

the feeble mind of Henry had been long accustomed to rest for its support, and who was cut off by an acute disorder but a few months previous, in the full prime of his ambitious schemes. The king, notwithstanding the lingering nature of his disease gave him ample time for preparation, expired without a will, or even, as generally asserted, the designation of a successor. This was the more remarkable, not only as being contrary to established usage, but as occurring at a period when the succession had been so long and hotly debated.²⁹

²⁹ This topic is involved in no little obscurity, and has been reported with much discrepancy as well as inaccuracy by the modern Spanish historians. Among the ancient, Castillo, the historiographer of Henry IV., mentions certain "testamentary executors," without, however, noticing in any more direct way the existence of a will. (Crón. c. 168.) The Curate of Los Palacios refers to a clause reported, he says, to have existed in the testament of Henry IV., in which he declares Joanna his daughter and heir; (Reyes Católicos, MS., cap. 10.) Alonso de Palencia states positively that there was no such instrument, and that Henry, on being asked who was to succeed him, referred to his secretary Juan Gonzalez for a knowledge of his intention. (Crón. c. 92.) L. Marineo also states that the king, "with his usual improvidence," left no will. (Cosas Memorables, fol. 155.) Pulgar, another contemporary, expressly declares that he executed no will, and quotes the words dictated by him to his secretary, in which he simply designates two of the grantees as "executors of his soul," (*albaceas de su anima*), and four others in conjunction with them as

the guardians of his daughter Joanna. Reyes Cat. p. 31.) It seems not improbable that the existence of this document has been confounded with that of a testament, and that with reference to it, the phrase above quoted of Castillo, as well as the passage of Bernaldez, is to be interpreted. Carbajal's wild story of the existence of a will, of its secretion for more than thirty years, and its final suppression by Ferdinand, is too naked of testimony to deserve the least weight with the historian. (See his Anales, MS., año 74.) It should be remembered, however, that most of the abovementioned writers compiled their works after the accession of Isabella, and that none, save Castillo, were the partisans of her rival. It should also be added that in the letters addressed by the princess Joanna to the different cities of the kingdom, on her assuming the title of queen of Castile, (bearing date May, 1475,) it is expressly stated that Henry IV., on his deathbed, solemnly affirmed her to be his only daughter and lawful heir. These letters were drafted by John de Oviedo, (Juan Gonzalez,) the confidential secretary of Henry IV. See Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 235 - 239.

PART
I.

The testaments of the Castilian sovereigns, though never esteemed positively binding, and occasionally, indeed, set aside, when deemed unconstitutional or even inexpedient by the legislature,³⁰ were always allowed to have great weight with the nation.

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

³⁰ As was the case with the testaments of Alfonso of Leon and Alfonso the Wise, in the thirteenth

century, and with that of Peter the Cruel, in the fourteenth.

Notice of
Alonso de
Palencia.

The historian cannot complain of a want of authentic materials for the reign of Henry IV. Two of the chroniclers of that period, Alonso de Palencia and Enriquez del Castillo, were eyewitnesses and conspicuous actors in the scenes which they recorded, and connected with opposite factions. The former of these writers, Alonso de Palencia, was born, as appears from his work, "De Synonymis," cited by Pellicer, (*Bibliotheca de Traductores*, p. 7,) in 1423. Nic. Antonio has fallen into the error of dating his birth nine years later. (*Bibliotheca Vetus*, tom. ii. p. 331.) At the age of seventeen, he became page to Alfonso of Carthagená, bishop of Burgos, and, in the family of that estimable prelate, acquired a taste for letters, which never deserted him during a busy political career. He afterwards visited Italy, where he became acquainted with Cardinal Bessarion, and through him with the learned Greek Trapezuntius, whose lectures on philosophy

and rhetoric he attended. On his return to his native country, he was raised to the dignity of royal historiographer by Alfonso, younger brother of Henry IV., and competitor with him for the crown. He attached himself to the fortunes of Isabella, after Alfonso's death, and was employed by the archbishop of Toledo in many delicate negotiations, particularly in arranging the marriage of the princess with Ferdinand, for which purpose he made a secret journey into Aragon. On the accession of Isabella, he was confirmed in the office of national chronicler, and passed the remainder of his life in the composition of philological and historical works and translations from the ancient classics. The time of his death is uncertain. He lived to a good old age, however, since it appears from his own statement, (see Mendez, *Typographia Española*, (Madrid, 1796,) p. 190,) that his version of Josephus was not completed till the year 1492.

The most popular of Palencia's

The character of Henry the Fourth has been sufficiently delineated in that of his reign. He was not without certain amiable qualities, and may be considered as a weak, rather than a wicked prince. In persons, however, intrusted with the degree of power exercised by sovereigns of even the most limited monarchies of this period, a weak man may be deemed more mischievous to the state over which he presides than a wicked one. The latter, feeling himself responsible in the eyes of the nation for his actions, is more likely to consult appearances, and, where his own passions or interests are not immediately involved, to legislate with reference to the general interests of his subjects. The former, on the contrary, is too often a mere tool

CHAPTER
IV.Influence of
his reign.

writings, are his "Chronicle of Henry IV.," and his Latin "Decades," continuing the reign of Isabella down to the capture of Baza, in 1489. His historical style, far from scholastic pedantry, exhibits the business-like manner of a man of the world. His Chronicle, which, being composed in the Castilian, was probably intended for popular use, is conducted with little artifice, and indeed with a prolixity and minuteness of detail, arising no doubt from the deep interest which as an actor he took in the scenes he describes. His sentiments are expressed with boldness, and sometimes with the acerbity of party feeling. He has been much commended by the best Spanish writers, such as Zurita, Zúñiga, Marina, Clemencin, for his veracity. The internal evidence of this is sufficiently strong in his delineation of those scenes in which he was personally engaged; in his account of others, it will not be difficult to find exam-

ples of negligence and inaccuracy. His Latin "Decades" were probably composed with more care, as addressed to a learned class of readers; and they are lauded by Nic. Antonio as an elegant commentary, worthy to be assiduously studied by all who would acquaint themselves with the history of their country. The art of printing has done less perhaps for Spain than for any other country in Europe; and these two valuable histories are still permitted to swell the rich treasure of manuscripts with which her libraries are overloaded.

Enriquez del Castillo, a native of Segovia, was the chaplain and historiographer of King Henry IV., and a member of his privy council. His situation not only made him acquainted with the policy and intrigues of the court, but with the personal feelings of the monarch, who reposed entire confidence in him, which Castillo repaid with uniform loyalty. He appears very early to have commenced his

Notice of
Enriquez del
Castillo.

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in the hands of favorites, who, finding themselves screened by the interposition of royal authority from the consequences of measures for which they should be justly responsible, sacrifice without remorse the public weal to the advancement of their private fortunes. Thus the state, made to minister to the voracious appetites of many tyrants, suffers incalculably more than it would from one. So fared it with Castile under Henry the Fourth; dismembered by faction, her revenues squandered on worthless parasites, the grossest violations of justice unredressed, public faith become a jest, the treasury bankrupt, the court a brothel, and private morals too loose and audacious to seek even the veil of hypocrisy! Never had the fortunes of the kingdom reached so low an ebb since the great Saracen invasion.

Chronicle of Henry's reign. On the occupation of Segovia by the young Alfonso, after the battle of Olmedo, in 1467, the chronicler, together with the portion of his history then compiled, was unfortunate enough to fall into the enemy's hands. The author was soon summoned to the presence of Alfonso and his counsellors, to hear and justify, as he could, certain passages of what they termed his "false and frivolous narrative." Castillo, hoping little from a defence before such a prejudiced tribunal, resolutely kept his peace; and it might have gone hard with him, had it not been for his ecclesiastical profession. He subsequently escaped, but never recovered his manuscripts, which were probably destroyed; and, in the Introduction to his Chronicle, he laments, that he has been obliged to rewrite the first half of his master's reign.

Notwithstanding Castillo's familiarity with public affairs, his

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

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

CHAPTER V.

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

1474 — 1476.

Isabella proclaimed Queen. — Settlement of the Crown. — Alfonso of Portugal supports Joanna. — Invades Castile. — Retreat of the Castilians. — Appropriation of the Church Plate. — Reorganization of the Army. — Battle of Toro. — Submission of the whole Kingdom. — Peace with France and Portugal. — Joanna takes the Veil. — Death of John II., of Aragon.

Most of the contemporary writers are content to derive Isabella's title to the crown of Castile from the illegitimacy of her rival Joanna. But, as this fact, whatever probability it may receive from the avowed licentiousness of the queen, and some other collateral circumstances, was never established by legal evidence, or even made the subject of legal inquiry, it cannot reasonably be adduced as affording in itself a satisfactory basis for the pretensions of Isabella.¹

CHAPTER
V.

Title of Isabella.

¹ The popular belief of Joanna's illegitimacy was founded on the following circumstances. 1. King Henry's first marriage with Blanche of Navarre was dissolved, after it had subsisted twelve years, on the publicly alleged ground of "impotence in the parties." 2. The

princess Joanna, the only child of his second queen, Joanna of Portugal, was not born until the eighth year of her marriage, and long after she had become notorious for her gallantries. 3. Although Henry kept several mistresses, whom he maintained in so

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These are to be derived from the will of the nation as expressed by its representatives in cortes. The power of this body to interpret the laws regulating the succession, and to determine the succession itself, in the most absolute manner, is incontrovertible, having been established by repeated precedents from a very ancient period.² In the present instance, the legislature, soon after the birth of Joanna, tendered the usual oaths of allegiance to her as heir apparent to the monarchy. On a subsequent occasion, however, the cortes, for reasons deemed sufficient by itself, and under a conviction that its consent to the preceding measure had been obtained through an undue influence on the part of the crown, reversed its former acts, and did homage to Isabella as the only true and lawful successor.³ In this disposition the legislature

ostentatious a manner as to excite general scandal, he was never known to have had issue by any one of them. — To counterbalance the presumption afforded by these facts, it should be stated, that Henry appears, to the day of his death, to have cherished the princess Joanna as his own offspring, and that Beltran de la Cueva, duke of Albuquerque, her reputed father, instead of supporting her claims to the crown on the demise of Henry, as would have been natural had he been entitled to the honors of paternity, attached himself to the adverse faction of Isabella.

Queen Joanna survived her husband about six months only. Father Florez (*Reynas Cathólicas*, tom. ii. pp. 760–786) has made a flimsy attempt to whitewash her character; but, to say nothing of

almost every contemporary historian, as well as of the official documents of that day (see Marina, *Teoría*, tom. iii. part. 2, num. 11.), the stain has been too deeply fixed by the repeated testimony of Castillo, the loyal adherent of her own party, to be thus easily effaced.

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

² See this subject discussed in *extenso*, by Marina, *Teoría*, part. 2, cap. 1–10. — See, also, *Introd. Sect. 1.* of this History.

³ See Part I. Chap. 3.

continued so resolute, that, notwithstanding Henry twice convoked the states for the express purpose of renewing their allegiance to Joanna; they refused to comply with the summons;⁴ and thus Isabella, at the time of her brother's death, possessed a title to the crown unimpaired, and derived from the sole authority which could give it a constitutional validity. It may be added that the princess was so well aware of the real basis of her pretensions; that in her several manifestoes, although she adverts to the popular notion of her rival's illegitimacy, she rests the strength of her cause on the sanction of the cortes.

On learning Henry's death, Isabella signified to the inhabitants of Segovia, where she then resided, her desire of being proclaimed queen in that city, with the solemnities usual on such occasions.⁵ Accordingly, on the following morning, being the 13th of December, 1474, a numerous assembly, consisting of the nobles, clergy, and public magistrates in their robes of office; waited on her at the alcazar or castle, and, receiving her under a canopy of rich brocade, escorted her in solemn procession to the principal square of the city, where a broad platform or scaffold had been erected for the performance of the ceremony. Isabella, royally attired, rode on a

She is pro-
claimed
queen.

⁴ See Part I. Chap. 4, Note 2.

⁵ Fortunately, this strong place, in which the royal treasure was deposited, was in the keeping of Andrés de Cabrera, the husband of Isabella's friend, Beatriz de Bobadilla. His coöperation at this

juncture was so important, that Oviedo does not hesitate to declare, "It lay with him to make Isabella or her rival queen, as he listed." *Quincuagenas*, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 1, dial. 23.

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I.

Spanish jennet whose bridle was held by two of the civic functionaries, while an officer of her court preceded her on horseback, bearing aloft a naked sword, the symbol of sovereignty. On arriving at the square she alighted from her palfrey, and, ascending the platform, seated herself on a throne which had been prepared for her. A herald with a loud voice proclaimed, "Castile, Castile for the king Don Ferdinand and his consort Doña Isabella, queen proprietor (*reina propietaria*) of these kingdoms!" The royal standards were then unfurled, while the peal of bells and the discharge of ordnance from the castle publicly announced the accession of the new sovereign. Isabella, after receiving the homage of her subjects, and swearing to maintain inviolate the liberties of the realm, descended from the platform, and, attended by the same *cor-tège*, moved slowly towards the cathedral church; where, after *Te Deum* had been chanted, she prostrated herself before the principal altar, and, returning thanks to the Almighty for the protection hitherto vouchsafed her, implored him to enlighten her future counsels, so that she might discharge the high trust reposed in her, with equity and wisdom. Such were the simple forms, that attended the coronation of the monarchs of Castile, previously to the sixteenth century.⁶

The cities favorable to Isabella's cause, compre-

⁶ Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, MS., cap. 10. — Carbajal, *Anales*, MS., año 75. — Alonso de Palencia, *Corónica*, MS., part. 2, cap. 93, — L. Marineo, *Cosas Memorables*, fol. 155. — Oviedo, *Quincuagenas*, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 2, dial. 3.

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

Settlement
of the
crown.

On Ferdinand's arrival from Aragon, where he was staying at the time of Henry's death, occupied with the war of Roussillon, a disagreeable discussion took place in regard to the respective authority to be enjoyed by the husband and wife in the administration of the government. Ferdinand's relatives, with the admiral Henriquez at their head, contended that the crown of Castile, and of course the exclusive sovereignty, was limited to him as the nearest male representative of the house of Trastámara. Isabella's friends, on the other hand, insisted that these rights devolved solely on her, as the lawful heir and proprietor of the kingdom. The affair was finally referred to the arbitration of the cardinal

⁷ Marina, whose peculiar researches and opportunities make him the best, is my only authority for this convention of the cortes. (Teoría, tom. ii. pp. 63, 89.) The extracts he makes from the writ of summons, however, seem to imply, that the object was not the recognition of Ferdinand and Isabella, but of their daughter, as successor to the crown.

Among the nobles, who openly testified their adhesion to Isabella, were no less than four of the six individuals, to whom the late king had intrusted the guardianship of his daughter Joanna; viz. the grand cardinal of Spain, the constable of Castile, the duke of Infantado, and the count of Benavente.

PART
I

of Spain and the archbishop of Toledo, who, after careful examination, established by undoubted precedent, that the exclusion of females from the succession did not obtain in Castile and Leon, as was the case in Aragon; ⁸ that Isabella was consequently sole heir of these dominions; and that whatever authority Ferdinand might possess, could only be derived through her. A settlement was then made on the basis of the original marriage contract. ⁹ All municipal appointments, and collation to ecclesiastical benefices, were to be made in the name of both with the advice and consent of the queen. All fiscal nominations, and issues from the treasury, were to be subject to her order. The commanders of the fortified places were to render homage to her alone. Justice was to be administered by both conjointly, when residing in the same place, and by each independently, when separate. Proclamations and letters patent were to be subscribed with the signatures of both; their images were to be stamped on the public coin, and the united arms of Castile and Aragon emblazoned on a common seal. ¹⁰

⁸ A precedent for female inheritance, in the latter kingdom, was subsequently furnished by the undisputed succession and long reign of Joanna, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and mother of Charles V. The introduction of the Salic law, under the Bourbon dynasty, opposed a new barrier, indeed; but this has been since swept away by the decrees of the late monarch, Ferdinand VII., and the paramount authority of the cortes; and we may hope, that the successful assertion of her lawful rights by Isa-

bella II. will put this much vexed question at rest for ever.

⁹ See Part I. Chap. 3. — Ferdinand's powers are not so narrowly limited, at least not so carefully defined, in this settlement, as in the marriage articles. Indeed, the instrument is much more concise and general in its whole import.

¹⁰ Salazar de Mendoza, Crón. del Gran Cardenal, lib. 1, cap. 40. — L. Marineo, Cosas Memorables, fol. 155, 156. — Zurita, Anales, tom. iv. fol. 222 — 224. — Pulgar, Reyes Católicos, pp. 35, 36. — See the