up for whatever may be for His service and for the welfare of these kingdoms.

About this time the spies of the Marqués sent him a description of the necklace Isabel had received from Aragon. Villena was furious and he sent at once for the King. Enrique dispatched a troop of calvary to Madrigal to arrest the Princess.

Isabel waited in an agony of suspense. Where was the Archbishop? He had promised to protect her, yet he had gone away and she did not know where he was. Somewhere in the town she heard shouts, the sound of feet running, the clatter of horses' hooves galloping over the cobblestone. She fell on her knees and prayed.

## Chapter V

A few moments later Isabel looked up to see in her apartment an overshadowing form in gleaming Toledo armour, whose spurs rattled as he came. It was Carrillo, he had kept his word and had come to her rescue with three hundred horsemen just in the nick of time.

As they rode through the gates of Madrigal, only an hour or two before the arrival of the royal troops, the Archbishop explained with his slow, pompous gravity, why he had not come before and why he had brought so small a force instead of the army he had planned to bring. He was having difficulty with some of his towns, rents were hard to collect, money was scarce and mercenary soldiers were greedy. As Carrillo talked on, the young Princess was calmly appraising him, as she was learning to do with all men. His weakness was vanity, which took the form of a childish love of glory. Like Villena, he was always looking for royal favours, but unlike

Villena, he wanted them only to give away to his friends and flatterers. He was so generous that with all his titles and possession he was constantly without funds as he was especially good to the poor and to religious communities. He was a strange mixture of priest and soldier. Yet he had a sincere devotion to the church. He had reformed certain abuses among the priests of his diocese. He had built the monastery of St. Francis at Alcala de Henares and had founded a chair at the college there.

Isabel rode fifty miles with the stalwart Archbishop to the city of Valladolid, where the citizens came forth to meet and to acclaim her. Yet, as Carrillo shrewdly observed, the citizens of Valladolid would count little against Enrique's army. The Princess was still in grave danger, without money and with few troops. The Archbishop saw no hope of her long escaping prison, unless Prince Fernando of Aragon might somehow be smuggled over the frontier through the estates of the Mendozas, who were faithful to Enrique, so he might marry the Princess, who would then have a stronger status as a wife. She could flee to Aragon or confront Enrique with a fait accompli. Isabel agreed. A swift messenger was sent to Aragon, bidding Fernando come at once in disguise.

The Prince replied that he would make the attempt. A few days later, while the King and Villena were on their way north from Estremadura, Prince Fernando set out from Tarazona in Aragon, disguised as a muleteer, with a small caravan of merchants. Aragon, disguised as a muleteer, with a small caravan of merchants. Going as rapidly as their mules and asses, laden with goods, could proceed, the travellers rode long after sundown by out of the way trails that went only through small villages. Whenever they stopped at an inn, the young muleteer, in his ragged garments with a soiled cap pulled over his eyes, waited on the rest at table. While the others were asleep, he tossed restlessly about, or arose to pace the courtyard of the inn and study the stars.

Working their way west along the river Duero to Soria, the merchants followed a rocky trail across the mountains and late on the second night of their journey came to Burgos de Osma. The castle there was the first they had come to that did not belong to the enemies of Princess Isabel. Its gates, however, were locked for the night. The merchants stopped at a

little distance to deliberate, but the young muleteer more impatient, ran ahead and knocked loudly. From a window overhead came a shower of large stones, one of which grazed the ear of the Prince.

Do you want to kill me, yo fools? he cried. It is Don Fernando! Let me in!

The governor of the castle came down to open the gate with profuse apologies, he had mistaken the travellers for robbers.

Early next morning he conducted the Prince along the road to Valladolid, where Isabel was waiting for him at the palace of Juan de Vivero. She was then eighteen, eleven months older than Fernando and perhaps an inch taller and though no authentic portraits of her are extant, all who saw her agreed on the fine proportions of her athletic body, her graciousness and poise, the classic purity of her features, the beauty and harmony of her gestures, the music of her low and distinct voice, the copper and bronze lights in her hair and the delicate blonde colouring that would have been the despair of any painter. Like Fernando, who was her second cousin, she was descended on both sides from the English house of Lancaster, through John of Gaunt.

Early responsibility had made the Prince seem older than his seventeen years. He had a lofty brow, accentuated by premature baldness and bold, alert eyes under bushy eyebrows. He was simple in his dress, sober in his tastes, always master of himself in all circumstances, always the Prince. He had rather irregular teeth, which showed pleasantly when he smiled. His voice was usually hard and authoritative, but became agreeable with those whom he like or wished to please. Isabel appears to have loved him at once and to have remained in love with him for the rest of her life.

In was the eleventh of October. The next day the Princess wrote to King Enrique, announcing her intention to marry Fernando and begging for his royal blessing. She intended to marry the Prince in any event, but she preferred to do so with the King's consent. A more serious obstacle, in her eyes, was the lack of dispensation. At this juncture Fernando's grandfather the Admiral, produced a bull granted by the Pope to marry

any person within the fourth degree of kinship. It was found later that this document had been forged, as so many supposed Papal briefs were of the period. When Isabel discovered the deceit, she had no rest until an authentic dispensation came from Rome. But the false paper, devised by Fernando's wily father, served its purpose at the time in overcoming her scruples and the wedding ceremony was performed by the Archbishop on October 18.

To protect her kingdom of Castile against the possibility of Aragonese aggression, she insisted upon Fernando's signing an agreement under oath, to respect all the laws and customs of Castile. To reside there and never to leave without her approval, to leave all nominations to church benefices in her hands, to continue the holy war against the Moors of Granada, to provide for Isabel's mother at Arevalo and to treat King Enrique with respect and devotion as the lawful ruler of Castile. All public ordinances were to be signed jointly Isabel and Fernando and if she succeeded Enrique, she was to be the undisputed sovereign of Castile, Fernando to be King only by courtesy. It was characteristic of Isabel's direct and lucid mind to insist upon a thorough understanding at the start.

The lovers were not compatible in every way. Isabel was better educated than her husband and had a more lofty and magnanimous spirit. She was a person of strong and uncompromising convictions. She hated cards and all games of chance and according to the scholar Lucio Marineo, who lived at her court for some years, she classed professional gamblers with blasphemers. She gave great honour to grave, worthy and modest persons. She abhorred libertines, loquacious fellows, the importunate and the fickle; and she did not wish to see nor hear liars, coxcombs, rascals, clairvoyants, magicians, swindlers, fortune-tellers, pal-readers, acrobats, climbers and other vulgar tricksters.

It must have been a trial to Isabel to find that Fernando was very fond of cards. In his youth, he also played Pelota, though later he was more partial to chess and backgammon. His wife, on the other hand preferred poetry, music, riding, hunting and serious conversation on literature, philosophy and theology. Fernando ate sparingly and drank moderately, but Isabel never touched wine at all. One great bond which helped to bridge over

their differences was that both were sincerely religious. Fernando never broke his fast until he heard Mass, even when travelling. Isabel not only heard Mass daily, but read the prayers in her breviary every day, like a priest or a nun, besides many private and extraordinary devotions.

They remained at Valladolid throughout the winter of 1469, waiting for Enrique's consent. But no word came from the court, except a brief letter from the King, saying that Isabel had disobeyed him and having broken the treaty of Toros de Guisando, must be treated like any other rebel. Although Isabel wrote him several times justifying her action, he would deign no other reply.

Later that summer she went to Duenas and there, on the first day of October 1470, her first child, a fair-haired girl also named Isabel, was born. A few days later the young mother sat up in bed and dictated a long letter to the King, in which she again offered him her allegiance, but declared that if he persisted in treating her as an enemy, she would take whatever steps seemed necessary and would appeal to the judgment of God.

Enrique decided to make war on the Princess and her husband. He summoned his eight year old daughter to Lozaya, where the Marqués of Villena and several others of the King's followers took the oath of allegiance to her as heiress to Castile and Leon, after which she was solemnly betrothed to the Duke of Guyenne. It now became apparent that the powerful Louis XI of France was siding with King Enrique against Isabel. Pope Paul II also tended to favour Enrique as the legitimate sovereign. Isabel's future looked dark and uncertain.

There was famine that winter in Castile. The roads were full of foot-pads and cutthroats. Money had almost disappeared and goods were exchanged by primitive barter. Corpses were found every morning on city streets, strangled or died from starvation. There was pestilence everywhere and everywhere the tolling of funeral bells and the digging of graves. It was a long, cruel winter. Spring came at last and it brought a turn in the tide of Isabel's fortunes. Two provinces declared for her against the King. The people of Aranda de Duero rejected the officers of Queen Juana and

acclaimed Isabel their sovereign. Other towns joined her cause. The Duke of Guyenne died suddenly, removing a strong link between Enrique and France. In the summer of 1471 came news of the death of Pope Paul II. To his successor, Pope Sixtus IV, a devout and learned Franciscan monk, Isabel and her friends looked with renewed hope.

## Chapter VI

Isabel had heard stories from Rome that made her hope that Pope Sixtus would commence his reign by reforming the Church. It was well known that abuses had crept into the ecclesiastical organization. One of the causes of the condition was the Black Death. In 1347 and 1348 this mysterious and dreadful disease from Asia spread to every corner of Europe, killing at least twenty-five million people. Some cities perished utterly. Most of the lost from a third to half their population. Whole masses went insane. Some in despair plunged into orgies of vice, other rushed to the monasteries to throw over the walls pest-tainted gold, from which the monks shrank in horror. Ghostly ships with flapping sails were washed on the shores of France and Spain and the curious fishermen who boarded them found only black, rotting corpses on the decks and themselves went ashore to die.

The church suffered more than the general population, for her priests were constantly exposed to contagion by the necessity of administering the sacraments to the sick and dying. As a result her priesthood was almost annihilated. To fill the places of the dead even partially she had to lower her standard and accept men ignorant of Latin. In this way many wolves crept into the fold and morale and discipline were everywhere weakened. To make matters worse, the authority of the Popes suffered terribly from their enforced exile at Avignon, as virtual prisoners of the French Kings, for seventy years.

It was not until 1337 that Gregory XI returned to Rome, to find moral corruption widespread both in Church and State and many abuses prevalent. One of the worst results of the exile at Avignon was the Great Schism. Christians were bewildered by the spectacle of two and even three claimants to the chair of St. Peter. Yet through all her trials the Church

continued to hand down, century after century, the treasury of faith committed to her Christ; to promote education and to foster the arts and sciences; to repress the evil impulses of tyrannical kings and to give all men a divine standard of truth and justice by which to measure and regulate their lives.

The Church gave to all Europe a common civilization and culture which, in the Thirteenth Century at least, attained a height never surpassed before or since. The Pope alone could speak with more than human authority. He ruled as a Prince over Rome and other papal estates in Italy, but his moral authority went to the ends of the civilized world. When he spoke on matters of faith or morals, men felt that they could rely upon him, as the representative of Christ on earth, for wisdom and leadership. He was usually an old man, weighted down with terrific problems. Ambitious kings sought to use him to further their own designs. He was constantly struggling against them to preserve the spiritual independence of the Church.

All this time, while Europe was in danger of being conquered by successive onslaught of Mohammedan invaders, only the great voice of St. Peter thundered above the follies and passions of selfish men, calling upon princes to lay aside their petty quarrels and unite in the defence of their common civilization. Meanwhile the Turks broke into Servia, overran Hungary and in 1453 took Constantinople by storm. The Spanish Pope Calixtus III sold his art treasures and table service to obtain money for the crusade to regain the great gateway to the West. But although his fleet drove the enemy from Lemnos and other places, he failed in the end, because the European princes were too stupid and/or too selfish to perceive the common danger. Pope Pius II in his old age declared that if the European Kings would not lead a crusade to save Europe, he would lead it himself and the saintly old man, who had been so gay a scholar in his youth, placed himself at the head of a fleet and died on his way to meet the Turks.

When Isabel was nineteen years old, all Italy and Spain were in a panic as news came that the Grand Turk Mohammed II had launched a fleet of four hundred ships against Negroponte, a supposedly impregnable

Venetian outpost on the island of Euboea. Pope Paul II succeeded in uniting the princes for the moment. But, when he died the following summer, he left Christendom in a critical state, bequeathing to his successor two mighty problems, the growing corruption in the Church and the Turkish invasion.

Each of these evils contributed to perpetuate the other. The weakening of ecclesiastical discipline and the scandalous lives of many political prelates made it more difficult for the Pope to organize Europe against the enemy. Yet the enormous demands of the crusade left him neither time nor energy for the thorough house cleaning that was needed. To break the vicious circle, the times called for a Pope of holy and irreproachable life, who at the same time would be a statesman of masterful genius.

When Sixtus IV, a devout Franciscan monk, was crowned on August 25, 1471, it was believed that he would immediately commence the reform of the Church. But the defence of Christendom seemed even more urgent than its reform and the Turkish victories in the East made quick action necessary. The Pope sent five cardinals to various parts of Europe to reorganize the crusade. He sent the Spanish Cardinal Roderigo Borgia, to his native country.

When Borgia (destined to rule later as Pope Alexander VI) sailed from Ostia in May, 1472, he was just forty-two years of age, tall and powerfully built, a commanding and majestic figure with penetrating black eyes. He was a gentleman of courtly manners, a charming conversationalist and an administrator of great capacity. He was a nephew of Pope Calixtus III, who had made him a cardinal at the age of twenty-three.

Borgia achieved a very considerable success in his Spanish mission. He found the country on the verge of starvation after failure of the crops and on the brink of civil war. After diplomatic conferences with Archbishop Carrillo, the Marqués of Villena and others, he succeeded in arranging for a reconciliation between the Princess Isabel and King Enrique. Beatriz de Bobadilla went to Segovia in disguise to win the King's consent to the Cardinal's program. Enrique invited his half-sister Isabel to Segovia to receive his blessing and to kiss his brotherly hand. He received her



graciously and entertained her royally. When, after a great public banquet, he had a sharp pain in his side, there were the usual rumors of poisoning, but all the rest of his life the King suffered from what was believed to be a disease of the liver. Possibly he had what we would now call appendicitis.

Isabel and Cardinal Borgia were then entertained by Archbishop Carrillo at Alcalá. While she was there, she learned with horror of a dreadful massacre of the Conversos, or secret Jews, at Cordoba. Such occurrences had long been a disgrace to her country and she resolved that if she ever had the power, she would put an end to them.

It seems that one Sunday in Lent the Christians of Córdoba had held a solemn procession to the Cathedral. The converted Jews (New Christians, or Conversos) were excluded, possibly because they had become so secure in Córdoba that they were openly attending the Jewish synagogues and mocking the Christian religion. However this may be, as the procession passed the house of one of the richest Conversos, a girl threw a bucket full of filthy liquid from one of the upper windows. It splashed upon a statue on the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was being borne at the head of the procession. This was the signal for a bloody massacre of the secret Jews.

In Córdoba however, they found a powerful champion, Don Alonzo de Aguilar, who had married a woman of Jewish descent, a daughter of the Marqués of Villena. He and his brother, Gonsalvo de Cordoba, who was later to win fame in Italy as the Great Captain, defended the Conversos. The Old Christians (bona fide Christians) led by the Count of Cabra, besieged them in the Alcazar. The result was a state of war which lasted for nearly four years. Unhappily too, the periodical frenzy against the New Christians or Jewish converts (also Marranos), flamed up in a dozen other places. One of the most brutal of the massacres occurred at Segovia on May 16, 1474. **the Man Most Responsible for It Was the Marqués of Villena, Himself of Jewish Descent.**

**Hatred between Jews and Christians Had Always Been Intense in Segovia. In 1405 a Physician Named Mayr Alquades and Other Prominent Jews Had Been Accused of Stealing a Consecrated Host**

**from the Cathedral and Had Been Executed, While Other Jews, Said to Have Attempted to Have the Bishop Poisoned in Revenge, Were Drawn and Quartered. When Isabel Was Seven Years Old Sixteen Jews, Including a Rabbi, Were Accused of Having Stolen a Christian Boy during Holy Week and of Having Crucified Him as an Insult to the Memory of Jesus.**

Whether or not the Jews actually had committed a crime, or were innocent victims of prejudice and we know that Jews have been falsely accused in other places of what is called ritual murder, (here the author obviously does not know anything about the fact that the Jews do, in deed, murder young innocent Christian boys and girls and use their blood in their filthy Jewish religious rites) no one say with certainty at this late date. Colmenares records in his History of Segovia that the Jews were sentenced to death by the Bishop of Segovia, Don Juan Arias de Avila, himself the son of converted Jews, and were drawn and hanged.

In 1468. Sepulveda, Segovia, Spain: The Jews sacrificed a Christian child on a cross. The Bishop of Segovia investigated the crime, and ordered the culprits to Segovia, where they were executed. It is important to know that this Bishop was himself a son of a converted Jew; Jean d'Avila was his name. Colmenares's History of Segovia records the facts of the case, which was juridically decided by a man of Jewish blood. That may be the reason that one finds no mention of it in Strack's book in defense of the Jews, The Jew and Human Sacrifice.

In 1474 the governor of Segovia was Cabrera, a Conversos of great ability, who had married Beatriz de Bobadilla, girlhood friend of the Princess Isabel. Villena had a grudge against this man and knowing that the Old Christians of Segovia hated him, he sent troops to stir up a massacre against all Conversos, under cover of which he hoped to get rid of his enemy.

On Sunday May 16, the Conversos awoke to find a city full of armed men, crying for their blood. Hooves rang, swords rattled, bullets pelted the walls and the flames lapped greedily over the hillside, devouring house after house. Corpses lay in tangled piles on the streets.

Fortunately news of the dastardly plot had reached Cardinal Borgia at Guadalajara. He sent a hasty warning to the King, who notified Governor Cabrera. The governor had barely time to assemble some of his troops and dash to the rescue of the Conversos. He and his men swept the streets clear of Villena's men. The Marques and his hirelings fled from the city.

When Isabel and Fernando arrived at Segovia, the place still stank of charred timbers, rotting flesh, carnage and pestilence. She commended Cabrera for his valor, affectionately welcomed his wife Beatriz and denounced all the misguided or fanatical tools of Villena who had shared in the massacre.

Only recently she had prevented a massacre of the Conversos at Valladolid, even though it meant the loss of many of her adherents and the necessity of fleeing from the city with her husband and Archbishop. **Now She Had an Opportunity of Seeing at Close Range the Frightful Results of the Hatred between the Christians and Jews. What Could save the Land from Utter Ruin and from a Second Conquest by the Mohammedans, Applauded by Jews and Conversos? What Could Make the Jews Stop Exploiting the Christians and Proselytizing, Even as Christians, to Destroy Christianity? What Could Make Christians, or Nominal Christians, Stop Massacring the Marranos on Every Provocation?** Isabel and Fernando came to the conclusion that the great need of Castile was a government strong enough to be feared and respected by all classes.

Events now conspired to give them the opportunity that they desired. The Marques of Villena, their relentless enemy, died on October 4, 1474. King Enriques, left forlorn and friendless, failed rapidly in health and on the twelfth of December, after confessing his sins for along hour to the prior of the monastery he had built to commemorate the prowess of Don Beltran, he too expired, stubbornly refusing to the end to state whether or not La Beltraneja was his daughter.

Isabel heard the news in Segovia. Her first act was to put on mourning garments and go to the church of St. Michael to pray for the repose of the King's soul. When she returned to the castle, she was notified by Cabrera and the chief men of Segovia that she would be crowned Queen of Castile

on the morrow, St. Lucy's Day. Destiny had strangely put into the hands of a girl the power she had dreamed of using. The Middle Ages were past and modern Spain was about to be born.

## Chapter VII

Isabel looked down from the Alcazar of Segovia on the frosty morning of December thirteenth upon a town full of people. Into the four gates of the stern city built upon a cliff, were coming noblemen and commoners from all the countryside, with much flourishing of pennons and much music of trumpets, flageolets and kettledrums, for ho ceremony in Spain was complete without music.

There was a mighty shout as the gate of the castle opened and Dona Isabel came forth on a white palfrey, with the Governor Cabrera on one side of her and Archbishop Carrillo on the other. She was then twenty-three years old, a beautiful and stately figure, clad from head to foot in white brocade and ermine. Gems sparkled at her throat, at her bridle, the arch of her foot and her mount were caparisoned with cloth of gold. Slowly she advanced along the narrow, stony street near the head of a gorgeous procession.

Just in front of her on a great horse rode a herald, holding point upward the Castilian sword of justice naked, menacingly brighter in the sunlight, symbol that the young woman in the white jennet had the power of life and death over all who beheld her. After him came two pages, bearing on a pillow the gold crown of her ancestor, King Fernando the Saint. After the Princess came prelates and priests in chasubles worked in gold threads over purple silks, velours, glistening with gold chains and precious stones, councilmen of Segovia in ancient heraldic costumes, spear men, cross-bowmen, men at arms, flag-bearers, musicians, with a great rabble following.

Viva la Reinal! Castile for the Queen Lady Isabel! cried the people.

Arriving at the plaza, she dismounted and ascended a high platform, draped with stuffs of rich colors and seated herself on a throne where, amid shouts and trumpet blasts, the great crown of her ancestors was

placed on her light auburn hair. The bells of all the churches and convents of the city began to ring joyously. Muskets and arquebusses were fired from the keep of the Alcazar and heavy Lombards thundered from the city walls.

Isabel was a queen at last.

After all the nobles present had kissed her hand and sworn allegiance to her, she walked to the Cathedral, where she humbly prostrated herself before the high altar, giving thanks to God for bringing her safely through so many perils and asking the grace to rule according to His will.

A few days later she learned that her husband was riding from the north as fast as his horses could carry him. The news of Enrique's death and of his wife's coronation had reached him in Perpignan, where he had gone early in the autumn to save his father from capture by his enemies. Having rescued the aged King, Fernando had commenced to restore order in Aragon in the way that he and Isabel agreed was necessary in those abnormal times.

**He Had Found the City of Saragossa in a State of Anarchy, Cowed and Exploited by Ximenes Gordo, a Rich Conversos (a supposed converted Jew), Who Had Taken Command of the City Troops and Imposed His Turbulent Will on the People.** The young Prince on his arrival, invited the tyrant to visit him and when Gordo came, had him seized and delivered to the ministrations of a priest and a hangman. The body was exposed in the market place that noon.

When Fernando learned from a letter of Carrillo of his wife's coronation, he was indignant because the sword of justice had been carried before her. It was not customary in Aragon or Castile to carry the sword before queens. In Aragon too there was a Salic law, excluding women from the throne. Fernando evidently thought, notwithstanding the terms of his marriage agreement with Isabel, that he would be the real King of Castile after Enrique's death and it was a great shock to him to find that the gentle lady he had married intended to take the burden of government into her own hands. Gossip, controversies and intrigues among the nobles made

the matter worse and when Fernando arrived at Segovia, the court was divided into two factions, bitterly disputing the merits of husband and wife.

A reconciliation was effected however, by the efforts of Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza Cardinal of Spain, representing the Queen and Archbishop Carrillo, speaking for King Fernando. But it was Isabel herself who, with her tact and dignity, manoeuvred her husband into a position where he could only acquiesce as gracefully as possible. According to her secretary Pulgar, she spoke to him in these words:

This subject Señor, need never have been discussed, because where there is such union as by the grace of God exists between us, there can be no difference. Already, as my husband, you are King of Castile and your commands have to be obeyed here. These realms, please God, will remain after our days for your sons and mine. But since it has pleased these cavaliers to open up this discussion, perhaps it is just as well that any doubts they have be clarified, as the law of these our kingdoms provides.

This Señor I say, because as you perceive, it has not pleased God thus far to give us any heir but the princess Doña Isabel, our daughter, it could happen that after our days someone might come who, being descended from the royal house of Castile, might allege that these realms belonged to him even by the collateral line and not to your daughter the Princess, on account of her being a woman—Hence you will see Señor, what great embarrassment would ensue for our descendants. We ought to consider that God willing, the Princess our daughter has to marry a foreign prince, to whom will belong the government of these realms and who may desire to place in command of our fortresses and royal patrimony other people of his nation, who will not be Castilians.

Whence it may follow, that the kingdom may pass into the hands of a foreign race. That would be a great burden on our consciences and a disservice to God and a great loss to our successors and subjects. It is well that this declaration be made now, to avoid any misunderstandings in the future. Fernando evidently could think of no reply. The King, knowing this to be true, was much pleased, says the chronicler, and gave orders

that nothing further be said on the subject. Fernando had disappointed Isabel more than once since their marriage. She had suffered keenly on learning the truth about the forged dispensation his father had sent from Aragon. She was even more deeply wounded when she learned that he had an illegitimate child, born about the time of his marriage. Henceforth she was to know the torment of a jealousy for which Fernando only too often provided the occasion, for he had four children born out of wedlock.

Nevertheless she continued to love him to the day of her death. Never again, with one notable exception, would they have any serious difference of opinion. Henceforth in most public affairs, they were to act as one person, both signatures on all documents, both faces on all coins. Even if necessity parted them, love held their wills in unison—Many persons tired to divide them, but they were resolved not to disagree.

They could not afford to have differences if they wished to accomplish the gigantic task that awaited them. To bring order out of anarchy, to restore the prestige of the crown, to recover from robber barons the crown lands illegally granted by Enrique. To deflate the currency and restore prosperity to the farms and industries, to settle the Jewish problem, the Moorish problem, the Conversos problem, this was a task that seemed impossible for a young woman and young man with neither troops nor money. Castile was in a state of Chaos.

The young Queen commenced her reign resolutely however, by sweeping out of sight the worst of the parasites who had made her brother's court so infamous. She appointed able and trustworthy men to the chief offices. Mendoza, the Cardinal of Spain, as Chancellor; Count Haro as Constable of Castile; Fernando's uncle Fadrique as Admiral of Castile; Gutierre de Cardenas as Treasurer and Bursar. She and Fernando began to have thieves and murderers executed right and left, until the men and citizens and labourers and all the people in general who longed for peace were joyful and gave thanks to God, because they had lived to see a time in which it pleased Him to have mercy on these kingdoms—

The King and Queen, with this justice which they administered, gained the hearts of all in such a manner that the good had love for them and the

evil had fear. The great barons who had looted the country under the weak Enrique were not willing however, to lose their power without a struggle. The young Márques of Villena threatened to proclaim Juana, La Beltraneja, Queen of Castile if Isabel did not grant him the Grand Mastership of the order of Santiago and several cities. Archbishop Carrillo, angered because Fernando had offered him certain lands different from those he had promised, left the court in a huff and remained at his home at Alcala de Henares, performing alchemistic experiments with a friend of his, Doctor Alarcon. Both the Archbishop and young Villena were said to be in correspondence with Alfonso V of Portugal.

Cardinal Mendoza, whose elevation to the Primacy and growing influence with Isabel and Fernando had aroused the jealousy of the old Archbishop, now rode to Alcala and attempted to conciliate the old warrior by offering to efface himself and to let Carrillo play the first part in a reform Cortes to be assembled at Segovia in the spring.

The Archbishop gave an evasive answer, which was somewhat too ceremonious to be reassuring. Mendoza disappointed, returned to the young sovereigns to report that he feared something was brewing between Carrillo, Villena and Alfonso V of Portugal. To make matters worse, several miniature wars had broken out among the nobles. Three of them were quarrelling over the Grand Mastership of Santiago. Two of them were conducting a war for the possession of Seville. Two others were fighting at Córdoba.

At this juncture Isabel and Fernando, then at Valladolid, received a letter from King Alfonso of Portugal, announcing that he was about to marry La Beltraneja and therefore, was entitled to call himself King of Castile and Leon. He added that many of the great Castilian nobles, including the Archbishop of Toledo, were ready to join him.

Isabel could not believe that her old friend Carrillo had gone over to her enemies. She had her secretary write a passionate letter of appeal to him. The Archbishop made no reply. People were saying all over Castile, Whoever gets the Archbishop will win. The Queen decided, in spite of the advice of her councillors, to ride to Alcalá and make a personal appeal



to him. She sent Count Haro ahead to make arrangements for her visit. Carrillo received the count with gloomy courtesy and was obviously moved by the nobleman's appeal to his generosity and his loyalty. However, his attitude changed after he had consulted certain friends, who may have been emissaries of Villena and of Portugal. He now declared that if Queen Isabel came in at one gate of Alcalá, he would go out the other. I took her from the distaff and gave her a scepter and I will send her back to the distaff! he said.

Haro rode back to Colmenar, where the Queen was in a church praying and waiting for his return. She did not receive her envoy until Mass was over. When she heard his report, she turned pale and put her hands to her hair, says Pulgar, as if to hold her wits together. Closing her eyes, she remained silent till she had regained control of herself. Then, looking up, she said, My Lord Jesus Christ, in your hands I place all my affairs and I implore your protection and aid! and mounting her horse, rode on toward Toledo.

There she learned that Alfonso V, with 20,000 men, had crossed the border from Portugal into Estremadura on May 25, and marching to Plasencia, where his Castilian allies joined him, had publicly married La Beltraneja and had himself and his fifteen year old bride proclaimed King and Queen of Castile and Leon.

Fernando rode frantically through the north, seeking to raise an army. He had become unpopular in Castile however, since his attempt to usurp the crown and it was evident that any successful appeal to the country must come from Isabel herself. It appeared only too likely however, that Alfonso would soon have both her and the kingdom in his power.

Queen Isabel, wearing a breastplate of steel over her pain brocade dress, pressed her lips silently together as she mounted her horse and took the road to the north.



## Chapter VIII

Instead of marching to seize Isabel, Alfonso V proceeded to Arévalo, in the heart of Castile, and camped there. By so doing he hoped to prevent her from assembling an army. He failed to reckon upon her awakening genius, a genius quite as remarkable in its way as that of Saint Joan of Arc and he gave her the one thing she needed, time.

She proceeded to make the most of her advantage. Sickness, foul weather and rough dangerous country were no obstacles to her. For months she lived almost constantly on horseback, going from one end of the kingdom to the other, making speeches, holding conferences, sitting up all night dictating letters to her secretaries, holding court all morning to sentence a few thieves and murderers to be hanged and riding a hundred miles or two over cold mountain passes to plead with some lukewarm nobleman for five hundred soldiers. Wherever she went, she stirred into flame the ancient hatred of the Castilians for the Portuguese, who had defeated their ancestors so decisively at Aljubarrota in 1385. She concluded every appeal with a passionate prayer:

Thou O Lord, who knowest the secrets of the heart, of me Thou knowest that not by an unjust way, not by cunning or by tyranny, but by believing truly that these realms of the King my father, belong to me rightfully, have Endeavoured to obtain them, that what the kings my forebears won with so much bloodshed may not fall into the hands of an alien race. Lord, in whose hands lies the sway of kingdoms, I humbly beseech Thee to hear the prayer of Thy servant and show forth the truth and manifest Thy will with Thy marvellous works, so that if my cause is not just, I may not be allowed to sin through ignorance and if it is just, Thou give me wisdom and courage to sustain it with the aid of Thine arm, that through Thy grace we may have peace in these kingdoms, which till now have endured so many evils and destructions.

While Fernando collected troops from the northern provinces, Isabel assembled several thousand men at Toledo and rode at their head, in full armour like Saint Joan, to meet her husband at Valladolid. By the end of June they had assembled a motley host of forty-two thousand men, poorly

equipped and badly disciplined, many of them farm hands and released convicts. Whipping them hastily into thirty-five battalions, Fernando left Valladolid in July and struck south-west to the river Duero. Isabel, who was ill, remained at Tordesillas to keep the line of communications open and to watch developments.

Alfonso marched to Toro, which yielded to him. There the impulsive Fernando besieged him, hoping to crush him quickly and then march north against the French, who were invading Guipúzcoa. But the governor of Castro Nuño, who had treacherously gone over to the Portuguese. His army threatened with starvation, Fernando had no choice but to retreat to Medina del Campo. Many of his men deserted on the way and it was only a remnant of the great army that he brought back to the disappointed Queen.

A disaster that would have been crushing to ordinary persons only stimulated Isabel to greater efforts. From this time on she was fortunate in having almost constantly with her, as friend and adviser one of the ablest men of his time, Don Pedro Gonzalez de Mendoza, Cardinal of Spain. Son of a distinguished soldier and poet, the Marques of Santillana, he was learned, acute, charming, a devout churchman, a skilful soldier and a profound statesman. It was he who now made a suggestion that saved the day for Isabel.

He appealed to the clergy to melt down the silver plate accumulated as gifts and heirlooms in various churches for centuries. In this way a sum of thirty million maravedis was realized. The help of the church enabled Isabel to pay her troops, to enlist new recruits, to bring gunpowder and heavy lombards from Italy and Germany and to buy food and clothing. By December first, less than five months after the retreat from Toro, a new army was ready for the field. It comprised only fifteen thousand men, but they were well armed and well trained.

Fernando marched again toward Toro. Alfonso offered to retire on condition he receive Toro and Zamora, the kingdom of Galicia, and a sum of money. But Isabel declared that she would never give away a single battlement of her father's kingdom. Fernando was obliged to leave his

army before Toro and ride to Burgos in the north, to aid his supporters there. Meanwhile Isabel, after posting guards on all the roads, galloped to Toledo, 130 miles south, to bring back reinforcements of new levies. She then made a wide and rapid swing to Leon, more than two hundred miles north, to rescue the province from a treacherous governor.

Returning, she sent the Count of Benavente to make a night attack on the Portuguese. Alfonso and his army withdrew twenty miles to Zamora, a fort built on a lofty rock, inaccessible except by a powerful fortified bridge across the Douro.

One night Isabel, learned that the governor of the bridge was willing to deliver it to her, if she would send troops to take it. She sent word to Fernando to leave Burgos in disguise and come at once. Fernando, pretending illness, left his quarters alone, rode sixty miles by night through an enemy country and arrived at Valladolid just before dawn. There Isabel had a picked force of cavalry ready for him. Zamora was fifty miles away. The next night he reached the Bridge and took possession of it. He had only to hold until Isabel brought up reinforcements and artillery. She had her big guns on the road before dawn.

Alfonso awoke to find his position commanded by the Castilian guns. He withdrew his army into the open country and Fernando occupied the town. Next day Alfonso was reinforced by his son, Dom Joao with 20,000 troops. He was now in a position to besiege Fernando and he did so. For two Fernando and his army were cooped up in Zamora.

Isabel, threatened with defeat, was spurred on to almost superhuman activity. Like all great soldiers, she saw the advantage of attack. If the enemy's force outnumbered hers, it must be divided. She sent troops to assail Alfonso's base at Toro. She hurled others against his right flank. Finally she discovered that a town at his rear, commanding his line of communications, was poorly guarded. She sent two thousand calvary to seize it. Alfonso in his turn was not compelled to retreat. One cold night, while his men grumbled at the scarcity of food, he broke camp and started along the river bank to Toro.

When Fernando discovered that the enemy had vanished, he rapidly pursued and overtook him in the middle of the afternoon. Cardinal Mendoza, riding ahead to reconnoiter, returned to the King to tell him that the Portuguese were drawn up in battle order, just beyond a small hill. Fernando gave the word to advance. Slowly the Castilian host went over the piece of rising ground and defiled into the plain. The sun, far down the western sky, was at their backs, shining murkily from under a heavy curtain of gray clouds, into the eyes of the Portuguese. Presently a fine, cold, drizzly rain began to fall.

There was a long splintering rash as the hosts came together and were interlocked—the splitting of lances, the rattle of armour, the thumping of horses; riders catapulted to the ground to lie still or rise and draw swords, footmen running out among them with daggers and axes—the melee grimly settled down to a business like hacking and thrusting. Fernando! cried the Castilians. Alfonso! shouted the Portuguese.

Where the standards of the rival kings fluttered back and forth on the waves of steel, there was the fiercest fighting, shouting, letting of blood and piling up of the slain. On the left the Cardinal of Spin, his bishop's crozier torn and spattered with blood that looked almost black in that leaden dusk, fought with the fury of a tiger, laying men flat to right and left of him as he pressed forward through the ranks of the Portuguese. On the right, Dom Joao's artillery thundered; the echoes rumbled from the river to the crags, followed by the brisk rattle of his musketry. The six squadrons of Fernando's Galician and Austrian cavalry broke and fled, pursued by the yelling Portuguese.

Entangled with their foes, neither Fernando nor the Cardinal could go to help of their right wing and to make matters worse, Dom Joao doubled back after a brief pursuit of the scared mountaineers and fell upon their flank. The fighting was desperate, to the death. Back and forth, up and down they swayed in the cold crepuscular rain, while the shouts became hoarser and the moaning of the wounded more frequently under foot and the darkness came swiftly down from the slaty sky and still neither side had the victory. Thus for three hours the fortune of the battle hung in the balance. They fought silently now, panting for breath.

Mendoza had hacked his way through the Portugese right to where he could barely see in the thick gloom the standard of King Alfonzo, rising and falling. Duarte de Almeida was making a heroic struggle to keep Alfonso's standard flying. Wounded in the right arm, he held the flag in his left. When a Castilian arrow transfixed his left arm, he held the staff between his teeth until he fell, pierced through the body, while the Cardinal of Spain seized the Portuguese flag and bore it off. The fat Alfonso, puffing valiantly gave ground. Their flag down, their king beaten back, a great hesitation like some slow fog began to drift over the mass of the tired Portuguese, who had eaten nothing since they left Zamor at daybreak. They gave way here, they drew in there. It was now quite dark.

Suddenly, with a mighty shout, the six battalions of mountain horsemen who had fled from Dom Joao's guns at the outset, but had slowly reassembled in shame on the hillside, fell upon the disordered Portuguese. The whole line began to retreat. At the same time the Cardinal of Spain and the Duke of Alba drove them from the flank toward the river. In vain Alfonso and Dom Joao shouted their battle cries. In vain the stout-hearted Carrillo, blood from head to foot, the red cloak torn from his back, stormed and pleaded with them while he smote about him like some Homeric hero in the opaque night.

The flight became a panic. Santiago! cried the victors. Castile! Castile for King Fernando and Queen Isabel! The miserable Portugese slew each other by mistake. They ran up the hills, they leaped into the swift river and were sucked under the cold waters by the weight of their armour. Bands of them rushed wildly about seeking their king and crying Fernando! Fernando! to avoid slaughter.

During the night Fernando ordered the men to cease slaying the vanquished and to make prisoners of them. The fury of the Castilians was such that even after some days, they wished to kill the Portuguese prisoners and might have done so but for the indignant opposition of Cardinal Mendoza, who said, Never, please God, may such a thing be said, or such an example of us remain in the memory of living men. Let us arrive to conquer and not think of vengeance, for to conquer is for strong men and to avenge is for weak women.

At dawn Fernando sent a briefly affectionate message to Isabel, announcing his victory. She received the news with great joy at Tordesillas. She ordered all the clergy of the town to assemble and to march through the streets singing the Te Deum. Amid the acclamations of the people, the young Queen came out of her palace barefoot and thus she walked over the rough stones of the streets to the monastery of Saint Paul, where she went on silent feet through the murmuring crowd to the high altar and prostrated herself with great devotion and humility, giving thanks to the God of Battles.

## Chapter IX

The victory over Portugal had left Isabel mistress of Castile, but it was a Castle ridden with famine, pestilence and economically almost beyond repair. No one paid his debts if he didn't want to, wrote her secretary in her chronicle. The people were accustomed to all disorders—and the citizens, labourers and peaceful men were not masters of their own property and had no recourse to anybody for the robberies and acts of violence they endured... Each man would willingly have given half his goods, if he could purchase security for himself and his family.

The chief task that confronted Isabel and Fernando was to restore respect for law. This they proceeded to do with a rigor which they felt was justified by the prevailing anarchy. At a Cortes assembled at Madrigal in 1476, they took steps to revive the Santa Hermandad or Holy Brotherhood, a voluntary police force, which in the fourteenth century had been organized to defend the local rights of the people against the crown, but in the end had become a tool of the nobles. Isabel proceeded to convert this nearly useless weapon of the privileged classes into an instrument of royal discipline.

A force of two thousand horsemen was organized under a captain-general, the Duke of Villahermosa, bastard brother of King Fernando, with eight captains under him. Every hundred householders maintained a horseman, well armed and equipped, ready at any moment to start in pursuit of a criminal. For every community of thirty families there were two alcades (Magistrates), whose powers were absolute, unless appeals were taken to

the bishop of Cartagena, or as a last resort to the King and Queen. But unless a lawbreaker had good grounds for an appeal, he had short shrift and the mildest penalty he could expect was the loss of an ear or hand. A petty thief was relieved of one of his feet, to make sure that he did not repeat his offence.

More often, the penalty was death. As soon as the sentence was pronounced, a priest was fetched to hear the prisoner's confession and give him the last sacraments. Tied to the nearest tree, the convict was dispatched with arrows by the Hermandad. Evidently the authors of the ordinances of the Brotherhood were skeptical about the permanency of any moral reforms effected by force among criminals, for they commanded that the shooting follow the absolution as speedily as possible, that his soul may pass from his body with the greatest safety.

This stern and speedy justice seemed a matter of course to Isabel and Fernando and their contemporaries. The sympathy that Enrique El Impotente had lavished on the criminal they reserved for the murdered man and his widow and children, the ravished woman, the family burned to death kin in the middle of the night by bandits or robber barons. It was not that the Spanish were any more cruel than other western people. For example, life was incredibly cheap in England at that period. Even a century later we find an English chronicler reporting the hanging every year of from three hundred to four hundred Arogues including petty thieves and during the reign of King Henry VIII seventy-two thousand died on the gallows for thefts alone.

Isabel and her husband rode from town to town, sometimes together, sometimes separately, administering justice without delay and without cost to the people. The young Queen would hear complaints, order reconciliations and restitutions, condemn the guilty to death and ride on to the next place. Within a short time her justice had filled the country with consternation. It was the more terrifying because it was felt to be impartial and incorruptible.

Although she was desperately in need of money, she frequently refused to accept bribes from rich criminals. A wealthy noble named Alvar Yañez,



who had murdered a notary, had offered the Queen the enormous sum of forty thousand ducats if she would spare his life. Some of her council, knowing how bare the royal treasury was, advised her to accept. But the Queen preferred justice to money. She had the head of Yañez, struck off the same day and to avoid any suspicion of mercenary motives, had the property distributed among his sons, although there were plenty of precedents to justify her confiscating it.

One day while she was resting at Tordésillas, after driving the remaining Portuguese out of Toro, she heard that a revolt had begun at Segovia and that the insurgents were storming the tower of the Alcazar, in which her baby Isabel, was guarded by a mere handful of loyalists.

Beatriz de Bobdilla, who had been left in charge of the child, had come to Tordesillas to confer with Her majesty. Cabrera, the governor, had left the city and during his absence, some of his enemies, with weapons concealed under their labourer's clothes, had entered the Alcazar, killed the guard at the gate and taken possession of the castle. The men assigned to guard the Infanta retreated to the tower where the child and her nurse were furiously resisted. Men all over the city took arms and joined one side or the other. The majority however, joined the rebels out of hatred for the Conversos Cabrera. Even the bishop of Segovia, Don Juan Arias de Avila joined them, though he himself was a Conversos.

Queen Isabel had with her at the time only Cardinal Mendoza, her friend Beatriz, and the count of Benavente. There was no time to assemble troops and she could travel more rapidly without them. She mounted a horse and followed by her three friends, rode madly for Segovia, sixty miles away.

The sun glared on the white road, as hot as on the sands of the Sahara. The dust, six inches deep, arose in clouds about her and her horse; it whitened them with powder; it blinded her eyes and rubbed the skin off her lips. The Queen lost her way trying to cut through a pine forest, retraced her steps to the road, let her horses rest awhile at Coca and during the night, when a cold wind came up with the August moon, pressed on to Segovia. At dawn she saw the tower of the Alcazar, rising above the rocky spur that projects over the grey plain like the prow of a galley. All

around them barren and treeless, stretched the desolate waste of a cruel, inscrutable country. Was the Princess still in the tower? Were they too late?

When the Queen approached the gate of St. John, the Bishop and several of the chief citizens came forth and begged her not to enter, for there was sharp fighting nearby. Furthermore the Bishop requested that she leave outside the walls Cabrera's wife and his friend the Count of Benavente, since the sight of them would infuriate the mob. The young queen with cold anger, cut short their ceremonious speeches, saying:

Tell those cavaliers and citizens of Segovia that I am Queen of Castile and this city is mine, for the king my father left it to me. To enter what is mine I do not need any laws or conditions that they may lay down for me. I shall enter the city by the gate I choose and the Count of Benavente shall enter with me and all others that I think proper for my service. Say to them further, that they shall all come to me and do what I shall command like loyal subjects and cease making tumults and scandals in my city, lest they suffer hurt in their persons and their property.

So saying, Isabel clapped the spurs into her jaded horse and followed by her three friends, galloped through the gate of St. John into the midst of the howling mob. Fearless of the swords and spears that flashed about her in the morning sun, she pressed on to the small courtyard near the tower. The Bishop followed, vainly trying to quiet the people. The mob surged around the little group.

Kill them all! they cried. To the sword with the friends of Mayordomo! Down with Cabrera! Storm the tower and kill them all! The Queen silent, haggard and dusty on her white horse, faced them. The Cardinal leaned toward her. Urgently he begged her to have the gate of the Alcazar closed, that no more of the mob might enter the court. The Queen shook her head.

Open the gates wider, she said, and bid them all come in. The gates creaked. Friends, shouted a cavalier, the Queen commands that all come in, as many as can. A murmur went over the crowd. The Queen! After a hesitation there was a forward seething of the human sea and an

overflowing into the court. The Queen waited for silence. The Cardinal, indifferent to his own safety, watched her with a mixture of admiration and fear. Her words, clear and resonant, sped like arrows over the heads of the shoving and grumbling people:

My vassals and servants, say now what you desire, for what suits you is agreeable with me, since it is for the common good of the city. A leader of the mob, motioning for quiet, stood forth as spokesman to relate their grievances at length. Senora, he began, Awe have several supplications to make. The first is, that the Mayordomo Andres de Cabrera no longer have the keeping of the Alcazar! The second...

What you wish, I wish. He is removed. I shall take possession of these towers and walls and commit them to a loyal companion of mine, who will guard them with loyalty to me and honour to you. A howl broke from the crowd, a howl of triumph and approbation. Viva la Reina! The people outside the gate took up the cry. It was the same motley swarthy multitude that had screamed those words to her that winter morning three years ago, when she rode out of this very court to be crowned.

In a trice the men who had been cursing Cabrera were clamoring for the blood of his enemies. The rebel leaders fled for their lives. By noon the towers and walls had been cleared of them and Isabel was in complete possession of the Alcazar. Her first thought was to embrace the Princess, from whom she had so long been separated. Then she rode in weary triumph through the streets to the palace near the Church of St. Martin, followed by a mob that all but smothered her in their joy and admiration. From the steps of the palace she made a brief speech, bidding them go peacefully to their homes, promising that if they would send a committee to her to explain all their grievances, she would have justice done. The multitude melted away. The Queen entered the palace, threw herself on a bed and slept.

Subsequently, when she considered the complaints laid before her by the committee and sifted them to the bottom, she reinstated Cabrera, finding him innocent of the charges against him, though some of his subordinates had committed minor tyrannies. The Queen believed on the part of men

who wanted his post, or the strong Old Christian Kon Juan Arias, repented of his part in the day's work, bethinking him that the Queen might have a long memory and a long arm. The time was coming, though he little suspected it, when he would have a particular need of her friendship.

## Chapter X

Late in September, when Queen Isabel went to Valladolid to meet her husband on his return from his estates in the north. She was vexed to learn of a conflict that had arisen over the Grand Mastership of the Order of Santiago. The Count of Paredes, chief claimant to the honour had died and his rival Don Alonso de Cardenas, had marched at the head of an army to Ucles, where the treces and comandadores of the Order had assembled at his bidding to elect him Grand Master.

Isabel had no personal objection to Cardenas. On the contrary, she found him an exceptionally able officer in a private Awar he had waged against the Duke of Medina Sidonia in the conflict against the Portuguese. She hoped to make use of him in the crusade she planned to begin against the Moors as soon as she had restored peace and prosperity in Castile. On the other hand she had vivid and painful memories of past civil wars fought for the Mastership of Santiago under King Enrique. Besides, she had a plan of her own making the famous military order useful to the Crown.

Three great military orders had grown up in Spain during the Middle Ages. The Order of Calatrava had been founded by two Cistercian monks, who with their companions defended a strategic pass between Castile and Anadalusia saving Christian Spain from being reconquered by the Moors. As time went on the Order grew in numbers and wealth, until it included fifty-six commanderies, sixteen priories, sixty-four villages and enjoyed an annual income of fifty thousand ducats.

The Order of Alcantara was organized to hold the town of that name, an important outpost, when it was taken from the Moors by the Christians in 1214. To defend it, a group of knights banded together, wearing over their armour the White Cistercian Mantle embroidered with a scarlet overcross. They too in time accumulated numbers and wealth.

But the most noted of the three orders was that of Santiago, founded in the twelfth century to protect pilgrims coming from all parts of Europe to the shrine of St. James the Apostle at Compostela in Galicia, where his body, found intact after eight centuries, was reserved and honoured. But after the Moors withdrew into Granada and no longer menaced the northern kingdoms, the knight grew indifferent and warred with each other instead of with the Infidel. The election of a Grand Master was so important that it often led to a civil war. That dignitary ruled over eighty-three commanderies, two cities, one hundred and seventy-eight boroughs and villages, two hundred parishes, five hospitals, five convents, and a college at Salamanca. He virtually presided over the kingdom and enjoyed more in come than many kings. In time of war he could lead into the field, four hundred knights and a thousand lances.

Isabel saw that if the Crown was to be supreme, it must do away with such powerful organizations, particularly when they were no longer of any great use in the new warfare that scientific discovery was making possible. Gunpowder was putting an end to the tactics of chivalry, simply because two or three plebeians with a canon could blow up any number of men in armour, be their blood ever so blue and their hearts ever so stout. She decided to annexe the powers of the orders by asking the Pope to appoint King Fernando to each Mastership, when the present incumbent died. The death of the Count of Paredes was her first opportunity. She dispatched a messenger to Rome, asking that Fernando be appointed Grand Master of Santiago. But Cardenas with his usual promptness and boldness jeopardized her plan.

Ucles, where the delegates were meeting, was two hundred miles away, across the mountains and the rains had set in, but that made no difference to Isabel. Taking a small retinue, she mounted her horse and started on the dangerous journey in a heavy downpour. At the end of the third day she came to Ocana, fifty miles from her destination. She was urged to spend the night in the palace there, the palace she had fled from with Carrillo eight years before, but fearing that the election might be held the next morning, she pressed on all night under the beating rain. Next morning, as the knights of Santiago were about to vote on the Mastership,

they were astonished to see the weary and drenched Queen walk silently into their midst.

As usual Isabel went to the heart of the problem and told them plainly why she had come. The Mastership of Santiago she said, was too important an office not to be kept in the royal family, hence she had decided that it must belong to King Fernando. She commanded them, as her subjects, to postpone their election.

The Queen's self possession carried the day and Cardenas submitted with good grace. Later, when Isabel had in her hands the Pope's bull, giving the administration of the Order to Fernando, she appointed Cardenas Grand Master for life, on condition that the order pay three million maravedis a year to maintain its forts along the Moorish frontier. When Cardenas died in 1499, Fernando assumed the Mastership. Similarly he took over the administration of Calatrava in 1487 and that of Clcantata in 1492. His wife's foresight was ultimately to increase the royal revenue by a million dollars a year.

Isabel now returned to Ocana to meet Fernando, who had been strengthening their defences on the Portuguese frontier, for peace had not yet been formally made and together they proceeded to Toledo. There, at the Queen's orders, a great preparation had been made for a triumph in honour of Fernando's victory at Toro.

She had promised, after the battle, that as soon as possible she would give public thanks to God and would build a church in honor of St. John the Evangelist, to whom she had prayed during the perilous days of the Portuguese war.

They entered the city one afternoon, to find waiting for them a gorgeous procession of prelates, canons and priests, together with noblemen and townspeople who marched with a raised crucifix before them to the great cathedral. There, in the vast grove of marble and granite, the rich colours of the late sunlight filtered through the stained glass to mingle with the shadows about the young King and the splendid Queen who knelt in silence before the high altar, giving thanks to God. On the next day there

was a second and even more magnificent procession to the cathedral. This time the King and Queen entered by the gate of their ancestor St. Fernando, who had freed Andalusia from the Moorish yoke by capturing Cordoba in 1235. Isabel wore his golden crown, blazing with precious stones, while a long mantle of ermine fell over her gown of white brocade, flowered with castles and lions of gold.

Around her neck gleamed the famous necklace of pearls and the collar of balas rubies, the largest of which was supposed to have belonged to King Solomon when he sent to Spain the ancient Tashish of Jews, for his gold and silver, his ivory and apes and peacocks. ("...bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks." (1 Kings 10:22) Silver and brass were not considered of great value in the days of Solomon. And every three years the navy of Tarshish came bringing with them gold and silver. They also brought ivory, "apes" and "peacocks."

These last two do not refer to animals or birds, but rather, they are the Commercial Names of Lead and Copper brought in the ships. From America! In modern language we refer to animals or birds, but rather, they are the commercial names of Lead and Copper brought in the ships. In modern language we refer to iron as "pigs" so, too, in ancient times Lead was called "Apes" because of its peculiar formation and colour, while Copper Ore, with its rich and changeable colouring, was called "Peacocks.")

After hearing High Mass, they walked to the tomb of their other ancestor, Juan I of Castile, who had been defeated by the Portuguese at Aljubarrota nearly a hundred years before and over his resting place Isabel draped the torn and bloody standard taken from Alfonso V at Toro.

Before leaving Toledo, Isabel bought several houses between two of the gates, had them destroyed and there had ground broken for the Franciscan monastery of Saint-John-of-the-Kings, on whose construction she was to spend several years. Its four vaults, carved with the most delicate lace work in stone, in infinite variety, still remain as a monument to her lifelong love for Fernando. She never tired of sending gold chalices, Jewels, trophies, tapestries and paintings to the church and in all parts of it may be found the arms of Castile and Aragon, and the cyphers of Isabel and

Fernando, interlaced. From Toledo the sovereigns proceeded to Madrid. There they found waiting for them several pieces of disquieting news. The new King of Granada, Muley Abou'l Hassan, had refused to send them the customary tribute which they had demanded and it was believed that he was preparing for war. This would have suited Isabel and Fernando well at a later time, for one of their chief ambitions was to drive the Moorish power out of Spain. But the hour had not yet come when they could afford to undertake so costly a struggle. Meanwhile, fresh Portuguese armies had invaded Castile in the west and it was said that Alfonso V had gone to Paris, seeking aid from France and had been received with great honour by Louis XI. In the cities of the south the wildest anarchy still reigned.

Isabel proposed that while Fernando crushed the remaining Castilian rebels in the west and Cardenas went to meet the Portuguese, she herself would ride to Southern Estremadura and pacify the country. To this the King and the council strenuously objected. They said there was no city or town that she could use as a base of operations, for every fortress was in the hands of some petty tyrant whose crimes were so notorious that he dare not surrender for fear of being hanged. They suggest that she remain in some safe place, such as Toledo, until the King and Cardenas returned.

The Queen listened to their advice and as usual, calmly announced her own decision:

I have always heard it said that the blood, like a good schoolmistress, always goes to repair the part of the body that receives some hurt. Now, to hear continually of the war that the Portuguese make as foes and the Castilians as tyrants and to endure it with complacency, would not be the office of a good king; for kings who wish to reign have to labour. It seems to me that my Lord ought to go to those places beyond the mountain pass and I to the other parts of Estremadura--

It is true that there are certain obstacles to my going, such as you have mentioned. But in all human affairs there are things both certain and doubtful and both are equally in the hands of God, who is accustomed to guide a good end the causes that are just and are sought with diligence.



The King and the council acquiesced, knowing well that when the Queen spoke in that vein, further argument was useless. While Fernando took the field in the west, therefore Isabel donned her armor again and rode south into the country of her foes the robber barons.

## Chapter XI

Dismounting at Guadalupe, Queen Isabel sent one of her secretaries ahead to demand the keys of the fortress of Trujillo. The governor sent back word that he would deliver the keys to no one but his master the young Marques of Villena, one of several noblemen who still defied her. Queen cried angrily, Do I have to remain out of my own city/ Surely no good king would do it and no more will I.

Summoned heavy artillery and troops from Sevilla and Cordoba and planned to blow down the walls of Trujillo. Meanwhile, she took Madrilego, a notorious robber's den and when the garrison had marched out, commanded her gunners to fire upon the walls and towers until not one stone was left upon another. This example frightened the petty tyrants of the vicinity and many of them submitted to the determined Queen.

The young Marques of Villena now appeared and offered to give her Trujillo on certain conditions. There can be no discussion, she said, until I have the keys of Trujillo. Villena then ordered his alcalde to surrender and Isabel entered the city in triumph. She rode to Caceres, settled a bloody feud there over an election, posted garrisons in Badajoz and other frontier towns and proceeded to Sevilla.

Sevilla was one of the largest and most beautiful cities of Andalusia. Taken from the Moors by St. Fernando, it was still principally Moorish in character, a bewildering labyrinth of narrow winding streets and lanes, lined with one-story white houses enclosing gay flowers and cool fountains in patios where the people virtually lived most of the year.

There were to causes of this discord. The weakness of Enrique's government had emboldened the nobles to take the law into their own

hands and for three years two of the most powerful nobles of the south, the Duke of Medina Sidonia and young Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marques of Cadiz, had been fighting pitched battles in and about the city, regardless of the damage to the lives and property of the citizens.

The other cause was racial, or perhaps more accurately religious. There was in Sevilla a large Jewish quarter, or Juderia, though the old law compelling the Jews to reside in it was no longer enforced. Far more numerous however, were the Jews who lived as Conversos among the Christians, intermarried with them, held most influential and lucrative office, owned the most valuable property in the city and derived great incomes, as did some of the Jews of the synagogue, from money lending and from the busy slave market in which Moors and blacks from Africa were bought and sold.

The Spanish Jews differed but little from the Christian population with regard to customs and education, say the Jewish Encyclopedia. They were fond of luxury and the women wore costly garments with long trains, also valuable Jewelry. This tended to increase the hatred of the populace toward them. They were quarrelsome and inclined to robbery, often attacked and insulted one another even in their synagogues and prayer houses, frequently inflicting wounds with the rapier or sword they were accustomed to carry. This was equally true of the Conversos, or Marranos but they were even more disliked because as Christian they dominated activities from which the Jews were excluded.

Queen Isabel seems to have had no prejudice against the Jews as a race. The problem as she saw it was religious, rather than racial. All her life she employed in positions of trust certain Jews who she felt were sincere in their profession of Catholic Christianity. She repeatedly protected the Jews of the synagogue from the fury of the mob. She believed however, that a very large percentage of the Conversos were really secret Jews who went to Mass on Sundays only for business or social reasons and could be found in the synagogue on Saturday, while they lost no opportunity to ridicule and blaspheme the most sacred truths of the Christian religion and to undermine the faith which was the basis of morality of the people among whom they lived. Isabel sought some way to restrict the activities of such

hypocritical Christians and at the same time to save them from the periodic massacres at the hands of the exploited populace. It was difficult to deal with them, because when a Jew professed himself a Christian, no one could say with certainty whether he was sincere or not. There were of course, many sincere Jewish Catholics who must be protected both from the misunderstanding of the mob and from the attempts of their Jewish friends to win them back to the synagogue.

About this time it was suggested that the Queen establish the Inquisition in Castile. She referred the matter to the venerable Bishop of Cadiz, asking him to investigate the situation in Seville and report to her. Meanwhile, she intended to deal with the prevalent crimes of Seville in her own way, under the existing laws. She announced that every Friday she would hold public court, as her ancestors had done and would give justice in all criminal or civil cases promptly and without cost. The laxity and corruption of the courts of Sevilla made this necessary.

When the Queen entered the city on a July morning in 1477, the streets were canopied with rich old tapestries stretched from one roof to another, so that the royal cortege, glittering with gems and purple and cloth of gold, might advance in a soft, multi-coloured shadow, over grown strewn with jasmine and roses from hundreds of gardens. Isabel went first to the Cathedral, as usual, to give thanks to God and to implore His help. Then she proceeded to the Alcazar, formerly a Moorish palace and walked through gardens where tufted palms swayed over pomegranates laden with blood red fruits and orange trees with spheres of gold. Finally she sat, pensive and grave, in the judgment seat of Saint Fernando in the Hall of the Ambassadors.

There she resolved to restore peace to laughing Sevilla. While the chief men of the city were hurrying about to arrange for her entertainment with feasts, banquets and bull-fights, she was calmly thinking of having some of them hanged.

As for the bull fighting, she despised the sport so intensely that she forbade it by royal decree but when she discovered that the Andalusians loved it too passionately to give it up, permitted it only on condition that false

horns, blunted, be fastened to the heads of the bulls. Every Friday during the next two months all who had grievances found their way to the Hall of the Ambassadors, where the young Queen sat on a dias draped with cloth of gold against a background of blue Moorish glazed tiles, called azulejos.

As each petition was received by her four secretaries, she would commit it to one of her councillors, who sat below her on one side, with instructions that the witnesses be examined diligently and a verdict returned in three days. The Queen herself heard all doubtful cases and all appeals from her judges. Soldiers began bringing in malefactors, great and small, rich and poor, from all parts of the city and its suburbs. Murderers and other major offenders were taken out, given time to confess and hanged without further ceremony. Huge quantities of stolen goods were restored to their rightful owners.

As it became evident that the Queen was terribly in earnest, rich citizens began offering her bribes, if she would relent. But Isabel was inexorable and now even those who had not been denounced began to flee from their homes by night. Four thousand left the city within a week. So many families in the city were involved that the aged Bishop of Cadiz finally went to see the Queen, taking with him a great throng of the wives, children, parents, brothers and sisters of the fugitives. He pointed out that under a lax government like Enrique's it was only natural for human nature to follow the course of least resistance. Hence so many in Sevilla were guilty that hardly a house was without a criminal, or an accessory in some way to crime. He begged the Queen to be merciful, saying:

True it is, most excellent Queen and Lady, that our Lord uses justice as well as mercy; but justice sometimes and mercy all the time; for if He used justice as He does mercy, all mortals would be condemned and the world would perish.—Scripture enjoins mercy, and the Holy Catholic Church continually chants in praise of the mercy of God. The reign of justice is nigh to cruelty and the prince is called cruel who, even though he has cause, does not use moderation in punishing. The Queen listened thoughtfully to the old prelate's speech and concluding that she had already accomplished her purpose, acceded to his request and proclaimed

a general amnesty convening all offences except heresy. She now turned her attention to the feud between the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Marques of Cadiz and having heard only the Duke's side of the dispute, became quite angry against the Marques who, according to his enemy, was the cause of all the anarchy in Sevilla, besides conspiring against his sovereign. Isabel issued commands for his arrest. Instead of taking flight however, young Rodrigo mounted a horse one August evening, rode to Sevilla with only one servant and boldly presented himself at the Queen's apartments.

She found him a man in his early thirties, of middle height, though his powerful, compact frame made him look shorter; pock-marked; a face framed by curly red hair and ending in a pointed beard of the same colour. His eyes were frank and fearless and he met the Queen's scrutiny coolly.

You see me here, most powerful Queen, in your hands, he began. I have come to show my innocence, and that being demonstrated, your royal highness may do with me what you please. He denied all of the accusations made against him by the Duke and declared that he had always been a loyal subject of the Queen.

His frankness and fearlessness so favourably impressed her that she promised to investigate the quarrel between him and the Duke and do justice to both, on condition that both deliver to her certain fortresses illegally given away by Enriques IV. Finding later that she could not reconcile such proud and high spirited enemies, she banished them both to their estates, forbidding them to return to Sevilla under pain of death.

Fernando, who had been engaged in similar work in other cities, rejoined his wife at Sevilla in August. In October they visited the Duke of Medina Sidonia at San Lucan and the Marques of Cadiz at Rota.

They returned to Sevilla in December and on Christmas Day issued the first known royal decree on printing, exempting the famous Louvain printer Dierck Maertens, from taxation, as a printer of books and forbidding anyone to interfere with his work. The first book printed in Spain had been a collection of songs in honour of Our Lady published in

1474, followed by an edition of Sallust and a translation of the Bible into Castilian in 1478.

There was great joy in the city and much ringing of bells and firing of cannon, when Queen Isabel gave birth to a son on the morning of June 30. Little Prince Juan was taken on the ninth of July to the Cathedral, where the great pillars of marble and granite were draped with brocades and silks of many gay colours.

The royal infant was carried in on a pillow of red brocade at the head of a splendid procession, including the court, the foreign ambassadors, the officials of Sevilla and the great prelates and nobles of the south. First came Cardinal Mendoza, followed by the distinguished godfathers, the Papal Legate, the Ambassador of Venice, the Constable of Castile and the Count of Benavente, to the accompaniment of music of horns of many sorts, from the highest piccolo to the throatiest basso profundo. Afterwards there was a great feast, during which the baby's godmother, the duchess of Medina Sidonia, gave her tabard to King Fernando's pet dwarf, Alegre.

A month later Queen Isabel went to Mass to present the Prince to God, as the Infant Jesus had been presented in Jerusalem by His mother. She sat on a white pony with a gilded saddle and caparisons of gold and silver, her silk skirt was woven with pearls. His majesty rode before her on a small silver grey horse with trappings of gold on black velvet and the King's sombrero was bordered with thread of gold.

Three weeks later there was a total eclipse of the sun. People indulged in much speculation as to what it might mean. Some feared that it boded ill for little Prince Juan. About this time the Bishop of Cadiz reported on his investigation of the activities of the Conversos in Seville. He confirmed the Queen's suspicion that most of them were secret Jews who were continually winning over Christians to Jewish practices and were on the point of preaching Moses even from Catholic pulpits.

The Bishop felt that the ordinary criminal courts of the state could not distinguish between the hypocritical Conversos, who were undermining Church and State, and the sincere Christian Jews. Serious as the crimes

against faith might begin their effects on public and private morality, they were so secret that they were difficult to prove. An ordinary judge could not always give an intelligent judgment on the religious views of the accused. It would take a court composed of men skilled in theology to pass judgment on this orthodoxy before the State could proceed against him. The bishop recommended that the Inquisition, which had served in a similar crisis in southern France long before, be established in Castile.

To understand the bitterness of Spanish Christians against the secret Jews, who pretended to be Catholics, one must remember that **Spain Had Been at War with the Moors for Hundreds of Years and That the Jews, Who Had Invited the Mohammedans into the Country in the First Place, Had Always Been Considered Enemies within the Gate, Sympathizing with and Often Lending Assistance to the Hated Moors. Beyond Any Question the Jews and the Mohammadens Did Share a Common Hatred of Christ and His Church. Whenever the Moorish War Flamed Anew, the Jews Became Special Objects of Suspicion,** just as German sympathizers in the United States were suspected and often persecuted during the World War. Unfortunately for the Jews, it was only too evident that Isabel and Fernando were on the eve of another long and dangerous conflict with the power in Granada.

Muley Baou'l Hassan had just retorted to their final demand for the tribute: The Kings of Granada who paid tribute are dead and so are the Kings that received it.

Isabel and Fernando, having neither money nor men to enforce their demands, were obliged to conclude a three year truce with him. The ink on the treaty was hardly dry when Muley led four thousand cavalry and fifty thousand infantry into Christian Murcia, destroyed crops, drove off cattle and taking the Christian town of Ciefa by storm, put all the inhabitants, men, women and children to the sword.

Isabel and Fernando were compelled to endure this atrocity in patience. But they solemnly renewed the promise they had made in their marriage agreement nine years before, never to rest while the Moors held any power in Spain and they were resolved that if possible they would commence

the final war of reparation for Christian Spain when the truce expired in 1481.

It was evident that when war began the two chief bases of operation must be Sevilla and Cordoba. In both places the Conversos were so numerous, rich and powerful, that it was felt their influence would be disastrous to the Crusade. Isabel therefore, decided that before the war began, she would find some means of making sure of the loyalty of the secret Jews. Yet she strove to be just and merciful. When Cardinal Mendoza suggested that many of the Conversos had no opportunity to be decently instructed in Christian doctrine, she allowed him to write a catechism, which he caused to be read and explained in all the churches of Sevilla and nearby places, in the hope of bringing back to the faith, the Conversos who had returned to Judaism. This labour occupied His Eminence for two years.

Meanwhile, the Queen secretly applied to Pope Sixtus IV for permission to organize an inquisitorial court at Sevilla, the inquisitors to be appointed by the Crown. It would be useful to have in case she decided to establish the Inquisition.

## Chapter XII

Isabel was a humane and charitable woman. Mother of five children, she abhorred all unnecessary shedding of human blood and could not even tolerate the bull fighting which was the favourite sport of her own people. How then could such a woman establish the Inquisition, in whose flames two thousand persons of Jewish descent were to perish during her lifetime alone? The usual observations about the complexities of human character will hardly suffice to explain this paradox; nor will the much repeated insinuation that she was priest-ridden, especially when one considers that her confessor at this period was of Jewish descent and disapproved of the Inquisition. To urge such a woman to so radical a step, there must have been something in the circumstances confronting her which she considered more than commonly sinister.

For the Inquisition as such, she had no more affection than a modern judge or governor has for the electric chair. But like most of the wisest people



of her time, she held that it was the lesser to two evils. It was an extension of the police powers of the State to meet war time emergency. The very existence of the State was involved and the State had the right and the duty to protect itself. We may pass judgment on her if we choose but, before doing so, we should try to see her world as she saw it and not from the viewpoint of other places and other centuries.

Most of her biographers have emphasized what she and her people did to the Jews. But if the resolute Queen could speak in her own defence, she might fairly claim that as ruler of a Christian country, she felt obliged to take into consideration also what the Jews had done and were doing to her own people. She did not believe that the Jewish version of the history of civilization which they hated, should be accepted as impartial and definitive.

As a Christian, she knew that it was wrong to persecute anyone, but as a monarch she owed it to her subjects to protect them from all enemies within and without. Among these enemies she reckoned the Jews. The same spiritual blindness that had led them to reject and crucify the Messiah had caused them in their later wanderings, to seek the destruction of the Church He had founded and the subversion and enslavement of every society based upon its teachings. Wherever they went, these unhappy people, as if doomed to repeat the same exact errors until they should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ, seemed to exemplify His prophecies, I came not to send peace, but the sword—He who is not with Me is against Me.

Wherever they had gone in every age, they had passed through similar cycles of experience, toleration, prosperity and persecution. Always they had made common cause with the enemies of the Catholic Church and of Christian order and peace.

They had sought to kill the first Christians. They had stoned Saint Stephen to death, they had clamoured for the blood of Saint Paul and they had demanded the head of Saint James. They were so turbulent against the earliest Christians in Rome that the Emperor Claudius expelled them from the city. (1) They slew 90,000 Christians when the Persians took Jerusalem

and caused 35,000 others to be dragged away into slavery. In every country, as Jewish writers still boast, they encouraged those Christian division which are called heresies.

It was among the Jews of Mecca and Medina that Mohammed developed the new sect that was to be the scourge of Christendom for a thousand years. It was the Jews of Spain, as the Jewish Encyclopedia records, who invited the Mohammedans to enter the peninsula and possess themselves of the property and lives of the Christians. Under the tolerant rule of the Mohammedans, writes Lewis Browne, a modern Jew, the Jews began to prosper. They who had been poor and bedraggled peddlers 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 High Road and on Every Great River and Sea, These Jewish Traders Were to Be Found with Their Gangs of Shackled Prisoners in Convoy.**

But for the Jews, in fact, there might never have been an Inquisition. For the Albigenian heresy, which sought to destroy the Catholic Church and which it succeeded, would have corrupted and overthrown the whole social structure of Europe, grew up in the part of southern France which had been called Judea Secunda because its Jewish population was so large and influential. If the truth were fully known, says Lewis Browne, 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 doctrines which the Jews had been spreading throughout the land for years could not but have helped to undermine the Church's power. It was to meet the questions raised by the Albigenes or Cathari, that the Inquisition was first established.

These secretaries were Manichean pessimists who taught that life was evil, being the creation not of God but of the Devil. That marriage therefore was evil, since it propagated life and that a woman with child was possessed by the Devil. Teaching and practicing suicide on principle, they frequently smothered or starved their sick and even put infants to death. Such ideas and practices were a challenge to both Church and State. Because the ordinary State courts could not cope with the evil, Pope

Innocent III, one of the greatest statesmen of all time, permitted the establishment of the courts of the Inquisition, in which Dominican priests, well versed in theology, decided whether or not the opinions of the accused were contrary to the teachings of Christ and His Church and if so, whether they belonged to the peculiarly sinister and anti social group known as the Cathari.

As for the Jews themselves aloof from it and so escaped the chastisement of the Inquisition, but not the crueller vengeance of the infuriated mobs who rose against them from time to time. (The first persecution of Christians under the Roman Empire was instigated by the Jews. Until a few years ago historians generally accepted the statement of Tacitus that Nero had the followers of Christ thrown to the lions to divert suspicion from himself after he had caused Rome to be burned. But modern scholarship, availing itself of other sources (Suetonius Clement of Rome, Tertullian) has made it appear that the persecution had nothing to do with the fire.

Poppaea, the wife of Nero, is known to have protected the Jews and was a Jewess. Several fairly recent historians believe that the Jews of Rome, working through her and others of their religion in the Imperial court, directed Nero's attention to the Christians and persuaded him that they were guilty of various crimes. Vide Leon Hardy Canfield, *The Early Persecution of the Christians*, New York 1913; J.F. Bacchus, *The Neronian Persecution*, Dublin Review, 1908, pp. 287 et seq; Allard, *Histoire des persecutions pendant les deux preieres siecles*, Paris, 1903, pp. 43 et seq.; E. Th. Klette, *Die Christenkatastrophe unter Nero*, Tubingen, 1907, p. 18, the other references given by Mr. Canfield in this interesting and scholarly study. Jewish scholars admit the animus of the Jews against the Christians and the extraordinary favour shown to the former by Poppaea: for example, vide Ismar Elbogen, *History of the Jews*, Berlin, English Translation, Cincinnati, 1926))

The Inquisition itself never condemned anyone to death. The Inquisitors would go to a certain city and summon all heretics to confess within a fixed time, usually thirty days. All who came forward and gave u their anti social opinions and practices were treated leniently. Two witnesses

were required to convict a person of heresy. The defendant had no witnesses, for no one would dare testify for a suspected heretic, for fear of being suspected himself. The accused was allowed to name all his enemies and if his accuser's names were among them, their testimony was rejected.

A prisoner who was found guilty and refused to abjure was handed over by the inquisitors to the State, which then proceeded against him as against a traitor. In practice about two persons out of a hundred accused were put to death. Others were given penances, some were imprisoned and some were freed. Torture was used as a last resort, the strappado or the rack, both cruel torments, but efforts were made to restrict their use. Eymeric, one of the most famous inquisitors, said torture was an unsafe and ineffective method of discovering the truth and recommended that it be used very cautiously and only after careful consideration.

The inquisitorial courts were usually more humane than the civil courts, all of which used torture. Obviously innocent persons must sometimes have been driven by pain to confess. Cruel and fanatical men undoubtedly perpetrated some atrocities. But in general the inquisitorial judges were selected with great care and were probably more intelligent and conscientious than the judges of the State courts.

Isabel was wondering how the Inquisition would succeed in Castile, where so many Jews professing to be Catholics were more or less secretly trying to undermine and destroy the Catholic faith. She turned the problem over in her mind as she rode along the river from Sevilla to Cordoba.

## **Chapter XIII**

The Queen put an end to anarchy at Cordoba by the same stern measures she had found so effective at Sevilla and then turned her attention to other matters.

Carrillo, she was told, was urging Alfonso V to make a second invasion of Castile. Isabel retaliated by putting an embargo on his revenues and proclaiming that she intended to ask the Pope to remove him. Carrillo,

deserted by his friends, was compelled to ask pardon of the Queen, who once more forgave him and allowed him to retire to his estates.

Alfonson V was no longer a serious menace to Castile. He had gone to France hopeful of obtaining the aid of Louis XI, but the Spiker King was already being won over by overtures made on behalf of Fernando and Isabel by that skilful statesman, Cardinal Mendoza and in 1479 he concluded a treaty of peace with them at St. Jean de Luz. When Alfonso discovered that Louis had deserted him, he wrote to Portugal, abdicating his throne, explaining that he intended to enter a monastery. He changed his mind and returned home just in time to see the people celebrating the coronation of his son. But Dom Joao dutifully permitted his father to remount the throne.

Alfonso's pride might have prolonged the quarrel with Castile indefinitely, had he not been persuaded by his sister-in-law, Dona Beatriz, to discuss terms of peace. Encouraged in her design by Pope Sixtus, Dona Beatriz wrote to Queen Isabel secretly, asking for a meeting, in which perchance, with the aid of God and of the glorious Virgin His Mother, they would find a way to restore peace and concord to the two kingdoms.

Isabel although she had an eight month old baby and again expecting a third child in November and although troops of Alfonso were again invading her territory and killing her subjects, went to Alcantara to meet her aunt. After several days of conversation, the two talented women drew up a treaty providing that Alfonso should give up his claim to Castile and promise never to marry La Beltraneja, who must agree to marry Prince Juan when he became old enough, or to enter a convent.

Prince Alfonso, younger son of the King of Portugal, would marry the Princess Isabel, then nine years old. It took Dona Beatriz nine months to persuade Alfonso to accept so humiliating a document and she did so only with the help of Dom Joao, who bluntly told his father that the war against Castile had been unjust and that all his misfortunes were a punishment from God. Peace was concluded at last and Isabel had nothing more to fear from the west. She was still disturbed however, about here enemies in the south and about the European situation in general. It was quite

evident that the Mohammedans were making a determined attempt to conquer all Europe. In 1479 Mohammed II, the Grand Turk, advanced by sea to lay waste to the Island of Rhodes. No one knew where his next stopping place might be. When the truce with Granada expired in 1481, the Moors there were likely to join in the general offensive against Christendom. Isabel felt that she had no time to lose. After the birth of her third child, the ill-fated Juan the Mad, in November 1479, she proceeded to Toledo and there, at a Cortes which met in the spring of 1480, she drew into her own hands the last strands of authority and made the crown supreme.

She reorganized the royal council by introducing lawyers and other middle class representatives to check the power of the great nobles. She divided her government into five departments, which maintained contact with local officials and brought about uniformity of administration everywhere. Furthermore, she had experts compile a new and enlightened code of laws, a great improvement on the ones her ancestors had passed.

But the most unpopular task she had set herself was the recovery of the last of the lands and revenues illegally given to the nobles by King Enrique. She entrusted this unpleasant duty to Frey Hernando and altogether enriched the royal treasury by thirty million maravedis. Five years before, such an attempt would have been the signal for a revolution, but Isabel and Fernando had become absolute monarchs.

In private life Queen Isabel was humble and devout. On the advice of Cardinal Mendoza she chose Talavera for her confessor. He was prior of the Convent of Santa Maria and a holy and learned man whose grandparents had been converted Jews. When she first went to confession to him, he sat in a chair and motioned her to kneel by his side. This was something new to Isabel, whose confessors in deference to her rank, had always knelt beside her and she said in surprise:

Reverend Father, it is customary for both to kneel. My daughter, replied Fray Hernando, the confessional is God's tribunal, in which there are no kings or queens, but only human sinners and I, unworthy as I am, am His minister. It is right that I sit and you kneel.

The Queen knelt and confessed her sins. Afterwards she said:

This is the confessor I have been looking for, and for several years she retained Talavera for her spiritual adviser. Nevertheless in her public capacity she insisted upon the respect she felt was due to the Crown, both for herself and for King Fernando. One evening when she had retired early, while the King in the next room was playing a long game of chess with his uncle the Admiral Don Fadrique, she heard that nobleman exclaim, Aha! I have beaten my nephew! Hastily throwing a wrap about her, the Queen hurried to the tapestry at the door and said frigidly: Don Fadrique, my lord the King has no relatives or friends, he has only servants and vassals.

When the Admiral's son, named after him, had a quarrel in the Queen's palace with young Ramir Nunez de Guzman, she was just as severe with him as if he had not been related to the royal family. She commanded him to remain in his father's house and not to leave without her permission. Meanwhile she gave a safe conduct to Don Ramir.

A few days later Don Ramir was attacked by asked men and severely beaten. Queen Isabel, believing young Donfadrique guilty, mounted a horse in the pouring rain and rode twenty miles to Simancas, where she demanded that the Admiral surrender the culprit. When he explained that his son was not there, the angry Queen took from him the keys of his castle and returned to Valladolid. Next day she was so ill that she could not get out of bed, but she persisted in her search for Don Fadrique and when he was found, had him marched through the streets and locked up like any ordinary criminal, in solitary confinement. The only concession she would make to King Fernando, who pleaded for his relative, was to exile Don Fadrique to Sicily.

Isabel and Fernando completed the organization of their government not a moment too soon for in 1480, when Mohammed II was repulsed by the valor of the Knights of St. John at Rhodes, he threw all Europe into consternation by swooping down upon the shores of Italy. His crews ravaged the coast of Apulia and on August 11, he took by storm the city of Otranto in the kingdom of Naples. Of the twenty-two thousand

inhabitants the barbarians bound twelve thousand with ropes and thus helpless, but them to death with terrible tortures. They slew all the priests in the city. They sawed in two the aged Archbishop of Otrano, whom they found praying before the Altar. On a hill outside the city, now known as Martyr's Hill, they butchered captives who refused to become Mohammedans and threw their corpses to the dogs.

Pope Sixtus appealed to the Italian princes in these solemn terms:

If the faithful, especially the Itanians, wish to preserve their lands, their houses, their wives, their children, their liberty and their lives; if they wish to maintain that Faith into which we are regenerated, let them take up their arms and fight.

The apathy of the Italian princes was incredible. King Ferrante of Naples was at war with Florence and his son Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, was 150 leagues away in Tuscany, fighting in the Tuscan war. Alfonso frantically marched to the defense of his dominions and almost unaided saved Pope Sixtus, who had the sacred vessels melted to obtain money for the crusade, he besieged the Turks in Otranto and recaptured the city.

On hearing of the atrocity in Italy, Isabel immediately sent the whole Castilian fleet of twenty-two vessels to Italian waters to assist in the recapture of Otranto and to protect King Fernando's kingdom of Sicily. Then she sent royal officers to the cities of the north to raise a fleet powerful enough to sweep the Turks from the seas.

Panic began to sweep over the Spanish kingdoms. Men were asking what would happen if the Turks came from the east and the Moors of Granada took the offensive in the south against Andalusia. Castile was evidently on the eve of war. It would be a war in which she would need every ounce of her strength. **yet There Were Secret Enemies within Her Gates, Who Had Grown Rich upon Her Wealth and in the past Had Given Evidence of Their Sympathy with the Hated and Feared Mohammedans.** Isabel felt that the time had come to establish that unity which every nation in a state of war considers indispensable. **the Landing of the Turks in Italy Had Sealed the Doom of the Conversos in Castile,**



**as a Nation within a Nation.** Not six weeks after the fall of Otranto, Queen Isabel decided to avail herself of the permission of Pope Sixtus had given her two years before, to establish the Inquisition and on September 26, 1480, she and Fernando signed an order making it effective. The double signature: Yo, el Rey, Yo, la Reyna marked the beginning of the last chapter in the slow resurrection of Christian Spain and of a new and sad one in the weary annals of the children of Yehudah.

## Chapter XIV

Whoever can understand the story of the Jews will begin perhaps to understand the history of the world. This extraordinary race, gifted with intelligence, will and a remarkably solidarity which usually resists all attempts at assimilation, has repeated its strange adventure in country after country and in century after century.

Time after time these wanderers, who seem to have been miraculously preserved as unwilling witnesses to the Crucifixion, have entered a country, poor and wrenched, have been welcomed with kindness, have attained wealth and power over their neighbours with astonishing rapidity and finally, when they seem on the very point of building a New Jerusalem on the ruins of the civilization into whose heart they had penetrated, have been turned upon by the more numerous Goyim about them and shorn of their pre-eminence, often with the utmost barbarity and cruelty.

This happened in Mohammedan kingdom of Fez and it happened in the Mohammedan city of Granada, which at one time was called the city of the Jews until the Moors rose against them on December 30, 1066, and slew four thousand; while one of the caliphs expelled all the Jews from Granada.

Something very similar was happening in Medieval Christian Spain. Whether the Jews first went to Spain after the destruction of Jerusalem, which was prophesied by Christ, or whether they had been there even before the Crucifixion, is disputed. But certainly they were present in large numbers early in the Christian Era, under the rule of the Aryan Visigoths

who were Christians, but not Catholics. **After the Discovery That the Jews Were Plotting to Bring the Arabs from Africa to Overthrow the Gothic Kingdom, They Were Condemned to Slavery** and even after their liberation were repressed by the cruel provisions of the Visigothic Code.

In spite of all this they prospered and by the beginning of the eighth century they were so rich and powerful in all the principal cities that when in 709 A.D., **the Saracens Finally Came, at the Jew's Invitation from Africa, the Spanish Jews Were Able to Open the Gates to the Conquerors and Were Rewarded by Being Made Rulers of Granada, Sevilla and Cordoba. In the New Moslem State They Attained a Brilliant Height of Prosperity and Culture.**

The gradual reconquest of the peninsula by the Christians, who had long since returned to the Catholic fold with the dying out of the old Aryan heresy, did not disturb the Jews. When St. Fernando recaptured Sevilla in 1224 A.D., he gave them four Moorish mosques to convert into synagogues. He allowed them one of the pleasantest sections for their homes and demanded only that they refrain from insulting the Christian religion and from making converts among the Christians. The Jews observed neither of these conditions, yet several of the later kings, especially those of lukewarm faith or those in need of money, shoed them high favor and Alfonso VIII made one of them his treasurer.

Toward the end of the thirteenth century the Jews were so powerful in the Christian kingdoms that they had almost brought the reconquest to an end. There must have been in all Spain from four to five million of them out a total population of twenty-five to thirty millions. So great was the influence of the Jews that the laws against blasphemy could not be enforced against them. It was so plain that they were above the law that some of the Albigenses, who had gone from southern France to Spain, used to circumcise themselves, so that they might teach freely as Jews the heresy for which they had been punished as Christians.

In a Europe which on the whole abhorred usury as a sin, for as such the Catholic Church has always regarded it, the Jews were almost the only

bankers and money lenders and little by little the capital and commerce of the country passed into their hands. They generally charged twenty percent interest in Aragon and thirty-three-and-one-third percent in Castile. During the famine of 1326 they demanded forty percent interest on money lent to the town of Cuenca to buy wheat. The citizens with taxes to pay, the farmers with no money to buy wheat for his planting, the burgher held for ransom by a robber baron turned in desperation to the Jewish money lender and became his economic slave. By lending money to the kings the Jews also acquired control of the government. The common people hated them because they often bought from the King the privilege of taxation and wrung all the money they could from the citizens. Now and then a massacre occurred.

To avert such evils the Church attempted to prevent the employment of Jews in public offices; but in vain. Certain kings found it more convenient to borrow from the Jews than to listen to either the people or the Church. Under Pedro the Cruel of Castile, who was denounced by Pope Urban I as a friend of the Jews and Moors and a slayer of Christians, the Jews had complete control of the government and kept it until Pedro was slain by Henry Trastamara, the great great grandfather of Queen Isabel.

When the Black Death slew half the population of Europe in two years, the Jews suffered worse than the rest, for the crazed populace accused them of having caused the pestilence by poisoning the wells and commenced to slay them all over Europe. Pope Clement VI denounced the accusations against the Jews as lies, pointing out that the plague had been just as deadly in lands where no Jews lived and sternly threatened to excommunicate the fanatics. But the mobs continued to kill Jews.

In Castile in 1391, thousands were massacred. As a result many Jews embraced Christianity and became known as Conversos of Morrano. Thirty-five thousand were converted by the marvellous eloquence of St. Vincent Ferrer, who traveled through Spain, preaching to them. After one of his sermons, four-thousand were baptized in Toledo in one day. Thus there came into being a new class of Jewish Christians, some of whom were sincere, but large numbers of whom, while attending Mass on a Sunday, secretly continued to attend the synagogue and to eat kosher food.

As professing Christians, the secret Jews were now free from the restrictions imposed upon their brothers of the synagogue and could intermarry with any of the leading families of Spain. Furthermore, a new highly important field was opened to them, for as Christians they could become priests, to dedicate their sons to the Church to show their loyalty to their new religion, with the result that in Isabel's time, they controlled and exploited the Catholic Church in Spain to an astonishing degree.

Many of the bishops were of Jewish decent. There were in Spain many Catholic priests who were secretly Jews and who made a mockery of the Mass and of the sacraments thy pretended to administer. One such priest for example, never gave absolution when he heard confessions. Naturally Catholics resented these sacrileges bitterly and some blamed the Jews exclusively for the prevalent corruption in the Church, ignoring such other factors as the Black Death and the exile of the Popes at Avignon.

The Conversos oddly enough, became the leaders in persecuting the poor despised Jews who had clung to the Law of Moses at the risk of their lives and the most cruel and discriminatory laws were passed by legislatures dominated by these New Christians. The Conversos were even more detested by the Old Christians than the Jews of the synagogue were. They offended their neighbors by keeping various Jewish customs, such as cooking their meat in oil instead of lard. Many of them made a mockery of the sacraments and when, out of deference to public opinion, they went to confession, they usually lied to the confessor.

Usually they were usurious people, of many wiles and deceits, wrote Bernaldez, a chronicler of the time, for they all lived an 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 anything 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 only gained at the expense of their enemies, according to the command of God in the departure of the people of Israel

to rob the Egyptians. Queen Isabel, facing a long and dangerous war with Granada, felt that the time had come to destroy the power of the secret Jews as a kingdom within the kingdom. Cardinal Mendoza's catechism had failed to bring about the conversions he had hoped for, it had only stirred the Conversos to new laughter and new blasphemies.

Finally, one cool day in September, the Queen unlocked one of the cunningly carved wood 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, fastened with a leaden seal hung on threads of coloured silk and bore the signature of Pope Sixtus IV. It took note of the intention of the King and Queen to complete the liberation of Spain from the Moors.

It noted that many Jews who had voluntarily become Christians had returned to the principles and ordinances of Jewish superstition and falsehood, and not content with their own blindness, were infecting others with the same errors, so that on account of their crimes Spain had been brought to a state bordering on anarchy. The Pope therefore, permitted the King and Queen to appoint two or three bishops or other well educated men of high character in each city or diocese to inquire into the opinions of the Jewish Christians, with a view to bringing back to the true faith those who had relapsed into Judaism.

It would seem from the text of the Pope's letter that he intended the Inquisition to be a temporary protection for Spain during the crusade against the Moors and had no idea that it would become an instrument of royal supremacy for three centuries. Pope Sixtus later complained that the Spanish ambassador at Rome had tricked him into granting the bull by misrepresenting the situation in Castile. Had he known the length to which Isabel and Fernando would proceed, he would probably never have granted them permission to appoint the inquisitors and to control their activities.

But Isabel and Fernando were so bent upon gaining full control of their kingdoms that they issued a decree, appointing two inquisitors, Fray Juan de San Martin, bachelor of theology and Fray Miguel de Morillo, master

of theology, giving them to understand that they were responsible not to the Pope, but to the royal crown. The Inquisition, as they planned it, was religious in form only. Its judges were to be Dominican monks, but the monks were to be servants of the State and not of the Church. Thus Queen Isabel, through all her life a most devout Catholic, was carried on the tide of events toward a dangerous shoal on which many kings had come to grief. Perhaps her attitude toward the Jews was inevitable. She was after all, the daughter of that uncompromising Portuguese Queen who had pursued De Luna, the friend of Jews and Conversos, to his doom.

Queen Isabel was the girl who had turned with disgust from the immoralities of Enrique's court, where the Conversos had 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 Villena, of poisoning her brother Alfonso. Like her ancestors, William the Conqueror and Henry II, she was possessed of an iron will which, once it had marked out an objective, was not easily turned aside.

She, who had ordered the execution of so many thieves and murderers in the Jew ridden city of Sevilla, was not likely to hesitate over putting to death some of those who were boring within the State on the very eve of a life and death struggle for independence. She had not forgotten that after the Massacres of 1473, the Conversos of Cordoba had attempted to purchase Gibraltar from King Enrique, with the intention, as was generally believed, of using it as a base to bring new hordes of Moors from Africa to reconquer all Spain. She believe too, that in proceeding against the Conversos she was substituting a legal procedure for the cruel massacres by which the mob periodically punished them and was protecting the sincere Christians among them from unjust suspicion and persecution.

It remained to be seen whether the Queen was powerful enough to enforce her will. Her court was full of powerful Conversos. Her closest friend Beatriz, had married one of them. Her confessor and secretaries had Jewish ancestors on one side or the other. In Fernando's court in Aragon the secret Jews were even more dominant. In fact his government, as he had inherited it from his father, was in the hands of Conversos, such as the millionaire

lawyer Luis de Santangel, a descendant of Rabbi Azarias Zinello. It would be strange if these shrewd and powerful politicians did not make every effort to dissuade the King and queen from the step they were contemplating and secretly place in their way every possible obstacle.

## Chapter XV

When Morillo and San Martin arrived in Sevilla late in October, the rich Conversos of the city threw so many difficulties in their way that, as late as December 27, Fernando and Isabel found it necessary to issue a sharp command to all officials to render every possible aid to their Inquisitors. Meanwhile the latter had been taking much secret evidence and had begun to make arrests.

The Conversos, thoroughly alarmed, at last began to flee from Queen Isabel's audiences. Many of them went to the country estates of great nobles, to whom they paid money for protection. But the two Inquisitors issued a proclamation January 2, 1481, commanding all the great lords, even the powerful Marques of Cadiz, to deliver up any strangers within their lands under pain of the most grievous penalties. The nobility hastened to comply. Times had changed indeed since the days of Enrique. The fortress of Triasa, across the river from Sevilla, held in its gloomy dungeons, below the water level, some of the richest and most powerful men and women of the beautiful city. Trials commenced at once.

Since there was no longer any doubt of the Queen's intentions, several of the most powerful Conversos met in the Catholic Church of San Salvador to discuss means for protecting themselves. Catholic priests, friars, magistrates, government official, all of Jewish descent and secret enemies of the Catholic Church, were present. Diego de Susan, a rabbi whose fortune was estimated at ten million maravedis, demanded in a fiery speech that they resist the Inquisition by force.

Are we not the principal men of this city? he cried. Let us assemble troops and if they come to take us, let us start an uprising with the troops and the people. We will kill them and avenge ourselves on our enemies! All applauded and committees were formed to collect money, to buy arms

and to raise soldiers. Susan had a daughter, one of the most beautiful women of Sevilla, who had a Christian lover. She told him the secret and he reported it to the Inquisitors. The chief conspirators were seized. In the house of one of them, the major-domo of the Cathedral, weapons enough to arm a hundred men were found hidden. Susan and his wealthy accomplices were tried before a jury of lawyers. Several of them who confessed were given penances to perform, according to the degree of their impenitent heretics and were turned over by the Inquisitors to be secular officials of the Crown.

The first auto-da-fe in Castile, was held February 6, 1481. The weather was damp and only a few stragglers followed the procession, for the pestilence had returned and the people were afraid of catching it. Two by two the civil officers and friars, followed by the conspirators guarded by troops, marched over the bridge across the Guadalquivir to the market place of Sevilla and after Mass was said in the Cathedral, the repentant Judaizers received their penances and were reconciled to the church. The assembly left the Cathedral and the auto-da'fe, or act of faith, was over.

Afterwards the six unrepentant conspirators were taken by officials of the city to Camp de Talbada, beyond the wall and there, tied to stakes, were burned. Susan's execution was three days later. His is said to have become reconciled to the Church just before his death. His property was confiscated by the Crown, with that of several of the other conspirators. It was now becoming apparent that Isabel and her astute husband were using their new powers to take away from the secret Jews money which had been gained, in part at least, by profiteering and usury at the expense of Christians and using it to prepare for the final crusade for Christian independence. But if the fate of Susan and his friends seems barbarous, it must be remembered that in other countries where there was no Inquisition, any plot to resist royal authority would have been followed by cruel executions.

Thousands of Conversos now fled in panic in all directions, some to Portugal, some to Italy, where the Jews in times of persecution had never failed to find a protector in the Pope. Many of them were captured leaving Sevilla however and seven hundred of them who confessed and were



reconciled to the Church, marched as penitents in a long procession. The plague was now raging with violence. It may have been a less virulent form of the Black Death and in some respects it resembles what we know as the bubonic plague.

The first symptom was a bluish black boil under the arm pit or on the balm of the hand, followed by headaches, vertigo, deafness, pains and convulsions, swelling of glands, buboes, and coughing up blood. The victim usually died in about ten days. At the first appearances of the dreaded disease, all who could fled from the city. Those who had to remain built great bonfires on public squares and other open spaces to purify the air, as they supposed, and prevent the spread of the infection. People marched in processions through the cities, doing public penance for their sins. The dead were buried by monks or by members of burial societies organized by pious Catholic laymen, for no one else would dare touch the corpses and even closest realities fled in terror from the blackened remains of the victims.

In Sevilla alone that summer, fifteen thousand people died of the plague, even the Inquisition must have seemed little more than an incident, by comparison. From the low, white-washed houses came the wailings of the bereaved. No women laughed in the balconies, the gaudy flowers went to seed uncut, the oranges shriveled on the trees. Every day there were grim, silent processions of penitentiaries in black hoods, stalking through the crooked streets with liters of corpses.

The Conversos begged Diego de Merlo, one of the Inquisitors' court, to let them leave the city until the pest abated. He mercifully granted the request and eight thousand Conversos escaped. The Inquisitors now moved to Aracena, where shortly afterwards twenty-three heretics were delivered to the secular arm and burned by the State.

When they returned to Sevilla, they announced a term of grace for two months during which time any heretic who voluntarily confessed would be pardoned and given a merciful penance, if he told all he knew of other Judaizers, or apostates. Hundreds of Conversos now rushed in to confess. Some in their fears betraying friends, and relatives, even mothers and

fathers, sisters, brothers, sons and daughters. In one auto-de-fe alone fifteen hundred of them, each wearing a yellow garment with a crimson cross on it, were reconciled to the Church.

Even the Inquisitors were astonished to find how large a percentage of the Conversos were engaged in undermining the Christian religion, which they outwardly professed. They suggested to the King and Queen an extension of the Inquisition to other cities, wherever Jewish influence was strong. Four Inquisitors began investigations at Cordoba in 1482. The first auto-de-fe was held there in 1483, and in February of the following year the treasurer of the Catholic Cathedral there was burned, his servants having killed an officer of the Inquisition when he was arrested.

By the end of 1484, four tribunals of the Inquisition had been established. Later on a court was opened at Segovia, in spite of the vigorous protests of the Bishop, Juan Arias de Avila, the same who had condemned the sixteen Jews to be burned several years before and who had met Queen Isabel at the gates on that hot day in 1476. One of the first acts of the Inquisitors was to condemn his mother and father, then dead, as secret Jews and heretics. The bishop drove them out of the diocese and sent a furious remonstrance to Queen Isabel.

When she refused to interfere, the Bishop, fearing that the bones of his ancestors would be publicly burned, dug them up and hid them. He then fled to Rome and placed himself under the protection of Pope Sixtus, to whom he seems to have declared that the Queen's chief purpose in establishing the Inquisition had been to obtain money, for she wrote her ambassadors at Rome, making denial of this charge and telling them what they were to say to His Holiness to offset the complaints of the Bishop.

Wildly exaggerated accounts of the Spanish Inquisition have been circulated during the past four centuries by writers hostile to Spain and to the Catholic Church. The truth seems to be that in all of Isabel's reign about two thousand persons, including not only secret Jews, but bigamists, blasphemers, church robbers, false mystical sin other offenders were burned and fifteen thousand accepted penances and were reconciled to the Church, in all of Spain. In Sevilla from 1481 to the end of 1488 seven

hundred from all parts of Andalusia were burned, including three priests, three or four friars and a doctor of divinity, who was a secret Jew and a persistent enemy of the Church he vowed to serve.

Considerable sums were collected in fines and confiscations. Fernando and Isabel commanded that these should be used for no purpose except for the forthcoming holy war against the Moors.

Public opinion undoubtedly approved of the Inquisition. The chroniclers of the time took it as a matter of course, dismissing it briefly in a few pages. The Queen herself believed it to be a necessary instrument for the salvation of her country and far from being ashamed of it, always referred to it with pride. She would have been astonished if she could have foreseen that in later times men would accuse her of having brought about the intellectual decay of Spain. She would have resented this and with some reason. For the intellectual life of Spain was never more vigorous than in the century after she established the Holy Office.

It was the period of her three greatest poets, Cervantes, Lope de Vega and Calderon, the golden age of her literature. It was the period when her finest schools and universities were established, while foreign scholars flocked to Spain and were honoured and medicine and other sciences made their most notable gains.

Never were the industries and commerce of the peninsula so prosperous. Never was order so well maintained at home and prestige abroad as 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 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. Queen Isabel at one time tried to induce King Henry VII of England to extend the Holy Office to England and Henry promised to do so. He failed to keep his promise however, and the Inquisition remained almost entirely a Spanish institution.

## Chapter XVI

While Marillo and San Martin were establishing the Holy Office in Andalusia, Isabel and Fernando were in Aragon, where they had gone to have Prince Juan recognized as heir by the Cortes and to dispatch a fleet of fifty vessels from the port of Laredo against the Moors in Italy. Fortunately for Christendom, the Grand Turk Mohammed II had died and the Mohammedan offensive had been abandoned for the time being. The royal party returned to Castile.

In ten months Queen Isabel had ridden about two thousand miles on horseback and had attended three parliaments, besides having conducted all her usual state business. She was expecting the birth of her fourth child in the summer of 1482.

She arrived in Medina del Campo early in January, 1482. There she found waiting for her many complaints against her two Inquisitors, who had taken the royal commandments only too literally and had proceeded with a zeal that seemed to some Christians to be more vindictive than judicial. Anyone who remembers how certain Germans were suspected and hated during the World War will understand the position of the Conversos in Spain on the eve of the final struggle with Mohammedans. 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 likely to be denounced by his neighbors and dragged before the Inquisitors to be asked all sorts of questions. Some of the accused were heretics, but undoubtedly others who truly meant to be Christians and faithful subjects of the Queen, even though they clung to certain customs of their ancestors, were suspected and punished unjustly.

A great storm of protest seemed also to have been carried to Rome by the fugitive Conversos, for a month or two after her return, Queen Isabel received a letter from Pope Sixtus IV dated January 29, 1482, in saying he protested against the abuses of Morillo and San Martin, saying:

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 Cardinals, he said, were of the opinion that Morillo and San Martin ought to be removed from office and the Holy Father was inclined to do so unless Fernando and Isabel would promise to make them act legally and justly and would henceforth follow the Pope's wishes as Catholic Kings ought so that they would Adeserve to be commended before God and men.

Queen Isabel felt keenly the indignant rebuke of Pope Sixtus, but before it reached her she had found herself caught up by a current of dramatic events which pushed the Inquisition in to the background. The long expected war with Granada had begun at last. On Christmas Day when a heavy rain pelted the fields of Andalusia and a tempest raged in the mountains between Christian Spain and Granada, Muley Abou'l Hassan had taken by storm the town of Zahara, fifteen miles southeast of Sevilla. This powerful Christian outpost had been considered impregnable. 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. 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 it looked like a stairway cut out of granite. But under cover of the storm, the Moors mounted the wet walls by scaling ladders, entered the town, slew the defenders and dragged the women and children to Granada as slaves, killing those who fell in the way. On contemporary says that the Moors slew all the women and children.

Isabel and Fernando, three hundred miles to the north, received the atrocious news days later while they were hearing Mass. Queen Isabel, whose kingdom slay nearer to Granada than Fernando's, found herself act to face with one of the greatest crises of her life. While she sent orders to governors of castles on the frontier to strengthen their garrisons and

maintain a strict watch, she steeled herself for what she knew would be a long and difficult task. She proposed to conquer a rich and fertile kingdom of some three million Moors, in the center of which, more than half a mile above sea level, stood the high walled city of Granada, on the slope of the Sierra Nevada. It was protected on almost every side by high mountains, commanded by a circle of powerfully fortified cities, many of them considered unconquerable. No one could lay siege to Granada without first battering down a score of other walled places. It was evident that the war would require months and perhaps years of heroic effort.

Yet, Isabel was resolved to end the Moorish domination in the south, no matter how long it might take. What all good Castilian kings had dreamed of doing, what her father had failed to do and weaklings like her half brother had neglected to do she proposed, with God's help and Fernando's, to accomplish. The King would lead the Christian host in the crusade and she, in her magnificent prime at thirty, would be recruiting agent, commissary, purchaser of munitions, field nurse, hospitaller and propaganda bureau, all in one. Her labours in the Portuguese War had been an excellent preparation for what she now had to do.

## Chapter XVII

Queen Isabel was at Medina with her husband, making plans for the war that seemed imminent, when she learned that the Marques of Cadiz, the same red-bearded young gentleman who had so frankly sought her pardon in Sevilla in 1477, had precipitated the conflict by a brilliant exploit.

Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon came from a long line of crusaders and living in Andalusia on the Moorish frontier, had been trained almost from the cradle for the holy war. He had killed Moors at the age of fourteen, long before he had sacked the city of Sevilla to avenge himself on the Duke of Medina Sidonia and he was now the popular hero of the south. A chronicler wrote that he was chaste, sober, a lover of justice and the enemy of all flatterers, liars, traitors and poltroons. He heard Mass every morning and knelt from beginning to end. Even Moorish women who fell into his hands were treated with knightly courtesy and respect. He had heard, with deep chagrin, of the capture of Zahara and when he learned from a spy

that Alhama, a rich and wealthy city situated high on a fortified rock, was negligently guarded by the Moors and might be taken by surprise, he decided to capture it, regardless of the fact that it was twenty miles inside the outposts of Granada.

A veteran climber who scaled the walls one dark night reported that although the town was well guarded, the castle, rising out of solid rock above, had no sentries. The Marques sent a message to Medina to ask permission of the King and Queen to attempt to surprise this important place.

On receiving their permission, he assembled a force of 2,400 light cavalry and 3,000 foot and marched, by night only, to a valley a mile and a half from Alhama. Thirty volunteers scaled the cliff and the lofty walls, killing guards and opened a gate to admit the Marques and a handful of his men.

Fighting desperately for many hours from street to street and house to house, the crusaders finally won possession of the town, killing 800 Moors and capturing 3,000. They also released many Christian captives whom they found loaded with chains in the dungeons. They were now masters of a rich booty of gold and silver, rare silks and taffetas, grain, oil and honey, horse and asses of the best breeds.

They remained in Alhama five days, celebrating their victory. In fact they remained too long, for one morning they looked out and saw themselves surrounded by an army of 53,000 that Muley Abou'l Hassan had brought from Granada to recover his fortress. Muley attempted to storm Alhama, but having no artillery, he failed and was obliged to undertake a slow siege.

Knowing that there were no wells or fountains in the city, he decided to divert the channel of the river far below from which the people obtained their water and thus so cause the crusaders to die of thirst. The Marques and his knights descended through a narrow tunnel and standing knee deep in the cold current, fought hand to hand with the Moslems until the river bed was choked with Moorish and Christian bodies and the stream ran red. The Christian survivors then retreated slowly before overwhelming

numbers. The Saracens diverted all of the river except a tiny rill that trickled through the dry bed.

Henceforth, to get even a cupful of water, Dan Rodrigo and his men had to pass under the archery fire of the Moors and fight their way step by step to the thin stream, so that every drop of water was paid for with a drop of precious blood. They seemed doomed to certain death unless help reached them within a few days.

When Isabel and Fernando learned of the perilous situation of Don Rodrigo, 300 miles away, the King mounted his horse and galloped day and night to place himself at the head of the Christian army that was assembling in Andalusia. But it was Don Rodrigo's wife who sent the first rescue party to Alhama. In her anguish she appealed to her husband's mortal enemy, The Duke of Medina Sidonia, at his neighbouring estate and the Duke, chivalrously putting aside his old grudge, gathered together 5,000 cavalry and dashed off to the relief of Alhama.

Muley Madeone last attack, but finding the Duke of Sidonia approaching on his other side, he withdrew during the night, for the Moors disliked open warfare. Next day the Duke entered Alhama with a great flourish of trumpets, while Don Rodrigo, with tears in his eyes, advanced to embrace the man whom he had once sworn to kill. From that time on the Marques and the Duke were friends and brothers-in-arms. During the ten years of the war they were two of the most useful generals in the Christian army. Several other noblemen who had been fighting one another under King Enrique, now gave all their energies to the common cause of Castile and of Christendom and Queen Isabel had no reason to regret her tact and wisdom in dealing with such high spirited cavaliers.

Isabel, at the head of the troops of Old Castile, arrived at Cordoba late in March. A council of war was held to determine whether Alhama, so dangerously situated, should be retained, or destroyed and abandoned. Although old border warriors shook their heads, the Queen declared that she would never dream of giving up the first place she had conquered and that if it cost labour, money and blood to retain it, that was only to be expected in war time. Instead of giving up Alhama, they should now



extend their conquest into the heart of the enemy country. Isabel's council prevailed and it was decided that the King would lead an army against Loja, the nearest large Moorish city to Alhama.

Meanwhile, as in the Portuguese war, Isabel appealed to all the cities of her kingdoms for troops, money and supplies and she ordered the fleet that had returned from Italy to the straits of Gibraltar, to cut off reinforcements to Granada from the Barbary coast. She was no longer able to go from camp to camp on a horse or mule, but she continued to carry on an enormous amount of official business in the palace at Córdoba until the very day of the birth of her fourth child, Maria.

Kin Fernando was destined in the course of the Moorish War to become the greatest and most able king of his time, both on the battlefield and in the council chamber. But, at this period he was inclined to be too impetuous, as in the Portuguese War and against the advice of Don Rodrigo and others, he advanced too far into broken ground where he was obliged to scatter his troops on different elevations separated by ravines, with no room for cavalry or artillery to work. To make matters worse, the Moors held a height from which they could dominate the Christian camp. The Marques of Cadiz stormed this elevation and planted twenty guns there. The Moors captured it but Don Rodrigo regained it fighting up hill with a terrible loss of lives.

King Fernando now admitted that the Marques had been right and consented to withdraw from before Loja. As the Christians retreated, the Moors rushed out of the town to attack them and only the most heroic efforts by Fernando and Don Rodrigo and other knights, fighting hand to hand in the front of the conflict, prevented a complete rout. It was a defeated and crestfallen Fernando who led the remnants of his army back to Cordoba. In spite of glory that Don Rodrigo had won at Alhama, the first year of the war had been disastrous.

Isabel and Fernando now saw clearly that it was not going to be easy to take Granada and that it would not be sufficient to have chivalrous Christian warriors with stout arms and brave hearts. Heavy artillery would be needed and that must come from France, Germany and Italy. Munitions

of war and other supplies would require money. But for the Inquisition and its fines, the prosecution of the war would have been hopeless.

That winter, while she was waiting for the big guns to arrive, Queen Isabel began to study Latin, so that she might understand foreign diplomats without having to depend upon interpreters. It was characteristic of her that within a year she was able to speak and write Latin correctly, if not elegantly. After Christmas she went to Madrid to hunt wolves and boars in the neighbouring forests. In the spring she returned to Cordoba, restored in health, to help the King prepare for the second year's campaign. But before Fernando could assemble his army, another unforeseen disaster put an end to Christian hopes for that year.

Early in the spring the Marques of Cadiz and others of the great lords of the south, decided to make a raid on the Axarquia of Malaga, a winding valley rich in herds and vineyards. They thought they could collect enormous booty in the valley and then take the rich city of Malaga by assault. They set out in high spirits, all the flower of Andalusia chivalry. But the Moors, who had gotten wind of the attempt, ambushed them one dark night and slew nearly all of them. Only Don Rodrigo and a handful of others cut their way out and returned to Cordoba to report the tragedy to the grief stricken Queen. All Andalusia wrote Bernaldez, was in great sorrow and there was no drying of the eyes that wept in her and in a great part of Castile, wherever grief had touched.

Queen Isabel went into her chapel and remained a long time in the silence, praying.

## **Chapter XVIII**

Queen Isabel was a devout Christian. In every crisis she humbly laid her difficulties at the feet of God, but having appealed to Him with all confidence, she proceeded to do her part with an energy almost unparalleled in history. She had nothing but contempt for oriental nations of irresistible fate. She believed that the human will, under God, was the supreme factor in existence. Her achievements remind us of the sometimes forgotten fact that women of talent enjoyed a large measure of

independence in the Middle Ages. Dona Lucia de Madrona was a brilliant teacher of Greek and Latin in the University of Salamanca. Dona Francisca de Lebrija succeeded her father as professor of rhetoric at the university of Alcalá; St. Catherine of Siena, by her own efforts, brought about the end of the Papal exile at Avignon. Women commonly managed large estates and ruled over cities and even provinces while their husbands were absent, fighting in the crusades.

The Mohammedan culture, against which Isabel had commenced a death struggle for the possession of Spain, did not accord women the high position they had always occupied in Christian civilization. The Koran hardly recognized them as human beings. It divided all mankind into twelve orders, of which the eleventh included robbers, sorcerers, pirates and drunkards and the twelfth and lowest, women. In practice the polygamy advocated by Mohammed did reduce the Arab women to the position of slaves and chattels of men.

The women of the harem sometimes managed however, to exert considerable influence over the affairs of their men and it was so with Muley Aou's Hassan, King of Granada. It was his misfortune that two of his fairest wives had more brains and ambition than women were supposed to have. For many years his favourite wife had been a Christian captive, Isabel de Solis, a blond of such surpassing beauty that the Moors called her Zoraya, Star of the Morning and her son Boabdil was the recognized heir to the throne of Granada.

His father Muley however, took unto himself in his old age a new wife named Ayesh, with the result of course, that Zoraya was jealous and, fearing that her son would be cheated out of his inheritance, she provoked a civil war. While Muley was retreating from Alhambra, the people of Granada locked the gates against him, and proclaimed his son king.

Young Boabdil now decided to distinguish himself in a military way by leading and expediting against the Christian town of Lucerna. The Court of Cabra intercepted him with a greatly inferior force and during the battle in a fog by a river, defeated the Moors and captured Boabdil. The possession of Boabdil gave Fernando, one of the most skilful and subtle

diplomats of his time, an excellent chance to divide his Mohammedan enemies. He agreed to recognize the Moorish prince as King of Granada if Boabdil would agree to hold his throne as vassal to Castile, and pay ransom and an annual tribute. Keeping Boabdil's son as hostage, the wily Fernando sent the long haired Moor, with hollow cheeks and mournful eyes, back to Granada, to be a thorn in the side of his own father. On his arrival however, he found that the latter had regained control of the city. After a bloody battle between the two factions, the Prince fled to Almeida.

Muley now assembled an army of nineteen thousand men and sent it against Utrera. On the way they met an army of Christian knights who defeated them with great slaughter on the banks of the Lopera, September 17, recovering some of the horses and fine armour taken by the Moors in their victory near Malaga.

Isabel and Fernando were at Vittoria, in Old Castile, when they heard of this triumph. They ordered the Te Deum sung in the churches and processions and feasts to be held and on their return to Cordoba, they gave a formal reception to the Count of Cabra, who had captured Boabdil and otherwise distinguished himself. When the Count arrived at the gates of the city, he was met by Cardinal Mendoza in scarlet robes and by the king's brother, the Duke of Villahermosa, who conducted him to the palace where the King and Queen were waiting, seated on a lofty dais covered with cloth of gold. The King arose and advanced five steps to meet the Count, who knelt and kissed his hand. Queen Isabel took two steps forward and gave her hand to the Count to kiss.

Cushions were now brought and the Count was asked to seat himself, a rare privilege in the Castilian royal presence, while Their Majesties resumed their places on the throne. Music from unseen instruments sounded through the whole audience. Twenty of the Queen's ladies, in magnificent gowns of many colours, began a stately square dance with twenty cavaliers. After the dance the King and Queen retired to dine while the Count, graciously dismissed, went to the palace of the Cardinal of Spain to be guest of honour at a great banquet. A week later the King and Queen invited him to supper and on that occasion Queen Isabel danced with King Fernando and the Count danced with the Infanta Isabel.

Isabel, though simple in her tastes and in her private life, knew well how much the Castilians, perhaps from long contact with the Moors, loved splendour and ceremony. Determined to make the throne respected by all classes, she wore the most magnificent dresses at public functions and spread no effort to dazzle the eyes of the people. It was her policy to bestow great honours sparingly, but when she did make gifts, they were the rich and generous ones of a woman who despised half measures. She never tired of heaping honours and riches on men who, like the Count of Cabra, had performed exploits of distinction.

The third year of the war ended far more triumphantly than had either of the first two. Late in October the Marques of Cadiz recaptured Zahara by a surprise attack in broad daylight, without the loss of a man. Queen Isabel, who had not begun to receive plenty of heavy artillery from abroad, hopefully looked forward to a more vigorous sort of warfare, a modern war of sieges, for 1485.

At this juncture King Louis XI of France died, leaving the throne to his weak son Charles VIII, an amiable youth with a touch of megalomania, who was completely dominated by his aunt, the Regent Anne de Beaujeu. King Fernando now saw an opportunity to recapture his father's provinces, Roussillon and Cerdagne, which had been so long illegally retained by King Louis. To do this he proposed giving up the Moorish war for a year and using the troops and artillery to extend his kingdom in the north. When Isabel objected, he replied that his war against France would be an eminently just one.

Senor, said Isabel, it is very true that your war is a just one, but my war is not only a just one, but a holy one. She reminded her lord the King, as she called him, that he had promised in his marriage agreement to prosecute the crusade against the Moors and she resolutely refused to be turned from her purpose.

Fernando felt that logic was on his side. If he was ever to strike for his lost provinces, he must do so now while Charles VIII was but a boy. When Charles grew older, it might be too late. He decided to make war on France without Isabel's help.

The Queen therefore left Tarazona, in Aragon, with Cardinal Mendoza and other Castilian noblemen, rode to Cordoba four hundred miles away and after spending Easter at Toledo, made a rapid recruiting tour of Andalusia. By April she had assembled at Antiquary an army of six thousand horse and twelve thousand foot, well equipped with artillery and munitions, under the direction of master gunners and engineers from Germany and France.

She had surgeons to care for the sick and wounded and three centuries before the Red Cross, she established the first military hospital in history, consisting of six great tents equipped with beds, medicines and other hospital supplies and know throughout the wondering army as the Queen's Hospital. Mounted on a war horse, she watched her host file out into the plains, under the leadership of Do Alonso de Aguilar, the Marques of Cadiz, the Grand Master of Cardenas of Santiago and Gonsalvo de Cordoba, who on this occasion had a first important command; besides the Duke of Medina Sidonia and the Count of Cabra.

The army marched to the sea coast near Malaga, defeated the Moors who came out to attack them, burned villages, destroyed crops and returned laden with spoils to Antiquary. They had not stormed Malaga. Perhaps Queen Isabel was unwilling that anyone but her lord the King should have that glory.

Fernando had remained in Aragon, pleading in vain with the stubborn Catalans for money enough to wage war against France. Their refusal left him no alternative but to return to Castile and place himself at the head of Isabel's army, which of course was exactly what she had hoped he would do.

Marching to Illora, he battered his way into it in nine days, ravaged the countryside to the gates of Granada and returned to Cordoba. Making a second campaign that summer, he smashed his way into the powerful fortress of Setenil. The Queen's new artillery had amply justified her wisdom in securing it, as her husband was justifying her faith in him as a general. When he returned victoriously to Cordoba, they had an affectionate reconciliation, and went to Sevilla to spend the winter.

No historian has told us whether Fernando admitted that he had been wrong, or whether Isabel ever said, I told you so. an undated letter in the King's handwriting however, may perhaps have been written during the stormy spring when Isabel rode to Toledo to continue the crusade:

Mi Senora, Now at last it is clear which of us two loves best. Judging by what you have ordered should be written to me, I see that you can be happy while I lose my sleep, because messenger comes after messenger and brings me no letters from you. The reason why you do not write is not because there is no paper to be had, or that you do not write know how to write, but because you do not love me and because you are proud. You are living at Toledo, I am living in small villages. Well! One day you will return to your old affection. If you do not, I shall die and the guilt will be yours.

Write to me and let me know how you are. There is nothing to be said about the affairs which keep me here, except what Silva will communicate to you and what Fernando Pulgar has told you. I beg you to believe Silva. Do write to me.

The affairs of the Princess must not be forgotten. For God's sake remember her, as well as her father, who kisses your hands, and is your servant.  
The King

## Chapter XIX

All this time Pope Sixtus IV had watched developments in Spain with an anxious eye. Although he rejoiced to note that Christian arms were beginning to make headway against the Mohammedans, he was not at all pleased with reports that reached him concerning activities of the inquisitors appointed by Isabel and Fernando. After his threat in January 1482 to remove them, the sovereigns had evidently explained the cruelties of Morillo and San Martin by reporting to the Pope that the cases of heresy were too numerous for any two men to give them proper attention.

In February that year, Sixtus appointed eight new inquisitors for Castile and Leon, saying that they had been recommended to him for their purity

of life, love and zeal for religion, gentleness of manners, extensive learning and other virtues. The seventh man named in the Pope's brief was Tomas of Torquemada, prior of the Dominican convent of Santa Cruz at Segovia. This there emerges into the light of history, for the first time, the name of a man who was to be held up for centuries in the English tradition as a monster of cruelty and intolerance.

The fact that Sixtus himself appointed the inquisitors on this occasion, instead of allowing the King and Queen to do so, shows how much he had begun to distrust the new instrument of royal absolutism in Spain. Two months later 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 from the Conversos flocking to Rome.

Queen Isabel wrote the Pope in her own handwriting, assuring him of her filial obedience and devotion and protesting that the secret Jews in Rome, with their usually duplicity, had deceived him about their own conduct and about the situation in Castile generally. The Pope had been receiving appeals from the Inquisition and granting pardons and remissions of fines very liberally. The Queen suggested that the court of appeal should be not in Rome, but in Spain where the judges would be familiar with the peculiar local situation.

Pope Sixtus replied in affectionate terms, saying he was glad to have the Queen's assurance that she was carrying out his wishes in being just and merciful to the Conversos and that he had not been deceived by her enemies in Rome. He promised to discuss with the Cardinals her petition for a court in Spain and to be guided by their advise. Meanwhile, although he did not blame the King and Queen personally for the irregularities of the Inquisition, he was far from being convinced that all the complaints of the New Christians were groundless.

He said that their official, 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, and that this had given great offence to him. 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.—For this 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.

After consulting the Cardinals, the Pope permitted the establishment of a court of appeal in Spain under the Archbishop of Sevilla, at the same time removing from office an inquisitor named Galves. The new court was not successful. Fugitives from Sevilla continued to flock to Rome, begging mercy of the Pope.

Sixtus was having an anxious time with the Venetians, who were threatening to bring the Turks back into Italy. Yet he seems to have watched the progress of affairs in Spain with keen solicitude and finally on August 2, 1483, he issued a long bull addressed not to the Spanish sovereigns but to posterity, condemning the new court of appeal at some length.

He declared that accused persons were denied access by Crown officials to the court of appeal and that letters of pardon issued by the Pope had been treated with contempt in Spain. He commanded that in the future complete freedom of appeal be guaranteed to all accused persons and that all penitents, whether heretics or Judaizers, be forgiven and admitted to penance secretly and circumspectly. Conversos, whose appeals were pending in the Roman Curia, must be treated and considered as true Catholics.

It is mercy alone that makes us like to God, wrote Pope Sixtus, 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 Sevilla 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.

In conclusion, Sixtus threatened any who opposed his wishes with the indignation of god and the penalties of the Church. Although Sixtus suspended the operation of this bull ten days later, to give further consideration to some objection that had been made to it, we know that it was receive and published by the Bishop of Elora in Portugal five months later and that Sixtus himself and the two succeeding Popes followed its letter and spirit in their dealings with the Spanish Inquisition.

The controversy between the Holy See and the spanish Crown had now reached 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 His Holiness did not fully understand the gravity of the Jewish problem in Spain.

A compromise was suggested and Queen Isabel prompted, it is said, by Cardinal Mendoza, recommended that the Pope appoint an Inquisitor-General a man whose qualification had been well demonstrated for a year and a half since his appointment as one of the eight and who had shown himself to have all the characteristics of a good and upright judge. Sixtus consented, and in August 1483, he appointed Fray Tomas of Torquemada Inquisitor-General for Castile and Leon and a few days later for Aragon, Catalonia and Valencia.

Torquemada had never wanted to be an inquisitor. He was a man of sixty-three, who for twenty years had been quietly presiding over a very devout monastery and giving the friars under him the example of a gentile, unselfish and studious life. He insisted upon discipline, but he was even stricter with himself than with others, for he never ate meat. He slept upon a bare board and he wore no linen next to his skin.

He was fearless and incorruptible, so that secret Jews could not hope either to frighten him or to bribe him into neglecting his duties. He had previously been offered a bishopric, but he had declined, since he had no

craving for honour or glory. Whatever money he received in the form of gifts he was continually spending on the poor and on various charitable and religious organizations. It was he who built the beautiful monastery of St. Thomas Aquinas at Avila and enlarged the one of Santa Cruz at Segovia.

Torquemada seems to have accepted the office of inquisitor as a painful duty, because he had become convinced that only the Inquisition could prevent the secret Jews from destroying the Christian religion and the Christian civilization of Spain.

He had not forgotten that the Christ who had blessed the lilies of the field and preached the Sermon on the Mount, was the same Christ who had foretold, in burning words, the destruction of Jerusalem and the punishment of the Jews for rejecting Him and who, when he scourged the money changer out of the Temple, reminded the Jews of the prophesy that The stone rejected by the builders would become the head of the corner, and declared to them: 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. Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it shall grind him to powder.

Perhaps it was natural for a man who had lived so long in Segovia, **Where the Jews and Conversos Had Openly Mocked and Blasphemed the Crucified Christ and Had Sought by All Means to Destroy His Work,** to take a stern view of the problem of Christianity toward that race whose ancestors had cried on the day of the Crucifixion, **His blood be upon us and upon our children.**

Yet perhaps too Torquemada, Queen Isabel and King Fernando made the mistake that St. Peter made when he cut off the ear of the servant of the High Priest with his sword in the garden of Gethsemane, only to be rebuked by his Master. It may well be that Spain at last paid for the Inquisition and the security it gave her, by the destruction of her empire. But be that as it may, we may grant that Torquemada and his royal master were as sincere as was St. Peter and like him did what they did, rightly or wrongly, out of love.

All the chroniclers of the time who mention Torquemada pay tribute to his lofty character, his administrative efficiency and the confidence he inspired in the King and Queen. Two Popes, Sixtus and Alexander VI, praised his zeal and his wisdom. He commenced with calm energy to reform and reorganize the Inquisition. He discharged the inquisitors who were unjust or temperamentally unfit and appointed 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 insisted upon clean and well ventilated prisons, far better than those maintained by the civil authorities all over Europe. He commanded that every effort be made to safeguard the legal rights of the accused, who were always allowed counsel and whose enemies were eliminated from among his witnesses. Torture was used only when all other means failed to elicit a confession from one against whom there was strong evidence.

If we remember that heresy was considered very much like high treason and that high treason everywhere in Europe was punished not only by a cruel form of death, but by confiscation of the estates of the condemned, the attitude of Isabel and Fernando and their Inquisition seems moderate with some of the treason trials in England under Henry VII, Henry III, and Queen Elizabeth. The advantage is all on the side of the Inquisition. If an institution is to be judged, as de Maitre insisted, not only by the evils it caused, but by those it prevented, we must admit that in certain ways the Inquisition was a blessing to Spain, for in the long run its saved more lives than it destroyed.

Not only was Spain free from the terrible religious wars that cost hundreds of thousands of lives in countries where Protestantism obtained a foothold, but she escaped almost completely the terrors of witch burning, which claimed one hundred thousand victims in Germany and thirty thousand in Great Britain. When the witch hunting craze swept over Protestant Europe, Spain was not immune from that ghastly impulse to persecute. The inquisitors claimed jurisdiction over witchcraft and after an investigation they announced that the whole business was a delusion. A dabbler in the

black arts was whipped or made to do penance here and there but few, if any lives were lost.

In the last twenty-three years of Queen Isabel's reign, one hundred thousand persons were placed on trial, of whom about two percent, or two thousand, were put to death. These included not only heretics, but bigamists, blasphemers, church robbers, priests who married women and deceived them as to their status, usurers, employees of the Inquisition who violated female prisoners and other offenders.

After Torquemada had reformed the Inquisition in Castile, he proceeded to do likewise in Aragon. In the latter place he appointed as inquisitors Fray Gaspar Juglar, a Dominican and Maestre Pedro Arbues of Epila, a member of the Order of Canons Regular attached to the metropolitan church at Saragossa. At the first auto-de-fe four persons were penanced and reconciled. There were no executions.

The penitents were fined, however and the Conversos, seeing that the King and Queen intended to reap a large harvest at their expense, for the prosecution of the Moorish War, began to reorganize, as in Castile, **to Prevent the Threatened Confiscations. Most of the Members of the Cortes, Most of the Judges and Most of the Lawyers Were Secret Jews and so Was the Governor of Aragon.**

When their protests failed to move Fernando and Isabel, they attempted to bribe the sovereigns. When the King and Queen refused to accept money, the Jewish millionaires, who outwardly professed Christianity, decided to use force. A large number of them gathered at the house of Luis de Santangel to raise funds to hire a band of assassins to murder the inquisitors. Juglar is said to have been poisoned by some cakes given to him by certain of the secret Jews.

Several attempts were not made to waylay the other inquisitor, 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 of reluctance. He was an eloquent preacher and is said to have had the gift of prophesy. His activities as inquisitor

had consisted, so far as known, merely obtaining evidence. On the night of September 14, 1485, the assassins hid themselves in the church where Pedro Arbues was accustomed to pray.

At midnight he entered the church and kneeling before the blessed sacraments, was soon lost in prayer. The assassins crept slowly toward him, Durango, a French Jew, stabbed him in the back of the neck, while another ruffian ran a sword twice through his body. Pedro Arbues cried out, Praised be Jesus Christ, that I die for His Holy faith! and fell, while the assassins fled.

Before dawn the streets were crowded with angry men, demanding the blood of the Conversos and undoubtedly one of traditional massacres would have occurred if the young Archbishop of Saragossa, who was a bastard son of King Fernando, had not ridden among the people, assuring them that justice would be done.

Peter Arbues died in the middle of the following night. For twenty-four hours since the assault he had spoken no words against his murderers, Abut always glorified our Lord till his soul left him. When he was buried on the following Saturday, in the presence of a great multitude, eye witnesses declared that some of his blood which had fallen on the flagstones had dried there, suddenly liquified and bubbled up. He was venerated as a martyr and a few years later, Fernando and Isabel erected a statue over his tomb. He was canonized in 1867 by Pope Pius IX.

Far from having the effect that the Jews hoped for, the assassination of St. Peter Arbues gave the Inquisition a free hand in Aragon. The chief conspirators were caught and cruelly executed and in a series of inexorable trials, during which every effort at bribery and corruption failed, Torquemada proceeded to shatter the power of the great Jewish plutocracy of Aragon and turned the proceeds into the war chest of the crusade.



## Chapter XX

When Isabel saw her husband ride out of Cordoba on April 5, 1485, with 29,000 men, including 9,000 cavalry, she felt that Castile at last had an army that would prove invincible. During the winter it had been completely recognized to meet the new conditions of warfare made possible by the increased use of gunpowder. The days of chivalry, in which knights met each other hand to hand and the better man won, were almost past.

A new era in warfare had begun. In the Middle Ages it was the privileged classes, the men who caused wars and chiefly benefited by them, who occupied the dangerous places in the front ranks, while the farmers and artisans remained working at home or served for a limited period, performing menial tasks with the army. But in the new modern warfare the common people would have the privilege of risking their lives.

Like every modern army Isabel's was well supplied with heavy artillery, the best in Europe. Some of her Italian guns, called lombards, could throw marble bullets weighing about one hundred sixty-five pounds. While Fernando and his host set out for the enemy country, Queen Isabel remained at Cordoba, praying for victory. Sometimes she heard Mass at the Cathedral, in a forest of porphyry and jasper and lapis lazuli, among exquisite traceries and mosaics. The splendor of the old church was almost barbaric. Indeed, it had once been a Moorish mosque, built by Abd er Rahman and had been transformed into a Christian church. The sanctuary was paved with silver. The pulpit was of ivory inlaid with gold and gems. All about hung thousands of lanterns made of filigree work like priceless lace.

As a rule the Queen preferred to hear Mass in her own chapel. It was characteristically at once rich and simple. The ornaments were all of gold and silver and the vestments were of choice silk or satin. The altar was covered with brocade and satin studded with precious stones and pearls of great value. Before the altar, on silk rugs of many rich colours spread over the floor, stood massive silver candlesticks of subtle workmanship. Queen Isabel listened so attentively that if any of the priests or choristers

who chanted the beautiful liturgy of the Church happened to mispronounce a Latin word, or slur over a single syllable, she made a note of it; and afterwards she corrected and instructed the delinquent.

She was then thirty-four, serene and thoughtful of countenance and still comely as on the day of her coronation. In dress she followed the prevailing fashion. A lady of rank usually wore long, full garments with graceful lines. The gown, with a tight bodice and a girdle tied in a looped knot at the front, fell over the ankles to the ground, revealing only the tips of the square toed shoes. Over this a cloak was drawn across the figure from the left and caught under the right arm, falling at the sides in long folds. It was customary to wear a veil and over it a hood like covering that met under the chin and was draped over the breast in small horizontal folds. Except on state occasions, the Queen wore few Jewels.

When King Fernando was there, the Queen generally breakfasted with him after Mass, while both opened their mail and afterwards they mounted horses and rode through the city to inspect the camp. Now that he had taken the field, she was left alone to pray and to forward supplies to the army. At first nothing but good news came from the Moorish frontier. The King had captured by storm, three large places and had destroyed seventy smaller Moorish towns.

Next he had tried out his new artillery on the thick walls of Rhonda, which was called the Jews' town. The people surrendered and those who wished were allowed to go to Africa or elsewhere, while those who stayed had lands assigned to them by the King and whether Moors or Jews, were allowed freedom of worship. Hundreds of Christian prisoners released from the dungeons of Rhonda were sent to Cordoba. There Queen Isabel received them on the steps of the Cathedral and commanded food, clothing and money to be given to the half starved, half naked wretches with matted beards and hair, who fell on their knees, weeping at her feet.

The Queen was ill and nervous and expected her fifth child. She had heard that King Fernando and the Count of Cabra were planning a difficult manoeuvre to take the town of Macklin, a stronghold commanding the northern approach to Granada. Wishing to beware the scene, she went to



Vaena with Cardinal Mendoza and little Prince Juan. There she sat in the tower of the castle, waiting for the tidings of victory.

One day when heard women wailing in the streets below and learned that couriers had come bring bad news. The Count of Cabra, who had taken a large portion of the King's army to storm Macklin, had been ambushed in the mountains by El Zagal, brother of Muley, and defeated with terrible slaughter.

Isabel, for the first time in her life, was tempted to despair. A silent melancholy, somewhat like that of her mother, began to steal upon her. For a few hours it seemed as if all the labors of her life had been in vain and as if the defeat of the Count were not enough, the situation in Castile was not wholly reassuring. In June of that very year the Jews and Conversos of Toledo planned to seize the gates of the city during a procession on the feast of Corpus Christi, to murder all the leading Christians and to rule the city.

Fortunately the plot was detected and punished by the Inquisition, but the Queen could not escape the thought that what had happened in Toledo might occur elsewhere with greater suddenness. She had many black hours, to which her physical condition no doubt contributed. But Mendoza, the great Cardinal of Spain, consoled her and encouraged her, until she shook off her gloomy presentiments and assembled her inner resources for a new effort.

Isabel held a council of war. Letters of the King said he had been on the way to attack Macklin from the other side when he learned of the Count's defeat. He was in doubt whether to retreat or to advance on Macklin and stake all on one desperate assault.

During the discussion the Bishop of Jaen, one of the Queen councillors, suggested that it might be wiser for the King to storm the twin castles of Cambial and Albahar before attempting Macklin, otherwise he would have the tow hostile places at his back. The Queen and the Cardinal thought the plan excellent and sent word to the King, who proceeded to adopt it. While Fernando advanced against the castles, Isabel and her court went

to Jaen, to watch the events. All went well until the King, having pitched his camps on the heights about Cambial and Albahar, made the alarming discovery that he could not bring his heavy guns through one narrow rugged path that led over the mountains, along perpendicular crags and precipices.

The new peril called forth the amazing energies of the Queen in a way that reminded her lieutenants of the invincible Lady Isabel of Portuguese War. Calling for a horse, she rode over the hills to inspect the terrain. She saw that a mountain stood in the way of her new guns. Very well then, let the mountain be removed.

Under the direction of the Queen and the Bishop of Jaen 6,000 sappers and pioneers started digging and blasting a new road on the mountainside, so high up on the steep slope that as bird could hold on there with difficulty. Day and night they worked, filling up valleys, breaking rocks, cutting down trees, in one place levelling a whole hill. When the royal funds gave out, the Cardinal paid the workmen. Nine miles of road were made in twelve days and the Moors who had been laughing at the discomfiture of the Christians, looked out one morning to see the black noses of heavy lombards, drawn by great oxen, come slowly through a gap in the mountainside.

Fernando's artillery now began to batter the towers and the walls of the twin castles and before long the Moors submitted and were allowed to depart for Granada.

It was now September and the court returned to Cordoba. It rained almost continuously that year from November 11 until Christmas Day. Cordoba and Devilla were in danger from the floods and Queen Isabel, at the invitation of Cardinal Mendoza, went with her family to spend the winter at his palace at Alcala de Henares.

Looking over her correspondence just before her departure, she found a letter from Rota that bore the crest of the Duke of Medina Celi, recommending to Her majesty an individual named Cristobal Colomo, who had come from Portugal and was on his way to France to as the French

King for three or four ships with which to sail across the western ocean to find certain islands. The Duke felt that if there were any islands to be discovered, the credit ought to go to Castile rather than France and he was keeping Colomo, or as he had come to be known in English Christopher Columbus, until he heard from He Majesty.

Isabel had no money for ships while the Moorish war was in so uncertain a stage, but she did not wish the credit for any discoveries to go either to France or to such a rich nobleman like the Duke of Medina Celi. She instructed the Duke therefore, to send Colomo to Cordoba, saying that she would hear what he had to say on her return.

She proceeded to Alcala and there, in the palace that had once belonged to Archbishop Carrillo, she brought into the world, on the fifteenth of December, her fifth and last child. It was a girl named Catalina, destined to be known in history as Catherine of Aragon, first wife of Henry VIII.

## Chapter XXI

A man in his late thirties, with prematurely grey hair that added a touch of nobility to a solemn and rather morose countenance, rode on a mule through the western gate of Cordoba on a warmish day in January, 1486. The sun was bright after the long rains, the air perfumed with the scents of new flowers. The whitewashed houses and gilded turrets sparkled like a city of alabaster and gold. But the man on the mule rode on, without looking to the right or to the left, past the great Cathedral with its nineteen doors of polished brass, until he came to Alcazar. There he dismounted and entering the palace, presented a letter from the Duke of Medina Celi to Their Highnesses, the King and Queen of Castile.

Not until April 28 however, did Isabel and Fernando return from the north so Christopher Columbus was obliged to wait for three months as the guest of their treasurer, Don Alonso de Quintanilla. Columbus was an intense, impatient man and the delay chafed him, but while he was waiting for their Majesties, he was treated with great kindness by people of such note as Cardinal Mendoza, Fray Hernando Diego de Deza, Prince Juan's tutor who later became Archbishop of Sevilla and succeeded Torquemada as

Inquisitor-General; Queen Isabel's lifelong friend, Beatriz de Bobadilla; and some of the great Conversos, such as Gabriel Sanchez, the royal treasurer for Aragon; and the rich banker-lawyer, Luis de Santangel, in whose house the murder of St. Peter of Arbues had been planned. In spite of his own complaints and the false legend to which they gave birth, Columbus seems to have been helped from the very beginning by the leading men and women of Spain.

His early life has remained cloaked in mystery and there are conflicting accounts of him, but from his own statements and those of his son, it appears that he was an Italian born in one of the little villages outside Genoa, probably about 1451, the year of Queen Isabel's birth. His father was a wool comber and Christopher seems to have been a weaver at Savona, his father's birthplace, until late 1472, when he took to the sea. He made a voyage to Chios and later ones to England, Iceland and Guinea. He married in Portugal and there his son Diego was born in 1480. Shortly afterwards Columbus conceived the idea of sailing west to reach the Indies and the lands described by Marco Polo and Sir John Mandeville.

Like all well informed people of his time, HE MUST HAVE KNOWN THE WORLD WAS ROUND, for he had read Aristotle's opinion in the *Imago Mundi* of Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly. Within his lifetime the noted scholar who became Pope Pius II had written, Almost all agree that the shape of the world is round. It was generally believed however, that the earth was larger than it is.

Columbus asked the aid of Dom Joao, King of Portugal, who appointed a committee of two bishops and two doctors to investigate. They advised the King that Columbus was only a visionary. Columbus later attributed their refusal to that Jew Joseph, the Physician and astrologer Vecinho. In Castile however, he had reason to be grateful to many Jews and one of them was to contribute in decisive fashion to his success.

Discouraged in Portugal, Columbus had set sail for Spain, intending to go from there to France, but a storm drove him ashore at Palos, where he asked for food and shelter for himself and little Diego at the Franciscan monastery at La Rabida. He explained his ambitions to Fray Antonion

Maruchena, a monk skilled in astronomy and cosmology and to Fray Juan Perez, prior of the monastery, who had at one time been Queen Isabel's confessor. They were both patriotic subjects of Castile and they begged Columbus to give Queen Isabel the opportunity of reaping the glory of his discoveries. It was probably they who had suggested his going to the Duke of Medin Celi.

When Isabel and Fernando returned to Cordoba, they received Columbus in the great hall of the Alcazar and listened to him explain his project. He appears to have made a favourable impression upon them from the start. He had a long freckled face that flushed easily as he spoke. His little gray eyes shone like those of a man with a vision. His nose, hooked like the beak of an eagle (the mark of a Jew), suggested an inquisitive and domineering nature. Father Barnaldez, the historian priest, whose guest Columbus was a few years later, called him a man of very high talent, but without much learning.

But however interesting the Liguarian and his plans may have been not the King and Queen, they doubted the wisdom of spending two million maravedis, probably ,7,000 in our money, on a voyage to lands that might not exist, when they were in the middle of a long and costly war and needed money for guns, munitions and ships to blockade the Moorish cities on the Mediterranean. It seemed to them wise to keep Columbus at the court until the end of the war. King Fernando, with the Queen's consent, appointed a commission under her confessor Fray Hernando, to look into Columbus's claims. Meanwhile they allowed the navigator a pension of about three thousand maravedis a month. After that they probably forgot all about him for awhile.

It was in that year that they put forth their greatest effort to press the war to a speedy end. Their gallant efforts had appealed to the imaginations of men all over Europe and soldiers from every Christian nation had come to fight under the silver standard of the Holy Cross and Pope Sixtus IV had sent with his special blessings. There were even Englishmen and Irishmen in the host of fifty-two thousand men that King Fernando led that summer against the Moors. He marched on Loja, where he had suffered his first humiliation in the war and after a few days of long and

bloody fighting, battered down the walls and entered the city in triumph, while the whole army cried Castile! Castile! and knelt, saying the Te Deum. Fernando sent the good news to Isabel in Cordoba and asked her to visit the troops. She did so and the fifty thousand Christian warriors passed in review before her, each battalion lowering its colours before her in salute. She was mounted on a chestnut mule, on a magnificent silver saddle chair. As the King came forth to receive her, she made three reverences to him and he made three to her. She then took off her hat, leaving on her auburn hair the silk net or cawl, which showed her cheeks uncovered. King Fernando embraced her and kissed her on the cheek. Then he embraced the Princess Isabel, kissing her on the mouth and gave her his blessing.

One of the foreign nobles who came to pay his respects to the Queen was Lord Scales (Earl Rivers), brother-in-law of King Henry VII, who brought one hundred English archers and two hundred yeomen to fight in the Crusade. At the siege of Loja a great stone thrown by a Moor had smashed his magnificent cavalier's front teeth. Queen Isabel expressed her sorrow for his loss.

It is a small thing, said the Englishman, to lose a few teeth in the service of Him who gave them all to me. Our Blessed Lord, who built all this house, has merely opened a window in it, that He may more easily see what passeth within.

The Queen was so delighted with this nobleman that she sent him a present the next day of twelve splendid Andalusian steeds, two beds with covers of gold brocade and stately tents for his men.

Fernando then took Macklin by Storm. When he and Isabel entered in triumph at the head of a long precession, with the choir of the royal chapel singing the Te Deum, they heard faintly, as if from underground, a chorus of voices singing ecstatically, Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.

The sound came from the dungeons where the Christian captive were kept and the poor wretches were led forth, half naked and half starved, but still singing hysterically and weeping.

The Queen followed her victorious army almost to the walls of Granada and then returned to Cordoba. It had been a most successful year. But new and perhaps graver dangers were looming up in the Mediterranean. For Granada was only a small segment of the long battle line of Islam, whose unbroken empire extended from Gibraltar eastward to China. Alarmed by the success of Fernando and Isabel, the Sultan of Egypt and the Turkish Emperor Bajazet II had patched up their quarrel and had decided to start a new offensive against Christian Europe. They agreed that while Bajazet launched a great fleet against Fernando's kingdom of Sicily, the Sultan would send a huge army from Africa to Spain to reinforce the Moors of Granada.

It was the gravest crisis of Christendom since Otranto fell in 1480. Pope Innocent VIII, a kind, charitable man of fifty-four, with weak eyes and feeble health, issued a bull calling upon all Christian nations to support the Spanish sovereigns in their crusade. But in general the appeals fell on ears made deaf by selfishness.

## Chapter XXII

King Fernando had courage and intelligence, but his wife had genius and when she learned of the new Mohammedan plan to conquer Europe, she suggested that he give up his design to storm Baza and instead descend to the Mediterranean coast and attack the three fortified ports, Valez Malaga, Malaqu and Almeria.

These were the southern outposts of Granada and their capture would cut off the Moorish kingdom from Africa. The most important of these was Malaga, through which supplies of men, food and munitions passed constantly from the Barbary coast to Granada. Fernando, who valued the queen's advice supremely, left Cordoba on Palm Sunday 1487 with 70,000 men, preceded by 4,000 pioneers to smooth out roads over the snow-clad mountains. Harried by Moorish mountaineers, the crusaders fought their way over the winding mule paths, far above yawning chasms and ravines and struggled over dizzy precipices, until at last they saw below the warm valley of Valez Malaga and the blue of the Mediterranean.

Fernando established his camp on a slope above the town and waited for his artillery to come up. The Moors surprised his camp and in the sharp battle they fought, the King would have been killed but for the timely aid of the Marques of Cadiz.

El Zagal now marched by night over the mountains to relieve Valez and camped on the mountains above Fernando, who now found himself in a dangerous position between two foes. He sent a fast courier to Queen Isabel, asking for reinforcements.

Isabel had no troops to send and no money to hire them. She was now thirty-six and beginning to show the effects of overwork and privation. But the challenge of the impossible once more spurred her energies to heroic accomplishment. She was in the saddle day and night, making swift round of cities and castles, calling to arms all the men in Andalusia under seventy years of age.

Under the fascination of her voice and words old veteran of the border warfare forgot their rheumatism, took their swords and lances from the walls and repaired to Cordoba, where the Queen and her faithful friend Cardinal Mendoza, who had come in his old age in spite of sickness, to answer her call, marshaled them quickly into regiments. The white haired Cardinal paid the men out of the remains of his private fortune and took the field at their head to rescue king Fernando.

Before the relief party arrived, El Zagal had attacked the Christians, but the help he had expected from Malaga failed him and he was repulsed by Fernando with great slaughter. When the artillery and the Queen's expedition arrived over the mountain, Valez surrendered and the victorious crusaders marched into Malaqua.

This rich and beautiful city lay between two powerful forts by the curve of the tranquil sea. The vast walls rose out of the water into great hanging gardens like those of Babylon. Stately cedars and palms shaded fountains, patios, groves of oranges and pomegranates. The garrison was composed of Gomeres, fierce and fanatical warriors from Barbary, commanded by a daring leader, Ez Zegri.



The Christian artillery thundered against the walls, but the Moors were growing accustomed to the new lombards and were learning how to repair breaches. Meanwhile a pestilence that had been raging in the neighboring villages spread to the Christian camp, slaying more soldiers than the Moors did. Supplies were running low and there was danger of famine. King Fernando appealed as usual to the Queen. She hastened to the camp with Cardinal Mendoza and the Princess Isabel.

Shortly after her arrival, a Moor was captured who said that he was a prophet to whom Allah had revealed how and when Malaga should be taken, but he would share his secret with no one but King Fernando and Queen Isabel. The Marques of Cadiz sent the man to the royal tent, thinking he might have valuable information.

The King was taking his siesta and Isabel decided to wait and interview the prisoner with him when he awoke. Hence the Moor was taken to a nearby tent where the Queen's friend prince Don Alvaro. The Moor supposed them to be the King and Queen. He asked for a drink of water and while his guards turned to fetch it, he drew a scimitar from under his burnous and threw himself upon the unsuspecting players. He laid Don Alvaro senseless with a gash in his head and would have killed Dona Beatriz but for the return of the guards. Royal troops soon cut the assassin to pieces and threw his hacked remains by catapult, over the walls of Malaga. Isabel offered devout prayers of thanksgiving for her husband's escape.

Her presence as usual, put new heart into the camp. The Spanish had an almost superstitious conviction that wherever she went, victory was sure to follow. Even the Moors had begun to share this belief. She rode about in armour inspecting the hospital tents, consoling the sick and binding up the wounds with her own hands.

Under her influence a new and holy spirit began to pervade the camp. There was no cursing or brawling while she was there. Priests said Mass every morning as in a great city and preached to those who were healthy as well as to the sick, and the singers from the Queen's chapel sang daily at Vespers and marched chanting, in solemn processions.

Over the wide city of silk and linen shone the silver cross of Pope Sixtus and forty great silver bells of varying pitch, chimed the hours of the day and night. The Moors, whose Koran forbade the use of bells, hated the sound and used to shout over the walls, What, you have no cows and yet you bring cowbells?

In honour of the Queen's coming Fernando suspended firing and offered the people of Malqa their lives, liberty and property if they surrendered. Under the fanatical Ez Zegri they refused. When at last they were obliged to submit, Fernando and Isabel entered the city as conquerors, after a siege of three months and eleven days and released 600 Christian captives from the dungeons.

Many of the Castilians who had been buried alive for fifteen and twenty years. King Fernando proceeded to deal harshly with those who had cost him so much money and blood. He ordered all the people to be sold into slavery, except those who could pay a ransom of thirty gold doblas. He gave them eight months to raise the money and after that time 11,000 of them, unable to meet his terms, were sold.

Four hundred and fifty Moorish Jews who lived in Malaga were ransomed by Abraham Senior, chief rabbi of Castile, a millionaire who had lent money to Isabel and Fernando and to whom they farmed out some of their taxes to raise money for the crusade.

The King and Queen went to Aragon for the winter and returned to the south in the spring.

The year 1488 was unfortunate, chiefly because Fernando made the mistake of sending troops to aid the Duke of Brittany in his rebellion against the Crown of France. Perhaps Queen Isabel gave her husband consent this time in a moment of gratitude for the King's successes and his almost miraculous escapes from death. The results confirmed her misgivings. The French rebels were defeated and more than a thousand of the Spanish were killed. This left Fernando short of men in the year when the blow so long prepared by the Mohammedans fell upon Europe. A Turkish fleet of 55 galleys sailed with an army of 100,000 men to attack

Fernando's kingdom of Sicily and with the intention of using it as a base to bring men and supplies from Africa to conquer Italy and thence overrun all Europe.

Fortunately the design failed because Pope Innocent rallied enough strength to defend Malta against the Turks and the latter were not able to get to Sicily without taking Malta. But, Fernando had only 19,000 men and very little money to fight the crusade and when he attacked Almeria, he was unable to take it and he had to retreat. Leaving his army, he went to the famous Cross of Caravaca in the hills of Murcia and there, like King David of old, he knelt in the dust to do penance for his sins and to ask God to give him better fortune.

The Moors, encouraged by Fernando's retirement, assumed the offensive all along the frontier, seized Christian towns, drove off herds of cattle, led men, women and children into slavery. They carried fire and sword into Murcia on the east and on the west front many Moorish towns that Fernando had taken, threw off their new yoke and began slaying Christians.

As if God and nature had turned against King Fernando for giving up the crusade for a private war, the year ended in floods, storms and pestilence. Wrecks of ships were scattered along every coast in Spain. Roofs were torn off houses by the winds, stone towers were laid flat, the Guadaquivir encircled Sevilla in an angry embrace and lashed the low buildings with its muddy yellow waters until the inhabitants feared total destruction. In Cordoba that year more people died of the plague than in 1481.

The King and Queen spent the winter assembling a new army and by strenuous efforts they collected 53,000 men, whom Fernando led against Baza. This was a tremendously strong place, defended in the rear by a mountain and in front by massive walls and turrets. It was evident as soon as Fernando had camped outside its walls, that the cost of taking it would be tremendous. Many of the King's generals, including the Marques of Cadiz, advised giving up the siege until the following year. Once more Fernando sent for Isabel's advice. Her reply was characteristic, Baza must be taken at any cost. Another retreat would be fatal to the spirit of the

people and to the crusade. If the King and his army would continue the siege, she guaranteed on her part, with the help of god, to send them food, munitions and money to pay the troops.

To obtain funds to keep her promise, she pawned her gold and plate, priceless heirlooms from her ancestors. She sent all her Jewels by speedy messengers to Valencia and Barcelona, to pledge them to Jewish money lenders. She pawned her pearl necklace, her balas rubies, even the Jewelled crown of St. Fernando. The money just obtained saved the crusade at its most critical moment.

## Chapter XXIII

When Isabel came within sight of Baza, even the Moors crowded to the walls and towers to catch a glimpse of the mighty Queen to whose beauty, goodness and sense of justice even their own minstrels paid tribute. Her coming put new life into the Christian army and filled the enemy with despair. The very next day the Moslems asked for terms of peace and on December 4, they surrendered.

While the King and Queen were at Baza, they were visited by two Franciscan friars, sent from Jerusalem by the Sultan of Egypt, to warn them that if they did not cease the war against Granada, he would slay all the Christians in Palestine and destroy their churches and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Isabel received the monks with great kindness, gave a grant of 1,000 ducats a year to their monastery and sent back, in their charge, a rich embroidery, the work of her own hands, to be hung in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. They took word to the Sultan that she would send an ambassador to him at a later date to go more fully into the questions he raised, Thus the Queen gained time. Eventually she dispatched Peter Martyr, an Italian scholar, to make peace with him.

A third man in a brown robe who had an audience with the King and Queen at this time was Christopher Columbus, who still had hopes of getting three ships to sail to the Indies. Like every man with a dominant idea, he considered everything else in the world of secondary or slight importance, He could not understand or tolerate opposition and his sensitiveness to

criticism amounted almost to a delusion of persecution. He was very prone to blame someone else, instead of himself, for all his misfortunes.

In a moment of bitterness he wrote that everyone in Castile was against him and yet he had been treated with great kindness. The pension Isabel gave him was almost equivalent to the salary of one of the most noted professors at the University of Alcala and when lack of money compelled the Queen to discontinue his allowance in 1489, she commanded all owners of inns and hotels to feed and clothe him and his two sons.

It is true that Fray Hernando de Talavera and the other commission of learned men and mariners appointed by King Fernando to investigate Columbus's proposal in 1486, had reported adversely. But, Columbus himself seems to have been to blame for this for he did not explain his plan completely to them, fearing that they might steal his material and attempt to make secret use of it, as he believed the Portuguese had. His suspicious attitude and lack of frankness must have made an unfavourable impression on the commissioners.

Immediately after this rebuff however, Columbus received a cordial invitation from the Dominican monks who were professors at Salamanca University, to visit them and to discuss his plans with them. For this kindness he was indebted chiefly to Fray Diego de Deza, formerly confessor to the Queen and tutor to Prince Juan and now Bishop of Salamanca and professor of theology at the University, a Converso.

Columbus remained as a guest at the Dominican college of St. Stephen at Salamanca for several months. At the time the University had 6,000 students. Most of the great nobles sent their sons there but poor boys, if worthy, were taught without charge. It was there that Columbus vigorously defended his scheme. He quoted from the prophecies of Isaias and other parts of the Bible and declared that God had chosen him directly to open the gates of the western seas.

This was not a very convincing argument to monks who were scientists and who, pious though they might be, objected to having quotations from the Church Fathers lugged into a scientific discussion. But on the whole

they considered the Italian's plan well worth trying and henceforth they were among his staunchest advocates before the King and Queen.

Isabel had no intention of giving up the chief ambition of her life to send a poetic adventurer, as he appeared to many to be, across the Atlantic. Once more she dismissed him with kindly words and he departed from Baza, to be heard from no more for the next two years.

Fernando marched for Almeria, on the south coast, on December 7. Isabel followed with the rear guard. The winter had settled down over the gusty mountains when she set out on her perilous journey over the most desolate and savage part of the long Sierra. Surrounded by shivering cavaliers, muffled in cloaks, she rode over icy peaks above the clouds and down through valleys where the sun never penetrated. It had cost her over 20,000 lives to take Baza. Hundreds more perished on the way to the Mediterranean.

Almeida surrendered with a struggle and the court spent Christmas very joyously by the salt scented beaches and hunted mountain boars along the wooded hills nearby. It was not fairly certain that the war against Granada would be won. Isabel and Fernando must have turned around with relief from battles and sieges to the education of their children and making plans for their marriages.

They sought an alliance with the German Emperor Maximilian, or as he was called, the King of the Romans, by arranging to marry Prince Juan to his daughter Marguerite and the eccentric Princess Juana to his son, Philip the Fair. Then to bind a treaty with England against France they had already agreed to give their youngest daughter Catalina, to Prince Arthur of Wales, as soon as both were old enough.

At the tournaments and feasts held at Medina del Campo when the treaty with England was signed, Fernando wore a rich robe of cloth of gold, trimmed with costly sable and Isabel wore a robe woven entirely of gold and over it a riding hood of black velvet, with large holes slashed in it. From her left shoulder hung shot cloak of fine crimson satin furred with ermine. Her necklace was of gold and Jewelled roses and on her breast

she wore a ribbon studded with diamonds, rubies and pearls. An Englishman wrote home that the pouch of her white leather girdle was set with a large balas ruby the size of a tennis ball, between five rich diamonds and other stones the size of a bean. This was in March 1489, before the siege of Baza. The Jewels were now in the coffers of the money-lenders of Valencia and Barcelona.

To arrange terms with Henry VII, Isabel and Fernando sent to England Doctor de Puebla, who was described as lame, stingy, shrewd, vain and deceitful, for under the flattery of the wily King Henry, he appears to have betrayed his own employers. He wrote that he had seen little Prince Arthur asleep and found him Afat and fair, but small for his age of twenty months.

Isabel and Fernando had agreed in 1479 to Betroth the Princess Isabel to Dom Alfonso, heir to the throne of Portugal. In 1486 we find them offering the Princess to young Charles VIII of France, but the Regent, Anne de Beaujeu, refused. Fernando and Isabel appear to have been sometimes unscrupulous in dealing with the unscrupulous monarchs of the time. At any rate they finally kept their agreement with Portugal and the Princess was married on Easter Sunday, 1490, by proxy and sent to Portugal as a bride in November. She had seventy maids of honour and one hundred pages, the feasts and tournaments for her wedding lasted two weeks.

The particular pride of Queen Isabel's heart was the little blond Prince whom she called Amyngel. As he seemed likely to rule over all Spain, she gave the greatest care to his health and to his education, for he was delicate. She chose ten boys as his companions, five of his own age and five older, with whom he was obliged to compete on equal terms in his sports and his studies. They all lived together in a little palace of their own like a king and his courtiers, to train the Prince for the task before him.

It was a proud day for Prince Juan when he was allowed to ride horseback, in armour from head to foot, at his father's side when the King took the field with an army of 25,000 in 1490. They marched through the country of the Moors, burning the fields and the orchards, until they came in sight of the red towers of Granada and there the King knighted Prince Juan,

who had for his sponsors the two old enemies, now friends, the Marques of Cadiz and the Duke of Medina Sidonia.

Both sovereigns were resolved to bring the war to a conclusion if possible in 1490 and by a great effort they put into the field an army of 50,000 men, who marched to Los Ojos de Huecar, four miles from Granada and there laid out and fortified a great grand angular camp. When Isabel and the Princesses arrived, the Marques of Cadiz offered her his own tent and she took up her residence in it.

One night in July, while the Queen was asleep, her tent caught fire from a flickering candle. The flame spread from tent to tent until the whole city of silk and brocade was ablaze. The Queen, aroused by the shouts of the soldiers, rushed into the next tent, where the King was sleeping soundly and woke him. They rescued the Prince and the Infantas who were sleeping nearby and then, still quiet the panic of the men. By that time the wooden barracks of the infantry had caught fire and in a short time the whole camp was reduced to cinders.

When it became known that the Queen's wardrobe had been destroyed, Gonsalvo de Cordoba, the handsome cavalier known as the Prince of Youth, offered her his wife's. Isabel, in thinking him said, Your household has lost more by the disaster than mine has. Fernando ordered his troops to prevent the Moors from exulting too much over the fire. Isabel, instead of being discouraged, set her army to work rebuilding the camp, not in silk and wood this time, but in stone. Rocks were drawn from the neighbouring hills and day after day the new buildings arose in the sight of the puzzled Arabs. The army constructed a complete city in three months in the midst of the plain. It had towers, battlements and walls, and its two principal streets formed a great cross. The cavaliers wanted it named after the Queen, but she insisted upon calling it Santa Fe, Holy Faith.

One day in August when the Queen had ridden forth with her children, the Marques of Cadiz and a large escort of troops, to see Granada from a hill, the Moors came forth to attack. Isabel had an opportunity to see her troops in action at close range. She knelt in prayer while the Marques and



his cavalry spurred into action, and after the battle, when her troops had killed or captured 2,000 of the Moors with hardly the loss of one man, she commanded a monastery to be raised on the spot to the memory of St. Francis, to whose aid she attributed the victory.

When autumn came, the Moors at last decided to surrender Granada. Fernando and Isabel granted them magnanimous terms. They allowed them to retain their own religion, their mosques, their laws, language, costumes and property, with the exemption from taxes for three years. Boabdil came forth to surrender January 2, 1492 and handed the keys of Granada to King Fernando, who in turn gave them to the Queen, who appeared on the high tower of the city with the flag of Santiago beside it. The King and Queen and the whole army knelt in the dust, giving thanks to God for their victory and the crusaders shouted: Santiago! Santiago! Castile! Castile! For the invincible monarchs, Don Fernando and Dona Isabel!

Four days later, on the feast of Epiphany, the monarchs entered the city and after giving thanks again at High Mass, went to the Alhambra and seated themselves on the thrones of the Emirs. It was the first time that Christians had ruled in that place for 777 years.

Among the chief men who were present at the triumph were Fray Hernando de Talavera, who was to be Archbishop of Granada; her lifelong friend, Cardinal Mendoza; the Inquisitor-General, Fray Tomas de Torquemada; the Great Captain Gonsalvo de Gonzalvo de Cordoba; the Marques of Cadiz and Christopher Columbus. It was one of the happiest days of Queen Isabel's life.

## **Chapter XXIV**

King Fernando's letter announcing the fall of Granada reached Rome on the night of February 1, a month after the event and Pope Innocent VIII and all the Cardinals went in solemn procession next morning from the Vatican to the Spanish Church of St. James, to offer a Mass of thanksgiving for the glorious ending of the epic struggle which had lasted

for eight centuries between Spanish Christians and an alien foe. When the news reached England, King Henry VII command all the nobles and prelates, who were then in court, to march with the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London to St. Paul's Church, where the Lord Chancellor made an address in praise of Isabel and Fernando, saying that all Christians should rejoice in their victory. Then they marched through London, singing the Te Deum Laudamus. In fact all Europe celebrated the triumphant end of Isabel's ten year war. Church bells rang and bonfires blazed from the Mediterranean to the North Sea.

The tired Queen meanwhile was resting in the beautiful palace of the Alhambra. All about her were pillared halls, incomparable mosaics, colors, delicate fragrances, the sons of tropical birds in the most luxurious gardens of the world.

The Queen rested and contemplated what she had done. She had reigned eighteen years and her genius had transformed a bankrupt country, drenched in blood, into a peaceful and prosperous Spain that was now one of the leading powers of Europe. It is true that Spain was not a nation in the technical sense, for Isabel ruled Castile and Fernando ruled Aragon. But practically, the Spanish kingdoms acted as one and the time was not far off when they would be permanently united.

The Queen was now free to give her attention to the plan of Christopher Columbus. She received him in audience and was evidently impressed by what he said. But, King Fernando was less enthusiastic, particularly as the royal treasury was bare after the long strain of war. The result was that he referred the matter to another commission, which probably reported unfavourably, (the record of their findings has been lost) for Columbus left the court in sorrow and anger and decided to go to France. Once more he stopped at the Franciscan monastery of La Rabida.

He told what had happened to Father Juan Perez the prior and it may be that in his bitterness he described his plans more frankly than he had a court. Friar Juan, at any rate, persuaded the Italian to remain at the monastery while he sent Queen Isabel a letter, saying that he was convinced that Columbus was right and felt it would be a great mistake

not to help him. Isabel was so influenced by the letter of her old confessor, that she sent back 20,000 maravedis in gold florins, by his messenger, to buy new clothes and a mule for Columbus and she bade him return to court. Columbus returned to Grenada, feeling that his eighteen years of waiting and begging were to be rewarded at last. In all men there was disbelief, he wrote later, Abut to the Queen, my lady, God gave the spirit of understanding and great courage. He had no doubt that she would now give him what he wanted.

Isabel and Fernando were hardly prepared however, for the terms that the Lirurian weaver, standing before them in the Hall of Ambassadors in the Alhambra, was about to lay down in his lordly manner. He spoke like one who had divine mission. He believed he had and he declared that once he heard a voice saying to him in the night: God will cause thy name to be wonderfully resounded through the earth and will give thee the keys of the gates of the ocean, which are closed with strong chains.

Now, addressing the monarchs of Castile in the tone of one king treating with another, he demanded to be made Admiral of all the seas and countries he was about to discover and Viceroy and Governor of all continents and islands he might find. He must have a tenth part of all merchandise, such as pearls and gold, that might be found. If any disputes arose between the countries of Asia and Spain over mercantile matters, he was to be the only judge. He reserved the right to contribute an eighth part of the expenses of all ships that might sail from Spain to the Indies and in return to receive an eighth part of the profits.

Such terms were bound to strike the King and Queen as preposterous. The title of Admiral in Spain was reserved for those of the royal blood, such as the King's uncle, Don Fadrique. Discoverers in Portugal and Spain were usually rewarded by captaincies and pensions.

Queen Isabel had also to consider the effect of bestowing so high a title upon a foreigner. The Castilians were intensely proud of their own kingdom and had never quite forgiven King Fernando for being an Aragonese. What would they think of making an Italian wool comber a Viceroy? The sovereigns once more said to Columbus. He bade them a

dignified farewell this time, as he thought, forever. Leaving the Alhambra, he mounted his mule, rode sadly through the gates of Granada and took the road to the west. This was later in January, 1492.

It would appear that before he left, he made a final appeal to some of his friends at court. Three of them hastened to the Queen to beg her to reconsider. They were Beatriz de Bobadilla, Marques of Moya, the Queen's treasurer Alonso de Quintanilla and the rich Converso Luis de Santangel. Santangel, who had been penanced the year before by the Inquisition, made an impassioned plea for Columbus, and when the Queen objected that she had no money to buy ships, it was he who pointed to a way out of the difficulty.

He happened to know that the Santa Hermandad, or Holy Brotherhood, of which he was one of the treasurers, was well supplied with funds received from taxes and he was able to advance 1,140,000 maravedis out of these public funds to Archbishop Talavera to equip an expedition for Columbus. Thus the police force that Isabel and Fernando had re-established years ago, to put an end to crime in their kingdoms, now made it possible for them to reach into the unknown world to the west for untold wealth and power.

It is interesting to note that they owed the suggestion to the intelligence and persistence of a Christian Jew. They granted all of Columbus's demands. The contract was signed on April 17, 1492, and the Admiral, now Don Cristobal Colon, a grandee of Castile, proceeded to Palos to organize his fleet. The town of Palos, for some offence against the Crown, was sentenced to provide two caravels, fully manned and equipped for a two months' voyage, while Their Majesties agreed to defray the cost of a third ship.

Queen Isabel remained at Granada until Pentecost, considering certain reports from the Inquisitor-General concerning the Jews. The Inquisition, it seemed, had repressed the secret Jews and had financed the Moorish war with their money, but it had not put an end to the attempts of the Jews of the synagogue to win back those who had become Christians. In March of that year, the Queen came to a momentous decision.

## Chapter XXV

During November of 1491 when Isabel and Fernando were negotiating with Boabdil for the surrender of Granada, there occurred at the bleak town of Avila, not far from where the unfortunate Prince Alfonso had once been crowned, an execution which was to have momentous and tragic consequences. Two Jews and six Conversos were burned at the stake after having been convicted, by a court Inquisition, of having kidnapped a Christian boy of about four years and of having crucified him in a cave, in mockery of Jesus Christ.

They were also accused of having cut out his heart with the intention of making a charm by black magic, which would cause the Christians of Spain to go insane and die thus giving the Jews control of the country. This sounds fantastic to us and one is tempted to say that the charge is only one more instance of the cruel accusation of ritual murder, which has been brought against the Jews in many times and places even in the United States and in Arabia in our own time and has been denounced as false by several Popes.

(The Popes denied it, of course, because they were themselves Jews. The Universal Jewish Encyclopaedia list more than 100 cases of ritual murder, some times called blood libel, which were proven to have happened and some by Jews who confessed that they had done the deed)

One does not have to believe that Jews ever officially countenanced such an atrocity as ritual murder however, to admit that Jewish individuals or groups may from time to time have been led by their hatred of Christ and Christianity into committing irresponsible and terrible crimes. There is no doubt that children have been killed in connection with the activities of devil worshipers in which renegade Jews have taken a part. There is evidence that from time to time consecrated hosts have been stolen from Catholic churches, to be injured or insulted in connection with such obscene and blasphemous rites as the black mass of Paris and elsewhere.

The Spanish mind, inflamed by centuries of war and hating the Jews as a friend of the enemy, found no difficulty in believing Jews guilty of the

most atrocious crimes. Seventeen Jews of Segovia were found guilty in 1468, the year of Isabel's brother's death, of having crucified a Christian boy. It was the Bishop Juan Arias de Avila, son of Jewish Converts, who passed sentence of death on them, whether justly or unjustly. The cruel charges against the Jews was so widely believed that it had found expression in a law passed by one of Isabel's ancestors, Alfonso the Wise.

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 our 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 deeds hall 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.

Whether or not the Jews executed from time to time were guilty of the crimes attributed to them, or of any crime attributed to them, or of any rime, it is impossible how to say. They same is true of the trial at Avila in the last months of the Moorish war.

A Converso named Benito Garcia had been arrested in June 1490, after some men who rifled his knapsack at an inn had found in it what appeared to be a Host from the altar of a Catholic church. He was tortured and admitted that although a professing Christian, he had been a secret Jew for many years, had never received Holy Communion and had made false confessions to the priest. A month later, as a result of Benito's confession and those of his friends, an old Jew named Ca Franco and his son Yuce, a lad of twenty, were arrested and taken to the prison of the Inquisition at Segovia, formerly the home of the Queen's friend Beatriz and her husband now Manques of Moya, who had donated it to the Holy Office.

The use of such a place as a prison shows how Torquemada had striven to make the Inquisition more humane. After a few days the young Jew became ill and thought he was going to die. The Inquisitors sent a physician to prescribe for him. Yuce begged the doctor to send him a Jew

who could give him the consolation of the dying. The inquisitors did not believe, from the doctor's report that Yuce was going to die, but they sent him a converted Jew who was a learned master of theology, Fray Alonso Enriquez, disguised as a rabbi. During the conversation the Arabbi asked Yuce why he had been arrested and Yuce, according to the sworn deposition of Fray Alonso and of the Physician, who was listening near by, said he supposed he had been arrested for the death of a boy after the manner of that man.

That man was a term used by the Jews in referring to Our Lord. The inquisitors were so impressed that they took their evidence to Torquemada, who was then in Segovia at the convent of Santa Cruz. He appointed three of his most trustworthy judges to try the case, commanding them to punish the guilty and to set free the innocent. Five other Conversos were arrested.

Three months after the arrest Yuce told the inquisitors that about three years before, one of the Conversos named Alonso Franco had told him that one Good Friday, he and his three brothers had crucified a boy. Two months later Yue was formally placed on trial and accused of having been associated with others in crucifying a Christian boy on Good Friday and of taking part in an outrage upon a consecrated Host, with the intention of destroying the Christians of Spain. The prosecutor demanded sentence of death, saying, I swear before God and before His cross, on which I place my hand, that I do not make this demand and accusation against the said Yuce Franco maliciously, but believe him to have committed all that I have said.

It is the greatest falsehood in the world, replied Yuce.

The inquisitors then appointed two lawyers to represent him and at his request granted him a third counsel of his own choice a few days later. His lawyers denied the charges against him and asked for a bill of particulars. **the following April Yuce Admitted That His Brother, Now Dead, Had Told Him That He and a Jewish Physician Named Tazarte and Five of the Conversos Had Taken Part in a Black Magic Rite, Using a Consecrated Host to Cause the Death of Christians. after He Had Been in Prison a Year, Yuce, Put under Oath According to Jewish**

**Form, Swore That He Had Been Present with the Other Prisoners in a Cave near La Guardia and That One of the Conversos Had Shown Them the Heart of a Christian Boy and a Consecrated Host, with Which Tazarte Was to Make a Charm to Cause the Inquisitors to Go Mad and Die within a Year, Should They Attempt Anything against the Conspirators. All Had Promised to Keep Silence for a Year.**

**The Year Was Now up and Yuce Made His Confession. The Same Afternoon He Admitted That He Had Been Present in a Cave When a Converso Stripped a Christian Boy Three or Four Years Old, Crucified Him on Some Wooden Poles, Gagged Him, Struck Him, Whipped Him, Spat on Him, and Crowned Him with Some Thorns from a Gorge Bush. He Said That Finally the Conversos Opened the Little Victim's Side with a Knife and Took Out the Heart.**

**Yuce and His Father Were There as Innocent Onlookers. Evidently the Inquisitors Now Went to Work on the Other Prisoners, Who Proceeded to Implicate Yuce and His Father. They All Confessed, under Torture, to Having Taken Part in the Crime and When Confronted with Each Other, Confirmed Their Confessions. The Stories Agreed in All the Main Points and Juan Franco Admitted Having Cut Out the Child's Heart.**

**Benito How Had His Revenge on Yuce by Saying That the Latter Had Pulled the Child's Hair and Whipped Him with the Rest. Another Converso Said That Yuce Had Drawn Blood from the Child's Arm with a Knife.**

It is not known to this day who was the boy to whose murder the Conversos and the Jews confessed and Jewish scholars persist in saying that the charges were all made up out of whole cloth by the inquisitors. On the other hand, about 150 pages of testimony have been found and a great deal of it has the ring of reality in it. Until the rest of the testimony is discovered, it will be impossible at this late date to say whether or not the accused were guilty. We do know however, that the inquisitors took all the evidence to the monastery of St. Stephen, where Columbus had been received with such kindness and there submitted it to a jury composed of



seven of the most distinguished professors at the University of Salamanca. After three days the seven scholars returned a unanimous verdict of guilty against Yuce.

Yuce was not threatened with torture by the water cure, and under fear of being tied to a ladder and being half suffocated by water dropped slowly through a cloth in his mouth, he made a more detailed confession, repeating some very foul and blasphemous insults spoken to the child, but intended for the person of Jesus Christ. Next day Yuce's father, under torture, confirmed his son's testimony and the Conversos, examined separately, also confirmed it.

On November 11, 1491, the inquisitors submitted their evidence to a second jury of the most learned men of Avila. There were five of them and they also returned a verdict of guilty. It is possible, of course, that the twelve jurors were mistaken, but it seems improbable that so many scholars and priests should have agreed to the death of six men unless they were convinced of their guilt.

At least it is no more improbable than that two Jews and four secret Jews, together with their accomplices who were dead, should have committed a crime of ignorance and superstition. The claim that the evidence was concocted for propaganda purposes would be more plausible if the testimony had been public. However, it appears to have been hidden in the archives of the Inquisition and came to light four centuries later, in 1887.

Whether guilty or innocent, the six men were executed the same month that Granada surrendered and all confirmed their confessions at the stake before death. The news spread rapidly from village to village.

There were riots everywhere and at Avila a Jew was cruelly stoned to death by the angry mob. The Jews of Avila, in terror for their lives, sent an appeal for protection to the King and Queen at Granada. Isabel and Fernando sent them a letter of safe conduct, December 16, 1491, forbidding anyone to harm the Jews or their property, under various penalties, ranging from a fine of 10,000 maravedis to sentence of death.

Torquemada appears to have laid the evidence in the La Guardia case and the sentence of the court before Their Majesties, for two days before they entered the Moorish capital, they issued an edict commending the devout father Fray Tomas de Torquemada, prior of the monastery of Santa Cruz of Segovia, our confessor and of our council and the inquisitors of Alvila, to whom he had delegated certain judicial powers and giving him permission to use the confiscated property of the condemned for the expenses of the Holy Office.

It is believed that when Torquemada went to the Alhambra early in 1492, he urged the King and Queen to go to the heart of the Jewish problem by expelling all the Jews from Spain. The evidence in the La Guardia case had shown how persistently the Jews worked to destroy the influence of Christianity among the Conversos and how the Conversos influenced the Christians among whom they lived. As long as the Jews remained in Spain, the same situation would exist and in the end all the lifework of Isabel and Fernando would be undone.

Whether or not Torquemada actually made this argument we do not know. No proof is available and it is likely that the later legend of his extraordinary influence over the sovereigns was exaggerated. Neither of them needed much encouragement against the Jews. As a matter of fact they had been considering the expulsion of the Jews for several years. In 1482 they had issued an edict expelling the Jews from Andalusia but later, for some reason, had suspended the order.

King Fernando in 1486 had caused all Jews to be expelled from the Archbishopric of Saragossa. A story was prevalent in Spain that this tragic action was the result of a request by the young Prince Don Juan. According to the Libro Verde de Aragon, King Fernando had a Jewish physician, Maestre Ribas Altas, who used to wear about his neck a golden ball hung on a chain of gold. One day when he was called to attend Prince Juan, who was often ill, the Prince opened the ball and found inside a tiny parchment on which was painted the image of the crucified Christ with one of the physician in an unspeakably obscene posture. The little Prince was so shocked and disgusted that he became ill and did not recover until his father promised to expel all the Jews.

Many modern historians scoff at this tale, but the fact remains that the King and Queen did permit their personal physician, Ribas Altas, to be burned at the stake. No one can say with certainty that the physician's execution had anything to do with the expulsion of the Jews. But there is no doubt that, whatever their reasons may have been, both Isabel and Fernando were disposed for several years towards the course they finally took. They were probably waiting for the end of the Moorish War to follow it. The Trial and execution of the Jews and Conversos at Avila and the indignation that followed it, probably forced their decision or at least gave them an occasion for the action they had in mind.

On the last day in March 1492, they issued an edict ordering all Jews to leave their kingdoms on or before July first, taking with them no gold, silver, or minted money. They explained that in spite of the Inquisition, there remains and is apparent the great injury to the Christians, which has resulted and does not result from the participation, conversation and communication which they have held and hold with the Jews, who had 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—which is clear from many utterances and confessions, not only by the Jews themselves, but by those who were perverted and injured by them.

It had been plainly demonstrated, they said, that the crimes and offences of the Jews against the Faith were increasing daily and that nothing would remove the root of trouble but to drive them from the kingdom. Sometimes a college was closed for some serious and detestable crime committed by some of its members and the innocent had to suffer with the guilty. It was even more important 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.

For that reason Isabel and Fernando with the council 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. Only those Jews who were baptized before July first would be permitted to remain. Later the time was extended to August second.

Abraham Senior, chief rabbi of Castile, is said to have offered the sovereign 30,000 ducats to revoke the edict. When they refused, he was baptized, together with his son and took the name of Ferrand Perez Coronel. Most of the Jews however, began selling their goods and preparing to leave. When the King and Queen sent priests to preach the Gospel to them, their rabbis told them it was false and assured them that if they stood firm and left the country, God would perform miracles for them and give them wealth and honour as he had for the people of Israel when they fled from Egypt.

They lived mostly in the larger cities, wrote Bernaldez... and in the most wealthy, prosperous and fertile lands ...and all of them were merchants, venders, lessors and farmers of taxing privileges. They were stewards of manors, cloth shearers, tailors, cobblers, leather dealers, couriers, weavers, spicers, peddlers, 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 cunning people and people who commonly lived on gains and usuries at the expense of the Christians. Many of the poor among them became rich in a short time. They were charitable among themselves, one to another. As the time for their exodus approached, the rich Jews paid the expenses of the poor Jews, so that only a few became Christians and remained. The rest sold their property at a terrible sacrifice.

A Jew would give a house for an ass and a vineyard for a tapestry or a piece of linen. Yet it was said they managed to take with them a large amount of gold and silver. The story became current that they ground gold pieces between their teeth, swallowed and carried them in their bellies. It was believed that one Jewish woman had swallowed 30 ducats. All boys and girls over twelve years of age were married, so that each girl might set out under the protection of her husband. So, putting all their glory

behind 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. 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 Cadiz saw the sea, both men and women shrieked and cried out, praying for God's mercy and thinking they would see some miracles. 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 Fragoza 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.

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. The Jews who reached Africa had most to suffer from the lust and cruelty of the Moors. The Jews paid the King of Fez to protect them, but he took their money and then gave orders to have them robbed. Moslem soldiers violated the Jewish 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 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 straggled back to Spain, convinced that their sufferings were a punishment for their rejection of Christ and

begged to be baptized. Among them were many rabbis. Bernaldez reports that he baptized ten or twelve of them who confessed that their eyes had been opened at last to the truth of the prophecies of Isaias concerning the birth, passion and resurrection of Christ, whom they admitted they truly believe to be the true Messiahs, 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.

About 160,000 Jews appear to have left Spain. There remained, of course, a large number of persons of Jewish descent, possibly as many as three or four millions, who had been baptized as Christians.

Isabel and Fernando felt that they had at last freed their kingdoms from Jewish influence and made possible permanent prosperity. There is no doubt however, in forcing the Jews to be baptized, they violated a fundamental principle of Christianity, on which the Catholic Church had always insisted. They were very angry with Pope Alexander VI, because he received some of the Jewish refugees at Rome.

Some of the Jews had become victims of pestilence on their ship. The Jews of Rome, fearing perhaps that they would catch the disease, offered Pope Alexander a large sum of money if he would forbid them to land. Alexander needed money, but he indignantly refused the offer of the Roman Jews, allowed the Spanish Jews to land and received them with fatherly kindness. For this, although he himself was a Borgia (a Jew) born in Spain, he was contemptuously referred to in his native land as the marrano and the Jew.

## **Chapter XXVI**

Columbus set sail from Palos on the day after the exodus of the Jews. It was Friday, always a lucky day for him and for Spain and he had a favourable wind straight from the east. On the evening before he and his men had confessed their sins to Fray Juan Perez in the chapel of the Franciscan monastery of La Rabida and that morning, the first Friday of the month, they had received Holy Communion and placed themselves under the protection of God.

After the good prior had blessed the ships, the ensigns of the Holy Cross and of the King and Queen were hoisted to the mastheads and at eight o'clock, after the women of Palos had cried their last farewells to their men, the Admiral weighed anchor at the bar of Saltes in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, he began all his undertakings with these words and put out to sea. It was a solemn moment for Columbus and for the whole human race, for he went with the lofty purpose of bringing about the conversion of the whole world to the Catholic Faith. In his journal addressed to the King and Queen, he wrote:

Your Highnesses, as Catholic Christians and Princes, loving the Holy Christian Faith and the spreading of it and enemies of the sect of Mohammed and of all idolatries and heresies, decided to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the said regions of India to see the said Princes and the peoples and lands, to learn of their disposition and of everything and the measures which could be taken for their conversion to our Holy Faith.

He had gotten his ships and crews together with the greatest difficulty. The people of Palos had been antagonistic and Isabel and Fernando were obliged to send them a sharp reminder that Columbus was their officer. The money contributed by the Crown appears to have been insufficient, but Columbus obtained a certain sum from Martin Alonzo Pinzon, the most expert sea captain in Palos, who also helped the Admiral to find sailors for his dangerous expedition. Ninety seamen enlisted, including a converted Jew, who went as physician, an English man and an Irishman from Galway.

The ships were good solid sailing vessels, well adapted for the voyage, but as small as safety would allow, to permit them to enter shallow harbors and coasts along unknown shores. Columbus's flagship, the Maria Galente, which he renamed the Santa Maria in honour of the Blessed Virgin, was about 128 feet long and 26 feet in the beam at the main deck and carried a crew of 52. The Pinto and the Nina were smaller, with a crew eighteen apiece and they were commanded by Pinzon and his brother. While the gallant little fleet sailed west to brave the terrors of an unknown ocean that some people thought full of whirlpools and mythical monsters,

Queen Isabel was at Cordoba, living in seclusion and wearing the deepest mourning for the death of Don Rodrigo Ponce de Leon, Marques-Duke of Cadiz, the outstanding hero of the Moorish War and the idol of all the ladies of Spain. By an odd coincidence, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, his reconciled enemy, followed him to the tomb within a week.

After the funerals the Queen and the court went to Saragossa and thence to spend the winter at Barcelona. Through the long journey over winding roads to the east coast Isabel saw many reminders of the glorious success of her life work. Andalusia was a booming garden, Castile was producing abundant crops of corn and wheat.

Thousands of men driven previously by despair to crime were now earning their living in various industries. The great glass works of Barcelona rivaled those of Venice. Fine woollens from the looms of Castile were exported to all parts of Europe. The silk industries of Sevilla employed as many as 130,000 workmen. The leather trade of Cordoba was flourishing. Granada made velvets too fine to be imitated, Toledo and Valencia wove exquisite carpets. Even the bleak area of treeless deserts were beginning to bloom again under the Queen's orders, for she commanded trees to be planted and commenced a regular program of reforestation which unfortunately, was not followed by her successors.

Freed from the anxieties of war, she now turned to the pursuits that had been so dear to her father and became generous patron of all the arts and sciences. She encouraged the beginnings of botany and zoology. Alonso Cordoba dedicated his astronomical tables to her and under the patronage of Prince Juan's tutor, Bishop Diego de Deza the noted Jewish astrologer Abraham Zacuto, prepared his Almanach Perpetuum, with tables of the sun, moon and stars which Columbus used on his voyages.

Medical studies flourished and the King and Queen established great hospitals at Granada, Salamanca and Santiago. One of Prince Juan's tutors opened up the vast field of archaeology and made a collection of written inscriptions, while Professor Lebrija studied the Roman circuses at Merida. Isabel and Fernando endowed several colleges, the baggiest of which were at Salamanca and Alcala de Henares, where some of the most



noted humanists of the later Renaissance gave lectures. Higher education became so popular that only a generation later, the great scholar Erasmus could write, The Spaniards have attained such eminence in literature, that they not only excite the admiration of the most polished nations of Europe, but likewise serve as their models.

The medieval Spanish, like the Greeks, considered music an essential part of every education and no person was thought educated who was not well trained in singing and in playing the various instruments. Music was considered especially necessary for the kings and princes. By song, wrote the Jesuit historian Mariana, A princes can understand how strong is the influence of laws, how useful order is in life, how suave and sweet is moderation in our desires. The King ought to cultivate music to distract his soul, to temper the violence of his character and to harmonize his affections. In studying music, he will understand that the happiness of a republic consists in the exact proportion and the just accord of the parties.

Isabel applied this principle to the education of Prince Juan. Not only was he trained to sing and to play skilfully on the harp, but he was surrounded by musicians. Isabel had a passion for the art and never went anywhere, even to the battlefield, without taking musicians with her. Garcilaso de la Vega, whom she sent as Ambassador to Rome, was an excellent harpist. One of her subjects, Francisco Penalosa, became one of the most brilliant musicians in the papal choir at Rome where Palestrina, only half a century later, was to lay the foundation of modern music.

Even when Isabel went to a military camp, she took with her the forty trained singers of her choir, besides organists and players on the viol, the lute, the clavecin, the flute and other instruments. Prince Juan at this period was fifteen years old. One of his best tutors was Peter Martyr, a scholar who had come from Italy to serve in the army against the Moors. He was so eloquent that when he gave a lecture on Juvenal at the University of Salamanca in 1488, the pupils bore him on their shoulders in triumph as if he had made a victorious athlete. Under his tutelage Prince Juan made rapid progress. All this time the prince lived in his own house with his ten companions, like a young monarch surrounded by his court. On certain days the Queen sent the lawyers and statesmen of her council to sit with

him while he asked them questions for practice and gravely gave judgment on real and imaginary problems of statecraft.

Isabel's activities in time of peace were almost as exhausting as her heroic efforts during the war. She never allowed her public career to interfere with her duty to her husband and five children. She is said to have made Fernando's shirts and she illuminated manuscripts. She took her spinning wheel to a convent where she heard discipline had grown lax and spent a day toiling there as an example to the nuns. She tried to be a mother to all her subjects. Nothing was too minute for her attention. She issued a decree against the costly and ostentatious funerals for which the Spanish had a weakness, point out that it was inconsistent for them, as Christians, who believe in the immortality of the soul, to waste so much money on the perishable body.

About this time she chose for her confessor a man who was later to be one of the greatest statesmen in Europe. He was Franciscan friar, Ximenes de Cisneros. He was recommended to her by Cardinal Mendoza, when the Queen visited him during his last illness, to console him and to receive his final advice as to the future government of the kingdom he had served so long and so well. As usual his counsel proved to be excellent. Ximenes was a humble, ascetic priest of lowly origin, who had been educated on a free scholarship at Salamanca and had graduated with high honours. At one time he offended Archbishop Carrillo and the impulsive old warrior clapped him into jail and kept him there for six years, but during those six years Ximenes became master of himself.

Isabel now asked the Pope to appoint Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo, to succeed Mendoza. King Fernando objected, for he wanted the post for his own natural son, the Archbishop of Saragossa. But Isabel had her way as usual and Pope Alexander appointed Ximenes.

Ximenes turned pale and fled from Court when the papal bull reached him one Good Friday and it took six months of pleading on the part of the Queen and a second bull of command from Pope Alexander to make him accept the honour. Even after his elevation he continued to wear coarse cotton, to sleep on bare boards and to eat simple convent fare. He would

not have put on the gorgeous robes of his office if Queen Isabel and the Pope had not insisted. However, he still wore a hair shirt next to his skin, under the silk and cloth of gold of his vestments.

Such was the man who guided Queen Isabel's conscience from 1492 until the end of her life. With her aid, he reformed the Church of Spain. It was he who established the University at Alcala. One of his greatest achievements was the assembling of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible, comprising all the known texts of Holy Scripture in various languages. This work took him many years, during which he engaged all the greatest scholars of Europe and ransacked all the libraries. After Isabel's death, he averted a civil war in Spain.

He was Inquisitor General and after Fernando's death he became Regent, ruled with great wisdom, saved the dearly won unity of Spain, led a crusade to Africa at his own expense and finally was repaid by the ingratitude of the young Emperor Charles V, who on his accession summarily discharged the greatest prime minister in Spanish history.

All this time Isabel and Fernando kept several secretaries constantly engaged in correspondence with all the princes of Europe. They sent most of their messages in code and any dispatch of an important character was sent by three different couriers travelling by different routes, so dangerous was travelling at that time. One of the codes sent by Queen Isabel to Dr. Puebla in London during the last year of the Moorish War reads as follows:

Considering the question whether the town of 102 be 90 or 39 90, we are constructing a 188 there in which we intend to have good 97 and all that is necessary of 94 102 or at least to watch her so closely that it shall 39 be necessary to 94 her now.

This decoded meant: Considering the question whether the town of Granada be conquered or not conquered, we are constructing a fortress there (Santa Fe) in which we intend to have good troops and all that is necessary to besiege Granada, or at least to watch her so closely that it shall not be necessary to besiege her now.



## Chapter XXVII

King Fernando was a skilful and crafty statesman. He had to deal with master liars like Louis XI, Henry VII, Ludovico Sforza of Milan and Philip the Fair and he met them with his own weapons. A new and alarming Europe was coming into being. England, under the miserly but sagacious Henry VII, was becoming a power to be reckoned with. In France the sepre had fallen into the dangers hands of young Charles VIII, a weakling of twenty-two, who liked to imagine himself as a Caesar or a Charlemagne.

Charles wished to make a crusade to regain the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, but lacking the generosity of such true crusaders as Richard of the Lion Beart and St. Louis, cherished a selfish plan to seize the kingdom of Naples on the way. He had inherited a rather shadowy claim to it through the house of Anjou. At one time while King Ferrante of Naples had been besieging Rome, Pope Innocent VIII had appealed to Charles for protection.

Pope Innocent's successor, elected in 1492, was the Spanish Cardinal Borgia, who took the title of Pope Alexander VI. An experienced papal statesman and a splendid specimen of manhood in his sixties, the new pontiff inspired general confidence when he promised to be a father to Christendom and to united Europe against the Moslems. Like King Fernando, he wanted to keep Charles VIII out of Italy, fearing that the French would seize control of the whole country and upset the political balance of Europe.

King Fernando saw a chance to get something out of Charles by pretending to favour his plans. He asked the young French King to return Roussillon and Cerdagne, which belonged to Aragon and Charles agreed to do so in the Treaty of Barcelona, signed January 8, 1493. In the same treaty Fernando promised not to oppose Charles in his crusade and to assist him against anybody in the world, except the Pope.

This last chance was inserted by the wily Fernando for excellent reasons, but Charles was completely deceived and resumed his preparations to conquer Italy.

About this time an attempt was made to assassinate King Fernando. Every Friday he used to hold public court where the poor might have justice without cost, without delay and without being victimized by the greed and hypocrisy of lawyers.

Naturally these audiences were popular and Fernando found himself besieged by petitioners from morning to night. One Friday he arose from his judgment seat at twelve o'clock, after having heard evidence since eight and walked down a flight of stairs. As he did so a madman leaped forward and struck him from behind with a cutlass, inflicting a deep wound from the top of the head to the ear and down the neck to the shoulders. A great hubbub arose in the city and Queen Isabel, listening at her palace window, heard the people shout, the King is dead! They have killed the King!

Fernando's condition remained critical for several days and Isabel remained at his bedside day and night. Meanwhile the people of Barcelona promised to make pilgrimages and mortifications if he recovered. Isabel, in her anxiety, wrote to her former confessor, Talavera, now Archbishop of Granada:

Very pious and very reverend Father: Since we see that Kings, like other men, are exposed to mortal accidents, it is a reason why they should be prepared for death. I say this, although I have never doubted it. I have reflected on it for a long time, for grandeur and prosperity made me think of it all the more and fear to reach the end of life without sufficient preparation. But the distance is great from the firm belief to the realization from concrete experience.

Since the King my Lord has seen death near hand, the experience was more real and more lasting than if I myself had been at the point of death. Not even at the moment of leaving the body would my soul endure anything similar. I cannot say or explain what I suffer. Indeed then, before I touch death again, please God it may not be in such a way, I should like to be in other dispositions than those in which I find myself at this moment and particularly as to my debts. Inform yourself of all the cases where it seems to you there can be restitution and satisfaction of the interested

persons and how this may be effected. Send me a memorandum of it. It will be the greatest peace in the world for me to have it and having it and knowing my debts, I shall labor to pay them.

In a later letter she corrects certain details of her first account of the attack on the King.

The wound was so great, as Doctor Guadalupe said, for I could not find the courage to look at it, that it penetrated four inches and was twelve inches long. My heart trembles to speak of it—but God, in his mercy decreed that it should be in a place where the wound would not be mortal for, the nerves and the spine having been left untouched, it soon became evident that there was no danger of death.

Afterwards, the fever and the danger of a haemorrhage alarmed us. The seventh day he was so well that I wrote you and dispatched a courier to you much relieved, although I was nearly mad for lack of sleep. Then after the seventh day he had an access of fever so great that he suffered the greatest anguish he had yet endured. The fever lasted a day and a night of which I will not say what Saint Gregory says in the office for Holy Saturday, but it was a night of hell. So that you may believe Father, that never was the like seen among the people at any time, for officials ceased their work and none paused to speak with another.

All was pilgrimages, processions and almsgiving and more hearings of confessions than even in Holy Week and that without being asked by anyone. In the churches, in the monasteries, night and day, without cease, ten or twelve friars were praying. On can't tell all that happened.

God, in His goodness, wished to have pity on us, for when Herrera left, taking you another letter from me, His Lordship was very well, as I told you. He has continued so, thanks be to God, so that he has got up and goes here and there. Tomorrow, if it please God, he will be able to mount his horse and go about town and visit the house where we are going to live. Great has been our pleasure at seeing him about, as great as our sadness was before. Indeed, he has brought us all back to life! Everyone wept for joy.

I don't know how we shall thank God for so great a grace, many virtues would not suffice to do it. What shall I do, who have none? Please God, henceforth I shall serve Him as I ought. Your prayers and your counsels will aid me in this, as they always have helped me.

After many days Fernando recovered and said that his illness had been a punishment for his sins. The good people of Barcelona were seen going barefoot on the streets in thanksgiving and some went to various churches and shrines on their knees, as they had promised during his illness.

Isabel's keen sense of her own sinfulness seems to have been the result of a very humble and sensitive conscience, for all investigators have agreed that Washington Irving was right in calling her one of the purest and most beautiful characters in the pages of history.

How humbly this autocratic Queen regarded herself as an individual may be judged from one of her letters to Talavera, apologizing for allowing ladies and gentlemen to eat at table together and for permitting bullfights against her better judgment. Yet when the old Archbishop wrote her that he had disturbing reports of the richness of her gown on certain occasions, she defended herself with vigor, saying that her dress was not new.

In fact, the dress was only made of silk and with three bands of gold, as plainly as possible. and she had worn it before in the presence of the same French Ambassadors. The same was true of her ladies. Some of the men's costumes may have been extravagant, she admitted, but it had not been by her orders nor by her example. With all her courage and determination, Isabel was very feminine.

Not long after the King's recovery, two of the most powerful Conversos of the court, Luis de Santangel and Gabriel Sanchez, received letters from Christopher Columbus, who had dropped completely out of sight for eight months, after setting sail from Palos. Just why the Admiral should have written first to these secret Jews, instead of the King and Queen, remains a mystery to this day (Obviously the original author of this document did not know that Christopher Columbus was a Jew, which explains his contacting Jews first before the King and Queen). Perhaps he wrote them

and his letters have been lost. At any rate, he wrote to Sanchez that thirty-three days after his departure, he had arrived in the sea of India and had discovered many islands, the first of which he called San Salvador or Holy Savior.

These islands are of a beautiful appearance and present a great diversity of views. They may be traversed in any part and are adorned with a great variety of exceedingly lofty trees, which, to appearance, never lose their foliage, for I saw them as verdant and flourishing as they exist in Spain in the month of May. Some are covered with flowers, others loaded with fruit, according to their season of bearing—The nightingale and countless other birds were singing, although it was the month of November when I fixated this delightful region.

Columbus reported that the people he had found were naked, timid, peaceful, honest and so generous that they would trade away their cotton and gold like idiots for broken hoofs, platters and glass, if he had not forbidden his men to take advantage of them. He said there were other Indians on an island beyond who were cannibals and he had heard of another island where the people had no hair and possessed large quantities of gold. Finally he promised that he could provide Their Majesties with any quantify of gold, drugs, cotton and other commodities and as many slaves for the service of the marine as they might need.

It still remains a mystery why Columbus should have emphasized the possibility of commercial gain and of a flourishing slave trade in his letters to the two Conversos. Whereas in his dealing with the King and Queen he had fallen in with their lofty purpose of making the whole world Catholic. But men's motives are sometimes mixed and in spite of the fact that **the Jews Had Been Gainers by the Slave Trade in Europe for Centuries**, there is no proof of the modern assertion that Santangel supported Columbus in the expectation of making great profits by the sale of human flesh and that Columbus also was of Jewish origin. In any case, the sincerity of the great discoverer's faith in Christ seems beyond question.

Presently came letters to the court from Portugal, stating that the Admiral had been driven by a storm into the port of Lisbon, where he had been



royally entertained by King Joeo. He was now on his way to Barcelona to report in person to Their Majesties.

## Chapter XXVIII

Columbus entered Barcelona with a burst of splendour in the middle of April. Many young noblemen and merchants came forth from the gates to receive him, as if he had been a Roman victor returning from the wars. The first to enter the city were the six Indians he had brought from the lands of Kubla Khan, painted and be feathered and shivering with cold.

After them walked the sailors of the Admiral's crew, carrying live parrots, stuffed birds and animals from the Indies and weapons and implements of the Indians. Columbus followed on horseback in silken doublet and hose, with a new velvet bonnet and a gorgeous cloak flung over his shoulders the Admiral of the Ocean Seas, making the most of the moment for which he had waited so many years. It was as if his poetic soul already whispered to him that after six months of applause he would be almost a forgotten man.

To show honor to the man who thought he had been to the waters of China and Japan, the King and Queen had their throne placed in public, before the Cathedral, under the canopy of gold brocade and there, with Prince Juan on one side of the and the Cardinal of Spain on the other, they received Columbus and when he knelt to kiss their hands, they raised him as if he were a person of the highest rank and begged him to be seated, a courtesy extended in Castile and Aragon only to princes of the blood.

The wool comber's son with his grave and gracious dignity, told them all he had seen. The substance of his account may still be read in his journal. He had made for the Canaries and then, September 6, after certain repairs, had boldly sailed west.

On the eleventh they saw part of the mast of a ship of about 120 tons floating in the water. On the night of the fifteenth they beheld a remarkable bolt of fire fall into the sea at a distance of four or five leagues. It drizzled the next day, but from then on there was nothing but very pleasant weather.

The morning were most delightful, wrote the Admiral. Nothing was wanting but the melody of the nightingales to make it like Andalusia in April. He encouraged the sailors by pointing to some patches of green weeds and said, The continent we shall find farther ahead. (Note: If Columbus had not known what was west of Spain, then how could he have known that there was a continent further own? It is because he was in possession of maps that had been prepared by Israelites centuries before he made his famous voyage).

But on the seventeenth the sailors were terrified when the Admiral noted, for the first time in history, the magnetic variation of the needle, a whole point from the north. The Admiral invented a very ingenious explanation to quiet the men. He told them the compass was correct but the north star, instead of being stationary, as all had supposed, evidently revolved about the pole like a lantern, what could be more simple?

After that >they were all very cheerful and strove which vessel should out sail the others. They saw tunnies and a live crab. The Admiral said he saw a white bird called a water-wagtail, which does not sleep at sea. On the eighteenth a pelican came aboard. The Admiral said they never went more than twenty leagues form land so there must be islands near. He was then in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

The wind blew so steadily from the east that the sailors began to say that it never blew in any other direction in that ocean, hence they could never return home, but must sail west forever. Fortunately, on the twenty-second the wind changed. The Admiral, seeing the hand of God in everything said, This head wind was very necessary to me, for my crew had grown much alarmed. The next day the sea was so smooth and tranquil that the sailors murmured, saying that they had got into an ocean where no winds blew. But they were presently astonished to see the waves rise without a wind. The Admiral recorded, The rising of the sea was very favourable to me, as it happened formerly to Moses when he led the Israelites from Egypt.

He had differences of opinion with Martin Alonzo Pinzon. At sunset September 25, Pinzon cried that he saw land and the crew of the Pinta

sang the Gloria in excelsis Deo, the other crews joining in. Sailors of that period commonly sang at their work and the Admiral had them all sing every evening the beautiful hymn called the Salve Regina. But, on this occasion the chanting of the ninety voices withered into a disappointed silence when the land turned out to be a cloud.

The Admiral now began to conceal from the crew the true distance they had gone. October first he told them they had sailed only 584 leagues, whereas his own reckoning showed 707. He would lop a few leagues off the reckoning each day. The weather continued fine. Many thanks to God, wrote the Admiral in his log.

On the sixth of October Pinzon urged Columbus to alter the course from west to south-west, where he thought there would be islands. Columbus, who appeared to have found Pinzon very irritating, refused. But on the next day he shifted his course from west to west south west, giving as his reason that the birds were flying toward the south-west and by attending to the flight of birds. If Columbus had continued to follow the inner voice of his own genius instead of Martin Alono and the birds, he would have landed on the North American continent in a few days. As it was, he discovered land on the fourth day. In his journal he says nothing of any mutiny or threats not mutiny by his crew.

On the evening of the eleventh the Admiral saw a moving light ahead. The three crews chanted the Salve Regina with unusual fervor and the next morning they landed on an island which Columbus called San Salvador, Holy Savior. It was on a Friday, Columbus's lucky day.

It is not certain which of the islands of the Lucaya Archipelago is the San Salvador of Columbus. It may have been Watling Island. It may have been Grand Turk, or Turk's Island, which corresponds to Columbus's description of San Salvador as flat, without any lofty eminence, surrounded by a reef of rocks and with a lake in the centre.

Naked savages gazed with wonder and delight as the celestial men landed. Columbus bore the royal standard and each of the Pinzons carried a banner of the Green Cross, containing the initials of the names of the King and

Queen on each side of the cross and over each letter a crown. The Indians swam out to the ships.

As I saw that they were very friendly to us, wrote the Admiral in his journal, and perceived that they could be much more easily converted to our Holy Faith by gentle means than by force, I presented them with some red caps and strings of beads to wear upon the neck and many other trifles of small value, wherewith they were much delighted.

To me, they seemed on the whole, to be a very poor people. They all go completely naked, even the women, though I saw but one girl. All whom I saw were young, not above thirty years of age, well made with fine shapes and faces. Their hair was short and coarse like that of a horse's tail, combed toward the forehead, except a small portion which they suffer to hang down behind and never cut. Some pain themselves with black, some with white and others with red.

When Columbus had finished his narrative, the King and Queen and the Prince and all the court knelt and raised their hands and voices in gratitude to Heaven, while the royal choir sang the Te Deum Laudamus; and then all arose and marched in joyous procession through the city.

Queen Isabel invited the Admiral to dine with the royal family and promised him a new fleet for a second expedition. Prince Juan was especially interested in the Indians and Columbus gave him one for a servant, but the Spanish climate was too much for the savage and he soon died. When the six aborigines were baptized, the King and Queen sponsored them.

For a whole month Columbus was the hero of the court. He was seen riding in the park with King Fernando and the Prince. He was entertained by the Cardinal at supper. His praises were sung in London, Paris, Vienna and especially at Genoa.

The first person that Isabel and Fernando notified was Pope Alexander VI. There was a great rejoicing in Rome for nearly everyone thought that Columbus had reached Asia and that his discovery would result in the

winning over of many souls to Christ. About a year later when a dispute arose between Spain and Portugal over the new discoveries, which the Portugese declared were in waters that belonged to them, Pope Alexander prevented war by drawing an imaginary line through the Atlantic to protect each nation in the right to its discoveries.

All discovered to the west of that line should belong to Spain, since Columbus had sailed west; all to the east should be Portugese since their activity had been along the coast of Africa. Of course Pope Alexander had no idea at the time that the American continent existed. Later, to satisfy Dom Joao, the Pope shifted the arbitrary line 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde Islands and in 1499 the two nations agreed to a treaty, which gave Portugal her later title to Brazil.

By September 1493, Isabel had assembled a second expedition for Columbus, consisting of seventeen ships and about 1,500 men, including soldiers, farmers, artisans, missionary priests, monks and young cavaliers in search of gold and adventure. Since the Indies had no domestic animals or agricultural products useful to civilized men, she had the fleet well stored with all kinds of seeds, wheat, barley, oranges, lemons, bergamots, melons and other fruit and vegetables; and all manner of beasts, cows, bulls, goats, horses, pigs, hens and rabbits. Her genius provided that the whole virgin continent, so rich in soil but poor in products, should become capable of sustaining civilization.

In return for these benefits the New World gave to the Old a root that looked like a carrot and tasted like chestnuts the potato, a truly American product, Irish only by adoption. Luis de Torres, a Christian Jew, who went with Columbus as interpreter, came back imitating the savages in burning certain herbs in a Y-shaped pipe called a tobago. He had seen the Indians perfuming themselves with this pipe by inserting the two hollow tubes of the Y in their nostrils and inhaling the fumes through the nose. De Tores seems to have been the first tobacco smoker in Europe. Columbus was reported to have found some very peculiar animals which looked like large rats, or something between a large rat and a rabbit and are very good and savoury for eating and have feet and paws like rats and climb trees undoubtedly the island, possum.

In October 1493, Columbus set sail a second time for the shores of Cathay. Meanwhile Charles VIII had notified King Fernando that he was commenting his crusade against the Turks and casually mentioned as though it were a fact of no importance, that he would take Naples on the way. He started with an army of 31,000 and plenty of artillery, but as he needed money and cavalry, he reminded Fernando of the Treaty of Barcelona and asked him for aid and for the use of the harbours of Sicily.

Fernando and Isabel now sent an ambassador to congratulate Charles on his zeal for the Faith and to promise him all possible aid against the Turks. But they felt it their duty to point out that the right of conquest in Africa had been reserved to Castile by papal brief; and they could not approve of Charles's design against Naples, because that kingdom was a fief of the Holy See. They had agreed at Barcelona to do nothing against the Pope.

Charles saw that he had been tricked by Fernando and was furious. But, having gone so far with his plans, he resolved to continue without Spanish aid. He crossed the Alps with his army and proceeded to conquer Italy. It was not difficult. Towns everywhere opened their gates to him. The mercenary armies of the Italian states, led by the condottieri, melted away like shadows.

They were really little more than sham armies who used to fight sham battles. It is said that in one battle that raged all day long, only one man was killed, and he was smothered by the weight of his armour. Often the opposing fighters would declare a holiday and play games. Naturally such troops fled without resistance before the well trained French and Swiss army of Charles. The truth was that the Italian States had become over civilized and so softened by ease and luxury, by books and art, that they had forgotten how to fight and had left their defence to mercenaries who cared for nothing but collecting their pay.

Rome was in a panic. While Pope Alexander and the Cardinals took refuge in the castle of San Angelo, the young French King, like a modern Caesar, rode triumphantly into the city at the head of his cavalry.



## Chapter XXIX

Charles had entered Rome with every intention of cause the Pope to be deposed and calling a Church Council which would elect Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere or some other member of the Sacred College, who was believed to be favourable to France. In this he was encouraged by the letters and sermons of Savonarola, the sallow faced Dominican friar with the aquiline nose and piercing fiery eyes who had snubbed Lorenzo the Magnificent and had burned the pagan art treasures of Florence. He was a holy and admirable man but, something of a fanatic, who imagined that Charles was the instrument chosen by God to reform the Church and save Europe.

It seemed likely that French influence, which had cause the papal exile at Avignon and other misfortunes of the Church, might once more gain great power at the expense of the See of Peter. It was expected that Alexander would resign rather than face a hostile council assembled by the French. But when the stately old Spaniard drew up his majestic figure on the crumbling ramparts of San Angelo and calmly defied the young King with the bronze cannon and Swiss infantry and the Italian traitors and cardinals who had joined the cabal of Giuliano, it was Charles who submitted. Charles humbly knelt before Alexander and acknowledged him to be the true Pope.

Meanwhile, the farsighted King Fernando of Aragon was secretly preparing for the game he intended to play with Charles. He sent to Sicily a strong fleet with 300 picked men on board under Gonsalve de Cordoba, the Great Captain whom the Queen recommended for the post. He also sent Garcilaso de la Vega to Rome to assure the Pope of the loyalty and obedience of the Spanish kingdoms to assure the Pope of the Italian States against the invader. Garcilaso went from one Italian prince to another, rebuking some for their weakness and appealing to others on the grounds of Faith, patriotism and self interest.

While Charles was marching to take Naples, the Spanish envoy was carefully preparing an alliance of the Pope, Venice, Milan, the German Emperor and Spain to oppose him. Thus was organized, in many night

conferences, the League of Venice. The Italian States promised to raise a force of 24,000 horse and 20,000 foot to defend the Holy See against Charles. Forty Venetian galleys were to attack the French forts on the Neapolitan coast, Charles's friend, the Duke of Milan, agreed to desert him and cut off his reinforcements from France. King Fernando offered his fleet and army and agreed to invade France.

Charles did not discover the existence of the League against him until he had entered Naples in triumph, clad in robes of scarlet and ermine, with the imperial crown on his head. He was furious to find how he had been tricked by the Spanish sovereigns, but there was nothing to do about it but to hurry home and defend his kingdom against the threatened invasion from Aragon. He fought his way north, with heavy losses and retreated across the Alps.

Meanwhile Gonsalvo de Cordoba had quietly crossed from Sicily to Calabria, which he proceeded to conquer in a brilliant campaign which showed him to be one of the great military leaders of his time. After taking Atella, he marched against Ostia where a French garrison, under a notorious freebooter, had cut off the supplies and destroyed the commerce of Rome and took it by storm.

Gonsalvo de Cordoba then went to Rome and was hailed as its deliverer. Pope Alexander publicly bestowed upon him the Golden Rose. Thus Spain, instead of France, became the dominant political force in Italy and all at very slight expense. In fact when the Great Captain wrote home for supplies of food and clothing for his men. King Fernando replied, let them live off the country. Fernando, with all his faults, had become one of the most powerful Kings of his time. If you consider his actions, said Machiavelli, you will find them always great and extraordinary. He now began to dream of a new empire to be established by conquest and by diplomatic marriages, to be ruled over one day by Prince Juan.

Both Fernando and Isabel were very skilful at playing off England against France. They engaged in a long period of haggling with Henry VII over the forthcoming marriage of their daughter Catalina with his son Prince Arthur of Wales. Finally a treaty was agreed upon in which Henry agreed



to make war on France whenever Fernando did. It was agreed also that Catalina's marriage portion was to be 200,000 scudos, each scudo worth 4s. 2d.; half to be paid at the time of marriage and the rest within two years. The dowry of the Princess was to consist of a third part of the revenues of Wales, Cornwall and Exeter.

When Charles VIII entered Rome, Isabel and Fernando tried to induce him to join the League in defence of the Pope. Henry replied that there was no more zealous Christian in the world and no one more disposed to aid the Holy See as he; but he could not believe the Pope was rally in danger, for he had not told him so. Doctor Puebla wrote them that it was true, no appeal from the pope had reached England and this astonished him, because the authority of the Pope is very great in England and his letter would have produced much effect.

The Princess Isabel, who had married the Portugese Prince Alfonso, had been widowed after six months of marriage and had returned to her parents to lead virtually the life of a noon in the palace. When her husband's brother Dom Manoel, became King of Portugal in 1495, he asked for her hand. But the beautiful widow did not even consider a second marriage at that time, nor did her parents insist. Isabel now began to think of sending the Princess Maria to Portugal.

This proved somewhat embarrassing, because King James of Scotland had made a request for one of the daughters and they were anxious to please him, for they were using him as a club to force Henry, who feared him, into a war with France. Queen Isabel solved the difficulty by writing Doctor Puebla in England that if there were a fifth daughter, they would gladly give her to the King of Scotland. But, since there were only four, she was about to send an ambassador to James, To keep him in suspense as much as he is able.

The chief purpose of the foreign policy of Isabel and Fernando at this time was to isolate France in such a way as to prevent Charles from overrunning Europe. They were anxious to prevent a war between France and Spain in Italy and to achieve this they did all they could to involve France in a war with their brother Henry. Isabel's letters, at this time, are sometimes

nervous and tense and occasionally illustrate the judgment of her secretary that Ashe was naturally truthful and desired to keep her word, though it happened in those times and in certain persons and by the great events of the times, that she was made to swerve from it sometimes.

Isabel was not forty-five years old, a difficult age and her letters sometimes show a trace of hysteria. Yet, the frankness and fearlessness of the young Isabel are often apparent. There is a pulsating vigor, characteristically hers, that is missing from the joint correspondence signed Ferdinandus et Isabella. In the letters that she herself wrote, there is a freshness of epithet, and aptness of metaphor and simile. In short, much of the charm, the power and the individuality of a woman of genius.

In her anxiety lest Puebla, whom she began to suspect, should be more devoted to Henry's interests than to hers, she flattered him, in one letter addressing him as my counsellor and ambassador, and in another, Virtuous and intimate friend. She wrote Henry that he would be doing King Charles a service if he declared war on him. If the King of France will continue to carry things with a high hand, putting reason entirely out of sight, then it would be of a certainty be doing him a good office to prevent him from further following the road to ruin which he is taking.

In order to do this, there does not appear to us a better course to take than for the King of England to make war upon him. Isabel goes on to argue that in this event Charles would give up his plan, make terms, and thus restore peace to Christendom without prejudice to anyone, in addition to which it would greatly benefit the said King of England, our cousin. By making war, she adds, Henry will put the finishing stroke to a thing of immense and universal good. At one time she actually made the ridiculous promise that if Henry would make war upon France she would arrange with the Pope to give him a bull of crusade and let him keep a third or half of whatever he might conquer.

To strengthen their hand against France, Isabel and Fernando had long planned the marriage of their second daughter Juana, to the Archduke Philip the Fair, so of the Emperor Maximilian and that of Prince Juan to the Archduchess Margot. The time now came for these marriages and

Queen Isabel went to the north coast to see the departure of her second daughter. Juana was then sixteen, slim and dark and so closely resembling her grandmother Juana Enriquez that the Queen used to address her teasingly as suegra, mother-in-law. In temperament however, Juana was more like her maternal grandmother at Arevalo. She was moody, melancholy, given to fits of sullenness and inexplicable depression. Of the four daughters she alone laced physical charm and she was jealous of the others. She resented her mother's discipline and sometimes showed a great impatience with religious instruction and observance. Such was the unfortunate girl who was sent to Flanders as the bride of a careless, sensual and pleasure loving boy.

She showed no emotion or regret at leaving her mother. She seemed more interested in the weather and the ship, both of which she detested. She was hardly to be blamed, for the weather was foul and even under the fairest skies, a voyage was bound to be dangerous and uncomfortable in a four masted vessel with a double tower stern, wide bow and narrow poop, all rolling like a cork in the heavy wind.

The sky was cloudy and the sea rough when she set sail. The Queen watched her go with a heavy heart full of misgivings. She had no news of her daughter for several months, during which reports of wrecks washed up on the Biscayan coasts kept her in a continual state of fear and remorse. At last Isabel heard that the fleet she had sent with Juana had been scattered in a storm and had stopped at Flanders for repairs, but had finally reached Flanders.

This news came indirectly, not from Juana, for she did not answer her mother's letters. Phillip was hunting in Luxembourg when she arrived and did not take the trouble to meet her for a month. She fell in love with him at once but he cared nothing for her.

The fleet that took Juana to her fate brought back a charming Princess to be the bride of Prince Juan. Margot had been sent to Paris at the age of four to be affianced to Charles VIII and had been brought up carefully by Charles's Regent, Anne de Beaujeu and very well educated. But Charles had jilted her at his sister's command, to marry Anne of Brittany and

thereby unite that province to France. When Margo left the French court, the people cheered her, for she was very popular there. She was charming, intelligent and attractive. Queen Isabel hoped that she would make an ideal wife for the delicate and sensitive boy with blond hair whom she called my angel.

## Chapter XXX

Columbus had returned from his second voyage while the Queen was at Almazan, waiting for Juana to sail, and she sent him a summons to come to court, for she had been receiving some very disquieting reports about him. A few weeks later he appeared before her at Laredo, shockingly changed.

During his thirty months of absence his beard had grown, his face had become aged and lined in sickness and care. Instead of the gay attire in which he had last appeared, he had returned to the brown habit of the Third Order of Saint Francis, so that on the whole he would have looked more like a hermit than an admiral of Castile, but for that touch of gloomy majesty that never forsook him. He came to court where he had many enemies and backbiters and few staunch friends save the Queen, the young Prince Juan and the royal nurse.

After a voyage of five weeks he had arrived at Antilles, November 3, 1493. When the crews went ashore at one of the islands, which the Admiral called Guadalupe, they found a very filthy village containing evidence that the idyllic picture Columbus had painted of the Indians after his first voyage was not quite accurate.

In several hamlets they found human limbs hung from rafters of the huts, as if curing for meat. They found the head of a young man recently killed, still bleeding and some parts of his body roasting before the fire. Others were being boiled with the flesh of geese and parrots.

When Columbus reached Espanola (Hayti), he found no trace of the garrison of thirty-nine men whom he had left there to defend the fortress

of La Navidad. Indians had evidently burned the fort to the ground and killed all its inmates. Columbus landed and commenced building the first Christian town in the New World, which he named Isabella after the Queen. On the feast of the Epiphany 1494, the first High Mass in America was solemnly offered up. The news was received in Europe with rejoicing.

Columbus now made his search for gold, but in vain. He explored Cuba, which he called Juana and which he was positive was the mainland of Asia. He explored the coast of Jamaica and then returned to Cuba to look for a channel through the continent so that he might circumnavigate the globe and return to Spain by way of Jerusalem.

Many complaints had reached the Queen that Columbus, with all his vision and greatness of soul, was from being an ideal administrator. He was sometimes too severe or sometimes too lenient. He could be impatient and overbearing. He had the faults of his virtues and sooner or later he appears to have quarrelled with most of the people who had close relations with him. He so exasperated a devout priest, Fray Bernard Buyl, that the latter, with Captain Pedro Margarite, fled to Spain to appeal to the King and Queen, from what they described as the tyranny of Columbus and his brother. Columbus was working, of course, under great difficulties.

The site of his town proved unhealthy and he was prostrated by illness for several months. Many of the adventurers who had gone with him wanted to find gold without labour or discomfort and were angry when Columbus made them work. The most difficult thing in his career for his friends to explain, is his attitude towards slavery. Catholics had always held the traffic in abhorrence and the Church had discouraged it wherever her influence was sufficient. Columbus's attitude, it was admitted, was hardly Christian.

Early in 1494 Columbus wrote the King and Queen suggesting that some of the cannibals of the Caribbean be sent to Spain as slaves. He argued that it would be doing them a service to wean them from their taste for human flesh and to teach them the tenets of the true Faith. Isabel put him off by writing that she would answer his proposal later. In 1494 he sent four shiploads of slaves to Sevilla, to be sold in slave markets. The King

and Queen authorized their sale, believing them to be male prisoners of war. Columbus had sent them news of a battle in which his 300 men at arms aided by blood hounds, had vanquished 100,000 Indians. Five days later the Queen, troubled in her conscience, issued an order forbidding the sale of the slaves. When she learned that the poor wretches were not prisoners of war, but five hundred souls, men, women and children, ranging from twelve years to thirty-five, she was highly indignant. Isabel commanded them all to be freed and sent back to their homes in the New World. Unhappily all of them died from the effect of the cold climate before the monarch's command could be carried out.

How Columbus justified his action to the Queen, history has not recorded. Bernalez says that he seized the Indians in retaliation for the burning of his fort and the murder of the garrison. But the sending of the slaves seems to have been the turning point in his life and from then on misfortunes closed in about him like dogs on the trail for a wounded lion.

Yet in all his adventures he remains a man of will, a heroic man. Columbus was vain and capable of self-deception and like all vain men had a passion for self justification. But under the influence of suffering he became a strong, unselfish man, who learned to live a life of ascetic self control even among dissolute men in a strange world. He subordinated his own ambition to a desire to gain money and to spend it only for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.

His voyage back to Spain in 1496 was a hideous one, lasting four months. Food and water ran short and it was a crew of emaciated, half starved, fever stricken wretches that crawled from the caravels at Cadiz. Last of all, in his brown habit, came the Admiral. His popularity was gone, everyone was calling him a humbug. Yet Isabel still saw in him a great man and she announced that whatever happened she intended to send him on a third expedition.

She was now at Burges, waiting for the Princess Margot, then on the high seas. Columbus predicted that Margo would arrive at Santander and he proved to be right. She arrived a few days later and came ashore to the sound of music and the shouts of the people.

She was now at Burges, waiting for the Princess Margot, then on the high seas. Columbus predicted that Margot would arrive at Santander and he proved to be right. She arrived a few days later and came ashore to the sound of music and the shouts of the people.

She had a piquant French charm and was witty and joyous. Her blond hair was long enough, if undone, to fall to her feet. Riding to Burgos between the King and the Prince, she gave an amusing account of her voyage and of the storm that had driven her ship into Southampton. In the worst of the tempest, when the sailors expected the ship to founder, Margot had written her own epitaph in verse and sewed it on her wrist band as a mark of identification in case her body was washed ashore.

Ci-git Margot, la gentil damoiselle,  
Qu'eut deux maris, et si, mourut pucelle.

(The gentle damsel Margo here lies dead,  
Sh had two husbands and so died unwed. )

The Queen was delighted with her and all Spain joined in the rejoicing of the royal family. The marriage was celebrated almost immediately on Palm Sunday by Archbishop Ximenes. Isabel and Fernando overwhelmed Margot with their generosity. The Queen even gave the Aragonese necklace that Fernando had given her and her balas ruby necklace, which she had redeemed from the money lenders. After the usual tournaments, feasts and processions, Juan and Margot rode in triumph through the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, feted everywhere, symbols of eternal youth and love.

To her mother's delight the Princess Isabel now agreed to marry Dom Manoel of Portugal, on condition that he would drive all the Jews out of his kingdom. Manoel hesitated, for the Portuguese Jews were rich, influential and rendered distinguished services to the crown. Nevertheless he was not sorry to have an excuse to rid himself of subjects who were rapidly taking into their hands all the new foreign trade and wealth that Portugal had gained through her discoveries. He expelled the Jews and the Princess went to Portugal a second time as a bride. After her departure,

Queen Isabel was compelled to take to her bed, for the strain of the festivities in honour of the Princess had been too much for her. Isabel's tremendous energies, long overtaxed, were beginning to wear down at last. Next day came a courier from Salamanca with bad news. Prince Juan had developed a high fever after the feats in his honour at Salamanca and the physicians sent word that his condition was alarming.

The King mounted a horse and posted to Salamanca, more than a hundred miles away, while Isabel remained in an agony of suspense. When Fernando reached his son's bedside, the physicians had given up hope and the Prince was reconciled to the prospect of death. He bade his father and mother to be of good cheer and submit to the will of God. He himself had known nothing but happiness and blessings in his short life, he said, and he would die without regret.

He told his father that Margot had conceived and he commended her and the unborn infant to the kindness of his parents and his own soul to God. Fray Tomas of Torquemada, the Inquisitor-General, who had hastened to Salamanca at the King's summons, heard the dying boy's confession and gave him Holy Communion and Extreme Unction.

The King, according to Bernaldez, comforted the Prince much when the last hour approached, saying, Fijo mucho amado, have patience since God calls you, who is a great King than any other and has other kingdoms and seigniories greater and better than any we might hold or might hope to give you and they will last you forever.

Therefore be of good heart to receive death, which comes only once inevitably to all, with hope to be immortal henceforth and to live in glory. thus he spoke and when the Prince had signed his last, closed the boy's eyes and wondered perhaps, why death, that had spared him in so many perilous battles, should strike down a happy youth on the threshold of life. The Prince died October 3, 1497, and thus was laid low the hope of all Spain. sadly wrote Peter Martyr, his tutor. The King had sent courier after courier to Alcantara, reporting every slight symptom that might be interpreted favourable and keeping up the Queen's hopes until the last,



perhaps in the belief that a miracle might yet happen. Now, as soon as the body of Juan was laid in state in the Cathedral of Salamanca, amid the lamentations of the university students and townspeople, he chose to be the first to break the tidings to the Queen. Isabel gave a cry of relief, for she imagined his coming signified that the Prince was out of danger. The King's face however, disillusioned her before he spoke. Tell me the truth, Senor! she demanded. He is with God, replied Fernando.

The great Queen stood pale and shaken. This was the first knife of sorrow, said Bernaldez, that pierced her heart. Then she bowed her head and said: God gave him and god has taken him away. Blessed be His holy name!

The King and Queen shut themselves up with their grief for several days while the church bells, all over Spain, tolled for the Prince and people everywhere put on mourning, draped the walls and gates of every city in black and suspended all public and private business for several days.

When at last the sovereigns emerged from their retirement, they faced the world with such fortitude that all marvelled at their self control. Peter Martyr wrote, The sovereigns force themselves to hide their grief and they succeed. As we watch them, crushed by the weakness of our souls, the look calmly, eye to eye, at those about them. Where do they get such a power to hide their feelings? It seems as if, clothed as men, they were not beings of human flesh and that their nature, harder than diamond, did not feel their loss.

But, under serene exterior of Queen Isabel there was a fatal wound. The world would never be to her as it had been, for she had learned at last the meaning of the word impossible.

## **Chapter XXXI**

The world was never the same to Queen Isabel after Don Juan was laid in his beautiful tomb at Avila and the seven remaining years of her life were years of illness, anxiety, prayer and mortification. Death had removed many of her old fiends and servants. Cardinal Mendoza, whose contribution to her greatness can hardly be over estimated, was gone.

Torquemada died in 1498 at the age of seventy-five and many venerated him as a saint, because a sweet and agreeable odour came from his tomb.

Charles VIII had died after a short and dissolute life, as the result of bumping his head on a low doorway. A few days later, in April 1498, Savonarola was hanged in Florence. King Fernando may have regretted the loss of Mendoza and Torquemada, but he probably shed no tears over Charles or the eloquent Dominican of Florence, who had invited the French King into Italy. It may be inferred that in this respect he was not far out of sympathy with Pope Alexander VI.

Savonarola, a powerful preacher, had made himself virtual dictator of Florence, where he had preached with increasing violence against the Medici and the Pope. Alexander, who had been heartbroken by the mysterious murder of his favorite son, the Duke of Fandia the year before, had paid no attention to personal attacks of the more slanderous nature, until Savonarola invited Charles to make a second descent into Italy. The Pope then forbade him to preach.

But the prior of San Marco defied the command and preached more violently than ever. The Pope therefore excommunicated him. Savonarola then declared from the pulpit that all who persecuted him were enemies of Christ. Early in 1498 he wrote to the Emperor and to the Kings of France, Spain, England and Hungary that the hour of vengeance has arrived. God desires me to reveal His secret counsels and to announce to all the world the dangers to which the barque of Peter is exposed in consequence of your slackness—I assure you, in verbo Domini, that this Alexander is no Pope at all and should not be accounted such. He went so far as to say that the Pope had bought his way into the Chair of St. Peter and did not even believe in the existence of God.

This seems to have been false, for Alexander, with all his faults, had faith and manifested an especial devotion to the Blessed Virgin. His political enemies had accused him of obtaining his election by simony, or the use of money, but there is no proof of the assertion. On the contrary, he was unanimously elected after having served for several years as an able and efficient Papal Chancellor. He made vigorous efforts to unite Europe

against the Turks, who had been ravaging Poland and even the mainland of Venice.

The previous year he had appointed a committee to draw up a program for the reform of the Church. One of his greatest faults seems to have been that in his ardent affection for his own family he often placed their interests before those of the Church, or at least furnished ground for the jealousy of spiteful prince lings who were his enemies or the enemies of the Church. He had been severely criticized for making Cesare Borgia commander of the papal troops and conqueror of a large part of Italy.

But in this respect, Alexander and Cesare were only carrying on the work of unification and centralization of power that was going on everywhere in Europe. A period of something like anarchy was being followed by an epoch of strong kings who repressed the selfish nobility, who had been preying upon the people and warring among themselves and gathered all authority into their own hands.

Louis XI had done this in France, Henry VII was doing it in England, Fernando and Isabel had found it necessary for the reconstruction of Spain and Alexander and Cesare were attempting something quite similar in Italy. Naturally the robber barons and petty kings, whom Cesare, with his very considerable genius, had shorn of their power, had another point of view and nothing was too vile for them to say about the Pope, Cesare and Lucretia, who so far as history has left any trust worthy records, was one of the most lovable and virtuous women of her time.

Savonarola evidently believed all that the Pope's enemies in Florence were saying about him and he continued to thunder against him and his family. But the Florentines turned against him on finding that many of his prophecies were false and after a trial of heresy and sedition, with cruel torture by the strappado, he was hanged with two other friars in April 1498. It is a mistake to consider Savonarola as the forerunner of Luther. He was convinced that the Catholic Church was the one true Church established by Christ and he lived and died in obedience to her teachings even though he disputed the title of the then reigning Pope. Many Catholics, including St. Philip Neri, have venerated him as a saint.

The new French King, Louis XII, announced his intention to lead a new crusade against the Turks and the Pope was now led by various circumstances into friendly relations with him. Cesare, who had been made a cardinal, but had never been a priest, wished to give up the red robe to marry some princess and become a great secular lord and King Louis, possibly in gratitude for the annulment of his marriage to the lame Princess Jeanne, who was later canonized as Saint Jeanne Valentino is.

Fernando and Isabel, who wished to keep the French out of Italy, were disgusted with Alexander's new French policy and together with Portugal they attempted to frighten him with threats of a General the Spanish chronicler Zurita who wrote later, when prejudice against Alexander had become very strong, Informed him that he was not the rightful Pope. The aged Pope replied that he had been elected, without a dissenting voice, that he held his title justly, whereas Fernando and Isabel were usurpers, who had seized the power in Spain that rightfully belonged to Juana, La Beltraneja.

Alexander evidently defended himself vigorously and accused Garcilaso de la Vega to his face, of having circulated false reports about him. He declared that the death of Prince Juan, which left Fernando and Isabel without direct successors , was a punishment from God for their encroachments upon the rights of the Church.

It is true that a strange fatality seems to have followed the children of the Spanish monarchs, whatever the cause may have been. Margot had been with child when Don Juan died, but the baby was born dead and the young Princess finally returned to her father's court. The succession to the throne of Castile now devolved upon the young Queen of Portugal. She bore a son in the summer of 1498, but died an hour later. The child, whose name was Michael, was now the centre of all Queen Isabel's hopes and affections. She dreamed that one day he would rule all Spain and Portugal. But alas for the hopes of the Queen, within two years he had followed his mother to her beautiful tomb at Toledo.

The first knife of grief that passed through the soul of the Queen Dona Isabel, wrote Bernaldez, Awas the death of the Prince, the second was

the death of Dona Isabel, her eldest daughter, the third was the death of Don Miguel, her grandson, with whom she had consoled herself. From that time, the Queen Dona Isabel, so illustrious and virtuous and so necessary to Castile, lived without pleasure and cut short her health and her life.

Maria, most fortunate of all Queen Isabel's daughters, lived to be thirty-five. In 1500 she married the King of Portugal and bore him six sons and two daughters. Poor Juana was very unhappy in Flanders and a constant source of anxiety to her mother. She was wildly jealous of her husband. Philip gave her no money and the Spaniards who had gone to Flanders with her were living in poverty. On the feast of Saint Matthias in 1500 she became the mother of a boy named Charles, who was destined to inherit through her, a vast empire. This included all Spain, Naples, Sicily, Germany, Austria and Flanders, as the Emperor Charles V, and then, at the height of his power, to relinquish it all and enter a monastery.

Of all the children there now remained with Queen Isabel only the youngest, Catalina, but the beginning of her long martyrdom was at hand. On Whit-Sunday, 1499, she was married by proxy to Prince Arthur of Wales. However, Queen Isabel deferred sending her to England as long as she could, because the Princess was only thirteen and she distrusted the miserly Henry, of whom her ambassador wrote, If gold coin once enters into his strong boxes, it never comes out again. He always pays in depreciated coin—All his servants are like him, they have quite a wonderful dexterity in getting other people's money.

While the two courts were haggling over the Princess's going, her money Jewels, her reception and her status in England, the affairs of Columbus were giving renewed uneasiness to the King and Queen. He had begun his third voyage by knocking down one Ximenes de Breviasca, a Converso employed by the Indian office, who had irritated him beyond further endurance and kicking him about the dock at Cadiz.

The Admiral discovered Trinidad and on the following day August 1, 1498, he saw the American continent from his deck and named it Holy Island, thinking it naturally to be another island. His crew went ashore,

but he himself was prevented by illness from doing so. He discovered Venezuela, which he called Garcia. When he reached Hispaniola, he found the colonists in rebellion against his brother, whom he had left in charge. As both Columbus and his enemies sent their conflicting reports to Spain, Fernando and Isabel sent Francisco de Bobadilla, who had been an officer in the Moorish War, to investigate and to place under arrest any disturbers of the peace.

Bobadilla seems to have concluded, perhaps somewhat hastily, that the Admiral's incapacity as an administrator was the cause of the trouble, for he arrested him, had him taken aboard ship in chains and sent him to Spain. When the ship captain offered to take off his chains, Columbus insisted on wearing them and thus in November 1500, he landed in Cadiz, crippled by gout, white-haired, painfully aged by exposure and suffering.

But under all circumstances, right or wrong, sick or well, rich or poor, he preserved a certain sublimity of bearing and a grandeur of phrase that leave him always, despite all that has been or can be said against him, a great figure and a heroic man. If Columbus had been a thief, he would have taken purses with a lordly air. If he had been a beggar, he would have held out his hand with the gesture of an emperor.

On shipboard he wrote to Prince Juan's old nurse, who had always been his friend, a letter burning with indignation:

God is just and He will in due time, make known by whom and why it has all been done. Let them not judge me as a governor who had been sent to some province or city under regular government, where the laws could be executed without fear of danger to the public weal or subjection to any enormous wrong. I ought to be judged as a captain sent from Spain to the Indies to conquer a nation numerous and warlike with customs and religion altogether different to ours.

A people who dwell altogether different to ours. A people who dwell in the mountains, without regular habitations for themselves or for us. Where, by the divine will, I have subdued another world to the dominion of the King and Queen, our sovereigns, in consequence of which Spain, what

used to be called poor, is now the most wealthy of kingdoms. I ought to be judged as a captain who for many years had borne arms, never quitting them for an instant. I ought to be judged by cavaliers who have themselves won the need of victory, by knights of the sword and not of title-deeds.

When the Admiral walked through the streets of Cadiz in chains, a murmur of pity and indignation swept through the town and thence through all Spain. When he appeared in the presence of the King and Queen at Granada, public sympathy had turned the tide in his favour and he was received with kindness, publicly vindicated and allowed to retain all his titles and privileges. Nevertheless a new governor named Ovando was sent to Hispaniola in his place. Bobadilla appears to have remained at Court and to have been much honored.

It is possible that Columbus was a little insane at this period, for he published a book of prophecies in which he predicted the end of the world in 155 years. Nevertheless, the Queen agreed to send him on a fourth voyage, if he would keep away from Hispaniola, He went and once more failed gloriously. Shipwrecked for eight months among hostile Indians on the island of Jamaica, sick, betrayed, denied entrance to the port he had discovered, he still kept his unconquerable spirit and one cannot read this letters without feeling sympathy and admiration.

## **Chapter XXXII**

While Queen Isabel was reading the letters of Columbus among the gardens of the Alhambra, King Fernando was making every effort to keep Louis XII out of Italy. But Louis sent an army over the Alps, under Trivulzio, in the summer of 1499 and made himself virtually master of northern Italy. Nothing remained but to march on Naples.

Yet, remembering the unfortunate experience of Charles, he hesitated to do so without making sure that the Spanish would not invade France. His fear drove him into making a fool's bargain with King Fernando. By a secret treaty of November 11, 1500, they agreed to divide the kingdom of Naples between them, deposing Fernando's cousin, King Federigo of

Naples, because he had betrayed Christendom by inviting the Turks into Italy to help him against Louis. Meanwhile Fernando had already sent Gonsalvo de Cordoba very quietly to Sicily with 70 ships, 7000 cavalry and 5,000 of the crack Spanish infantry, to be ready to deal with Louis's army when the time came.

Gonsalvo answered the Holy Father's appeal by joining the Venetian fleet. They proceeded against Cephalonia, which they recaptured from the Turks after a siege of fifty days.

Pope Alexander, in gratitude, gave King Fernando the title Defender of the Faith. Gonsalvo, whose victory had saved Venice and perhaps all Europe, was received everywhere with applause and princely gifts, which he distributed among his troops with his usual magnificence and he proceeded to Naples to take possession of his master's half of it.

Up to this point King Fernando could claim that he had been actuated chiefly by zeal for the Church, but from then on his devotion to his own interest became more apparent. Gonsalvo probably on his master's instructions, soon quarrelled with the French and then proceeded to drive them out of Naples in one of the most brilliant campaigns in the history of warfare. Thanks to King Fernando's statecraft and the Great Captain's military genius Spain, instead of France, was the dominant power in Italy.

Queen Isabel was greatly interested at this time in the attempts to convert Moors of Granada to Christianity, for she feared that so long as they remained Mohammedan there would be danger of their conspiring with the Moslems of Africa to disrupt the dearly won unity of Spain.

Her old confessor Talavera, had been making great progress among the Moors as Archbishop, for his boundless charity and the purity and nobility of his life, appealed to the Mohammedans so powerfully that many of them voluntarily became Christians. But when Ximenes de Cisneros, Archbishop of Toledo, went to Grenada to assist Talavera in 1499, he was not content with the slow and sure gains of the latter, but decided upon more energetic measures. He began inviting the leaders of the Moors to his palace to discuss religion with him and many of them were so



impressed by his arguments that they became Christians. On one day he baptized 4,000 Moors.

The result was that the more bitter enemies of Christianity among the Moors stirred up a rebellion which spread through many towns. Ximenes retaliated with characteristic vigor by having the ringleaders arrested. In his exasperation he commanded the prisoners to receive instruction in the Christian religion from the chaplains and when some of the refused, punished them severely.

He caused several thousand copies of the Koran and other Mohammedan books to be burned on the public square and he compelled the descendants of renegades to be baptized, even against the wishes of their parents. Thus by his indiscreet zeal and bigotry, the capable Ximenes betrayed the time honoured principle of the Church that no one must be forced to become a Christian.

The result was what might have been expected, the Moors of Granada took arms against the Christians and besieged them for nine days and nights. It began to appear as though all the Christians would be butchered, when the saintly Archbishop Talavera, attended by a single chaplain carrying a cross before him, went forth on foot to face the howling mob of Mohammedans. He raised his hand for silence and spoke to them in Arabic. So great was their affection for him and the power of his sanctity, that the Moors nearest to him fell upon their knees and kissed the hem of his robe. Through his good office, peace was once again restored. Yet the Inquisition later dared to attack this holy man, merely because his parents had been Jews.

King Fernando, who had never liked Ximenes, was mightily enraged against him. Ah! he cried to the Queen. Does it not appear to you, Senora, that your Archbishop in a single hour has placed in jeopardy all that the Kings our ancestor and we ourselves have won in so long a time and with so great a cost in toil and bloodshed? Isabel sent to Ximenes for an explanation. He hurried to Sevilla and he was so successful in defending his course, probably on the ground that without it the Moors might conquer Spain a second time, that the sovereigns followed his suggestion of giving

the Moors their choice between persecution for high treason and baptism. Nearly all the Moors in Granada chose to be baptized. In the following year however, a new revolt broke out in the Alpujarras, the mountains running south-west from Granada and many of the friars sent to preach to the people were murdered. Moorish women and boys stoned to death two priests who had been tied to trees with matted grass. Mohammedans sailed by night from Africa, ten miles across the straits, to burn the Christian hamlets near the sea and slay the people.

King Fernando placed himself at the head of an army and marched swiftly into the Moorish territory. When the Moors asked for terms of peace, he gave them their choice between exile to Africa and baptism. Most of them chose to become Christians.

Thus came into existence that class of unwilling Christians known as the Moriscos, of whom half a million were finally expelled under Philip III in 1609. Their going was a serious economic loss to Spain, for they were excellent farmers who understood the importance of irrigation. But for a whole century after the death of Queen Isabel her kingdoms were to enjoy the height of their prosperity.

The later decline of Spain was due more to the discoveries of Christopher Columbus, than to the exodus of either Jews or Moors. Spain exhausted herself in the stupendous effort to colonize and civilize the New World. In the seventeenth century the secret Jews of Holland, Italy and England, descendants of those punished by the Inquisition or expelled from the country, used their great power to divert trade from Spain to those countries and to obtain information about Spanish naval activities from the Conversos in Spain, for the benefit of England especially. Even in Cromwell's time Jews who pretended to be Spanish Catholics gave the English government information about Spanish military and commercial secrets.



## Chapter XXXIII

The Princess Catalina finally left Granada May 21, 1501, on her long journey to England. She had five hundred miles to travel to Coruna, the port of embarkation, in the extreme north-west. She took with her 150 attendants, including Dona Elvira Manuel, first lady of the bedchamber, for Henry had asked that only beautiful ones be brought. The group also included a major-domo, a master of ceremonies, a chief-cup-bearer and trenchant, a confessor, two chaplains and an almoner. Pages and equerries, gentlemen in waiting, a cook, a purser, a baker, a sweeper and others of high and low degree. Henry had asked to have the number restricted, since he, Adid not propose to starve them, as the Archdue Philip had starved the Spaniards in Flanders. King Fernando and Queen Isabel did not accompany the Princess, that she might travel faster. Besides, the Queen was too ill to ride.

Catalina found the heat so intense that she had to stop frequently and took two months for the journey. She reached Guadalupe July 5, and arrived at Coruna July 20. Illness and bad weather caused further delays, so that she did not set sail until August. A furious storm nearly confounded the armada, causing it to return to the Spanish coast and seek refuge in the port of Laredo. Embarking a second time September 27, the ships had gotten as far as Ushant when they were over taken by a vendabal (south wind) with thunderstorms. During all the rest of the voyage they had thunderstorms every four or five hours. It was October 2 when the tired and miserable little Princess landed in the harbour of Portsmouth.

The Prince and Princess were married November 14, 1501, at the altar of Stain Paul's Cathedral in London, before an immense concourse. Catalina was fifteen years old, her husband sixteen. The news was a relief to Queen Isabel, for until the very last moment she had not been certain that Henry would not make some new arrangement with another power and send Catalina home, as Margot had been sent home from Paris. But Henry wrote that he much admired the beauty of Catalina and her agreeable and dignified manners. The union between the tow royal families and the two kingdoms is now so complete, he wrote, that is impossible to make any distinction between the interests of England and Spain.

Prince Arthur informed his wife's parents that he had never felt so much joy in his life as when he beheld the sweet face of his bride. Within six months the Prince was dead and Fernando and Isabel, alarmed by the reports of Henry's indifference to the comfort of their daughter, were sending frantic requests to the English court for her immediate return to Spain. They demanded from Henry the 100,000 scudos which had been paid as the first instalment of the marriage portion of the Princess.

They demanded that the towns and lands assigned to her as her dowry be delivered and they begged their brother to send her to Spain in the best manner and in the shortest time possible. At the same time they authorized the Duke of Estrada, their ambassador, to conclude a second marriage between Catalina and Henry, Prince of Wales, since the young widow declared that her marriage with Arthur had never been consummated. She was only at the beginning of the years of suffering which were to end with her divorce to Henry VIII and the final shattering of that Christian European unity to which Fernando and Isabel had devoted their lives and the lives of their children. Isabel wrote Puebla that the death of Prince Arthur had revived the affliction caused by her former losses, But the will of God must be obeyed.

Two weeks later in May 1502, the Spanish sovereigns wrote a most urgent letter to Puebla. They said they expected confidently that Henry would at once fulfil his obligations toward their daughter. They had been told that Catalina had been advised to borrow money, because the King of England would not provide for her.

If she were really to do that, it would reflect great dishonour upon Henry. Such a thing is unheard of. When the Queen of Portugal their daughter became a widow, she received all she wanted from the new King of Portugal and they had never to send her a farthing. When the Princess Margot was widowed in Spain, they provided for all her wants, as though she had been their own daughter.

Neither her father nor her brother Philip had sent her the smallest sum of money. If they had done so, Fernando and Isabel would have considered it an insult and would not have accepted it. In June they wrote that some

persons had advised the Princess of Wales not to accept what the King of England had offered her (Presumably because it was so small). The advice is bad. She must accept all she can get.

Queen Elizabeth of England had been kind to Catalina and after Arthur's death had sent a black litter borne between two horses to fetch her to Croydon Palace, but Elizabeth died in childbirth the following winter. The very letter of Doctor de Puebla that notified the Spanish Court of her death intimated that King Henry was not disinclined to marry the Princess of Wales. Queen Isabel wrote the Duke of Estrada her opinion of this, April 11, 1503:

The Doctor has written us concerning the marriage of the King of England with the Princess of Wales, our daughter, saying that it is spoken of in England. But as this would be an evil thing, one never before seen and the mere mention of which offends the ears, we would not for anything in the world that it should take place. Therefore, if anything be said to you about it, speak of it as a thing not to be endured.

For the next seven years Catalina was doomed to a most wretched life, while her father and Henry bargained about her dowry, her plate, her household and the long and tiresome details of the agreement under which she was at last married to Prince Henry. Fernando sent her very little money, evidently in the belief that if he did not do so, Henry would be compelled by shame, if not by generosity, to provide for her. But Henry, whose position on the throne was now secure, was never troubled by either shame or generosity. Several years later the Princess wrote her father that her servants and maidens had no money to buy clothes. She herself sometimes had to borrow money for food. All this time Fernando was using her as a special ambassador. She was skilful and trustworthy and kept him well informed.

Queen Isabel too, has been accused of employing her daughter for political purposes and abandoning her to the cold charity of Henry. The facts hardly justify so severe a judgment. Isabel only lived two years after the death of Prince Arthur. Two years of sickness, anxiety and discouragement. Her letters to England show the most earnest desire to have Catalina sent home,

unless her position could be made secure by a marriage to Prince Henry. The betrothal of Catalina to the Prince of Wales, just before Isabel's death, naturally ended all talk of the return of the Princess. If the great Queen could have foreseen the consequences of this match, her last moments would have been greatly embittered.

Henry had urged the Spanish sovereigns to send Catalina to England, promising to be a father to her. But his conduct was cold, stingy and heartless almost consistently, except when he saw some advantage in a temporary gift. Even after her betrothal to Prince Henry in 1503, her condition in no way improved. To make matters worse, she was almost constantly ill from the effects of the English climate and in 1504 was almost given up by the physician who had bled her and repeatedly purged her of a cough and a fever.

As Catalina could not marry her husband's brother without a dispensation, King Fernando wrote to Rome requesting one of Alexander VI. Pope Alexander died however, in the summer of 1503 and was succeeded by the irreproachable and highly respected Pope Pius III. Queen Isabel celebrated the event with pomp and welcomed his brief reign as the beginning of the great and needed reform by which the Church was to purge itself of the stains that a dying civilization had left upon it.

By this time 1503, it was pretty generally known throughout Europe that the great Queen had almost finished her course, but the last months of her life were to be still further embittered by the actions of Juana and she was to find peace only in death.

The Archduchess had come to Spain with her husband in 1501, to be acknowledged as heir to the throne of Castile. When Philip returned to Flanders, Juana remained a prey to despondency and jealousy. Her second son Fernando, was born in March 1503. She wished to return home at once, but as war had begun with France on the northern borders, she was compelled to remain with her mother and Ashe raged like a lioness, according to Peter Martyr and accused every one of being in a monstrous plot to keep her away from her husband. People were now calling her Juana la Loca, Arazy Jane.

King Louis meanwhile, enraged at being outwitted by Fernando, had launched a great offensive against Spain. One army was to invade Italy, another to cross the border near Fuenterrabia, a third of 20,000 men to penetrate Roussillon and regain it.

King Fernando hastily raised an army in Aragon to defend his territory. In the midst of his recruiting, he heard that Isabel was dying at Segovia, 300 miles away. He dropped everything and rode night and day until he reached her side.

The Queen was ill but not as seriously as rumour had represented. When the King returned to Aragon to lead his army against the invaders, she arose to help him for the last time to raise troops and supplies. While her household fasted, prayed and visited all the churches in the city, Fernando was again victorious.

When the Queen heard that the danger was past and the French in disorderly flight to the north, she sent the King a letter, begging him to remember that the French were a Christian nation and not to drive them to despair by cutting off their retreat to their own country. Fernando, in answer to her appeal and to one from the second Inquisitor-General, permitted no unnecessary, but contented himself with their leaving the country. Some believe that if the Queen and the inquisitor had not interfered, he would have invaded France and conquered it.

Isabel's effort had left her weak and almost exhausted but, her troubles were not yet ended. Juana, whom she had placed under the supervision of the Bishop at Medina de Campo, fled half clad, from the palace one cold and stormy November evening and attempted to flee through the city gate, which was already closed for the night. The Bishop pleaded with her in vain. She would not return to the palace, but spent all night clinging to the iron bars, shrieking, weeping and threatening the guards with punishment if they did not let her join her husband.

When Queen Isabel heard of this, forty miles away, she was too ill to ride, but she managed to leave Segovia the following day and hurried to Medina. Juana was still clinging to the gate as she addressed her royal

mother with anger and bitterness. It was a severe trial for the ceremonious Queen, especially before a crowd of gaping citizens and yokes, but her strong will prevailed and Juana sullenly returned to the palace. Later, when she returned to Flanders in the spring of 1504, she was reconciled to Philip, but soon after she struck his mistress and cut off her beautiful hair in the presence of the whole court. The story was carried through all the capitals of Europe and Queen Isabel, struck to the heart with grief and shame, failed rapidly. As soon as the weather permitted, she was taken to Medina del Campo, where there were so many happy childhood recollections and there she prepared for death.

People were saying that some misfortune was about to befall Castile. On Holy Thursday, twelve beggars from the streets were brought into the palace and King Fernando, following the example of his Lord, knelt humbly before the tattered odds and ends of humanity and washed their feet, a custom observed by the Kings of Spain. On the following day, Good Friday, the King and Queen fasted and prayed with their usual rigor and on that day occurred an event that struck all hearts with terror. A violent earthquake, accompanied by a loud and peculiar noise in the air overhead, rumbled through Anadalusia and parts of Castile.

That summer both the King and the Queen were ill with the prevalent fever. Fernando recovered but Isabel, more anxious about him than herself, developed symptoms of dropsy and from that time on had no illusions that her life would be prolonged, nor had she any wish to remain longer in a world that seemed to be to futile. Hearing that people were going on pilgrimages and marching in processions all over Spain for her recovery, she asked them not to pray for the health of her body, but for the salvation of our soul. On October 12, the twelfth anniversary of the landing of her Admiral in San Salvador, she signed her last will and testament.

She desired her body to be taken to Granada and placed without unnecessary expense or ostentation in a simple tomb of humble design. The money that would otherwise have been wasted upon an extravagant funeral was to be distributed in the form of dowries for twelve poor girls, always a favourite charity with Isabel, and the ransom of Christian captives in the hand of the African Moors. She would not even permit the vanity



of embalming for her body, that it might more quickly return to dust. Her love for King Fernando, which appears to have grown and deepened, in spite of occasional jealousies, since that day when she first saw him a young Prince in Valladolid, shines through her testament with characteristic frankness and warmth.

Should the King my lord, prefer a sepulchre in some other place, then my will is that my body be transported there and laid by his side, that the union we have enjoyed in this world and through the mercy of God may hope again for our souls in heaven, may be represented by our bodies in the earth.

She provided for a personal maintenance of the King a sum less than I could wish and far less than he deserves, considering the eminent services he had rendered the State: half of all the net profits of the discoveries in the Indies and 10,000,000 maravedis a year assigned on the alcabalas (ten percent tax) of the military orders. In case her daughter Juana was unable for any reason to rule, the Queen desired Fernando to act as regent until the majority of their grandson Charles.

Finally, I beseech the King and my lord that he will accept all my Jewels, or such as he shall select, so that seeing them he may be reminded of the singular love I always born him while living, now that I am waiting for him in a better world, by which remembrance he may be encourage to live the more justly and holly in this.

Even in her last moments Isabel saw clearly the evils that were likely to come upon Castile following her death and sought to avert them. Six weeks after signing her will and only three days before her death, she wrote a codicil. She appointed a commission to make a new codification of the laws, a reform that she had twice accomplished but never to her complete satisfaction.

She recommended an inquiry into the legality of the alcabalas, a ten per cent tax on commerce, which she implies was not intended to be perpetual and ought not to be mad so without the consent of the people, showing that after she had accomplished her purposes by a necessary concentration

of authority, her sense of fair play led her to look backward to the free institutions of her ancestors. Further, she most earnestly enjoined her successors to treat the Indians in the new possessions beyond the seas, with the greatest kindness and gentleness. To redress any wrongs they might justly complain of and to carry on the sacred work of civilizing them and converting them to Christianity. With characteristic foresight she insisted that Gibraltar was necessary to the safety of Spain and must never be given up.

Her duty accomplished, the Queen returned to her prayers. Clad in a Franciscan robe, she confessed, received Holy Communion and consoled the friends who came in tears to pay their final reverence. Archbishop Ximenes, who was engrossed in building his university and preparing his polyglot Bible, hurried from Alcala to give Isabel his last consolation. Prospero Colonna, one of her visitors from Italy, told the King that he had come to Spain to see a woman who from her bed of sickness rules the world.

A Franciscan brought from Jerusalem a stone slab from the Holy Sepulchre, part of which he gave to the Queen, who received it with the greatest reverence. We sit sorrowful in the palace all the day long, wrote Peter Martyr, tremulously awaiting the hour when religion and virtue shall quit the earth with her.

It stormed almost continually that November. On the twenty-sixth the skies were dull gray, the rain beat against the castle walls, the rivers were in flood and the wind whistle over the melancholy Vegas. The Queen felt that her moment was near. She received the sacraments again and was anointed, signifying by a gesture that she did not wish her feet uncovered during the ceremony. She then became unconscious. Toward noon she recognized the King at her bedside, smiled weakly, folded her hands, turned her eyes upward in hope and supplication and gently breathed out her pure and luminous soul. There was a silence in the great chamber, then a sobbing and a wailing of women.

My hand fall powerless by my said for very sorrow, wrote Peter Martyr to Archbishop Talavera. The world has lost its noblest ornament, a loss to

be deplored not only by Spain, which she has so long carried forward in the career of glory, but by every nation in Christendom, for she was the mirror of every virtue, the child of the innocent and an avenging sword to the wicked. I know none of her sex, in ancient or modern times, who in my judgment is at all worthy to be named with this incomparable woman.

The next day, after King Fernando had announced the Queen's death and taken the oath as regent, in accordance with her wishes, a cortege of cavaliers and prelates, wrapped in black cloaks of mourning and mounted on horses and mules with black caparisons, left Medina with the unpretentious black litter containing the boy of the Queen still wrapped, according to her wishes, in a coarse Franciscan robe. They had hardly left the city when a terrific tempest of rain and wind burst over them.

The cavalcade went slowly on through Arevalo, where the queen had spent her girlhood; through Toledo where she had joyously celebrated Fernando's victory at Toro in the flush of her young womanhood; through Jaen, where she had saved the Christian cause and completed the building of the Spanish nation, by pawning her Jewels to finance the siege of Baza.

During the three weeks of the journey they saw neither sun or stars. Roads were almost impassable. Bridges had been swept away, the fields and plains were lakes and the small rivers roaring torrents in which, now and then, a horse would tumble, to be drowned with his rider. It was still storming December 18, when the drenched pilgrims carried their silent burden through the gates of the city that the great Queen had conquered. Through the gates of the Alhambra whence she had sent forth Christopher Columbus to discover a world and laid Queen Isabel in the Franciscan monastery.

When the clouds lifted that day, the sun looked down upon a Spain from which something vital had passed forever. Somewhere on the sea there was a ship bearing a letter from the Princess Catalina in England. She had written it on the very day of her mother's death, saying that she was very depressed and adding: I have no other hope or comfort in this world than that which comes from knowing that my mother and father are well. Christopher Columbus, who had returned from his fourth voyage, was on

his way to Medinas when the news reached him. He wrote with a heavy heart to his son Diego:

he principal thing is to commend affectionately and with great devotion the soul of the Queen, our lady, to God. Her life was always Catholic and holy and prompt in all things in His holy service. For this reason we may rest assured that she is received into His glory and beyond the care of this rough and weary world.

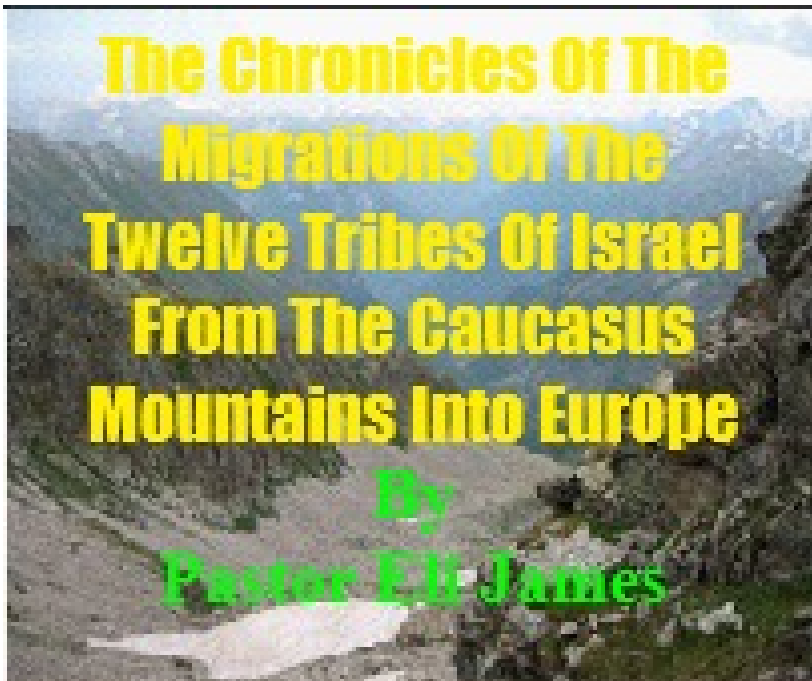


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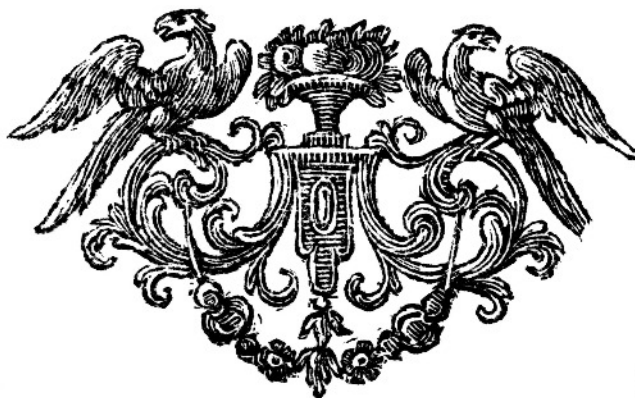
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