

In one of her interviews with the dying minister, the queen requested his advice respecting the nomination of his successor. The cardinal, in reply, earnestly cautioned her against raising any one of the principal nobility to this dignity, almost too exalted for any subject, and which, when combined with powerful family connexions, would enable a man of factious disposition to defy the royal authority itself, as they had once bitter experience in the case of Archbishop Carillo. On being pressed to name the individual, whom he thought best qualified, in every point of view, for the office, he is said to have recommended Fray Francisco Ximenez de Cisneros, a friar of the Franciscan order, and confessor of the queen. As this extraordinary personage exercised a more important control over the destinies of his country than any other subject, during the remainder of the present reign, it will be necessary to put the reader in possession of his history.⁸

Ximenez de Cisneros, or Ximenes, as he is usually called, was born at the little town of Tor-

Birth of
Ximenes.

wretched parents frequently destroyed their offspring by casting them into wells and pits, or exposing them in desert places to die of famine. "*The more compassionate,*" he observes, "laid them at the doors of churches, where they were too often worried to death by dogs and other animals." The grand cardinal's nephew, who founded a similar institution, is said to have furnished an asylum in the course of his life to no less than 13,000 of these little victims! *Ibid.*, cap. 61.

⁸ Salazar de Mendoza, *Crón. del Gran Cardenal*, lib. 2, cap. 46. — Gomez, *De Rebus Gestis*, fol. 8.

The dying cardinal is said to have recommended, among other things, that the queen should repair any wrong done to Joanna Beltraneja, by marrying her with the young prince of the Asturias; which suggestion was so little to Isabella's taste that she broke off the conversation, saying, "the good man wandered and talked nonsense."

PART
II.

delaguna, in the year 1436,⁹ of an ancient but decayed family.¹⁰ He was early destined by his parents for the church, and, after studying grammar at Alcalá, was removed at fourteen to the university of Salamanca. Here he went through the regular course of instruction then pursued, devoting himself assiduously to the civil and canon law, and at the end of six years received the degree of bachelor in each of them, a circumstance at that time of rare occurrence.¹¹

He visits
Rome.

Three years after quitting the university, the young bachelor removed by the advice of his parents to Rome, as affording a better field for ecclesiastical preferment than he could find at home. Here he seems to have attracted some notice by the diligence with which he devoted himself to his professional studies and employments. But still he was far from reaping the golden fruits presaged by his kindred; and at the expiration of six years he was suddenly recalled to his native country by the death of his father, who left his affairs in so embar-

⁹ It is singular, that Flécher should have blundered some twenty years, in the date of Ximenes's birth, which he makes 1457. (Hist. de Ximenes, liv. 1, p. 3.) It is not singular, that Marsollier should. Histoire du Ministère du Cardinal Ximenez, (Toulouse, 1694,) liv. 1, p. 3.

¹⁰ The honorable extraction of Ximenes is intimated in Juan Vergara's verses at the end of the Complutensian Polyglot:

"Nomine Cisnerius clarâ de stirpe parentum,
"Et meritis factus clarior ipse suis."

Fray Pedro de Quintanilla y

Mendoza makes a goodly genealogical tree for his hero, of which King Pelayo, King Pepin, Charlemagne, and other royal worthies are the respectable roots. (Proemia Dedicatoria, pp. 5-35.) According to Gonzalo de Oviedo, his father was a poor hidalgo, who, having spent his little substance on the education of his children, was obliged to take up the profession of an advocate. *Quincuagenas*, MS.

¹¹ Quintanilla, Archetypo, p. 6. — Gomez, De Rebus Gestis, Ximenes., fol. 2. — Idem, Miscellanear., MS., ex Bibliothecâ Regiâ Matritensi, tom. ii. fol. 189.

passed a condition, as to require his immediate presence¹²

CHAPTER
V.

Before his return, Ximenes obtained a papal bull, or *expectative*, preferring him to the first benefice of a specified value, which should become vacant in the see of Toledo. Several years elapsed before such a vacancy offered itself by the death of the archpriest of Uzeda; and Ximenes took possession of that living by virtue of the apostolic grant.

His return
and impris-
onment.

1473.

This assumption of the papal court to dispose of the church livings at its own pleasure, had been long regarded by the Spaniards as a flagrant imposition; and Carillo, the archbishop of Toledo, in whose diocese the vacancy occurred, was not likely tamely to submit to it. He had, moreover, promised this very place to one of his own followers. He determined, accordingly, to compel Ximenes to surrender his pretensions in favor of the latter, and, finding argument ineffectual, resorted to force, confining him in the fortress of Uzeda, whence he was subsequently removed to the strong tower of Santorcaz, then used as a prison for contumacious ecclesiastics. But Carillo understood little of the temper of Ximenes, which was too inflexible to be broken by persecution. The archbishop in time became convinced of this, and was persuaded to release him, but not till after an imprisonment of more than six years.¹³

¹² Gomez, De Rebus Gestis, fol. 2. — Idem, Miscellanear., MS., ubi supra. — Eugenio de Robles, Compendio de la Vida y Hazañas del Cardenal Don Fray Francisco Xi-

menez de Cisneros, (Toledo, 1604,) cap. 11.

¹³ Quintanilla, Archetypo, pp. 8, 10. — Gomez, De Rebus Gestis, fol. 2. — Fléchier, Hist. de Xime-

PART
II.Established
at Sigüenza.

1480.

Ximenes, thus restored to freedom, and placed in undisturbed possession of his benefice, was desirous of withdrawing from the jurisdiction of his vindictive superior; and not long after effected an exchange for the chaplainship of Sigüenza. In this new situation he devoted himself with renewed ardor to his theological studies, occupying himself diligently, moreover, with Hebrew and Chaldee, his knowledge of which proved of no little use in the concoction of his famous Polyglot.

Mendoza was at that time bishop of Sigüenza. It was impossible that a man of his penetration should come in contact with a character like that of Ximenes, without discerning its extraordinary qualities. It was not long before he appointed him his vicar, with the administration of his diocese; in which situation he displayed such capacity for business, that the count of Cifuentes, on falling into the hands of the Moors, after the unfortunate affair of the Axarquía, confided to him the sole management of his vast estates during his captivity.¹⁴

But these secular concerns grew more and more distasteful to Ximenes, whose naturally austere and contemplative disposition had been deepened, probably, by the melancholy incidents of his life, into stern religious enthusiasm. He determined, there-

Enters the
Franciscan
order.

nés, pp. 8-10. — Suma de la Vida del R. S. Cardenal Don Fr. Francisco Ximenez de Cisneros, sacada de los Memoriales de Juan de Vallejo, Paje de Cámara, è de algunas Personas que en su Tiempo lo vieron: para la Ilustrísima Señora Doña Catalina de la Zerda, Con-

desa de Coruña, a quien Dios guarde, y de su Gracia, por un Criado de su Casa, MS.

¹⁴ Suma de la Vida de Cisneros, MS. — Gomez, De Rebus Gestis, fol. 3. — Robles, Vida de Ximenez, cap. 11. — Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS., dial. de Ximeni.

fore, to break at once from the shackles which bound him to the world, and seek an asylum in some religious establishment, where he might devote himself unreservedly to the service of Heaven. He selected for this purpose the Observantines of the Franciscan order, the most rigid of the monastic societies. He resigned his various employments and benefices, with annual rents to the amount of two thousand ducats, and, in defiance of the arguments and entreaties of his friends, entered on his noviciate in the convent of San Juan de los Reyes, at Toledo; a superb pile then erecting by the Spanish sovereigns, in pursuance of a vow made during the war of Granada.¹⁵

CHAPTER
V.

He distinguished his noviciate by practising every ingenious variety of mortification with which superstition has contrived to swell the inevitable catalogue of human sufferings. He slept on the ground, or on the hard floor, with a billet of wood for his pillow. He wore hair cloth next his skin; and exercised himself with fasts, vigils, and stripes, to a degree scarcely surpassed by the fanatical founder of his order. At the end of the year, he regularly professed, adopting then for the first time the name of Francisco, in compliment to his patron

His severe
penance.

¹⁵ Quintanilla, Archetypo, p. 11. — Gomez, Miscellanear., MS., ubi supra. — Idem, De Rebus Gestis, fol. 4.

This edifice, says Salazar de Mendoza, in respect to its sacristy, choir, cloisters, library, &c., was the most sumptuous and noted of its time. It was originally destined

by the Catholic sovereigns for their place of sepulture; an honor afterwards reserved for Granada, on its recovery from the infidels. The great chapel was garnished with the fetters taken from the dungeons of Malaga, in which the Moors confined their Christian captives. Monarquía, tom. i. p. 410.

PART
II.His ascetic
life.

saint, instead of that of Gonzalo, by which he had been baptized.

No sooner had this taken place, than his reputation for sanctity, which his late course of life had diffused far and wide, attracted multitudes of all ages and conditions to his confessional; and he soon found himself absorbed in the same vortex of worldly passions and interests, from which he had been so anxious to escape. At his solicitation, therefore, he was permitted to transfer his abode to the convent of our Lady of Castañar, so called from a deep forest of chestnuts, in which it was embosomed. In the midst of these dark mountain solitudes, he built with his own hands a little hermitage or cabin, of dimensions barely sufficient to admit his entrance. Here he passed his days and nights in prayer, and in meditations on the sacred volume, sustaining life, like the ancient anchorites, on the green herbs and running waters. In this state of self-mortification, with a frame wasted by abstinence, and a mind exalted by spiritual contemplation, it is no wonder that he should have indulged in ecstasies and visions, until he fancied himself raised into communication with celestial intelligences. It is more wonderful that his understanding was not permanently impaired by these distempered fancies. This period of his life, however, seems to have been always regarded by him with peculiar satisfaction; for long after, as his biographer assures us, when reposing in lordly palaces, and surrounded by all the appliances of luxury, he looked back with fond regret on the

hours which glided so peacefully in the hermitage of Castañar.¹⁶ CHAPTER
V.

Fortunately, his superiors choosing to change his place of residence according to custom, transferred him at the end of three years to the convent of Salzeda. Here he practised, indeed, similar austerities, but it was not long before his high reputation raised him to the post of guardian of the convent. This situation necessarily imposed on him the management of the institution; and thus the powers of his mind, so long wasted in unprofitable reverie, were again called into exercise for the benefit of others. An event which occurred some years later, in 1492, opened to him a still wider sphere of action.

He is made guardian of Salzeda.

By the elevation of Talavera to the metropolitan see of Granada, the office of queen's confessor became vacant. Cardinal Mendoza, who was consulted on the choice of a successor, well knew the importance of selecting a man of the highest integrity and talent; since the queen's tenderness of conscience led her to take counsel of her confessor, not merely in regard to her own spiritual concerns, but all the great measures of her administration. He at once fixed his eye on Ximenes, of whom he had never lost sight, indeed, since his first acquaintance with him at Sigüenza. He was far from approving his adoption of the monastic life, and had been heard to say, that "parts so extraor-

¹⁶ Flécher, *Hist. de Ximenes*, Gestis, fol. 4. — *Suma de la Vida de Cisneros*, MS. — Oviedo, *Quincuagenas*, MS.
p. 14. — Quintanilla, *Archetypo*, pp. 13, 14. — Gomez, *De Rebus*

PART
II.

dinary would not long be buried in the shades of a convent." He is said, also, to have predicted that Ximenes would one day succeed him in the chair of Toledo. A prediction, which its author contributed more than any other to verify.¹⁷

Introduced
to the queen.

He recommended Ximenes in such emphatic terms to the queen, as raised a strong desire in her to see and converse with him herself. An invitation was accordingly sent him from the cardinal to repair to the court at Valladolid, without intimating the real purpose of it. Ximenes obeyed the summons, and, after a short interview with his early patron, was conducted, as if without any previous arrangement, to the queen's apartment. On finding himself so unexpectedly in the royal presence, he betrayed none of the agitation or embarrassment to have been expected from the secluded inmate of a cloister, but exhibited a natural dignity of manners, with such discretion and fervent piety, in his replies to Isabella's various interrogatories, as confirmed the favorable prepossessions she had derived from the cardinal.

Made her
confessor.
1492.

Not many days after, Ximenes was invited to take charge of the queen's conscience. Far from appearing elated by this mark of royal favor, and the prospects of advancement which it opened, he seemed to view it with disquietude, as likely to interrupt the peaceful tenor of his religious duties; and he accepted it only with the understanding,

¹⁷ Salazar de Mendoza, Crón. — Suma de la Vida de Cisneros, del Gran Cardenal, lib. 2, cap. 63. MS. — Robles, Vida de Ximenez, — Gomez, De Rebus Gestis, fol. 4. cap. 12.

that he should be allowed to conform in every respect to the obligations of his order, and to remain in his own monastery when his official functions did not require attendance at court.¹⁸

CHAPTER
V.

Martyr, in more than one of his letters dated at this time, notices the impression made on the courtiers by the remarkable appearance of the new confessor, in whose wasted frame, and pallid, care-worn countenance, they seemed to behold one of the primitive anchorites from the deserts of Syria or Egypt.¹⁹ The austerities and the blameless purity of Ximenes's life had given him a reputation for sanctity throughout Spain; ²⁰ and Martyr indulges the regret, that a virtue, which had stood so many trials, should be exposed to the worst of all, in the seductive blandishments of a court. But Ximenes's heart had been steeled by too stern a discipline to be moved by the fascinations of pleasure, however it might be by those of ambition.

Two years after this event, he was elected provincial of his order in Castile, which placed him at

Elected provincial.

¹⁸ Fléchier, Hist. de Ximenes, pp. 18, 19. — Peter Martyr, Opus Epist., epist. 108. — Robles, Vida de Ximenez, ubi supra. — Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS.

¹⁹ Peter Martyr, Opus Epist., epist. 108.

"Præterea," says Martyr, in a letter to Don Fernando Alvarez, one of the royal secretaries, "nonne tu sanctissimum quendam virum a solitudine abstrusisque silvis, macie ob abstinentiam confectum, relictæ Granatensis loco fuisse suffectum, scriptitasti? In istius facie obducta, nonne Hilarionis te imaginem aut primi Pauli vultum conspexisse

fateris?" Opus Epist, epist. 105.

²⁰ "Todos hablaban," says Oviedo, "de la sanctimonia é vida de este religioso." The same writer says, that he saw him at Medina del Campo, in 1494, in a solemn procession, on the day of Corpus Christi, his body much emaciated, and walking barefooted in his coarse friar's dress. In the same procession was the magnificent cardinal of Spain, little dreaming how soon his proud honors were to descend on the head of his more humble companion. Quincuagenas, MS.

PART
II.

the head of its numerous religious establishments. In his frequent journeys for their inspection he travelled on foot, supporting himself by begging alms, conformably to the rules of his order. On his return he made a very unfavorable report to the queen of the condition of the various institutions, most of which he represented to have grievously relaxed in discipline and virtue. Contemporary accounts corroborate this unfavorable picture, and accuse the religious communities of both sexes throughout Spain, at this period, of wasting their hours, not merely in unprofitable sloth, but in luxury and licentiousness. The Franciscans, in particular, had so far swerved from the obligations of their institute, which interdicted the possession of property of any description, that they owned large estates in town and country, living in stately edifices, and in a style of prodigal expense not surpassed by any of the monastic orders. Those who indulged in this latitude were called *conventuals*, while the comparatively small number who put the strictest construction on the rule of their founder were denominated *observantines*, or brethren of the observance. Ximenes, it will be remembered, was one of the latter.²¹

Corruption
of the mon-
asteries.

The Spanish sovereigns had long witnessed with deep regret the scandalous abuses which had crept

²¹ Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, MS., cap. 201. — *Suma de la Vida de Cisneros*, MS. — Mosheim, *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iii. cent. 14, p. 2. — Peter Martyr, *Opus Epist.*, epist. 163. — L. Marineo, *Cosas Memorables*, fol. 165. — Oviedo, *Epilogo Real, Imperial y Pontifical*, MS., apud *Mem. de la Acad. de Hist.*, tom. vi. *Ilust.* 8. — Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernando*, lib. 3, cap. 15.

into these ancient institutions, and had employed commissioners for investigating and reforming them, but ineffectually. Isabella now gladly availed herself of the assistance of her confessor, in bringing them into a better state of discipline. In the course of the same year, 1494, she obtained a bull with full authority for this purpose from Alexander the Sixth, the execution of which she intrusted to Ximenes. The work of reform required all the energies of his powerful mind, backed by the royal authority. For, in addition to the obvious difficulty of persuading men to resign the good things of this world for a life of penance and mortification, there were other impediments, arising from the circumstance, that the conventuals had been countenanced in their lax interpretation of the rules of their order by many of their own superiors, and even the popes themselves. They were besides sustained in their opposition by many of the great lords, who were apprehensive that the rich chapels and masses, which they or their ancestors had founded in the various monasteries, would be neglected by the observantines, whose scrupulous adherence to the vow of poverty excluded them from what, in church as well as state, is too often found the most cogent incentive to the performance of duty.²²

From these various causes, the work of reform went on slowly; but the untiring exertions of Ximenes gradually effected its adoption in many estab-

Attempts at reform.

²² Fléchier, *Hist. de Ximenes*, bus Gestis, fol. 6, 7. — Robles, pp. 25, 26. — Quintanilla, *Archetipo*, pp. 21, 22. — Gomez, *De Re-*

PART
II.

lishments; and, where fair means could not prevail, he sometimes resorted to force. The monks of one of the convents in Toledo, being ejected from their dwelling, in consequence of their pertinacious resistance, marched out in solemn procession, with the crucifix before them, chanting, at the same time, the psalm *De exitu Israël*, in token of their persecution. Isabella resorted to milder methods. She visited many of the nunneries in person, taking her needle or distaff with her, and endeavouring by her conversation and example to withdraw their inmates from the low and frivolous pleasures to which they were addicted.²³

See of Toledo vacant.
1495.

While the reformation was thus silently going forward, the vacancy in the archbishopric of Toledo already noticed, occurred by the death of the grand cardinal. Isabella deeply felt the responsibility of providing a suitable person to this dignity, the most considerable not merely in Spain, but probably in Christendom, after the papacy; and which, moreover, raised its possessor to eminent political rank, as high chancellor of Castile.²⁴ The right of nomination to benefices was vested in the queen by the original settlement of the crown. She had uni-

²³ Fléchier, *Hist. de Ximenes*, p. 25. — Quintanilla, *Archetypo*, lib. 1, cap. 11. — *Mem. de la Acad. de Hist.*, tom. vi. *Ilust.* 8. — *Robles, Vida de Ximenez*, ubi supra. — ²⁴ Oviedo, *Quincuagenas*, MS., bat. 1, quinc. 2, dial. 1. — Ferdinand and Isabella annexed the dignity of high chancellor in perpetuity to that of archbishop of Toledo. It seems, however, at least in later

times, to have been a mere honorary title. (Mendoza, *Dignidades*, lib. 2, cap. 8.) The revenues of the archbishopric at the beginning of the sixteenth century amounted to 80,000 ducats, (Navagiero, *Viaggio*, fol. 9. — L. Marineo, *Cosas Memorables*, fol. 23.) equivalent to about 702,200 dollars at the present day. See *Introd.*, Sect. 1, Note 63, of this History.

formly discharged this trust with the most conscientious impartiality, conferring the honors of the church on none but persons of approved piety and learning.²⁵ In the present instance, she was strongly solicited by Ferdinand, in favor of his natural son Alfonso, archbishop of Saragossa. But this prelate, although not devoid of talent, had neither the age nor experience, and still less the exemplary morals, demanded for this important station; and the queen mildly, but unhesitatingly, resisted all entreaty and expostulation of her husband on his behalf.²⁶

The post had always been filled by men of high family. The queen, loath to depart from this usage, notwithstanding the dying admonition of Mendoza, turned her eyes on various candidates before she determined in favor of her own confessor, whose character presented so rare a combination of talent

²⁵ "De mas desto," says Lucio Marineo, "tenia por costumbre, que quando avia de dar alguna dignidad, o obispado, mas mirava en virtud, honestidad, y sciencia de las personas, que las riquezas, y generosidad, aun que fuessen sus deudos. Lo qual fue causa que muchos de los que hablaban poco, y tenian los cabellos mas cortos que las cejas; començaron a traer los ojos baxos mirando la tierra, y andar con mas gravedad, y hazer mejor vida, simulando por ventura algunos mas la virtud, que exercitando la." (Cosas Memorables, fol. 182.) "L'hypocrisie est l'hommage que le vice rend à la vertu." The maxim is now somewhat stale, like most others of its profound author.

²⁶ Quintanilla, Archetypo, lib. 1, cap. 16. — Salazar de Mendoza, Crón. del Gran Cardenal, lib. 2, cap. 65.

This prelate was at this time only twenty-four years of age. He had been raised to the see of Saragossa when only six. This strange abuse of preferring infants to the highest dignities of the church seems to have prevailed in Castile as well as Aragon; for the tombs of five archdeacons might be seen in the church of Madre de Dios at Toledo, in Salazar's time, whose united ages amounted only to thirty years. See Crón. del Gran Cardenal, ubi supra.

PART
II.Offered to
Ximenes.

and virtue, as amply compensated any deficiency of birth.

As soon as the papal bull reached Castile, confirming the royal nomination, Isabella summoned Ximenes to her presence, and, delivering to him the parcel, requested him to open it before her. The confessor, who had no suspicion of their real purport, took the letters and devoutly pressed them to his lips; when his eye falling on the superscription, "To our venerable brother Francisco Ximenez de Cisneros, archbishop elect of Toledo," he changed color, and involuntarily dropped the packet from his hands, exclaiming, "There is some mistake in this, it cannot be intended for me;" and abruptly quitted the apartment.

The queen, far from taking umbrage at this unceremonious proceeding, waited awhile, until the first emotions of surprise should have subsided. Finding that he did not return, however, she despatched two of the grandees, who she thought would have the most influence with him, to seek him out and persuade him to accept the office. The nobles instantly repaired to his convent in Madrid, in which city the queen then kept her court. They found, however, that he had already left the place. Having ascertained his route, they mounted their horses, and, following as fast as possible, succeeded in overtaking him at three leagues' distance from the city, as he was travelling on foot at a rapid rate, though in the noontide heat, on his way to the Franciscan monastery at Ocaña.

After a brief expostulation with Ximenes on his

abrupt departure, they prevailed on him to retrace his steps to Madrid; but, upon his arrival there, neither the arguments nor entreaties of his friends, backed as they were by the avowed wishes of his sovereign, could overcome his scruples, or induce him to accept an office, of which he professed himself unworthy. "He had hoped," he said, "to pass the remainder of his days in the quiet practice of his monastic duties; and it was too late now to call him into public life, and impose a charge of such heavy responsibility on him, for which he had neither capacity nor inclination." In this resolution he pertinaciously persisted for more than six months, until a second bull was obtained from the pope, commanding him no longer to decline an appointment, which the church had seen fit to sanction. This left no further room for opposition, and Ximenes acquiesced, though with evident reluctance, in his advancement to the first dignity in the kingdom.²⁷

CHAPTER
V.

He reluctantly accepts.

There seems to be no good ground for charging Ximenes with hypocrisy in this singular display of humility. The *nolo episcopari*, indeed, has passed into a proverb; but his refusal was too long and sturdily maintained to be reconciled with affectation or insincerity. He was, moreover, at this time, in the sixtieth year of his age, when ambition, though not extinguished, is usually chilled

²⁷ Garibay, Compendio, tom. ii. lib. 19, cap. 4. — Mariana, Hist. de España, tom. ii. lib. 26, cap. 7. — Suma de la Vida de Cisneros, MS. — Quintanilla, Archetypo, lib 1, cap. 16. — Gomez, De Rebus Gestis, fol. 11. — Carbajal, Anales, MS., año 1495. — Robles, Vida de Ximenez, cap. 13. — Oviedo, Quincuagenas, MS.

PART
II.

in the human heart. His habits had been long accommodated to the ascetic duties of the cloister, and his thoughts turned from the business of this world to that beyond the grave. However gratifying the distinguished honor conferred on him might be to his personal feelings, he might naturally hesitate to exchange the calm, sequestered way of life, to which he had voluntarily devoted himself, for the turmoil and vexations of the world.

Characteris-
tic anecdotes
of Ximenes.

But, although Ximenes showed no craving for power, it must be confessed he was by no means diffident in the use of it. One of the very first acts of his administration is too characteristic to be omitted. The government of Cazorla, the most considerable place in the gift of the archbishop of Toledo, had been intrusted by the grand cardinal to his younger brother, Don Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza. The friends of this nobleman applied to Ximenes to confirm the appointment, reminding him at the same time of his own obligations to the cardinal, and enforcing their petition by the recommendation which they had obtained from the queen. This was not the way to approach Ximenes, who was jealous of any improper influence over his own judgment, and, above all, of the too easy abuse of the royal favor. He was determined, in the outset, effectually to discourage all such applications; and he declared, that "the sovereigns might send him back to the cloister again, but that no personal considerations should ever operate with him in distributing the honors of the church." The applicants, nettled at this response, returned

to the queen, complaining in the bitterest terms of the arrogance and ingratitude of the new primate. Isabella, however, evinced no symptoms of disapprobation, not altogether displeased, perhaps, with the honest independence of her minister; at any rate she took no further notice of the affair.²⁸

Some time after, the archbishop encountered Mendoza in one of the avenues of the palace, and, as the latter was turning off to avoid the meeting, he saluted him with the title of *adelantado* of Cazorla. Mendoza stared with astonishment at the prelate, who repeated the salutation, assuring him, "that, now he was at full liberty to consult his own judgment, without the suspicion of any sinister influence, he was happy to restore him to a station, for which he had shown himself well qualified." It is scarcely necessary to say, that Ximenes was not importuned after this with solicitations for office. Indeed, all personal application he affected to regard as of itself sufficient ground for a denial, since it indicated "the want either of merit or of humility in the applicant."²⁹

After his elevation to the primacy, he retained the same simple and austere manners as before, dispensing his large revenues in public and private charities, but regulating his domestic expenditure with the severest economy,³⁰ until he was admon-

His austere
life.

²⁸ Gomez, De Rebus Gestis, fol. 11.

²⁹ Ibid., ubi supra. — Robles, Vida de Ximenez, cap. 13, 14.

³⁰ "He kept five or six friars of his order," says Gonzalo de Ovie-

do, "in his palace with him, and as many asses in his stables; but the latter all grew sleek and fat, for the archbishop would not ride himself, nor allow his brethren to ride either." Quincuagenas, MS.

PART
II.

ished by the Holy See to adopt a state more consonant with the dignity of his office, if he would not disparage it in popular estimation. In obedience to this, he so far changed his habits, as to display the usual magnificence of his predecessors, in all that met the public eye,—his general style of living, equipage, and the number and pomp of his retainers; but he relaxed nothing of his own personal mortifications. He maintained the same abstemious diet, amidst all the luxuries of his table. Under his robes of silk or costly furs he wore the coarse frock of St. Francis, which he used to mend with his own hands. He used no linen about his person or bed; and he slept on a miserable pallet like that used by the monks of his fraternity, and so contrived as to be concealed from observation under the luxurious couch in which he affected to repose.³¹

As soon as Ximenes entered on the duties of his office, he bent all the energies of his mind to the consummation of the schemes of reform, which his royal mistress, as well as himself, had so much at heart. His attention was particularly directed to the clergy of his diocese, who had widely departed from the rule of St. Augustine, by which they

³¹ *Suma de la Vida de Cisneros*, MS.—*Quintanilla*, Archetypo, lib. 2, cap. 8, 9.—*Gomez, de Rebus Gestis*, fol. 12.—*Oviedo, Quincuagenas*, MS.—*Robles, Vida de Ximenez*, cap. 13.

He commonly slept in his Franciscan habit. Of course his toilet took no long time. On one occasion, as he was travelling, and up

as usual long before dawn, he urged his muleteer to dress himself quickly; at which the latter irreverently exclaimed, "Cuerpo de Dios! does your holiness think I have nothing more to do, than to shake myself like a wet spaniel, and tighten my cord a little!" *Quintanilla, Archetypo, ubi supra.*

were bound. His attempts at reform, however, excited such a lively dissatisfaction in this reverend body, that they determined to send one of their own number to Rome, to prefer their complaints against the archbishop at the papal court.³²

CHAPTER
V.

The person selected for this delicate mission was a shrewd and intelligent canon by the name of Alborno. It could not be conducted so privately as to escape the knowledge of Ximenes. He was no sooner acquainted with it, than he despatched an officer to the coast, with orders to arrest the emissary. In case he had already embarked, the officer was authorized to fit out a fast sailing vessel, so as to reach Italy, if possible, before him. He was at the same time fortified with despatches from the sovereigns, to the Spanish minister Garcilasso de la Vega, to be delivered immediately on his arrival.

Example of
his severity.

The affair turned out as had been foreseen. On arriving at the port, the officer found the bird had flown. He followed, however, without delay, and had the good fortune to reach Ostia several days before him. He forwarded his instructions at once to the Spanish minister, who in pursuance of them caused Alborno to be arrested the moment he set foot on shore, and sent him back as a prisoner of state to Spain; where a close confinement for two

³² Gomez de Rebus Gestis, fol. 16.

The Venetian minister Navagiero, noticing the condition of the canons of Toledo, some few years later, celebrates them, as "lording it above all others in their own

city, being especial favorites with the ladies, dwelling in stately mansions, passing, in short, the most agreeable lives in the world, without any one to trouble them." Viaggio, fol. 9.

PART
II.

and twenty months admonished the worthy canon of the inexpediency of thwarting the plans of Ximenes.³³

Reform of
the monastic
orders.

His attempts at innovation among the regular clergy of his own order, were encountered with more serious opposition. The reform fell most heavily on the Franciscans, who were interdicted by their rules from holding property, whether as a community, or as individuals; while the members of other fraternities found some compensation for the surrender of their private fortunes, in the consequent augmentation of those of their fraternity. There was no one of the religious orders, therefore, in which the archbishop experienced such a dogged resistance to his plans, as in his own. More than a thousand friars, according to some accounts, quitted the country and passed over to Barbary, preferring rather to live with the infidel, than conform to the strict letter of their founder's rules.³⁴

Great excitement caused
by it.

The difficulties of the reform were perhaps augmented by the mode in which it was conducted. Isabella, indeed, used all gentleness and persuasion;³⁵ but Ximenes carried measures with a high

³³ Gomez, *De Rebus Gestis*, fol. 17.

³⁴ Quintanilla, *Archetypo*, pp. 22, 23. — *Mem. de la Acad. de Hist.*, tom. vi. p. 201. — Zurita, *Hist. del Rey Hernando*, lib. 3, cap. 15.

One account represents the migration as being to Italy and other Christian countries, where the conventual order was protected; which would seem the most probable, though not the best authenticated, statement of the two.

³⁵ "Trataba las monjas," says Riol, "con un agrado y amor tan cariñoso, que las robala los corazones, y hecha dueña de ellas, las persuadía con suavidad y eficacia á que votasen clausura. Y es cosa admirable, que raro fue el convento donde entró esta celebre heroína, donde no lograrse en el propio día el efecto de su santo deseo." *Informe*, apud *Semanario Erudito*, tom. iii. p. 110.

and inexorable hand. He was naturally of an austere and arbitrary temper, and the severe training which he had undergone, made him less charitable for the lapses of others; especially of those, who, like himself, had voluntarily incurred the obligations of monastic rule. He was conscious of the rectitude of his intentions; and, as he identified his own interests with those of the church, he regarded all opposition to himself as an offence against religion, warranting the most peremptory exertion of power.

CHAPTER
V.

The clamor raised against his proceedings became at length so alarming, that the general of the Franciscans, who resided at Rome, determined to anticipate the regular period of his visit to Castile for inspecting the affairs of the order. As he was himself a conventual, his prejudices were of course all enlisted against the measures of reform; and he came over fully resolved to compel Ximenes to abandon it altogether, or to undermine, if possible, his credit and influence at court. But this functionary had neither the talent nor temper requisite for so arduous an undertaking.

Visit of the
Franciscan
general.

1496.

He had not been long in Castile before he was convinced that all his own power, as head of the order, would be incompetent to protect it against the bold innovations of his provincial, while supported by royal authority. He demanded, therefore, an audience of the queen, in which he declared his sentiments with very little reserve. He expressed his astonishment that she should have selected an individual for the highest dignity in the

Insults the
queen.

PART
II

church, who was destitute of nearly every qualification, even that of birth; whose sanctity was a mere cloak to cover his ambition; whose morose and melancholy temper made him an enemy not only of the elegances, but the common courtesies of life; and whose rude manners were not compensated by any tincture of liberal learning. He deplored the magnitude of the evil, which his intemperate measures had brought on the church, but which it was, perhaps, not yet too late to rectify; and he concluded by admonishing her, that, if she valued her own fame, or the interests of her soul, she would compel this man of yesterday to abdicate the office, for which he had proved himself so incompetent, and return to his original obscurity!

The queen, who listened to this violent harangue with an indignation, that prompted her more than once to order the speaker from her presence, put a restraint on her feelings, and patiently waited to the end. When he had finished, she calmly asked him, "If he was in his senses, and knew whom he was thus addressing?" "Yes," replied the enraged friar, "I am in my senses, and know very well whom I am speaking to;—the queen of Castile, a mere handful of dust, like myself!" With these words, he rushed out of the apartment, shutting the door after him with furious violence.⁸⁶

Such impotent bursts of passion could, of course, have no power to turn the queen from her purpose.

⁸⁶ Fléchier, *Hist. de Ximenes*, pp. 56, 58.—Gomez, *De Rebus* Robles, *Vida de Ximenez*, cap. 13. Zurita, *Hist. del*

The general, however, on his return to Italy, had sufficient address to obtain authority from His Holiness to send a commission of conventuals to Castile, who should be associated with Ximenes in the management of the reform. These individuals soon found themselves mere ciphers; and, highly offended at the little account which the archbishop made of their authority, they preferred such complaints of his proceedings to the pontifical court, that Alexander the Sixth was induced, with the advice of the college of cardinals, to issue a brief, November 9th, 1496, peremptorily inhibiting the sovereigns from proceeding further in the affair, until it had been regularly submitted for examination to the head of the church.³⁷

CHAPTER
V.The pope's
interference.

Isabella, on receiving this unwelcome mandate, instantly sent it to Ximenes. The spirit of the latter, however, rose in proportion to the obstacles it had to encounter. He sought only to rally the queen's courage, beseeching her not to faint in the good work, now that it was so far advanced, and assuring her that it was already attended with such beneficent fruits, as could not fail to secure the protection of Heaven. Isabella, every act of whose administration may be said to have had reference, more or less remote, to the interests of religion, was as little likely as himself to falter in a matter, which proposed these interests as its direct and only object. She assured her minister that she would

Consents to
the reform.

³⁷ Gomez, De Rebus Gestis, fol. 23. — Quintanilla, Archetypo, lib. 1, cap. 11.

PART
II.

support him in all that was practicable; and she lost no time in presenting the affair, through her agents, in such a light to the court of Rome, as might work a more favorable disposition in it. In this she succeeded, though not till after multiplied delays and embarrassments; and such ample powers were conceded to Ximenes, in conjunction with the apostolic nuncio, as enabled him to consummate his grand scheme of reform, in defiance of all the efforts of his enemies.³⁸

Its operation
and effects.

The reformation thus introduced extended to the religious institutions of every order equally with his own. It was most searching in its operation, reaching eventually to the moral conduct of the subjects of it, no less than the mere points of monastic discipline. As regards the latter, it may be thought of doubtful benefit to have enforced the rigid interpretation of a rule, founded on the melancholy principle, that the amount of happiness in the next world is to be regulated by that of self-inflicted suffering in this. But it should be remembered, that, however objectionable such a rule may be in itself, yet, where it is voluntarily assumed as an imperative moral obligation, it cannot be disregarded without throwing down the barrier to unbounded license; and that the reassertion of it, under these circumstances, must be a necessary preliminary to any effectual reform of morals.

³⁸ Quintanilla, Archetypo, lib. 1, cap. 11 - 14. — Riol discusses the various monastic reforms effected by Ximenes, in his Memorial to Philip V., apud *Semanario Erudito*, tom. iii. pp. 102 - 110.

The beneficial changes wrought in this latter particular, which Isabella had far more at heart than any exterior forms of discipline, are the theme of unqualified panegyric with her contemporaries.³⁹ The Spanish clergy, as I have before had occasion to remark, were early noted for their dissolute way of life, which, to a certain extent, seemed to be countenanced by the law itself.⁴⁰ This laxity of morals was carried to a most lamentable extent under the last reign, when all orders of ecclesiastics, whether regular or secular, infected probably by the corrupt example of the court, are represented (we may hope it is an exaggeration) as wallowing in all the excesses of sloth and sensuality. So deplorable a pollution of the very sanctuaries of religion could not fail to occasion sincere regret to a pure and virtuous mind like Isabella's. The stain had sunk too deep, however, to be readily purged away. Her personal example, indeed, and the scrupulous integrity with which she reserved all ecclesiastical preferment for persons of unblemished piety, contributed greatly to bring about an amelioration in the morals of the secular clergy. But the secluded inmates of the cloister

CHAPTER
V.

³⁹ L. Marineo, *Cosas Memorables*, fol. 165. — Bernaldez, *Reyes Católicos*, MS., cap. 201. — et al.

⁴⁰ The practice of concubinage by the clergy was fully recognised, and the ancient *fueros* of Castile permitted their issue to inherit the estates of such parents as died intestate. (See Marina, *Ensayo Histórico-Crítico sobre la Antigua Legislación de Castilla*, (Madrid, 1808,) p. 184.) The effrontery of these legalized strumpets, *barragas*,

as they were called, was at length so intolerable as to call for repeated laws, regulating their apparel, and prescribing a badge for distinguishing them from honest women. (Sempere, *Hist. del Luxo*, tom. i. pp. 165-169.) Spain is probably the only country in Christendom, where concubinage was ever sanctioned by law; a circumstance doubtless imputable, in some measure, to the influence of the Mahometans.

PART
II.

were less open to these influences; and the work of reform could only be accomplished there, by bringing them back to a reverence for their own institutions, and by the slow operation of public opinion.

Notwithstanding the queen's most earnest wishes, it may be doubted whether this would have ever been achieved without the coöperation of a man like Ximenes, whose character combined in itself all the essential elements of a reformer. Happily, Isabella was permitted to see before her death, if not the completion, at least the commencement, of a decided amendment in the morals of the religious orders; an amendment, which, so far from being transitory in its character, calls forth the most emphatic eulogium from a Castilian writer far in the following century; who, while he laments their ancient laxity, boldly challenges comparison for the religious communities of his own country, with those of any other, in temperance, chastity, and exemplary purity of life and conversation.⁴¹

⁴¹ Gomez, *De Rebus Gestis*, fol. 23.

Alvaro Gomez, and biographers of Ximenes.

The authority on whom the life of Cardinal Ximenes mainly rests, is Alvaro Gomez de Castro. He was born in the village of St. Eulalia, near Toledo, in 1515, and received his education at Alcalá, where he obtained great repute for his critical acquaintance with the ancient classics. He was afterwards made professor of the humanities in the university; a situation which he filled with credit, but subsequently exchanged for the rhetorical chair in a school recently founded at Toledo. While thus occupied, he was chosen by the university of Alcalá to pay the most distinguished honor, which could be rendered to the memory of its illustrious founder, by a faithful record of his extraordinary life. The most authentic sources of in-

formation were thrown open to him. He obtained an intimate acquaintance with the private life of the cardinal, from three of his principal domestics, who furnished abundance of reminiscences from personal observation, while the archives of the university supplied a mass of documents relating to the public services of its patron. From these and similar materials, Gomez prepared his biography, after many years of patient labor. The work fully answered public expectation; and its merits are such as to lead the learned Nic. Antonio to express a doubt, whether any thing more excellent or perfect in its way could be achieved; "quo opere in eo genere an præstantius quidquam aut perfectius, esse possit, non immerito sæpe dubitavi." (Bibliotheca Nova, tom. i. p. 59.) The encomium may be thought somewhat excessive; but it cannot be denied, that the narrative is written in an easy and natural manner, with fidelity and accuracy, with commendable liberality of opinion, though with a judgment sometimes warped into an undue estimate of the qualities of his hero. It is distinguished, moreover, by such beauty and correctness of Latinity, as have made it a text-book in many of the schools and colleges of the Peninsula. The first edition, being that used in the present work, was published at Alcalá, in 1569. It has since been reprinted twice in Germany, and perhaps elsewhere. Gomez was busily occupied with other literary lubrications during the remainder of his life, and published several works in Latin prose and verse, both of which he wrote with ease and elegance. He died of a catarh, in 1580, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, leaving behind him a reputation for disinterestedness and virtue, which is sufficiently commemorated in two lines of his epitaph;

"Nemini unquam sciens nocul,
Prodesse quam pluribus curavi."

The work of Gomez has furnished the basis for all those biographies of Ximenes which have since appeared in Spain. The most important of these, probably, is Quintanilla's; which, with little merit of selection or arrangement, presents a copious mass of details, drawn from every quarter whence his patient industry could glean them. Its author was a Franciscan, and employed in procuring the beatification of Cardinal Ximenes by the court of Rome; a circumstance which probably disposed him to easier faith in the *marvellous* of his story, than most of his readers will be ready to give. The work was published at Palermo in 1653.

In addition to these authorities I have availed myself of a curious old manuscript, presented to me by Mr. O. Rich, entitled "Suma de la Vida del R. S. Cardenal Don Fr. Francisco Ximenez de Cisneros." It was written within half a century after the cardinal's death, by "un criado de la casa de Coruña." The original, in "very ancient letter," was extant in the archives of that noble house in Quintanilla's time, and is often cited by him. (Archetypo, apend., p. 77.) Its author evidently had access to those contemporary notices, some of which furnished the basis of Castro's narrative, from which, indeed, it exhibits no material discrepancy.

The extraordinary character of Ximenes has naturally attracted the attention of foreign writers, and especially the French, who have produced repeated biographies of him. The most eminent of these is by Flécher, the eloquent bishop of Nismes. It is written with the simple elegance and perspicuity, which characterize his other compositions; and in the general tone of its sentiments, on all matters both of church and state, is quite as orthodox as the most bigoted admirer of the cardinal could desire. Another life, by

**PART
II.**

Marsollier, has obtained a very undeserved repute. The author, not content with the extraordinary qualities really appertaining to his hero, makes him out a sort of universal genius, quite ridiculous, rivalling Molière's Dr. Pancrace himself. One may form some idea of the historian's accuracy from the fact, that he refers the commence-

ment and conduct of the war of Granada chiefly to the counsels of Ximenes, who, as we have seen, was not even introduced at court till after the close of the war. Marsollier reckoned largely on the ignorance and *gullibility* of his readers. The event proved he was not mistaken.



P.C. Monumental de la Alhambra y General
CONSEJERÍA DE CULTURA

JUNTA DE ANDALUCÍA

CHAPTER VI.

XIMENES IN GRANADA.—PERSECUTION, INSURRECTION, AND
CONVERSION OF THE MOORS.

1499 — 1500.

Tranquil State of Granada. — Mild Policy of Talavera. — Clergy Dissatisfied with it. — Violent Measures of Ximenes. — His Fanaticism. — Its mischievous Effects. — Insurrection in Granada. — Tranquillity restored. — Baptism of the Inhabitants.

MORAL energy, or constancy of purpose, seems to be less properly an independent power of the mind than a mode of action, by which its various powers operate with effect. But, however this may be, it enters more largely, perhaps, than mere talent, as commonly understood, into the formation of what is called character, and is often confounded by the vulgar with talent of the highest order. In the ordinary concerns of life, indeed, it is more serviceable than brilliant parts; while, in the more important, these latter are of little weight without it, evaporating only in brief and barren flashes, which may dazzle the eye by their splendor, but pass away and are forgotten.

The importance of moral energy is felt not only, where it would be expected, in the concerns of active life, but in those more exclusively of an

CHAPTER
VI.
Introductory
remarks.

PART
II.

intellectual character, in deliberative assemblies, for example, where talent, as usually understood, might be supposed to assert an absolute supremacy, but where it is invariably made to bend to the controlling influence of this principle. No man destitute of it can be the leader of a party; while there are few leaders, probably, who do not number in their ranks minds, from which they would be compelled to shrink in a contest for purely intellectual preëminence.

This energy of purpose presents itself in a yet more imposing form when stimulated by some intense passion, as ambition, or the nobler principle of patriotism or religion; when the soul, spurning vulgar considerations of interest, is ready to do and to dare all for conscience' sake; when, insensible alike to all that this world can give or take away, it loosens itself from the gross ties which bind it to earth, and, however humble its powers in every other point of view, attains a grandeur and elevation, which genius alone, however gifted, can never reach.

But it is when associated with exalted genius, and under the action of the potent principles above mentioned, that this moral energy conveys an image of power, which approaches, nearer than any thing else on earth, to that of a divine intelligence. It is, indeed, such agents that Providence selects for the accomplishment of those great revolutions, by which the world is shaken to its foundations, new and more beautiful systems created, and the human mind carried forward at a single stride, in the ca-