

mischievous to himself, were beyond his strength to control. Silva endeavoured to inflame still further his jealousy of the French, who had already given him many serious causes of disgust; and, in order to detach him more effectually from Charles's interests, encouraged him with the hopes of forming a matrimonial alliance for his son with one of the infantas of Spain. At the same time, he used every effort to bring about a coöperation between the duke and the republic of Venice, thus opening the way to the celebrated league which was concluded in the following year.³⁷

The Roman pontiff had lost no time, after the appearance of the French army in Italy, in pressing the Spanish court to fulfil its engagements. He endeavoured to propitiate the good-will of the sovereigns by several important concessions. He granted to them and their successors the *tercias*, or two ninths of the tithes, throughout the dominions of Castile; an impost still forming part of the regular revenue of the crown.³⁸ He caused bulls of crusade to be promulgated throughout Spain, granting at the same time a tenth of the ecclesiastical rents, with the understanding that the proceeds

³⁷ Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernando*, lib. 1, cap. 35.—Alonso de Silva acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of the sovereigns, in his difficult mission. He was subsequently sent on various others to the different Italian courts, and uniformly sustained his reputation for ability and prudence. He did not live to be old. Oviedo, *Quincuagenas*, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 4.

³⁸ Mariana, *Hist. de España*, tom. ii. lib. 26, cap. 6.—Salazar de Mendoza, *Monarquía*, lib. 3, cap. 14.

This branch of the revenue yields at the present day, according to Laborde, about 6,000,000 reals, or 1,500,000 francs. *Itinéraire*, tom. vi. p. 51.

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The pope
confers the
title of
Catholic.

should be devoted to the protection of the Holy See. Towards the close of this year, 1494, or the beginning of the following, he conferred the title of Catholic on the Spanish sovereigns, in consideration, as is stated, of their eminent virtues, their zeal in defence of the true faith and the apostolic see, their reformation of conventual discipline, their subjugation of the Moors of Granada, and the purification of their dominions from the Jewish heresy. This orthodox title, which still continues to be the jewel most prized in the Spanish crown, has been appropriated in a peculiar manner to Ferdinand and Isabella, who are universally recognised in history as *Los Reyes Católicos*.³⁹

Ferdinand was too sensible of the peril, to which the occupation of Naples by the French would expose his own interests, to require any stimulant to action from the Roman pontiff. Naval preparations

Naval preparations
in
Spain.

³⁹ Zurita, Abarca, and other Spanish historians, fix the date of Alexander's grant at the close of 1496. (Hist. del Rey Hernando, lib. 2, cap. 40.—Reyes de Aragon, rey 30, cap. 9.) Martyr notices it with great particularity as already conferred, in a letter of February, 1495. (Opus Epist., epist. 157.) The pope, according to Comines, designed to compliment Ferdinand and Isabella for their conquest of Granada, by transferring to them the title of Most Christian, hitherto enjoyed by the kings of France. He had even gone so far as to address them thus in more than one of his briefs. This produced a remonstrance from a number of the cardinals; which led him to substitute the title of Most Catholic. The epithet of Catholic was not

new in the royal house of Castile, nor indeed of Aragon; having been given to the Asturian prince Alfonso I. about the middle of the eighth, and to Pedro II., of Aragon, at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

I will remark, in conclusion, that, although the phrase *Los Reyes Católicos*, as applied to a female equally with a male, would have a whimsical appearance literally translated into English, it is perfectly consonant to the Spanish idiom, which requires that all words, having reference to both a masculine and a feminine noun, should be expressed in the former gender. But it is obviously incorrect to render it, as usually done by English writers, by the corresponding term of "Catholic kings."

had been going forward during the summer, in the ports of Galicia and Guipuscoa. A considerable armament was made ready for sea by the latter part of December, at Alicant, and placed under the command of Galceran de Requesens, count of Trevento. The land forces were intrusted to Gonsalvo de Cordova, better known in history as the Great Captain. Instructions were at the same time sent to the viceroy of Sicily, to provide for the security of that island, and to hold himself in readiness to act in concert with the Spanish fleet.⁴⁰

Ferdinand, however, determined to send one more embassy to Charles the Eighth, before coming to an open rupture with him. He selected for this mission Juan de Albion and Antonio de Fonseca, brother of the bishop of that name, whom we have already noticed as superintendent of the Indian department. The two envoys reached Rome, January 28th, 1495, the same day on which Charles set out on his march for Naples. They followed the army, and on arriving at Veletri, about twenty miles from the capital, were admitted to an audience by the monarch, who received them in the presence of his officers. The ambassadors freely enumerated the various causes of complaint entertained by their master against the French king; the insult offered to him in the person of his minister Alonso de Silva; the contumelious treatment of the pope, and forcible occupation of the fortresses and estates of

Second mission to Charles VIII.

⁴⁰ Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernando*, cap. 41. — Quintana, *Vidas de Españoles Célebres*, (Madrid, 1807, 1830,) tom. i. p. 222. — Carbajal, *Anales*, MS., año 1495.

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the church; and finally the enterprise against Naples, the claims to which as a papal fief, could of right be determined in no other way than by the arbitration of the pontiff himself. Should King Charles consent to accept this arbitration, they tendered the good offices of their master as mediator between the parties; should he decline it, however, the king of Spain stood absolved from all further obligations of amity with him, by the terms of the treaty of Barcelona, which expressly recognised his right to interfere in defence of the church.⁴¹

Charles, who could not dissemble his indignation during this discourse, retorted with great acrimony, when it was concluded, on the conduct of Ferdinand, which he stigmatized as perfidious, accusing him, at the same time, of a deliberate design to circumvent him, by introducing into their treaty the clause respecting the pope. As to the expedition against Naples, he had now gone too far to recede; and it would be soon enough to canvass the question of right, when he had got possession of it. His courtiers, at the same time, with the impetuosity of their nation, heightened by the insolence of success, told the envoys, that they knew well enough how to defend their rights with their arms, and that King Ferdinand would find the French chivalry enemies of quite another sort from the holiday tilters of Granada.

These taunts led to mutual recrimination, until

⁴¹ Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, 192-194. — Garibay, *Compendio*, MS., cap. 138. — Sismondi, *Rélib. 19*, cap. 4. — *publiques Italiennes*, tom. xii. pp.

at length Fonseca, though naturally a sedate person, was so far transported with anger, that he exclaimed, "The issue then must be left to God,—arms must decide it;" and, producing the original treaty, bearing the signatures of the two monarchs, he tore it in pieces before the eyes of Charles and his court. At the same time he commanded two Spanish knights who served in the French army to withdraw from it, under pain of incurring the penalties of treason. The French cavaliers were so much incensed by this audacious action, that they would have seized the envoys, and, in all probability, offered violence to their persons, but for Charles's interposition, who with more coolness caused them to be conducted from his presence, and sent back under a safe escort to Rome. Such are the circumstances reported by the French and Italian writers of this remarkable interview. They were not aware that the dramatic exhibition, as far as the ambassadors were concerned, was all previously concerted before their departure from Spain.⁴²

Charles pressed forward on his march without further delay. Alfonso the Second, losing his con-

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Bold conduct of the envoys.

The king of Naples flies to Sicily.

⁴² Oviedo, *Quincuagenas*, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 3, dial. 43. — Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernando*, lib. 1, cap. 43. — Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, MS., cap. 138. — Giovio, *Hist. sui Temporis*, lib. 2, p. 46. — Lanuza, *Historias*, tom. 1. lib. 1, cap. 6.

This appears from a letter of Martyr's, dated three months before the interview; in which he says, "Antonius Fonseca, vir

equestris ordinis, et armis clarus, destinatus est orator, qui eum moneat, ne, priusquam de jure inter ipsum et Alfonso regem Neapolitanum decernatur, ulterius procedat. Fert in mandatis Antonius Fonseca, ut Carolo capitulum id sonans ostendat, antequam ipsius oculos (si detrectaverit) pacti veteris chirographum laceret, atque indicat inimicitias." *Opus Epist.*, epist. 144.

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confidence and martial courage, the only virtues that he possessed, at the crisis when they were most demanded, had precipitately abandoned his kingdom while the French were at Rome, and taken refuge in Sicily, where he formally abdicated the crown in favor of his son, Ferdinand the Second. This prince, then twenty-five years of age, whose amiable manners were rendered still more attractive by contrast with the ferocious temper of his father, was possessed of talent and energy competent to the present emergency, had he been sustained by his subjects. But the latter, besides being struck with the same panic which had paralyzed the other people of Italy, had too little interest in the government to be willing to hazard much in its defence. A change of dynasty was only a change of masters, by which they had little either to gain or to lose. Though favorably inclined to Ferdinand, they refused to stand by him in his perilous extremity. They gave way in every direction, as the French advanced, rendering hopeless every attempt of their spirited young monarch to rally them, till at length no alternative was left, but to abandon his dominions to the enemy, without striking a blow in their defence. He withdrew to the neighbouring island of Ischia, whence he soon after passed into Sicily, and occupied himself there in collecting the fragments of his party, until the time should arrive for more decisive action.⁴³

⁴³ Comines, *Mémoires*, liv. 7, chap. 16. — Villeneuve, *Mémoires*, apud Petitot, *Collection des Mémoires*, tom. xii. p. 260. — Ammirato, *Istorie Fiorentine*, tom. iii. lib. 26. — Summonte, *Hist. di Napoli*, tom. iii. lib. 6, cap. 1, 2.

Charles the Eighth made his entrance into Naples at the head of his legions, February 22d, 1495, having traversed this whole extent of hostile territory in less time than would be occupied by a fashionable tourist of the present day. The object of his expedition was now achieved. He seemed to have reached the consummation of his wishes; and, although he assumed the titles of King of Sicily and of Jerusalem, and affected the state and authority of Emperor, he took no measures for prosecuting his chimerical enterprise further. He even neglected to provide for the security of his present conquest; and, without bestowing a thought on the government of his new dominions, resigned himself to the licentious and effeminate pleasures so congenial with the soft voluptuousness of the climate, and his own character.⁴⁴

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The French
enter Naples.

While Charles was thus wasting his time and resources in frivolous amusements, a dark storm was gathering in the north. There was not a state through which he had passed, however friendly to his cause, which had not complaints to make of his insolence, his breach of faith, his infringement of their rights, and his exorbitant exactions. His impolitic treatment of Sforza had long since alienated that wily and restless politician, and raised suspicions in his mind of Charles's designs against his own duchy of Milan. The emperor elect, Maximilian, whom the French king thought to

General hostility to them.

⁴⁴ Giovo, *Hist. sui Temporis*, André de la Vigne, *Histoire de Charles VIII.* (Paris, 1617,) p. lib. 2, p. 55. — Giannone, *Istoria di Napoli*, lib. 29, cap. 1, 2. — 201.

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have bound to his interests by the treaty of Senlis, took umbrage at his assumption of the imperial title and dignity. The Spanish ambassadors, Garcilasso de la Vega, and his brother, Lorenzo Suarez, the latter of whom resided at Venice, were indefatigable in stimulating the spirit of discontent. Suarez, in particular, used every effort to secure the coöperation of Venice, representing to the government, in the most urgent terms, the necessity of general concert and instant action among the great powers of Italy, if they would preserve their own liberties.⁴⁵

League of
Venice.

Venice, from its remote position, seemed to afford the best point for coolly contemplating the general interests of Italy. Envoys of the different European powers were assembled there, as if by common consent, with the view of concerting some scheme of operation for their mutual good. The conferences were conducted by night, and with such secrecy as to elude for some time the vigilant eye of Comines, the sagacious minister of Charles, then resident at the capital. The result was the celebrated league of Venice. It was signed the last day of March, 1495, on the part of Spain, Austria, Rome, Milan, and the Venetian republic. The ostensible object of the treaty, which was to last twenty-five years, was the preservation of the estates and rights of the confederates, especially of

⁴⁵ Giovo, *Hist. sui Temporis*, lib. 2, p. 56. — Guicciardini, *Istoria*, tom. i. pp. 86, 87. — Bembo, *Istoria Viniziana*, tom. i. lib. 2, p. 120. — Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernando*, lib. 2, chap. 3, 5. — Comines, *Mémoires*, liv. 7, chap. 19.

the Roman see. A large force, amounting in all to thirty-four thousand horse and twenty thousand foot, was to be assessed in stipulated proportions on each of the contracting parties. The secret articles of the treaty, however, went much further, providing a formidable plan of offensive operations. It was agreed in these, that King Ferdinand should employ the Spanish armament, now arrived in Sicily, in reëstablishing his kinsman on the throne of Naples; that a Venetian fleet, of forty galleys, should attack the French positions on the Neapolitan coasts; that the duke of Milan should expel the French from Asti, and blockade the passes of the Alps, so as to intercept the passage of further reinforcements; and that the emperor and the king of Spain should invade the French frontiers, and their expenses be defrayed by subsidies from the allies.⁴⁶ Such were the terms of this treaty, which may be regarded as forming an era in modern political history, since it exhibits the first example of those extensive combinations among European princes, for mutual defence, which afterwards became so frequent. It shared the fate of many other coalitions, where the name and authority of the whole have been made subservient to the interests of some one of the parties, more powerful, or more cunning, than the rest.

The intelligence of the new treaty diffused general joy throughout Italy. In Venice, in par-

⁴⁶ Guicciardini, *Istoria*, tom. i. 122; 123.—Daru, *Hist. de Venise*, lib. 2, p. 88.—Comines, *Mémoires*, liv. 7, chap. 20.—Bembo, *Hist. del Rey Hernando*, lib. 2, *Istoria Viniziana*, tom. i. lib. 2, pp. cap. 5.

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ticular, it was greeted with *fêtes*, illuminations, and the most emphatic public rejoicing, in the very eyes of the French minister, who was compelled to witness this unequivocal testimony of the detestation in which his countrymen were held.⁴⁷ The tidings fell heavily on the ears of the French in Naples. It dispelled the dream of idle dissipation in which they were dissolved. They felt little concern, indeed, on the score of their Italian enemies, whom their easy victories taught them to

⁴⁷ Comines, Mémoires, p. 96. — Comines takes great credit to himself for his perspicacity in detecting the secret negotiations carried on at Venice against his master. According to Bembo, however, the affair was managed with such profound caution, as to escape his notice until it was officially announced by the doge himself; when he was

so much astounded by the intelligence, that he was obliged to ask the secretary of the senate, who accompanied him home, the particulars of what the doge had said, as his ideas were so confused at the time, that he had not perfectly comprehended it. Istoria Viniziana, lib. 2, pp. 128, 129.

Zurita's life
and writings.

The principal light, by which we are to be guided through the remainder of this history, is the Aragonese annalist, Zurita, whose great work, although less known abroad, than those of some more recent Castilian writers, sustains a reputation at home, unsurpassed by any other, in the great, substantial qualities of an historian. The notice of his life and writings has been swelled into a bulky quarto by Dr. Diego Dormer, in a work entitled, "Progressos de la Historia en el Reyno de Aragon. Zaragoza, 1680;" from which I extract a few particulars.

Gerónimo Zurita, descended from an ancient and noble family, was born at Saragossa, December 4th, 1512. He was matriculated at an early age in the university of Alcalá. He there made extraordinary

proficiency, under the immediate instruction of the learned Nuñez de Guzman, commonly called El Pinciano. He became familiar with the ancient, and a variety of modern tongues, and attracted particular attention by the purity and elegance of his Latinity. His personal merits, and his father's influence, recommended him, soon after quitting the university, to the notice of the emperor Charles V. He was consulted and employed in affairs of public importance, and subsequently raised to several posts of honor, attesting the entire confidence reposed in his integrity and abilities. His most honorable appointment, however, was that of national historiographer.

In 1547, an act passed the cortes general of Aragon, providing for the office of national chronicler,

regard with the same insolent contempt, that the paladins of romance are made to feel for the un-knightly rabble, myriads of whom they could overturn with a single lance. But they felt serious alarm as they beheld the storm of war gathering from other quarters, — from Spain and Germany, in defiance of the treaties by which they had hoped to secure them. Charles saw the necessity of instant action. Two courses presented themselves ; either

with a fixed salary, whose duty it should be to compile, from authentic sources, a faithful history of the monarchy. The talents and eminent qualifications of Zurita recommended him to this post, and he was raised to it by the unanimous consent of the legislature, in the following year, 1548. From this time he conscientiously devoted himself to the execution of his great task. He visited every part of his own country, as well as Sicily and Italy, for the purpose of collecting materials. The public archives, and every accessible source of information, were freely thrown open to his inspection, by order of the government ; and he returned from his literary pilgrimage with a large accumulation of rare and original documents. The first portion of his annals was published at Saragossa, in two volumes folio, 1562. The work was not completed until nearly twenty years later, and the last two volumes were printed under his own eye at Saragossa, in 1580, a few months only before his death. This edition, being one of those used in the present history, is in large folio, fairly executed, with double columns on the page, in the fashion of most of the ancient Spanish historians. The whole work was again published, as before, at the expense of the state, in 1585, by his son, amended and somewhat enlarged, from the man-

uscripts left by his father. Bouterwek has fallen into the error of supposing, that no edition of Zurita's Annals appeared till after the reign of Philip II., who died in 1592. (*Geschichte der Poesie und Beredsamkeit*, band iii. p. 319.)

No incidents worthy of note seem to have broken the peaceful tenor of Zurita's life ; which he terminated at Saragossa, in the sixty-eighth year of his age, in the monastery of Santa Engracia, to which he had retired during a temporary residence in the city, to superintend the publication of his Annals. His rich collection of books and manuscripts was left to the Carthusian monastery of Aula Dei ; but, from accident or neglect, the greater part have long since perished. His remains were interred in the convent where he died, and a monument, bearing a modest inscription, was erected over them by his son.

The best monument of Zurita, however, is his Annals. They take up the history of Aragon from its first rise after the Arabic conquest, and continue it to the death of Ferdinand the Catholic. The reign of this prince, as possessing the largest interest and importance, is expanded into two volumes folio ; being one third of the whole work.

The minuteness of Zurita's investigations has laid him open to the charge of prolixity, especially

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to strengthen himself in his new conquests, and prepare to maintain them until he could receive fresh reinforcements from home, or to abandon them altogether and retreat across the Alps, before the allies could muster in sufficient strength to oppose him. With the indiscretion characteristic of his whole enterprise, he embraced a middle course, and lost the advantages which would have resulted from the exclusive adoption of either.

in the earlier and less important periods. It should be remembered, however, that his work was to be the great national repository of facts, interesting to his own countrymen, but which, from difficulty of access to authentic sources, could never before be fully exhibited to their inspection. But, whatever be thought of his redundancy, in this or the subsequent parts of his narrative, it must be admitted that he has uniformly and emphatically directed the attention of the reader to the topics most worthy of it; sparing no pains to illustrate the constitutional antiquities of the country, and to trace the gradual formation of her liberal polity, instead of wasting his strength on mere superficial gossip, like most of the chroniclers of the period.

There is no Spanish historian less swayed by party or religious prejudice, or by the feeling of nationality, which is so apt to overflow in the loyal effusions of the Castilian writers. This laudable temperance, indeed, has brought on him the rebuke of more than one of his patriotic countrymen. There is a sobriety and coolness in his estimate of historical evidence, equally removed from temerity on the one hand, and credulity on the other; in short, his whole manner is that of a man conversant with

public business, and free from the closet pedantry, which too often characterizes the monkish annalists. The greater part of his life was passed under the reign of Charles V., when the spirit of the nation was not yet broken by arbitrary power, nor debased by the melancholy superstition which settled on it under his successor; an age, in which the memory of ancient liberty had not wholly faded away, and when, if men did not dare express all they thought, they at least thought with a degree of independence, which gave a masculine character to their expression. In this, as well as in the liberality of his religious sentiments, he may be compared favorably with his celebrated countryman Mariana, who, educated in the cloister, and at a period when the nation was schooled to maxims of despotism, exhibits few glimpses of the sound criticism and reflection, which are to be found in the writings of his Aragonese rival. The seductions of style, however, the more fastidious selection of incidents, in short, the superior graces of narration, have given a wider fame to the former, whose works have passed into most of the cultivated languages of Europe, while those of Zurita remain, as far as I am aware, still undisturbed in the vernacular.

CHAPTER II.

ITALIAN WARS. — RETREAT OF CHARLES VIII. — CAMPAIGNS OF GONSALVO DE CORDOVA. — FINAL EXPULSION OF THE FRENCH.

1495 — 1496.

Impolitic Conduct of Charles. — He plunders the Works of Art. — Gonsalvo de Cordova. — His Brilliant Qualities. — Raised to the Italian Command. — Battle of Seminara. — Gonsalvo's Successes. — Decline of the French. — He receives the Title of Great Captain. — Expulsion of the French from Italy.

CHARLES THE EIGHTH might have found abundant occupation, during his brief residence at Naples, in placing the kingdom in a proper posture of defence, and in conciliating the good-will of the inhabitants, without which he could scarcely hope to maintain himself permanently in his conquest. So far from this, however, he showed the utmost aversion to business, wasting his hours, as has been already noticed, in the most frivolous amusements. He treated the great feudal aristocracy of the country with utter neglect; rendering himself difficult of access, and lavishing all dignities and emoluments with partial prodigality on his French subjects. His followers disgusted the nation still further by their insolence and unbridled licentiousness. The people naturally called to mind the

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Conduct of
Charles.

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virtues of the exiled Ferdinand, whose temperate rule they contrasted with the rash and rapacious conduct of their new masters. The spirit of discontent spread more widely, as the French were too thinly scattered to enforce subordination. A correspondence was entered into with Ferdinand in Sicily, and in a short time several of the most considerable cities of the kingdom openly avowed their allegiance to the house of Aragon.¹

Plunders the
works of art.

In the mean time, Charles and his nobles, satiated with a life of inactivity and pleasure, and feeling that they had accomplished the great object of the expedition, began to look with longing eyes towards their own country. Their impatience was converted into anxiety on receiving tidings of the coalition mustering in the north. Charles, however, took care to secure to himself some of the spoils of victory, in a manner which we have seen practised, on a much greater scale, by his countrymen in our day. He collected the various works of art with which Naples was adorned, precious antiques, sculptured marble and alabaster, gates of bronze curiously wrought, and such architectural ornaments as were capable of transportation, and caused them to be embarked on board his fleet for the south of France, "endeavouring," says the Curate of Los Palacios, "to build up his own renown on the ruins of the kings of Naples, of glorious memory." His vessels, however, did not reach

¹ Comines, Mémoires, liv. 7, chap. 17. — Summonte, Hist. di Napoli, tom. iii. lib. 6, cap. 2. — Giannone, Istoria di Napoli, lib. 29, cap. 2.

their place of destination, but were captured by a Biscayan and Genoese fleet off Pisa.²

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Charles had entirely failed in his application to Pope Alexander the Sixth for a recognition of his right to Naples, by a formal act of investiture.³ He determined, however, to go through the ceremony of a coronation; and, on the 12th of May, he made his public entrance into the city, arrayed in splendid robes of scarlet and ermine, with the imperial diadem on his head, a sceptre in one hand, and a globe, the symbol of universal sovereignty, in the other; while the adulatory populace saluted his royal ear with the august title of Emperor. After the conclusion of this farce, he made preparations for his instant departure from Naples. On the 20th of May he set out on his homeward march, at the head of one half of his army, amounting in all to not more than nine thousand fighting men. The other half was left for the defence of his new conquest. This arrangement was highly impolitic, since he neither took with him enough to cover his retreat, nor left enough to secure the preservation of Naples.⁴

It is not necessary to follow the French army in

Retreat of
the French.

² Bernaldez, Reyes Católicos, MS., cap. 140 - 143.

³ Summonte, Hist. di Napoli, tom. iii. lib. 6, cap. 2.

According to Giannone, (Istoria di Napoli, lib. 29, cap. 2,) he did obtain the investiture from the pope; but this statement is contradicted by several, and confirmed by none, of the authorities I have consulted.

⁴ Brantôme, Hommes Illustres,

Cœuvres, tom. ii. pp. 3 - 5. — Comines, Mémoires, liv. 8, chap. 2.

The particulars of the coronation are recorded with punctilious precision by André de la Vigne, secretary of Queen Anne. (Hist. de Charles VIII., p. 201.) Daru has confounded this farce with Charles's original entry into Naples in February. Hist. de Venise, tom. iii. liv. 20, p. 247.

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its retrograde movement through Italy. It is enough to say, that this was not conducted with sufficient despatch to anticipate the junction of the allied forces, who assembled to dispute its passage on the banks of the Taro, near Fornovo. An action was there fought, in which King Charles, at the head of his loyal chivalry, achieved such deeds of heroism, as shed a lustre over his ill-concerted enterprise, and which, if they did not gain him an undisputed victory, secured the fruits of it, by enabling him to effect his retreat without further molestation. At Turin he entered into negotiation with the calculating duke of Milan, which terminated in the treaty of Vercelli, October 10th, 1495. By this treaty Charles obtained no other advantage than that of detaching his cunning adversary from the coalition. The Venetians, although refusing to accede to it, made no opposition to any arrangement, which would expedite the removal of their formidable foe beyond the Alps. This was speedily accomplished; and Charles, yielding to his own impatience and that of his nobles, recrossed that mountain rampart which nature has so ineffectually provided for the security of Italy, and reached Grenoble with his army on the 27th of the month. Once more restored to his own dominions, the young monarch abandoned himself without reserve to the licentious pleasures to which he was passionately addicted, forgetting alike his dreams of ambition, and the brave companions in arms whom he had deserted in Italy. Thus ended this memorable expedition, which, though crowned with complete

success, was attended with no other permanent result to its authors, than that of opening the way to those disastrous wars, which wasted the resources of their country for a great part of the sixteenth century.⁵

Charles the Eighth had left as his viceroy in Naples Gilbert de Bourbon, duke of Montpensier, a prince of the blood, and a brave and loyal nobleman, but of slender military capacity, and so fond of his bed, says Comines, that he seldom left it before noon. The command of the forces in Calabria was intrusted to M. d'Aubigny, a Scottish cavalier of the house of Stuart, raised by Charles to the dignity of grand constable of France. He was so much esteemed for his noble and chivalrous qualities, that he was styled by the annalists of that day, says Brantôme, "grand chevalier sans reproche." He had large experience in military matters, and was reputed one of the best officers in the French service. Besides these principal commanders, there were others of subordinate rank stationed at the head of small detachments on different points of the kingdom, and especially in the fortified cities along the coasts.⁶

Scarcely had Charles the Eighth quitted Naples, when his rival, Ferdinand, who had already completed his preparations in Sicily, made a descent on

⁵ Villeneuve, Mémoires, apud Petitot, Collection de Mémoires, tom. xiv. pp. 262, 263. — Flassan, Diplomatie Française, tom. i. pp. 267-269. — Comines, Mémoires, liv. 8, chap. 10 — 12, 18.

⁶ Comines, Mémoires, liv. 8, chap. 1. — Brantôme, Hommes Illustres, tom. ii. p. 59.

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the southern extremity of Calabria. He was supported in this by the Spanish levies under the admiral Requesens, and Gonsalvo of Cordova, who reached Sicily in the month of May. As the latter of these commanders was destined to act a most conspicuous part in the Italian wars, it may not be amiss to give some account of his early life.

Gonsalvo
de Cordova.

Gonzalo Fernandez de Cordova, or Aguilar, as he is sometimes styled from the territorial title assumed by his branch of the family, was born at Montilla, in 1453. His father died early, leaving two sons, Alonso de Aguilar, whose name occurs in some of the most brilliant passages of the war of Granada, and Gonsalvo, three years younger than his brother. During the troubled reigns of John the Second and Henry the Fourth, the city of Cordova was divided by the feuds of the rival families of Cabra and Aguilar; and it is reported that the citizens of the latter faction, after the loss of their natural leader, Gonsalvo's father, used to testify their loyalty to his house by bearing the infant children along with them in their rencontres; thus Gonsalvo may be said to have been literally nursed amid the din of battle.⁷

His early
life.

On the breaking out of the civil wars, the two brothers attached themselves to the fortunes of Alfonso and Isabella. At their court, the young Gonsalvo soon attracted attention by the uncommon beauty of his person, his polished manners,

⁷ Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernan-* Magni Gonsalvi, lib. 1, pp. 204,
do, lib. 2, cap. 7.—Giovio, *Vita* 205.

and proficiency in all knightly exercises. He indulged in a profuse magnificence in his apparel, equipage, and general style of living; a circumstance, which, accompanied with his brilliant qualities, gave him the title at the court of *el príncipe de los caballeros*, the prince of cavaliers. This carelessness of expense, indeed, called forth more than once the affectionate remonstrance of his brother Alonso, who, as the elder son, had inherited the *mayorazgo*, or family estate, and who provided liberally for Gonsalvo's support. He served during the Portuguese war under Alonso de Cardenas, grand master of St. James, and was honored with the public commendations of his general for his signal display of valor at the battle of Albuera; where, it is remarked, the young hero incurred an unnecessary degree of personal hazard by the ostentatious splendor of his armour. Of this commander, and of the count of Tendilla, Gonsalvo always spoke with the greatest deference, acknowledging that he had learned the rudiments of war from them.⁸

The long war of Granada, however, was the great school in which his military discipline was perfected. He did not, it is true, occupy so eminent a position in these campaigns as some other chiefs of riper years and more enlarged experience; but on various occasions he displayed uncommon proofs both of address and valor. He particularly distinguished himself at the capture of Tajara, Illora,

His brilliant
qualities.

⁸ Quintana, *Espanoles Célebres*, *Vita Magni Gonsalvi*, lib. 1, pp. tom. i. pp. 207-211.—Giovio, 205, 206, 210.

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and Monte Frio. At the last place, he headed the scaling party, and was the first to mount the walls in the face of the enemy. He wellnigh closed his career in a midnight skirmish before Granada, which occurred a short time before the end of the war. In the heat of the struggle his horse was slain; and Gonsalvo, unable to extricate himself from the morass in which he was entangled, would have perished, but for a faithful servant of the family, who mounted him on his own horse, briefly commending to his master the care of his wife and children. Gonsalvo escaped, but his brave follower paid for his loyalty with his life. At the conclusion of the war, he was selected, together with Ferdinand's secretary Zafra, in consequence of his plausible address, and his familiarity with the Arabic, to conduct the negotiation with the Moorish government. He was secretly introduced for this purpose by night into Granada, and finally succeeded in arranging the terms of capitulation with the unfortunate Abdallah, as has been already stated. In consideration of his various services, the Spanish sovereigns granted him a pension, and a large landed estate in the conquered territory.⁹

After the war, Gonsalvo remained with the court,

⁹ Peter Martyr, *Opus Epist.*, epist. 90. — Giovio, *Vita Magni Gonsalvi*, lib. 1, pp. 211, 212. — Conde, *Dominacion de los Arabes*, tom. iii. cap. 42. — Quintana, *Españoles Célebres*, tom. ii. pp. 215, 216.

Florian has given circulation to a popular error by his romance of

"Gonsalve de Cordoue," where the young warrior is made to play a part he is by no means entitled to, as hero of the Granadine war. Graver writers, who cannot lawfully plead the privilege of romancing, have committed the same error. See, among others, *Varillas, Politique de Ferdinand*, p. 3.

and his high reputation and brilliant exterior made him one of the most distinguished ornaments of the royal circle. His manners displayed all the romantic gallantry characteristic of the age, of which the following, among other instances, is recorded. The queen accompanied her daughter Joanna on board the fleet which was to bear her to Flanders, the country of her destined husband. After bidding adieu to the infanta, Isabella returned in her boat to the shore; but the waters were so swollen, that it was found difficult to make good a footing for her on the beach. As the sailors were preparing to drag the bark higher up the strand, Gonsalvo, who was present, and dressed, as the Castilian historians are careful to inform us, in a rich suit of brocade and crimson velvet, unwilling that the person of his royal mistress should be profaned by the touch of such rude hands, waded into the water, and bore the queen in his arms to the shore, amid the shouts and plaudits of the spectators. The incident may form a counterpart to the well-known anecdote of Sir Walter Raleigh.¹⁰

Isabella's long and intimate acquaintance with Gonsalvo enabled her to form a correct estimate of his great talents. When the Italian expedition was

Raised to
the Italian
command.

¹⁰ Giovio, Vita Magni Gonsalvi, p. 214. — Crónica del Gran Capitan Gonzalo Hernandez de Cordova y Aguilar, (Alcalá de Henares, 1584,) cap. 23.

Another example of his gallantry occurred during the Granadine war, when the fire of Santa Fe had consumed the royal tent, with the greater part of the queen's apparel

and other valuable effects. Gonsalvo, on learning the disaster, at his castle of Illora, supplied the queen so abundantly from the magnificent wardrobe of his wife Doña Maria Manrique, as led Isabella pleasantly to remark, that, "the fire had done more execution in his quarters, than in her own." Giovio, Vita Magni Gonsalvi, lib. 1, pp. 212, 213.

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resolved on, she instantly fixed her eyes on him as the most suitable person to conduct it. She knew that he possessed the qualities essential to success in a new and difficult enterprise, — courage, constancy, singular prudence, dexterity in negotiation, and inexhaustible fertility of resource. She accordingly recommended him, without hesitation, to her husband, as the commander of the Italian army. He approved her choice, although it seems to have caused no little surprise at the court, which, notwithstanding the favor in which Gonsalvo was held by the sovereigns, was not prepared to see him advanced over the heads of veterans, of so much riper years and higher military renown than himself. The event proved the sagacity of Isabella.¹¹



Arrives in
Italy.

The part of the squadron destined to convey the new general to Sicily, was made ready for sea in the spring of 1495. After a tempestuous voyage, he reached Messina on the 24th of May. He found, that Ferdinand, of Naples, had already begun operations in Calabria, where he had occupied Reggio with the assistance of the admiral Requesens, who reached Sicily with a part of the armament a short time previous to Gonsalvo's arrival. The whole effective force of the Spaniards did not exceed six hundred lances and fifteen hundred foot, besides those employed in the fleet, amounting to about three thousand and five hundred more. The

¹¹ Giovio, Vita Magni Gonsalvi, p. 214. — *Crónica del Gran Capitán*, cap. 23.

finances of Spain had been too freely drained in the late Moorish war to authorize any extraordinary expenditure; and Ferdinand designed to assist his kinsman rather with his name, than with any great accession of numbers. Preparations, however, were going forward for raising additional levies, especially among the hardy peasantry of the Asturias and Galicia, on which the war of Granada had fallen less heavily than on the south.¹²

On the 26th of May, Gonsalvo de Cordova crossed over to Reggio in Calabria, where a plan of operation was concerted between him and the Neapolitan monarch. Before opening the campaign, several strong places in the province, which owed allegiance to the Aragonese family, were placed in the hands of the Spanish general, as security for the reimbursement of expenses incurred by his government in the war. As Gonsalvo placed little reliance on his Calabrian or Sicilian recruits, he was obliged to detach a considerable part of his Spanish forces to garrison these places.¹³

Lands in
Calabria.

¹² Zurita, Hist. del Rey Hernando, lib. 2, cap. 7, 24. — Quintana, Españoles Célebres, tom. i. p. 222. — Crónica del Gran Capitán, ubi supra.

Giovo, in his biography of Gonsalvo, estimates these forces at 5000 foot and 600 horse, which last in his History he raises to 700. I have followed Zurita, as presenting the more probable statement, and as generally more accurate in all that relates to his own nation. It is a hopeless task to attempt to reconcile the manifold inaccuracies, contradictions, and discrepancies, which perplex the narratives of the

writers on both sides, in every thing relating to numerical estimates. The difficulty is greatly increased by the extremely vague application of the term *lance*, as we meet with it, including six, four, three, or even a less number of followers, as the case might be.

¹³ Mariana, Hist. de España, tom. ii. lib. 26, cap. 10. — Zurita, Hist. del Rey Hernando, lib. 2, cap. 7.

The occupation of these places by Gonsalvo excited the pope's jealousy, as to the designs of the Spanish sovereigns. In consequence of his remonstrances, the

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The presence of their monarch revived the dormant loyalty of his Calabrian subjects. They thronged to his standard, till at length he found himself at the head of six thousand men, chiefly composed of the raw militia of the country. He marched at once with Gonsalvo on St. Agatha, which opened its gates without resistance. He then directed his course towards Seminara, a place of some strength about eight leagues from Reggio. On his way he cut in pieces a detachment of French on its march to reinforce the garrison there. Seminara imitated the example of St. Agatha, and, receiving the Neapolitan army without opposition, unfurled the standard of Aragon on its walls. While this was going forward, Antonio Grimani, the Venetian admiral, scoured the eastern coasts of the kingdom with a fleet of four and twenty galleys, and, attacking the strong town of Monopoli, in the possession of the French, put the greater part of the garrison to the sword.

D'Aubigny, who lay at this time with an inconsiderable body of French troops in the south of Calabria, saw the necessity of some vigorous movement to check the further progress of the enemy. He determined to concentrate his forces, scattered through the province, and march against Ferdinand,

Castilian envoy, Garcilasso de la Vega, was instructed to direct Gonsalvo, that, "in case any inferior places had been since put into his hands, he should restore them; if they were of importance, however, he was first to confer with his own government." King Ferdinand, as

Abarca assures his readers, "was unwilling to give cause of complaint to any one, *unless he was greatly a gainer by it.*" *Reyes de Aragon, rey 30, cap. 8.* — Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernando, tom. v. lib. 2, cap. 8.*

in the hope of bringing him to a decisive action. For this purpose, in addition to the garrisons dispersed among the principal towns, he summoned to his aid the forces, consisting principally of Swiss infantry, stationed in the Basilicate under Précý, a brave young cavalier, esteemed one of the best officers in the French service. After the arrival of this reinforcement, aided by the levies of the Angevin barons, D'Aubigny, whose effective strength now greatly surpassed that of his adversary, directed his march towards Seminara.¹⁴

Ferdinand, who had received no intimation of his adversary's junction with Précý, and who considered him much inferior to himself in numbers, no sooner heard of his approach, than he determined to march out at once before he could reach Seminara, and give him battle. Gonsalvo was of a different opinion. His own troops had too little experience in war with the French and Swiss veterans to make him willing to risk all on the chances of a single battle. The Spanish heavy-armed cavalry, indeed, were a match for any in Europe, and were even said to surpass every other in the beauty and excellence of their appointments, at a period, when arms were finished to luxury.¹⁵ He had but a handful of these, however; by far the greatest part of his cavalry consisting of *ginetes*, or light-armed troops, of inestimable service in the wild

Gonsalvo's
prudence.

¹⁴ Giovio, Vita Magni Gonsalvi, pp. 215-217. — Idem, Hist. sui Temporis, pp. 83-85. — Bembo, Istoria Viniziana, lib. 3, pp. 160, 185. — Zurita, Hist. del Rey Hernando, lib. 2, cap. 8. — Guicciar-

dini, Istoria, lib. 2, pp. 88, 92. — Chronica del Gran Capitan, cap. 25.

¹⁵ Giovio, Vita Magni Gonsalvi, lib. 1. — Du Bos, Ligue de Cambray, introd., p. 58.

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guerilla warfare to which they had been accustomed in Granada, but obviously incapable of coping with the iron *gendarmarie* of France. He felt some distrust, too, in bringing his little corps of infantry without further preparation, armed, as they were, only with short swords and bucklers, and much reduced, as has been already stated, in number, to encounter the formidable phalanx of Swiss pikes. As for the Calabrian levies, he did not place the least reliance on them. At all events, he thought it prudent, before coming to action, to obtain more accurate information than they now possessed, of the actual strength of the enemy.¹⁶

In all this, however, he was overruled by the impatience of Ferdinand and his followers. The principal Spanish cavaliers, indeed, as well as the Italian, among whom may be found names which afterwards rose to high distinction in these wars, urged Gonsalvo to lay aside his scruples; representing the impolicy of showing any distrust of their own strength at this crisis, and of balking the ardor of their soldiers, now hot for action. The Spanish chief, though far from being convinced, yielded to these earnest remonstrances, and King Ferdinand led out his little army without further delay against the enemy.

Battle of
Seminara.

After traversing a chain of hills, stretching in an easterly direction from Seminara, at the distance of about three miles he arrived before a small stream, on the plains beyond which he discerned the

¹⁶ Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernando*, lib. 2, cap. 7. — *Giovio, Vita Magni Gonsalvi*, ubi supra.

French army in rapid advance against him. He resolved to wait its approach; and, taking position on the slope of the hills towards the river, he drew up his horse on the right wing, and his infantry on the left.¹⁷

The French generals, D'Aubigny and Précý, putting themselves at the head of their cavalry on the left, consisting of about four hundred heavy-armed, and twice as many light horse, dashed into the water without hesitation. Their right was occupied by the bristling phalanx of Swiss spearmen in close array; behind these were the militia of the country. The Spanish *ginetes* succeeded in throwing the French gendarmerie into some disorder, before it could form after crossing the stream; but, no sooner was this accomplished, than the Spaniards, incapable of withstanding the charge of their enemy, suddenly wheeled about and precipitately retreated with the intention of again returning on their assailants, after the fashion of the Moorish tactics. The Calabrian militia, not comprehending this manœuvre, interpreted it into a defeat. They thought the battle lost, and, seized with a panic, broke their ranks, and fled to a man, before the Swiss infantry had time so much as to lower its lances against them.

King Ferdinand in vain attempted to rally the dastardly fugitives. The French cavalry was soon upon them, making frightful slaughter in their

Defeat of the
Neapolitans.

¹⁷ Giovio, Vita Magni Gonsalvi, tana, Españoles Célebres, tom. i. lib. 1, pp. 216, 217. — Crónica del Gran Capitan, cap. 24. — Quin-

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ranks. The young monarch, whose splendid arms and towering plumes made him a conspicuous mark in the field, was exposed to imminent peril. He had broken his lance in the body of one of the foremost of the French cavaliers, when his horse fell under him, and as his feet were entangled in the stirrups, he would inevitably have perished in the *mêlée*, but for the prompt assistance of a young nobleman named Juan de Altavilla, who mounted his master on his own horse, and calmly awaited the approach of the enemy, by whom he was immediately slain. Instances of this affecting loyalty and self-devotion not unfrequently occur in these wars, throwing a melancholy grace over the darker and more ferocious features of the time.¹⁸

Gonsalvo was seen in the thickest of the fight, long after the king's escape, charging the enemy briskly at the head of his handful of Spaniards, not in the hope of retrieving the day, but of covering the flight of the panic-struck Neapolitans. At length he was borne along by the rushing tide, and succeeded in bringing off the greater part of his cavalry safe to Seminara. Had the French followed up the blow, the greater part of the royal army, with probably King Ferdinand and Gonsalvo at its head, would have fallen into their hands, and thus not only the fate of the campaign, but of Naples itself, would have been permanently decided by

¹⁸ Giovio, *Hist. sui Temporis*, lib. 3, pp. 83-85. — *Crónica del Gran Capitan*, cap. 24. — Summonte, *Hist. di Napoli*, tom. iii. lib. 6, cap. 2. — Guicciardini, *Is-toria*, lib. 2, p. 112. — Garibay, *Compendio*, tom. ii. lib. 19, p. 690.

this battle. Fortunately the French did not understand so well how to use a victory, as to gain it. They made no attempt to pursue. This is imputed to the illness of their general, D'Aubigny, occasioned by the extreme unhealthiness of the climate. He was too feeble to sit long on his horse, and was removed into a litter as soon as the action was decided. Whatever was the cause, the victors by this inaction suffered the golden fruits of victory to escape them. Ferdinand made his escape on the same day on board a vessel, which conveyed him back to Sicily; and Gonsalvo, on the following morning before break of day, effected his retreat across the mountains to Reggio, at the head of four hundred Spanish lances. Thus terminated the first battle of importance in which Gonsalvo of Cordova held a distinguished command; the only one which he lost during his long and fortunate career. Its loss, however, attached no discredit to him, since it was entered into in manifest opposition to his judgment. On the contrary, his conduct throughout this affair tended greatly to establish his reputation, by showing him to be no less prudent in council, than bold in action.¹⁹

Gonsalvo
retreats to
Reggio.

King Ferdinand, far from being disheartened by this defeat, gained new confidence from his experience of the favorable dispositions existing towards him in Calabria. Relying on a similar feeling of loyalty in his capital, he determined to hazard a

¹⁹ Guicciardini, *Istoria*, lib. 1, p. 112. — Giovio, *Hist. sui Temporis*, lib. 3, p. 85. — Lanuza, *Historias*, tom. i. lib. 1, cap. 7.

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bold stroke for its recovery; and that, too, instantly, before his late discomfiture should have time to operate on the spirits of his partisans. He accordingly embarked at Messina, with a handful of troops only, on board the fleet of the Spanish admiral, Requesens. It amounted in all to eighty vessels, most of them of inconsiderable size. With this armament, which, notwithstanding its formidable show, carried little effective force for land operations, the adventurous young monarch appeared off the harbour of Naples before the end of June.

Charles's viceroy, the duke of Montpensier, at that time garrisoned Naples with six thousand French troops. On the appearance of the Spanish navy, he marched out to prevent Ferdinand's landing, leaving a few only of his soldiers to keep the city in awe. But he had scarcely quitted it before the inhabitants, who had waited with impatience an opportunity for throwing off the yoke, sounded the tocsin, and, rising to arms through every part of the city, and massacring the feeble remains of the garrison, shut the gates against him; while Ferdinand, who had succeeded in drawing off the French commander in another direction, no sooner presented himself before the walls, than he was received with transports of joy by the enthusiastic people.²⁰

²⁰ Summonte, *Hist. di Napoli*, pp. 87, 88. — Villeneuve, *Mémoires*, apud Petitot, *Collection des Mémoires*, tom. xiv. pp. 264, 265. — Guicciardini, *Istoria*, lib. 2, pp. 113, 114. — Giovinio, *Hist. sui Temporis*, lib. 3,